

**GIRLS AND TATTOOS:
INVESTIGATING THE SOCIAL PRACTICES
OF SYMBOLIC MARKINGS OF IDENTITY**

by

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ABSTRACT

The dramatic increase in the masculine practice of tattooing among girls in Western societies is an area of interest for feminist researchers and visual culture educators. Girls' tattoos are perceived as diverse practices of conformity, resistance, reclamation, and empowerment, and/or as contemporary markers of femininity, sexuality, and desire.

Eleven adolescent girls with tattoos from the Central Okanagan region of British Columbia were interviewed during a 12 month period in 2007/2008. Discourse analysis was employed as a method to interpret and deconstruct girls' narratives with respect to understanding why girls have adopted traditional Western male practices of tattooing as expressions of individuality or identity. Secondly, responses were examined with respect to girls' knowledge of potential risks involved with tattooing.

The majority of participants had strong attachments to their relatives and their tattoos signified a desire to maintain that close family relationship. Research findings indicated girls' mothers were influential in their daughters' decisions to get tattooed and in the type of image tattooed. Girls were adamant that popular media figures with tattoos and advertisements of models with tattoos could influence or encourage girls to engage in body art.

Knowledge of potential risks was learned primarily from tattoo artists and relatives, with infection indicated as the main associated risk. Participants suggested the distribution of pamphlets in school counseling centres could inform students of potential risks and provide information related to safe body art practices.

Participants believed societal norms respecting girls' behaviors and practices were different than those experienced by their mothers. However size, placement, and image of their tattoos, their own biases, and their experiences with older relatives including grandmothers and some fathers indicate that traditional Western attitudes regarding femininity and the female body continue. In spite of this, girls believe that they have the freedom to choose how they enact femininity and assert their individuality, and they believe "if guys can do it, so can girls".

As visual culture educators we need to listen to and respect the voices of girls to achieve a greater understanding of how girls experience and perform gender through their everyday practices within the popular visual culture.

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DEDICATION

To my children, Matt and Tamara

CHAPTER I: Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the study

Girls and Tattoos: Investigating the Social Practices of Symbolic Markings of Identity has been a one year narrative study that was designed to examine the ways in which adolescent girls use tattoos as markers or expressions of identity. This study investigated the positive or negative attitudes and stereotypes girls experienced from family, friends, and strangers and it examined the reasons why girls become engaged in this practice. A second objective of this study was to assess girls' perceived understanding of this practice as a risk-taking behavior with consideration to potential health and educational implications of these perceptions.

For the purpose of this study, adolescence was defined as a transitional time between childhood and adult status, specifically ages 12 through 19; as a period in which girls and boys are defined through individuality, agency, and biological sexuality (Driscoll, 2002); and as a phase in which young people's desire for independence, uniqueness, and acceptance may, for some adolescents, lead to unhealthy experimentation and boundary testing (Santrock, 2003). Female adolescence can be specifically described as a stage of transformation (Driscoll, 2002); and one that according to Harris (2004) "has always been a highly managed process for girls in order for particular forms of gender relations to be maintained" (p. 15). Stanley Hall (1904/2000) previously referred to adolescence as a new birth filled with emotional contradictions, curiosities, and yearnings for idols, role models, and authority.

Adolescent girls are increasingly associating themselves with masculine defined traits and male risk-taking behaviors, specifically tattoos. Girls who engage in traditionally masculine-related activities or in male-dominated physical sports have been perceived as immature and unfeminine. This

perception, according to Hudson (1984), can be attributed to the historical categorization of males and females in Western societies in which the gendered classification of adolescence as a masculine construct has connected masculine images with rebellion, aggression, and physical competitiveness and has alienated or discouraged girls from participating in male dominated activities and social practices. Historical notions of femininity continue to marginalize girls who engage in male-dominated physical activities and continue to stereotype women as objects of desirability and beauty in popular imagery.

Tattoos on girls can specifically represent symbolic resistance against gendered norms in Western societies (Atkinson, 2002) or they can represent what is considered popular, fashionable, and accepted amongst themselves. Burton (2001) notes that with the increasing population of girls who are adopting traditional male-dominated social practices, individualism disappears and instead, becomes a “medium for collective discourses” (p. 65). Social practices as characterized by how the world becomes meaningful through our experience and engagement with it, is defined as well, by “our construction and enactment of particular masculinities and femininities” (Paechter, 2003, p. 74). With increased adoption of traditional male social practices such as tattoos by girls, it is questionable whether or not these behaviors have become increasingly tolerated and socially accepted in Western societies. In fact, tattoo as a ‘cool’ trend or desirable practice largely continues to remain socially unacceptable thus categorizing women as unfeminine and threatening traditional gendered values (Hawkes, Senn, & Thorn, 2004; Forbis, 1994).

In this thesis I posit that body adornment, specifically tattoos are permanent markings used by girls to signify various aspects of their identities. Although there are numerous meanings behind tattoos including group membership, recording of special occasions or major events, and sexual attractiveness, for adolescents it can also represent changes experienced in puberty (Hicks, 2004).

Some theorists have argued that late modernity and the postmodern have led to a fracturing and alienation of identities (Bauman, 1996; Friedman, 1994; Giddens, 1990). According to Klesse (2000), this has allowed a new space to emerge “for different possible and optional identity positions, resulting in a historical situation of permanent alterity and personal change” (p. 23), allowing adolescent girls the opportunity to define their identities as a stage of adolescent transition and simultaneously, affording a liberal freedom for young women to assert their individuality through permanent tattoos. Turner (2000) believes that “changes in the nature and purpose of tattoos indicate changes in the nature and purpose of social life” (p. 40). The extent to which tattoos have gained popularity in the last fifteen years is recognizably visible amongst younger generations. According to art educator Paul Duncum (2002) “the more common visual experiences are and the more ordinary they appear, the more powerful they become in informing and forming minds” (p. 6) and it is because these everyday experiences “are so ordinary that they are so significant” (p. 6). In this respect, images which inform and influence young people are powerful resources that can be used in examining social practices and attitudes.

As expressions of identities, tattoos communicate ideas and transmit messages about the self and relationships between people (Hicks, 2004; Selekman, 2003). Atkinson (2003) states that “using the body to signify and perform identity is a cornerstone activity in the social-communication process” (p. 21). According to Entwistle (2000), fashion and body adornment are “part of the expressive culture of a community” (p. 66) through which meanings are created and communicated. The need for people to communicate through symbols of dress and adornment is historically documented and articulates, in part, sexual identities, group affiliations, and religious beliefs (Entwistle, 2000). Adolescents use their physical appearance (e.g., hair styles, make-up, jewelry, clothes, tattoos, etc.) to communicate ideas, values, and mental attitudes about themselves and who they want to associate with or be connected to through their body language.

Tattoos are part of the visual everyday experiences of adolescent life and can offer girls a fantasized association with idealized role models associated with film, advertisement, fashion, and music industries. Actors Angelina Jolie, Megan Fox, and Johnny Depp are amongst those role models adolescent girls adore and follow. Many adolescent girls were exposed to tattoo symbolism as young children through the band “Spice Girls”. Although this all girl British pop band was “short-lived”, its influence on young, pre-teen girls was profound.



Figure 1: Mel C (*leChinois.com*)



Figure 2: Mel C (*leChinois.com*)

女力

**Figure 3: Chinese symbols/characters signifying woman and strength
(*leChinois.com*)**

Especially influential was Mel C who sported Japanese Kanji tattoo ideograms (Chinese characters introduced to Japan in the fifth century) that meant woman and strength and signified ‘girl power’ for their group (Figures 1 and 2¹). Today, these same girls who as pre-teens idealized tattooed vocalists Christina Aguilera and Avril Lavigne, now consider the tattoos that Nicole Richie, Taylor Swift, and

¹ Figure 1 portrays an image of Mel C as average adolescent girl which was an important image for many preteens who perceived that the average girl could, as well, become successful.

Pink have as “nice” and “pretty sweet”². Girls as well, are avid followers of rock, rap, and punk music bands whose male musicians often sport massive body tattoos. There is little doubt as to the potential influence of people popularized through visual media.

Tattoos signify an individual’s intent to be independent, in control and different (Atkinson, 2003; DeMello, 2000; Featherstone, 2000) and yet, they “simultaneously mark a collective identity and belonging” (Burton, 2001, p. 64). Flynn (2003) asserts that societal notions of gender difference orientate girls from birth to form a collective identity, whereas boys are encouraged to be individualistic. Collectivism offers social acceptance for girls and increased self-esteem (Flynn, 2003). However, research on adolescent female identity development has shown that girls are increasingly developing both intrapersonal and interpersonal social practices (Lytle, Bakken, & Romig, 1997).

Why is contemporary research about girls and their tattoos necessary for understanding how these young women situate themselves within youth cultures? Jeffreys (2000) has argued that the tattoo as a form of body art is a form of self-mutilation, and is a consequence of a male dominated society that requires women and girls to mold their bodies as objects of sexual desire. However, Williamson (1986) believes that escaping conventional gender images through body presentation and style are about “the values placed on actual male and female roles in social and sexual life” (p. 53). The association of tattoos with juvenile deviance has resulted in its undesirable reputation and recognition by authoritarian and media figures (DeMello, 2000; Armstrong & Murphy, 1998). Western stereotypes continue to connect these practices with deviant social behavior and high-risk activities (Roberts, 2002) including substance use and abuse, promiscuity, school and home related problems, truancy, low self-esteem, gangs and violent activity, and suicide (Larzo & Poe, 2006; Stephens,

² Personal experience with daughter and daughter’s friends, and personal experience with students at middle school

2003). Howson (2004) notes the body has become a sight for resistance and difference from adult authority. Although the reasons why adolescents get tattoos are varied (Selekman, 2003), and will be further explored in this thesis, what they represent for girls may not be as diverse. Carroll and Anderson (2002) acknowledge the lack of research on the relationship between girls with tattoos and self-image.

1.2 Educational implications

Present discourses of historic gender categories and their social constructions demonstrate a need to examine the changing images of youth, specifically adolescent female identities in a period in which cultural diversity and cultural globalization is emphasized (Hicks, 2004). The increased use of tattoos, as expressions of individuality for girls (Armstrong & Murphy, 1998), needs to be addressed in school curricula with respect to possible health risks and social stigmatization. Tattoos have potentially infectious and non-infectious health risks and medical implications. For girls, these social practices can pose specific problems that affect the female body during physical growth, pregnancy, nursing, and aging. Risks associated with tattoos include scarring, allergic reactions to pigments or metals, bacterial infections, and increased risk of blood born diseases including hepatitis A, B, and C viruses and human immunodeficiency virus (Stevenson, 2004; Selekman, 2003; Cronin, Jr., 2001; Armstrong, 1999).

Other associated problems involve accessibility to, or interference with diagnostic and therapeutic medical procedures. Stevenson (2004) reports radiology departments may refuse to perform MRIs on patients with tattoos containing ferromagnetic materials as they may cause excessive heating or intense burning. Anesthesiologists are concerned about the effects of dyes and pigment content in women with tattoos over their midline lumbar area (Kuczkowski, 2006 and “will refuse to perform epidurals if they can’t find tattoo-free skin to go through” (Stevenson, p. 10). This can be potentially

problematic for women with lower back tattoos who will not have the option of receiving an epidural during childbirth.

Armstrong and Murphy (1998) believe that a health education program may discourage some adolescents who want a tattoo. Furthermore, the researcher recommends that educational institutions have a responsibility to include any adolescent activity that involves risk-taking, and this includes body art (e.g., tattoos and piercing) in curricula that address health issues. Adolescents who are aware of health complications from tattoos and other forms of body art are often unaware of the seriousness of complications and/or are not concerned with the risks involved (Huxley & Grogan, 2005; Slonim et al., 2005).

Specific concerns about who influences girls and their social practices, and how adolescent identities are perceived are issues that can be addressed through education (Proeche & Schmid, 2004). For example, schools are recognized as sites of conflict in which the identities and desires of young people are influenced or controlled (Posner, 2003; Trend, 1992) through positive encouragement for feminine behavior including dress and demeanor (Hudson, 1984); through curriculum texts specifically sex education (Aapola, 1997); and through promotion of popular advertisement images and fundraising events (Kenway & Bullen, 2001). Day-to-day practices of education and socialization continue to separate girls and boys through the exercising of power that is largely invisible, specifically by “endowing individuals with specific perceptions of their identity and potential, which appear natural to the subjected individual, rather than as the product of diffuse forms of power” (Weedon, 1991, p. 121). Foucault (1978/1990) writes “power is tolerable only on condition that it mask a substantial part of itself. Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms” (p. 86). These influences perceived as subtle or invisible, become natural through everyday occurrences.

Parents and professionals need to examine their own prejudices about body art (Armstrong, 1999) and gendered stereotypes. Perceptions of tattooed youth as deviant and as more likely to engage in high-risk behaviors (Carroll, Riffenburgh, Roberts, & Myhre, 2002; Armstrong, 1995) are socio-educational concerns that can be discussed and debated in the classroom. Research has shown that through identity exploration, students, educators, parents, and other community members develop respectful, empathetic, and understanding attitudes and concurrently, develop awareness for how identities are formed within different environments (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

1.3 Research questions

The problems surrounding female gender discourses demand further investigation in order to understand how girls identify themselves in contemporary society. In this study questions will address the following concerns:

- Why are some girls adopting previously defined male social practices, specifically tattoos, as expressions of individuality and identity?
- How does visual culture, specifically advertisements and magazine photos of models and celebrities influence girls' social practices and their self-perceptions?
- Given the fact that getting tattooed is a known risk-taking activity, what educational information is provided and how are adolescents informed of the various risks and possible complications?

1.4 Research methods

In order to answer the question of why girls are getting tattooed, methodology appropriate to addressing adolescent practices was applied. Methods used in this study were based on semi-structured qualitative interviews intended to encourage narrative responses and additional inquiry, informal conversations, and photographs of girls' tattoos. These methods present opportunities for girls to articulate their perceptions, emotions, and concerns respecting what they consider or perceive

as important in their daily lives. Bettis and Adams (2005b) believe that methods which are receptive to girls' voices, their ways of thinking and living, provide a foundation in which researchers can understand how girls' practices or actions are central to their identity and can, accordingly, "construct a pedagogy that is place and gendered based" (p. 272). Furthermore, the researcher believes that girls' stories about their experiences and practices, their casual conversations, and their visual practices will provide parents, educators, and other professionals with a greater understanding of how girls construct their daily lives and define their gender through their social interactions and their practices. Discourse analysis was used to deconstruct and analyze the content of girls' texts for emerging themes, inconsistencies, and connections within or between participants' narratives.

Considering that this study was about girls and their social practices of tattooing; only girls were invited to participate. Eleven adolescent girls from the Central Okanagan region of British Columbia, referred to throughout this thesis by pseudonyms, participated in this research. Interviews and discussions conducted over a 12 month period were held at local coffee establishments and at girls' homes. Sessions were designed to explore influences, perceptions, and risks related to girls' tattoo practices through their narratives and responses.

As an educator who is interested in examining adolescent girls with tattoos (as a social practice and as a risk-taking activity), narrative inquiry can provide an understanding of how girls construct gender, form identities, project a sense of self (e.g., past, present, and future) within communities and their environment, and how they make decisions that affect their everyday lives. Within feminist research, narrative inquiry (Harrison, 2002) has provided a space in which women's voices and ways of knowing are heard and acknowledged. Girls want to be involved in issues that affect their daily practices through "spaces of dialogue [and] connection and action" in which experiences are reflected, understood, and made meaningful (Hussain et al., 2006, p. 61). Although narratives can

provide a lens for researchers to examine how identities develop in relationship to “social context and the construction of a gendered sense of self during adolescence” (Abrams, 2003, p. 66), Clandinin and Connelly (2000) assert that narrative inquiry requires an awareness of ‘wakefulness’. When narratives are used in research methodology, various ethical ramifications, criticisms, and contextual aspects which can affect the inquiry process must be considered.

Oliver (1999) states that “ethical research requires us to give back to our participants rather than merely take from them” (p. 228). Although young women are encouraged by researchers to tell their stories, their narratives are at risk of being questioned, appropriated, and considered irrelevant (Harris, 2004). Harris (2004) writes “the desire to learn from girls sometimes results in an idealization of their strategies and solutions about injustice, along with an abdication of responsibility on the part of the adults with greater social power to elicit their stories as well as generate changes in their circumstances” (p. 141). Acknowledging differences and their individuality as positioned by cultural heritage, gender, religion, family units, etc. are critical with research that involves girls’ participation. Otherwise, girls may not be interested in telling and having their stories heard or classified into a homogenized category (Harris, 2004). Girls can be willing participants in documenting and retelling their daily lives if the methods of study offer a sense of excitement, interest, and enjoyment (Bach, 2001). Girls’ narratives with respect to their perceptions of tattooed friends, relatives, and popular media figures may reveal new understandings with respect to their engagement in body art practices.

1.5 Significance of Study

Contemporary society has witnessed a significant change in girls’ identities. Girls’ visual culture, its popular influence, and its identification has become in part, symbolized by and appropriated from historically defined Western masculine symbols, specifically tattoos. The last report issued from the Public Health Agency of Canada (2001) indicated adolescent girls were more likely to have tattoos than boys and considered tattoos as “badges of identity” which expressed individuality. Survey results

suggested that tattoos among adolescent girls were increasing and that these girls were more likely to engage in other forms of risk-taking behavior.

Risks presently addressed in Canadian health education relate, in part, to substance abuse and sexual relations. However, adolescents are now experimenting with new forms of risk that question the defining of health compromising activities and how these are addressed through education. Schulenberg, Maggs and Hurrelmann (1997) assert risk activities, although perceived as harmful or detrimental to adolescent health, can be constructive in negotiating independence, in adjusting to new environments or situations, in developing identity transitions, in recognizing and achieving valued goals, and in gaining new friendships.

The increased number of tattoos visually present on Canadian girls warrants further investigation. Atkinson (2002) acknowledges that little is known about the way in which young Canadian women experience and construct tattoos on the body. This thesis aims to substantiate, clarify, and provide significant information about girls' construction of identity through their social and risk-taking practices, and provide a basis upon which these can be pedagogically addressed.

1.6 Organization of the Thesis

This study will include the following eight chapters:

- Chapter 2 will be comprised of a review of related feminist literature and research in which adolescent girls' identities and their perspectives "challenge prevailing images and discourses [and offer] alternative portrayal of daily realities" (Hussain *et al*, 2006, p. 69);
- Chapter 3 will outline the research methodology, methods of study, research location, age and number of female participants, discuss ethical issues, and will include the researcher's reflections as an outsider. For example, despite personal histories that enable inquiries to

become more meaningful, the researcher must invariably be aware that ethical dilemmas can unexpectedly disrupt the researcher participant relationship and the research itself;

- Chapter 4 will present the data from field notes, narratives, interviews, and photographs in table format;
- Chapter 5 will include discussions and emerging themes related to the analysis of girls' tattoo practices with respect to their responses regarding influences, perceptions, and risks;
- Chapter 6 will include narrative stories and tattoo photographs from each participant;
- Chapter 7 will present girls' responses to advertisements that use tattoos on young women to promote and sell products; and
- Chapter 8 will present concluding remarks, study limitations, and designs for future research.

For example, qualitative research about girls' identities can provide a foundation for theoretical interpretations and constructs. The only way to build knowledge is by engaging in girls' knowledge: girls' understanding of their experiences and their sense of place within the world (Hussain et al., 2006).

CHAPTER II: Girls and the perceived female gender in the 21st century

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine literature reflecting the changing landscape of femininity. Young feminist principles are used to identify how girls' identities are performed, constructed, rewritten, and understood. Femininity is a highly contested and contradictory construct among girls who have grown up in an era which has encouraged them to challenge preexisting patriarchal norms and occupy spaces or adopt practices considered masculine (Bettis & Adams, 2005a). Girls have adopted an 'if guys can do it so can girls' attitude with respect to everyday practices including in part, career choices, athletics, rock music, and body presentation. In spite of this, girls remain caught within and subjected to what most feminists would claim are political residues of historical gendered binaries rooted in Western ideologies that are often reflected through popular imagery or media. Although definitions of 'female gender' have shifted, the social and/or cultural expectations, stereotypes, and norms that judge girls primarily on appearance and behavior still linger. Moreover, popular images of young feminism have positioned girls as "cultural symbols of risk, danger and change" (Harris, 2001, p. 11).

Within this chapter, I present an overview of feminisms that have emerged within the last two decades and focus on how girls are situated within these definitions. The following section, Girls and feminism discusses the emergence of young women as the new feminist activist. "Girls and the gendered body" considers the female body and the 'performance' of femininity with respect to historic and patriarchal notions and binaries that present girls and women as either object or subject. "Tattoos and feminism" examines girls and women's tattoo practices as political practices that are a result of, or a resistance to, pre-existing norms and male dominance with respect to the female body. "Girls, feminism, and the popular" presents feminist views related to the popular media, focusing

primarily on advertisements and how these images target girls' perceptions of femininity and body image.

2.2 Girls and feminism

Using feminist perspectives to understand girls' identities in the 21st century has limitations. As a political and social movement and as a field of theoretical inquiry (McDowell, 2007; McLaughlin, 2003) feminisms were radically influential in the recognition of women's individuality, equality, and aspirations from the late 19th century onward, further initiating proactive shifts with how gender and the female body, sexuality, age, race, and so forth were/are perceived. Feminism, Pollock (1996) states, is "a commitment to the full appreciation of what women inscribe, articulate, voice and image in cultural forms: interventions in the fields of meaning and identity from the place called 'woman' or the 'feminine' (p. xv). Sadly girls were not included in the political battles or scholarly interests of second wave feminists of the 1960s and 1970s as they signified immaturity, rather than empowerment (Pomerantz, Currie, & Kelly, 2004; Leonard, 1997) and were later considered either too egocentric or disturbed to express any feminist opinions (Harris, 2001). As well, Driscoll (2002) notes that feminism's disinterest with girls was related to the assumption that it was the experiences of women and not of girls that characterized feminist politics. It is to this extent that some scholars believe girls have disassociated themselves from feminist ideologies (Pomerantz, Currie, & Kelly, 2004). This is not surprising when considering Butler's (1997) statement that "feminist theory has sought to bring female specificity into visibility and to rewrite the history of culture in terms which acknowledge the presences, the influence, and the oppression of women. Yet, in this effort to combat the invisibility of women as a category feminists run the risk of rendering visible a category which may or may not be representative of the concrete lives of women" (p. 407). Consequently feminist scholarship can view women's issues as not necessarily relevant to the daily social and cultural lives, practices, and experiences of adolescent girls (Hussain et al., 2006; Bettis & Adams, 2005a; Pomerantz, Currie & Kelly, 2004). Girls have had few opportunities to actively participate in research concerning their

lived experiences (Hussain et al., 2006) rendering them silent, invisible, and rendering their stories and interests as trivial.

In the last two decades, new feminisms have emerged in which girls and young women are presenting themselves as powerful, in control, and as self-assured females who are as well, politically voiced and globally diverse in their principles and awareness of issues which affect girls and women throughout the world. These young feminists are difficult to define (Steenbergen, 2001). Branded as postfeminists through popular discourse or as third wave feminists by many journalists and writers who dismissed and attacked feminism in the 80s and 90s, these girls and young women were perceived as signifying an end to feminism and were associated with weakening the feminist movement (Chesney-Lind & Eliason, 2006; Jervis, 2006; Hamilton, 2005). Third wave feminists should not be confused with postfeminists who have antifeminist sentiments, reject second wave concepts, and disassociate themselves from earlier feminist theory and practices (Gillis, Howie, & Munford, 2004; Sanders, 2004). Furthermore, Hall and Rodriguez (2003) position postfeminism as a vague term and as a myth popularized and elevated through media representation. Whereas third wave feminism, although loosely defined, has a diverse membership of multiple identities and is directly connected through and expanded from second wave foundations (Hollows & Moseley, 2006; Aronson, 2003; Bulbeck, 2001; Harris, 2001; Baumgardner & Richards, 2000). Third wave “refers *both* to a feminist generation *and* to emerging forms of feminist activism” (Heywood & Drake, 2004, p. 17).

The term ‘third wave’ is troublesome for some feminists. Jervis (2006) believes the ‘wave’ metaphor is no longer intellectually effective:

Discussions of the waves are only nominally about demographics. The metaphor wraps up differences in age, ideology, tactics, and style and pretends that distinguishing among these factors is unimportant. Even the most nuanced

discussions of Third Wavers tend to cast them ... as sex-obsessed young things with a penchant for lip gloss and a disregard for recent history, or sophisticated politicians who have moved past the dated concerns of their predecessors (p. 14).

However Baumgardner and Richards (2000) clarify third wave as a 'disparate movement' that has not fully achieved the status of an active organization and as a result often becomes oppositional and confused in its political debates between old-school feminists and new-girl feminists "half pierced and tattooed" (p. 139). Distinctive and assertive practices of new feminisms are defining characteristics of third and second wave feminists. When feminism is confined to a generation its transgressive potential is limited, and negates third wave feminism and its significance as a movement that is fluid, diverse, and historically interconnected (Gillis, Howie, & Munford, 2004; Aikau, Erickson, & Moore, 2003).

Debates over new feminisms are, as Harris (2001) states framed in discourse between third wave feminists and two other young feminist groups, the power feminists and the 'Do-It-Yourselfers' (DIY/girpower). Power feminism strongly advocates women's individual strengths through individual empowerment and single-issue groups. DIY's express their convictions through antihierarchal girl-run political/cultural spaces and alternative media such as zines, weblogs, and comic art (Harris, 2004). All three groups situate girls as agents of power and not as victims or as objects of men's cultural representation. Additionally they acknowledge power as a platform for transformation and the rewriting of histories that challenge or question patriarchal dominance (Grosz, 2000). In this respect, agency offers girls and women power by accepting female identities as in process of always becoming (Butler, 1999).

Additionally, young feminists have reclaimed power through their re-popularization and redefinition of 'girl' (Heywood & Drake, 2004; Harris, 2001; Baumgardner & Richards, 2000); a word considered demeaning to female identity in second wave ideology. Instead, they have adopted such terms as girl

culture, grrrlpower, girlie, girl movement, and ‘it’s a girl thang’ to describe who they are and what they represent. Younger feminists and Do-It-Yourselfers are aggressively committed to a view of the personal as being political (Driscoll, 1999). These girls represent the era of new feminisms and their ‘do-it-yourself style’ articulated through a multitude of exciting directions in which feminisms are diversely represented and globally interconnected (Pomerantz, Curries & Deirdre, 2004; Harris, 2001; Driscoll, 1999).

Although there are considerable debates over the defining and structuring of emerging feminisms and third-wave feminism, traditional and postmodern feminists are adamant about their objectives of asserting the right to control their own bodies and defending their right for equality, fairness, and justice. Girls’ feminist practices can be described as an expression of everyday actions and reactions, and their resolutions to unfair situations (Grossman & Peter-Axtell, 2008). When considering what feminism may mean for girls, Driscoll (1999, 2004) notes that girls, as symbols of social change, have always had a strong investment in the histories of women’s resistance through their acts of self-assertion and pleasure which have and continue to disrupt the norms of ‘proper’ social and physical behaviors.

2.3 Girls and the gendered body

Throughout childhood and adolescence girls receive and are taught contradictory messages about their bodies and how to perform femininity or be feminine. Driscoll (2002) states that “the difficulties with which girls negotiate adolescence have mostly been interpreted as the struggle for proper femininity, or the struggle to retain a sense of self in the face of expected femininity” (p. 58). Although individuality, independence, self-assertion and determination are considered desirable qualities for girls, they continue to be homogenized into adult categories of what are considered appropriate or inappropriate behaviors (Bettis & Adams, 2005a; Harris, 2004; Driscoll, 2002).

Identity is a historical production that articulates “signifying practices, subjective identities and political positions” in which connections, challenges, resistance or struggle, victories and progression push people in specific directions simultaneously limiting other possibilities (Grossberg, 1989, p. 92). Johnson (1993) maintains that historical positioning is necessary in addressing questions related to the construction of female subjectivities. How women and the female body are perceived is embodied within historical beliefs, subjective and material practices, relationships within social groupings and classes, lived experiences and cultural conditions of the era. Driscoll (2002) writes:

Feminine adolescence as a popular and theoretical category and feminism as a public movement are contemporary in their development and their cultural visibility, and they were and still are bound together in a critical relation to patriarchal models of identity production. The significance of feminine adolescence for feminist subjectivity is partly evident in this concurrent emergence from a range of public discourses on women’s development – on what a modern girl might become (p. 126).

Frost (2001) and other feminist scholars believe girls are continuously subjected to ‘cultural baggage’ based upon the concept that women are sexual and aesthetic objects of desire. Historic notions in popular imagery continue to maintain discourses connected to the representation of girls and women in the twenty-first century.

Discourse is clarified as an expression and action of language, objects and practices within a particular knowledge that shapes how societies function and how their everyday practices are understood (Rose, 2001; Hauser, 1999). Girls are increasingly associating themselves with masculine defined traits creating discourse in how society distinguishes and accepts gendered behaviors. According to Adams (2005), the adoption of masculine practices is desirable and is socially acceptable as long as girls remain feminine. Adams’ (2005) research on cheerleader girls, fighter girls, and ‘girl power’ found that historically constructed male practices of assertiveness, physical strength, and athleticism was acceptable only if social practices were not overtly masculine. Although cheerleaders were expected to develop muscular strength and perform aggressively, their actions were

considered non-threatening, and were perceived by both adults and peers as being more feminine and popular than fighter girls. Physical aggression in girls, assert Brown and Tappan (2008), is a gendered performance that embraces ‘girl power’. It is to this extent that some feminist scholars believe girls’ gendered performance render their bodies as subject rather than object (Brown & Tappan, 2008; Adams, 2005). However, Weedon (1991) argues that the body rendered subject through economic, social, or political practices is a constant site of conflict and struggle over power. Day-to-day practices of resistance and conformity separate girls and boys through the exercising of power that is largely invisible, by “endowing individuals with specific perceptions of their identity and potential, which appear natural to the subjected individual, rather than as the product of diffuse forms of power” (Weedon, 1991, p. 121). Foucault (1978/1990) writes, “Power is tolerable only on condition that it mask a substantial part of itself. Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms” (p. 86). For example, Bettis and Adams (2005a) argue that schools continually control girls’ bodies through subtle requirements of how femininity and sexuality should be enacted. Popular visual imagery such as advertisements, music videos, and television programs regularly employ power as well, to exploit girls and women in its presentation of subject/object binaries.

Hauser’s (1999) premise that discourse changes with the interaction of past and present histories and changes with the aspects of the when, where, and how of social conditions is further confirmed by society’s acceptance of girls and women in traditional masculine dominated activities and spaces. Although girls and women play soccer, report sports related news, engage in active Armed Forces duty, and participate in other previously stated masculine practices, they are however, expected to follow the rules of patriarchy within these spaces and expected to maintain femininity outside these spaces (Lemish, 2003). Media images of athletic women construct women or girls’ bodies as sexual by focusing on those females whose bodies reflect grace and beauty (Lorber & Martin, 2001; Lenskyj, 1993) further accentuating the notion of attractiveness as a non-negotiated marker of

feminine physique (Bettis & Adams, 2005a) disregarding the female body as one of physical strength. Bettis and Adams (2005a) write ‘normative femininity is in a liminal state with the old markers of normative girlhood such as prettiness alongside the new markers of assertiveness and independence (p. 10).

Contrary to the presentation of ‘proper’ femininity is the rendering of girls as victim or as vulnerable, thus depicting them in need of moral and practical intervention, control and restraint (Woodward, 2008; Harris, 2004). As such, the female deviant in any mannerism sustains adverse social reactions and consequences (Abrams, 2003; Flynn, 2003). For example, Currie (1999) discusses the experiences of a 13-year-old female skateboarder who is rejected by her peers for having an identity outside the Western traditional bounds of femininity. Girl skateboarders challenge traditional femininity through their embodiment of physical practices and activities that incorporate strength, power, pain, risk, and injury (Pomerantz et al; 2004). Considered as ‘tomboyish’ tendencies such as: having athletic abilities; favoring outdoor masculine activities and rough play; engaging in masculine behaviors including aggression and risk-taking practices; and being independent and assertive; these behaviors during female adolescence are frequently viewed as unacceptable, deviant, immature, and vulgar (Griffin, 2008; Hall, 2008; Abrams, 2003; Hogan & Hudson, 1998). Yet other research has revealed that parents are more tolerant of these alleged deviant behaviors in pre-adolescent girls (Sandnabba & Ahlberg, 1999) leading to the conclusion that the onset of menarche can mark prescribed patriarchal expectations of femininity, with the expectation that pre-adolescent freedoms and masculine activities will be abandoned (Halberstam, 1998).

Complexities of sexuality and identity constructions continue to question how the female body or the gendered body is recognized (Butler, 1999a, b). Butler (1999a, b) considers gender and the classification of women as having a common identity problematic, in that different historical contexts

have defined identities based on race, ethnicity, class, sex, and geographical locations thus signifying gender as a project of corporeal styles, which condemn those who do not embody a defined norm. Butler (1999b) writes gender “is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts” (p. 421) and argues that gender perpetuates an illusion of intentionally constructed and performative identities which are “neither true or false” (1999a, p. 174). However, Bordo (2003) describes Butler’s postmodern approach as a playful destabilization of gender that is too abstract to situate within a cultural context. Instead, she believes feminist politics should focus on how gender is positioned by “what the culture continually presents to them as their individual choices” (Bordo, 2003, p. 300). This concept is one that is emphasized within popular culture.

Although Bordo’s political beliefs question the multifaceted approach to gender, other feminists, are considerate of Butler’s gender concepts. Webster (2000) states gendered identities are natural expressions of the body and are in a state of always transforming. In this aspect, the contemporary girl can no longer be defined by age or behavior but must be recognized “as a constantly shifting, discursively constituted sign that comes to mean and represent many things besides young female” (Eisenhauer, 2004, p. 87). As well, Ussher (1997) asserts that performance is a masquerade in which gender is negotiated through symbolic representations of how young women create and reflect the conditions in which they live by acting out the part of what they perceive ideal femininity should be. How girls situate themselves within these gendered norms and relations has changed. Many North American girls have now grown up with feminism telling them that they can do anything and that they are on ‘equal footing’ with boys (Fingerson, 2006).

Although feminist practices have been successful in numerous aspects, old notions associated with femininity, the female body, and girls or women continue. Practices or behaviors considered feminine

are frequently considered less important than those regarded as masculine (McDowell, 1999). Girls can do all the activities considered masculine, but not “while wearing nail polish, pink uniforms, or crying” (Baumgardner & Richards, 2004, p. 60). Perceptions of the female body as fragile and perceptions of women as emotional, narcissistic beings were patriarchal constructions of inferiority³. According to Brownmillar (1984); the experience of femininity was/is built upon “a recognition of powerlessness” (p. 19). Conversely, young women and girls assert the right to ‘have it all’ and the right to ‘choose’ how they enact femininity. Girls’ claim that makeup, hairstyles, and clothing are a means in which they exercise control and experience self-confidence (Wadsworth, 2004; Barns, 2001) and that innocence, immaturity, passiveness, or sweetness previously associated with fashion and colour such as wearing pink (Gleeson & Frith, 2004; Entwistle, 2000) is nonsense. In this respect, femininity becomes an expression of what Bartky (1990) considers a certain “style of the flesh” (p. 78), “a spectacle that women are required to participate in” (p. 73). Whelchan (2004) asserts that when femininity becomes an obligation, the female as a political self is no longer a choice but a necessity. Hence, the body is in a continuous struggle “over the shape of power” (Bordo, 1999, p. 248).

³ Psychologist and educator Stanley Hall (1904) described women as frivolous and narcissistic. A women dressed:

for adornment rather than use. In savage and civilized life, her body is more mutilated and she is more primitive. Her hair is long; she is more prone to wear ornaments which show wealth rather than to dress solely for protection or concealment; is still fond of feathers, skin, and fur, flowing garments and partial exposure of person, so that she betrays rank and wealth more often than men. She pinches her waist and feet; uses pins, powders, and perfumes, neck ornaments, beads, overshoes, and sometimes shoes that are not rights and lefts; is more prone to fashion....

Hall, S. (1904). *Adolescence: Its Psychology and its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education*. (Vol. 2). (Adolescent Girls and Their Education, Chap. XVII). Internet resource by C. Green (2000) Toronto: York University. Retrieved October 22, 2005, from <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Hall/Adoescence/chap17.htm>

2.4 Tattoos and feminism

The dramatic increase in the masculine practice of tattooing among girls and women, commonly referenced as a ‘tattoo renaissance’ (Frost, 2003; DeMello, 2000, Rubin, 1988), is an area of interest to feminists and other researchers. These practices are seen as accentuating the duality and struggles of the female as a political self and as an agent of societal or cultural progression (Hawkes, Senn & Thorn, 2004; Atkinson, 2002; Mifflin, 1997). In this respect, girls and women’s tattoos can be perceived as diverse practices of conformity, resistance, reclamation, and empowerment, and/or as contemporary markers of femininity, sexuality, and desire.

Some feminists describe tattoos as a reclaiming of power and ownership over their own bodies and lives (Pitts, 2003, 1998). Kosut (2000) and Forbus (1994) found that a majority of female participants acknowledged their tattoos as a means of redefining and reclaiming their femininity and sexuality. Girls and young women claim that tattooed bodies are projects of girl power, engulfed in meanings associated with empowerment, identity exploration, and the personal (Atkinson, 2002). Fisher (2002) refers to women’s tattoo practices as an “equalizing between the sexes” (p. 100); a practice that disintegrates the boundaries of femininity and masculinity and one that disengages from patriarchal notions of ideal feminine beauty. This concept equates with Butler’s postmodern approach that gender is never fixed, but is an open door to new possibilities. However, Braunberger (2000) claims that through acts of “bodily ownership, tattooed women risk further reinscription” (p. 20) by others who are uneasy with and consider the tattooed female body as a nonconforming and repulsive disfigurement (Entwistle, 2000; Featherstone, 2000).

Jeffreys (2000) presents an alternative feminist perspective with respect to female tattooing; one she considers “a result of, rather than resistance to, the occupation of a despised social status under male domination” (p. 410). She states that practices of body modification such as tattooing and piercing are

a recent form of male domination in which women's or girls' bodies are modified, minimized, and controlled in the interests of men, and as well depicts what Fisher (2002) states is a reappropriation of the body in groups that are despised. Such groups exposed to involuntary or voluntary tattooing have included: slaves, prisoners, the military, the working class, Jewish prisoners of war, aboriginals First Nations and American Indians, girls, women, lesbians, homosexual men, and children or other adults who have suffered sexual and physical abuse, violence, or humiliation (Benson, 2000; Jeffreys, 2000). Fisher (2002) refers to this type of patriarchy as an infection of the state. In this respect tattooing becomes an "incarnation of self-loathing" (Maccormack, 2006, p. 66), a form of self-mutilation (Jeffreys, 2000), and a "defense against the femaleness of the body" (Bordo, 2003, p. 8). The process of cutting or piercing, Benson (2000) notes is a practice that both mimics and expunges previous abuse. Carroll and Anderson (2002) in their study of adolescent girls with body art found that tattoos and piercing were strong indicators of anger and negative feelings toward the body. Postmodern scholarship, Jeffreys (2000) asserts, is at fault for legitimizing "the projects of the mutilators" (p. 426) and for culturally sanctioning practices that can have possible health consequences. Jeffrey's perspective, according to Riley (2002) denies women agency and authenticity to women's experiences, and relegates power "as a top-down mechanism of patriarchy" (p. 544). However, she asserts it can be effective in research that examines girls and women's relationships with their bodies holistically.

Practices of self-cutting, including tattooing and body piercing, were classified in 1960s and 1970s psychiatric studies as self-mutilation and labeled as an illness or as a deviant behavior that threatened the social norm (Brickman, 2004; Bordo, 2003; Riley, 2002; Riessman, 1992). Research from the 1990s (Hewitt, 1997; Favazza, 1996) continues to perpetuate this stigma of psychological illness associated with female body art or modification. Riley (2002) writes:

The western construction of body art, drawn from our imperialist and Christian cultural inheritance (associating body art with 'primitives', slaves and the defacement of God), is a construction reproduced in psychological research which has associated body art with pathology, health risks, sexual deviancy and criminality (p. 542).

Female pathology reveals itself as a social formation in which resistance and rebellion are challenged, counteracted, and suppressed into the service of preserving domination, established order and norms, and perceived inferiority (Abrams, 2003; Bordo, 2003; St. Pierre, 2000). Freedom becomes simultaneously limited through new venues of dominance and social control in which the discipline of power as a discourse regulates bodies through surveillance and self-surveillance (Foucault, 1978/1990). It is to this extent that the 'pathologized' female body becomes categorized in popular and scientific discourses as 'other': deviant, deceitful, threatening, promiscuous, irrational, etc. (Brickman, 2004; Bordo, 2003). Bordo (2003) describes girls' dramatic increase in modifying their bodies or their body image as a 'cultural backlash' or resistance against societal and popular attempts to portray, reorganize, and redefine male/female gender roles.

Positions which focus on body art as a negative activity of resistance, rebelliousness, deviance, and oppression can be perceived as disregarding inherent meanings such as desire and personal choice as reasons for getting tattoos (Riley, 2002; Van Lenning, 2002). Houghton, Durkin, Parry, Turbett and Odgers (1996) found that the female participants in their study who obtained tattoos in late adolescence were motivated by a desire to improve their appearance. Others have written that tattoos on girls were the product of the desire to project a certain image onto others (Armstrong & McConnell, 1994) or to undermine comfortable expectations about gendered binaries (Van Lemming, 2002) such as redirecting the male gaze to the tattoo instead of the female body.

Atkinson (2002) noted in his study of women with tattoos that these practices were acts of both desire and dissent in the engagement of a male-dominated activity. Women were cognizant of gendered

expectations in the size and placement of their tattoos and they tattooed “their bodies in the conscious effort of reproducing or negotiating established constructions of femininity” (Atkinson, 2002, p. 232). Smaller and non-visible tattoos such as flowers or butterflies were considered more feminine than the larger visible tattoos which outwardly stereotyped and labeled women as aggressive and deviant (Hawkes, Senn, & Thorn, 2004, Atkinson, 2002), and/or unfeminine (Maccormack, 2006). Deviance is also expressed through image selection and in the degree to which women cover their bodies with tattoos (Schildkrout, 2004). Similar findings correlating awareness of gender-based stereotypes with femininity were reported by Abrams (2003) with respect to high school girls and their perceptions and experiences of themselves as young women. Abrams found that girls were expected to follow strict norms of femininity with respect to body image and those who resisted were often stereotyped negatively or perceived as unfeminine or deviant. As a result, girls perceived their social and cultural positions as subordinate and secondary. Bordo writes, “the body is not only a ‘text’ of culture...” it is a “practical, direct locus of social control” (p.165).

Despite the controversial prevalence of tattoos, there are those who argue that this practice will never in its entirety, be accepted into the mainstream (Bell, 1999) since some girls and women continue to be tattooed in places, which are easily hidden from family, friends, religious affiliations, work environments, and social organizations. However, girls and women who get tattoos, whether it is only one or several, do agree, “if guys can do it so can we”. In summation, Mifflin (1997) writes:

Tattoos tell stories about the female experience and trigger reactions that underscore cultural assumptions about women (p. i).

...tattoos serve as touchstones for [girls and] women’s changing roles and evolving concerns...and as passkeys to the psych of [girls and] women who are rewriting accepted notions of beauty and self-expression (p. vi).

These ideas will be further explored in this dissertation.

2.5 Girls, feminism, and the popular

Feminist cultural studies have examined girls' consumption in relation to how femininity is constructed. Products and their consumption are recognized as key sites for how people as active participants make the popular meaningful (Harrington & Bielby, 2001). Although there is some debate with how the popular should be defined, Harrington and Bielby (2001) acknowledge that it is often comprised of social practices consumed in everyday life. Frost (2001) writes that the desires of girls and their consumption "are not just about wanting to own but also [about] wanting to become" (p. 196). The desire of 'wanting to become' reflects the imagined self-image of girls and their imagined connection with other girls as "constructed through observation of [their] own and other girls' bodies" (Driscoll, 2002, p. 239). The popular exemplifies the self-production of girls through traditional norms of beauty that emphasizes fashion, makeup, and body appearance as desirable. Harris (2003) argues that as girls' desires become more commercial and commodified, they become a medium of discipline and control rather than liberation.

Feminist theory has considered the popular as a site for resistance and struggle (Brooks, 1997). Postmodern feminists "reject the notion that there is an 'essential', proper, ideal body" and consider the body "as always open to history and culture, and always negotiable and changing" (Pitts, 2003, p. 28). In Western societies, the formation of girls' identities "as a silenced or alienated experience" (Abrams, 2003, p. 71), and one rendered as invisible (Frost, 2001) has now become an arena in which identities become meaningful and valued through consumer products, market commodities, and visual image commodification (Frost, 2003). Kacen (2000) notes that people create a sense of self by trying to become whom they desire through their consumption of cultural products and ideas. Turner (2000) states, "tattoos have become a regular aspect of consumer culture, where they add cultural capital to the body's surface" (p. 40). Women as consumers of masculine symbols or ideas associated with male identities are what Miles (2002) considers as the right or "freedom to consume in the same ways as

your peers” (p. 184) and does not signify a loss of femininity but is an exertion of it. However, consumption as an infliction of power objectifies the female body in its ascribed invisibility within the popular. Consumer-based identifications possibly retain and promote insecurities in girls (Martin, 1996) and can lead to what Frost (2003) infers as ‘identity damage’ in adolescence.

The impact history has had on girls and women and the cultivation of consumption is significant. History continues to reenact gender and define desirable traits in advertisements and other aspects of girls’ visual culture. Discourse in femininity, according to Hudson (1984), is maintained through dichotomized constructs of gender stereotypes and attitudes. For example, there are relatively few advertisements that portray female fashion models with tattoos and those that do often appear airbrushed or painted or they are indiscreetly presented (Figure 4; Figure 5; Figure 6).

Advertisements continue to display young women and girls as unmarked suggesting continued stereotyped attitudes around the female body and their skin marking (Holliday, 2008; Blood, 2005; Bordo, 2003; Frost, 2003; Barker & Barker, 2002). However, girls and women with body art are establishing a presence in magazine advertisements and as a result are questioning the boundaries associated with traditional stereotypes (Figure 7). Unfortunately positive images of the female body and/or practices are destabilized by the popular presentation of tattooed girls and women as deviant and risqué in various media outlets such as websites and tattoo magazines (Pitts, 2004) (Figure 8, Figure 9). Furthermore, advertisements can manipulate and represent a form of domination by encouraging risqué activities and risk-taking practices and by promoting these activities as desirable or by offering desirable incentives (Figure 10, Figure 11). Advertisements in the 1970s and 1980s displayed smoking as a sexually desirable, socially assertive, and ‘classy’ activity for women significantly increasing their risk of smoking-related diseases. The glamorized perception that smoking characterizes the female as sexually desirable, socially assertive, and ‘classy’ continues to

affect girls' social practices (Figure 12). The aftereffects of advertisements that promote other risk-taking activities or glorify unhealthy indulgences cannot be predicted.

Frost (2001) asserts, "girls clearly understand that to become a woman means developing the ability to construct a visual and strictly governed identity" (p. 75). Girls' identities are interlaced with consumption; girls are influenced by the popular and their visual culture and they adopt practices that express themselves symbolically (Frost, 2001). Advertisements in magazines, the magazines themselves, cinematography, and television have a history of targeting girls and young women through the creative manipulation of images in which implied meanings become fantasized or presented as "truths". Currie (1999) notes that although girls construct their own meanings from what they visualize and read in magazines, readers of teen magazines will often argue that these publications provide them with useful advice and information on how to be a girl. Unfortunately, this information is often based on historic notions of women as either the seductress: exotic, evil, and promiscuous; or as the innocent: subservient, pure, and unblemished (Holliday, 2008).

The power within visual media lies in its ability to "destabilize the original notion of use or meaning of goods and attach to them new images and signs which summon up a whole range of associated feelings and desires" (Featherstone, 1991, p. 114). Popularity of girls and women's magazines is reflected by the contradictory messages and the female role contained within (Howson, 2004). Haug (1987) states that female consumers become subservient to advertisements in that they perceive a desired or fantasized appearance of social self-identity or one of frustration, what Haug terms 'aesthetic subjugation'. For example, advertisements of slim, attractive women may create uncomfortable relationships for girls with their bodies, reduce their body satisfaction and self-esteem (Bordo, 2003; Grogan, 1999). Frost (2001) states that the process of 'doing looks' becomes frustrating when girls can not achieve the desired images of women presented in advertisements. In

this respect, girls become defined by a consumption that is directly linked to body image and self-esteem and as “objects for consumption” (Carter, 1983, p. 186), girls are the products of their own desires or disappointments.

Desirable traits according to Leiss, Kline, and Jhally (1986) are presented as images that culturally sanction or delegate behaviors and attitudes deemed appropriate in society. Advertisements can reveal values and beliefs about the society in which we live and about our own psychological makeup (Cook, 1992). For example, girls’ magazines are filled with advertisements that promote products alleged to beautifully the skin, to enhance physical appearance, and to create desirability. Although, socially accepted behaviors and gender roles have changed in recent years, advertising continues to create discourse by presenting images based on historic perceptions of gender.

As well, the consumption of objects and practices often project attitudes or values about the people who use them and become sites in which social struggles, agency, and identities are performed or imagined and accepted or rejected. Identity performance can be viewed as a masquerade in which gender is negotiated through symbolic representations of how girls create and reflect the conditions in which they live by acting out what they perceive as desired feminine behavior (Ussher, 1997). Body adornment (clothing, cosmetics, tattoos, piercing, hair colorants, etc.) is considered one means by which identities are expressed and made social (Entwistle, 2000). According to Haug (1987) the consumption of objects and practices induce an imagination of identity in which gratification is experienced and everyday culture is influenced. In this respect, culture becomes an aspect of relationships in which people “arrange their activities in a meaningful and sensually enjoyable way” (Haug, 1987, p. 24). However, culture is “a site of perpetual struggle and political possibilities” (Trend, 1992, p. 17) of beliefs, attitudes, and values in which consumption expresses and constructs identities and produces feelings of either satisfaction or discontent.

Entwistle (2000) states that fashion, including body adornment or marking “embraces not only the desire to imitate others and to express commonality, but to also express individuality” (p. 114). This continues to create discourses in defined binary roles, specifically gendered stereotyped identities. Social change and progress, as noted by Fiske (1990) develops through imitation and desire. Traditional conceptions of femininity, the female body and girlhood that are challenged or disrupted in some manner reinforces a dichotomized view of gender and nourishes discourse through the processes of social classification of the gendered body (Howson, 2004). Butler (1999a) notes, that gender as a shifting contextual phenomenon is “inscribed on the surface of bodies” (p. 174) and, over time performs and produces the appearance of being. In this respect new discourses appear as old symbols are appropriated, rebuilt, deconstructed, and recreated, and are used with the intent of redefining their original meanings. The disintegration of boundaries that define masculinity and femininity suggest that gendered categories are becoming blurred by consumption experiences (Firat, 1994).

Girls who are disciplined and pressured by societal definitions of how the ideal feminine body should be constructed (Bartky, 2003; Pipher, 1994) have learned rules for femininity “directly through bodily discourse” (Bordo, 1992, p. 17) and through, in part, by contextual images in popular media that influence body appearance, body desire, and social behavior. The discursive nature of adolescent magazines equally acknowledged by Phoenix (1997) allows young women the space to reflect upon binary aspects of the gendered female. Although there are differing perceptions amongst feminist researchers as to how girls perceive magazine content, the general belief is that this popular outlet continues to display patriarchal notions of the ideal feminine body as pure and innocent, and as a desirable object (Driscoll, 2002; Ussher, 1997).

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has critically discussed issues related to girls' adoption of and active participation in previous male dominated practices and/or spaces as a means of redefining their femininity, reclaiming power, and expressing identity and the personal. Girls have grown up in an era of increased gender equality in which the emergence of new feminisms have created opportunities for girls to politically voice their principles with respect to everyday experiences. Girls believe they have the freedom to choose how they enact femininity, they believe in male/female equality, and they challenge authoritarian voices that target their assertiveness and independence.

Body presentation is considered fundamental to the negotiation of femininity and to feminist activism. Reischer and Koo (2004) argue that "the body is a prime site for the contestation of social and individual power; it is the locus of both oppression and empowerment, simultaneously" (p. 314). Girls' enactment of femininity in which previous dominant male practices are re-appropriated and made feminine such as the tattoo, is still confounded by Western historic and patriarchal notions that regard the female body as an object of desire, unmarked and pure. In this respect, the tattoo can be perceived as "a destructive decoration that flouts the possibility of untainted flesh" (Braunberger, 2000, p. 6). Some scholars believe that girls' tattoos are self-destructive and deviant behaviors that indicate anger and negative attitudes which consequently expose them to potential health risks and female exploitation (Carroll & Anderson, 2002; Jeffreys, 2000). Other authors assert that girls' body modifications are an expression of rebelliousness or resistance that counter cultural norms and oppose visual images that supposedly define gender roles (Bordo, 2003) and/or are an articulation of personal choice and desire (Riley, 2002; Van Lemming, 2002).

Girls' visual culture and the popular are targeted sites for resistance and for consumption in defining their individuality and/or identification. Girls identify with popular media figures including actors,

actresses, and musicians whom they admire and consider ‘cool’ and stylish (Ivaldi & O’Neill, 2008) and they acknowledge their identification through appropriating or mimicking the fashions and appearances of these popular idols. Tattoos, body piercing, makeup, fashion accessories, clothing and hair styles are practices in which girls consume and as well experience self-confidence and self-control. However, considering that tattoos have been associated with deviant subculture, some research has indicated deviance and delinquent behaviors are associated with low self-esteem (Nathanson, Paulhus & Williams, 2006).

Advertisement images in popular magazines continue to portray binaries of girls and young women. In recent years fashion and other magazines have recognized a need to acknowledge increased body art consumption as a significant aspect of some young women’s individuality. Consequently, tattoos have become increasingly visible in advertisements and on fashion model magazine spreads aimed at attracting the young female consumer. Although some advertisements portray tattoos in a positive manner, others continue associating body art with deviant subculture. Feminist researchers have differing views as to how girls perceive magazine content including images. To date there is no known research available respecting girls’ perceptions on advertisements or photo spreads that use models with tattoos. By listening to and respecting the voices of girls, researchers will achieve a greater understanding of how girls experience, perceive, and perform gender through their everyday practices within the popular and visual culture.



Figure 4: Models with airbrushed or computerized images of tattoos
(VANITY FAIR: *The Style Issue*)



Figure 5: Model with indiscrete wrist tattoo
(*Cosmopolitan*)



Figure 6: Model with facial make-up drawing
(ELLE CANADA)



Figure 7: Soloist/model Ndidi Onukwulu (detail)
(Ikiriko, 2005)

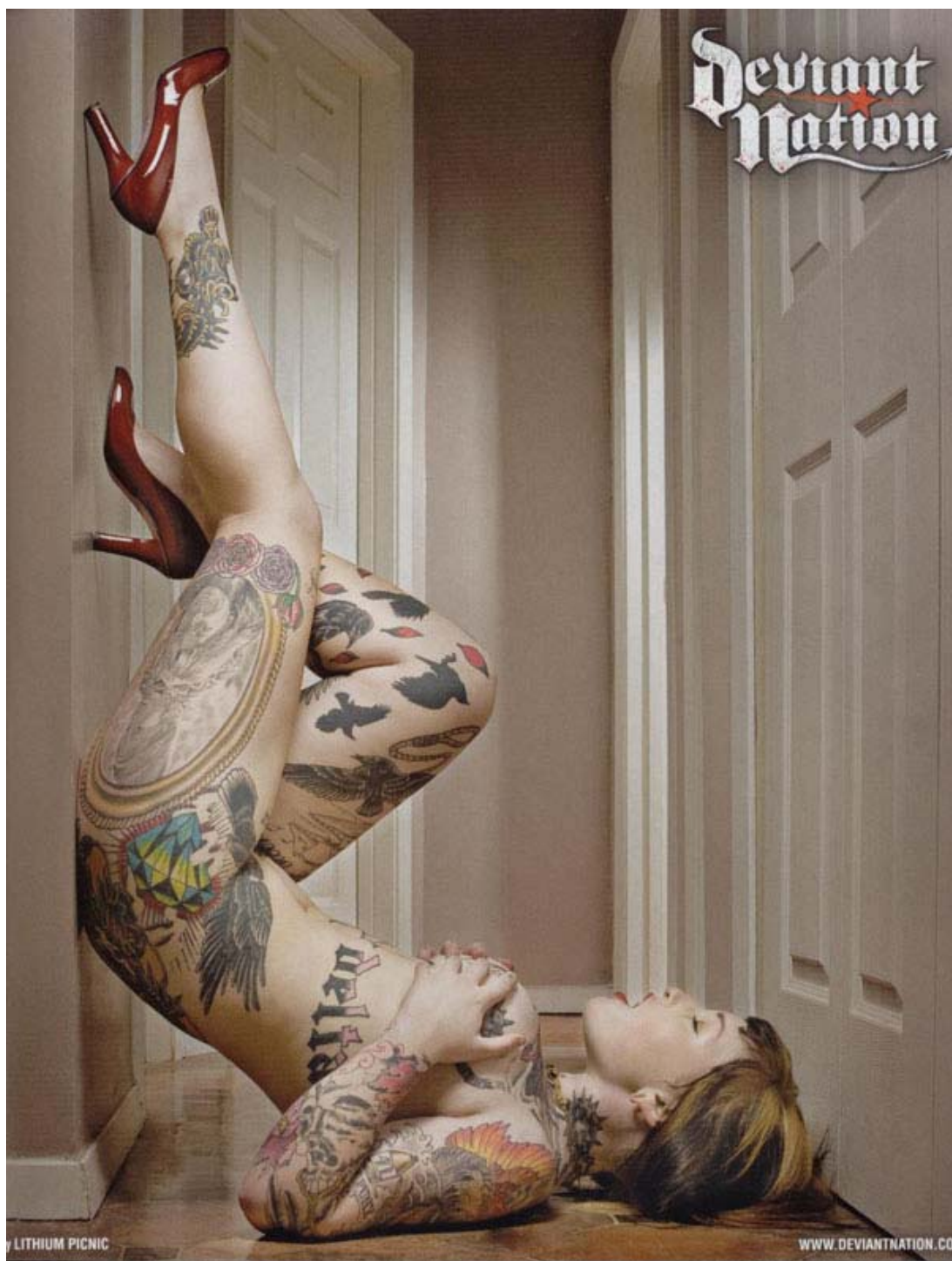


Figure 8: Model from *Inked: Culture, Style, Art* magazine
(Picnic, 2008)

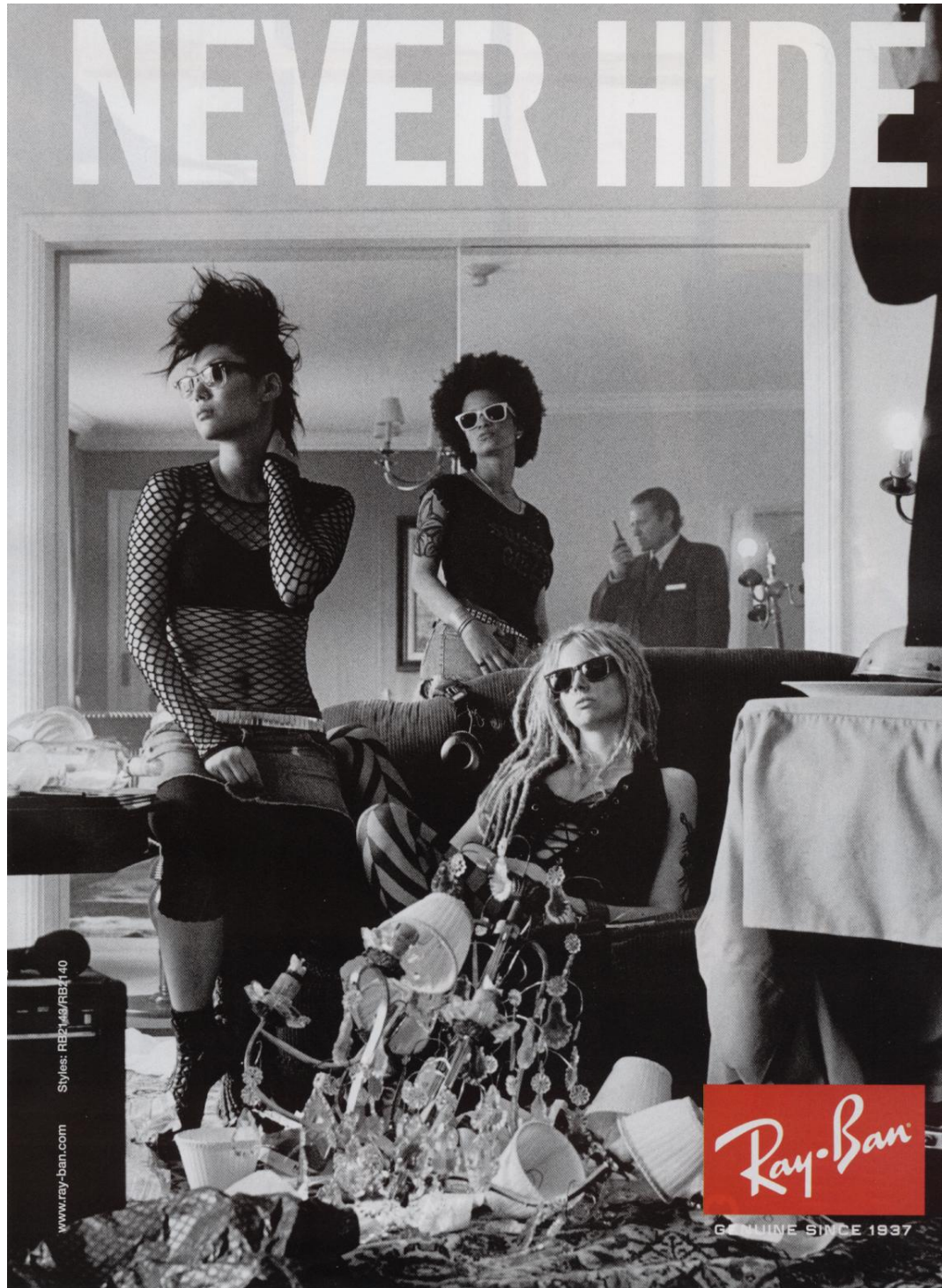


Figure 9: Tattooed young women associated with a crime scene.
(ELLE)



Figure 10: Tattooed girls and young women presented as sexually desirable and deviant.
(INKED: Culture, Style, Art)

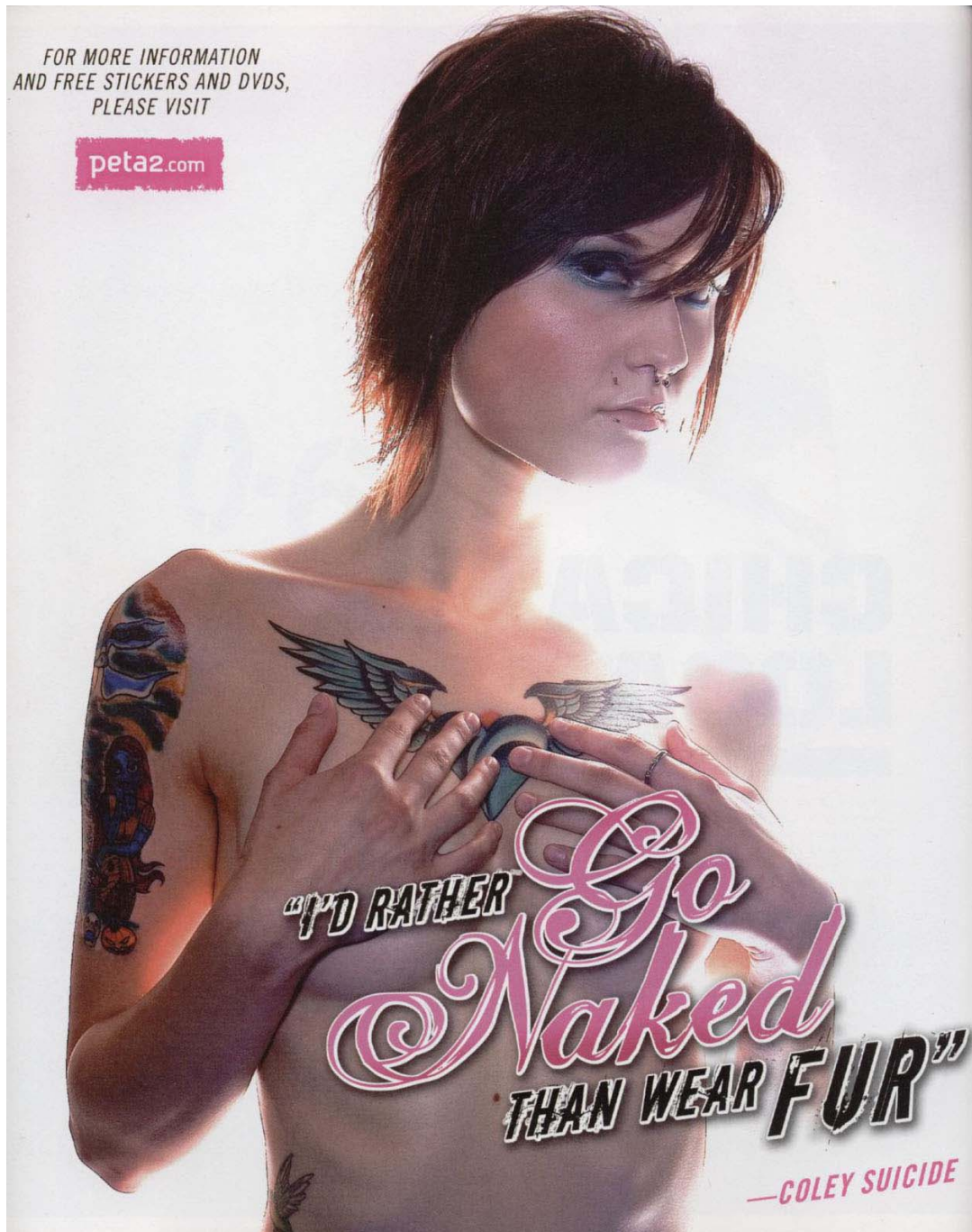


Figure 11: One of several PETA advertisements designed to encourage people to wear synthetic fibres and not fur.
(INKED: Culture, Style, Art)

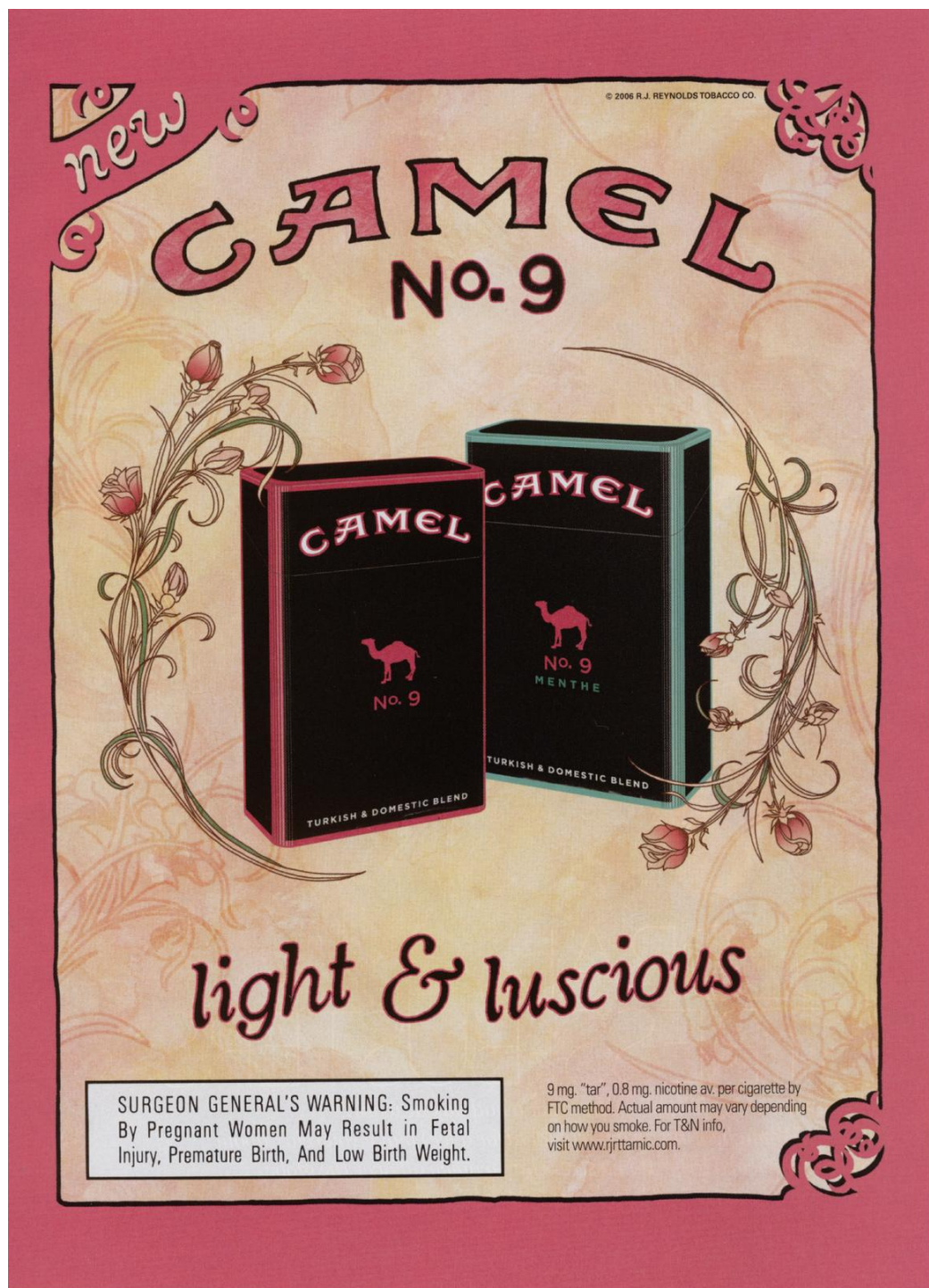


Figure 12: Art deco tattoo-style design aimed at attracting the female consumer
(*Marie Claire*)

CHAPTER III: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Girls' portrayal of their experiences, relationships, and identity perceptions are presented through multiple dialogues. Traditional practices of writing in diaries are replaced by desires to express narratives publicly and visually including using the body as a canvas and surface to signify cultural and social traditions, symbols, and identities. Considering that the narrative is a verbal and a visual dialogue, interviews, narratives, and photographs of girls' tattoos were viewed as collectively instrumental in assessing their stories. Discourse analysis was used to deconstruct and critically examine participants' narratives.

3.2 Background

The findings discussed here are based on in-depth interviews with 11 tattooed girls ages 15 to 18 during a 12 month period in 2007 and 2008. Girls involved in the study were contacted by the researcher after having expressed an interest in participating.⁴ Although, participants became aware of the study through other girls who had participated, only two, Rheanna and Leanne were high school friends. At the time of the study seven girls had one tattoo, four girls had two tattoos, and nine girls were planning to get another tattoo. Age of girls' first tattoo ranged from 14 to 17 years with most obtaining them at 16. Interviews were constructed as a preset cluster of questions related to girls' tattoo practices with respect to influences and perceptions, and with respect to their awareness

⁴ Pamphlets intended to recruit participants were displayed in three tattoo businesses in Kelowna, at UBC Okanagan, and at the YMCA in Kelowna. Not one participant was engaged through this publication. Three probable reasons can account for this: girls were getting a tattoo without their parents' permission and were concerned about having a parental consent form signed; girls were hesitant to contact an unfamiliar person; and girls were uneasy with the association of tattoos with risk-taking practices.

or knowledge of potential body art risks and safety procedures.⁵ Questions were structured in a fashion and in a comprehensive language that encouraged participation through conversation and story-telling initiating further inquiry and a validation of experiences disclosed. Examples of questions designed to stimulate further queries, reflections, and recollections were: “Can you tell me why it was so significant to get a tattoo that was related to your Christian, your religious background?” and “Can you tell me more about your tattoo?”

When listening to girls’ voices it is important to acknowledge and respect their differences and uniqueness as positioned by cultural heritage, gender, religion, family units, etc., otherwise they may be reluctant to reveal personal information or stories concerning their practices and everyday experiences (Harris, 2004). Girls who participated in this project lived in the Kelowna, Westbank, and Peachland communities of the Central Okanagan area of British Columbia and attended Rutland Senior Secondary, Kelowna Senior Secondary, Mount Boucherie Senior Secondary, and Central School. One participant was completing her grade 12 at home, one had graduated, one was in grade 12, two had completed grade 10, and six were in grade 11. Not all girls resided with their parents during the interview period. One girl was married, one lived with her boyfriend, one had her own suite, and two were with other family members. Other participants were from two-parent or step-

⁵ All participants were read the following statement: “This interview is comprised of four sections. Some questions require yes, no, or one word answers. Most of my questions will ask that you tell me more about your tattoos, and about your tattoo related experiences, perceptions, influences and feelings.

The four sections were as follows: Section 1 included 13 structured background questions related to age, number of tattoos, ethnic background, etc.; Section 2 was comprised of 13 semi-structured questions concerning influences such as “Describe how you were influenced to get a tattoo” and “Why did you choose to get tattooed on that part of your body?”; Section 3 related to perceptions and included 11 semi-structured questions. Examples were “Do you feel that you have ever been treated differently, in public, by strangers who have seen your tattoo?” Girls who responded with a ‘yes’ were asked to describe how they were treated differently. Girls who responded ‘no’ sometimes offered additional information such as Sadie who stated “a lot of older people kind of look down on it...I figure save it for the beach when there are more teenagers around”; and Section 4 related to risk-taking behaviors and included 23 semi-structured questions. Examples were “Tell me about your experience with getting tattooed” and “Do you think there are any risks involved with getting a tattoo?” and “What are the risks you have heard about?”

Questions and responses often led to further questions and other information. Girls’ responses sometimes related to questions not addressed.

parent families. The majority of the participants were Caucasian, two girls were of Jewish ancestry (one Israeli), and three were First Nations. One girl believed that tattoos were an important part of her First Nations culture. Girls came from a variety of religious backgrounds that included two Christians⁶, two Catholics, one Pentecostal (previously Judaism), one atheist, and five who were not affiliated or were not sure of their affiliation. One girl stated that tattoos were “kind of” against her Christian religion. Having a tattoo and being an adolescent girl were the only requirements for study participation. Homogeneity was not assumed. The desire to hear girls’ stories can expose them to public surveillance and scrutiny in which their concerns are ignored and become regulated and silenced (Harris, 2004; Ormand, 2004).

Providing an environment in which girls were comfortable and not pressured by an older female researcher that they could perceive as a person of authority such as a parent, teacher, or employer was a recognized ethical issue. Oliver (1999) states that in order to create environments that meet the needs of girls “we must strive to understand [them] on their own terms” (p. 221). Bloustien (2003) believes that researchers cannot construct judgments that girls are victims and cannot consider them as passive participants in the interview process. Ethical research requires that we respect our participants’ willingness to welcome researchers into their private spaces (Oliver, 1999). Girls who engage in research in which they are provided opportunities to story or visually capture their sense of self-making acknowledge that everything in their world (e.g. where they are tattooed, who their friends are, and their online practices) is not public knowledge (Bloustien, 2003). For example, one participant expressed concerns that her information might create problems for a person she discussed during the interview. Respecting this, girls were reassured that all information disclosed was confidential and that names used were pseudonyms.⁷

⁶ Believers in Jesus as Christ and the teachings of Christ.

⁷ Girls signed an assent form and parents signed a consent form which explained the research study and confidentiality.

Throughout this inquiry the researcher was considerate and aware of questions that challenged personal or professional motives, experiences, and understandings of research with adolescent girls. Presenting oneself as an unbiased and non-judgmental party interested in listening to and discussing their perceptions and stories of themselves and others was equally important. For example, the majority of participants were curious as to why I was interested in girls and their tattoos or interested in only studying girls and not boys with body art. Respecting girls' questions and encouraging an active role in the interview process allowed participants the opportunity to be involved in issues that affect their daily practices through "spaces of dialogue [and] connection and action" in which experiences are reflected, understood, and made meaningful (Hussain et al., 2006, p. 61). Furthermore, the researcher's experience as a mother of two children (one an adolescent girl) and familiarity with adolescents as an art teacher contributed positively to establishing a comfortable relationship with the participants. Bloustien (2003) states that although there were gaps of age, education, and ethnicity between her and the adolescent participants, her experiences as a teacher, filmmaker, and mother of an adolescent girl, allowed her to establish a relationship with the girls that was not "regarded as suspect or nefarious" (p. 23). Bloustien's previous experience allowed her to participate and experience girls' lives without her participants feeling that it was an intrusion into their world.

In order to facilitate a level of trust and comfort with the girls, interview locations were of their choosing. A few interviews were conducted at the participants' homes and the rest were held at the following coffee shop locations: Starbucks in the Kelowna Mission and in Westbank, Perk's Place Coffee in Kelowna, Tim Hortons in the Kelowna Mission, and at Bliss Bakery in Peachland.⁸

⁸ Office space was provided at UBC Okanagan to conduct interviews, however, given that the some girls lived in communities which would require bus transportation for three to four hours this was not feasible. Reasons for this length of transportation was owing to poor public transit on weekends, distance of communities and the construction of a new bridge (William R. Bennett Bridge) across Okanagan Lake. Coffee shops as public places were considered appropriate for conducting interviews and most were held outside when weather permitted.

Interviews were held on weekends, after school, and during other times convenient for the participants. Some girls preferred to have other family members or friends present during the interviews. Sessions were approximately one hour to two hours, with some participants requiring one to three meetings for completion.⁹

The following sections examine the tattoo as a narrative on the body, the photograph as a visual narrative, and the qualitative interview as a verbal dialogue. All three forms of the narrative as process and method are important in developing further insight into the lives of tattooed adolescent girls. Patricia MacCormack (2006) states that the tattooed body represents another layer of differentiation; “seeing a tattooed body is evocative but reading one envelops it into a comparative system of the self to others, distancing its power to act as a catalyst toward thinking body relations differently” (p. 65).

3.3 Method: the tattoo narrative

The narrative is a fluid and transparent language; one that is verbalized, visualized, and communicated, performed, or mediated through image, dialogue, and script. As a method of inquiry, the narrative is instrumental in studying adolescent girls and their social practice of tattooing in which they use their bodies to communicate experiences, convey memories, and express or perform identities through body art. Kosut (2000b) states the body is the principle means in which we distinguish ourselves and are known to others. Girls’ bodies have become “the locus and primary symbol of simultaneously acquiring, articulating, and negotiating particular understandings of the world” (Bloustien, 2003, p, 75 – 76). Narrative and identity cannot be separated, each serve to legitimize the other, publicize the private, and confirm our identity (Gover, 1998). New (1996) writes:

⁹ In order to be considerate of girls’ schedules multiple sessions for completion of interviews were allocated.

The body is the locus of personhood, the site of the subject; it is the body that gives a point of view, however temporary, that is the medium of experience, the centre of memory and personal identity, the determinant of the possibilities of action (p. 29).

Tattoos are visual dialogues in which image and language connect; become story and voice, and a permanent record of events or memories performed on the body. Described as a communicative aesthetic icon (Kosut, 2000b), as a 'textualization' of the body, and as "a story of the body told through the body" (Langellier, 2001) p. 151) tattoos are expressive narratives that are both private and/or public. Conner (2004) states that markings on the body are a dialogue of "mute and blatant" (p. 96) silenced through coverings and unknown personal meanings or verbalized through recognized symbols and images that reflect obvious transcriptions of the self. The tattoo narrative is more than a performance, but one that is encoded in time:

The marked skin allows the past and present to communicate, easily, running backwards and forwards....The order of marks is the order of identity, of immediate resemblance, in which everything can be the image of everything else, because everything can be both its mark and be made to bear the mark of everything else (Conner, 2004, p. 85).

Furthermore the tattoo can be perceived as a 'therapeutic narrative', a container in which life is expressed and made meaningful through multitudes of lived experiences and it is, simultaneously, a fragmented narrative, a 'many-foldedness' in which time is intertwined, connected incohesively, and restructured (Conner, 2004). Maccormack (2006) equates the tattooed skin to gender; "both are infinitely complex in their capacity to make us speak our own bodies and their force on the world" (p. 80). The tattoo narrative provides empowerment to the adolescent female whose voices are often challenged or discounted by authoritarian figures.

3.4 Method: the photograph

Photographs represent an important layer of documented knowledge and represent a continuity of personal meanings through visual representations of identity (Pink, 202). Both the photo and the narrative are connected by the stories they represent, and by their in-between and behind messages or accounts (Harrison, 2002). In combination with the qualitative interview, the photograph further serves as reflexivity between image and dialogue (Harrison, 2002). Close (2007) argues that the photograph is a social practice; a tool used by women to explore identity and personal narrative. Photographs reflect depictions, they are apparent truths composed and produced or presented as a ways of seeing (Rose, 2001, p. 23).

Girls' tattoos were an important visual element in this study and expressed a dialogue not communicated through their verbal narratives. Myers (1992) writes "photography is a must in any discipline where the recording and analyzing of visual data is important, but unfortunately it also has the capacity of violating the personal world of those being studied" (p. 272). Although the tattoos were photographed by the researcher¹⁰, girls chose the manner in which they wanted their tattoo framed and posed accordingly. Photos functioned in this research as individualistic expressions meant to visually capture the essence of the tattoo and offer an extension of girls' personalities not related through the narrative. However, it can be argued that in the performance of being photographed, the tattoo becomes just another 'pretty' or 'interesting' picture. Bell (1999) claims photos of tattoos are not representational of the unique ways in which body markings are used to perform or present identity in that the placement of tattoos on the body as a three-dimensional surface become lost in transition when represented two-dimensionally. According to Myers, "the richest written description of a tattoo when compared to a photograph can only be pale" (p. 272).

¹⁰ All tattoos, except Taylor's tattoo, were photographed by the researcher.

Others argue that it is the story of the tattoo photograph which is important (Harrison, 2002; Kosut, 2002). Photographs express what words cannot (Forbis, 1994) or are narratives without words (hooks, 1995). For example, actress Lindsay Lohan exhibited a series of prints of her tattoos from well-known photographers at the Sky Terrace of the Lohan Atelier building in New York on March 6, 2008. Lohan considered that these photographs “represented the mood behind her tattoos” (*New York Post*, 2008). Furthermore, photographs of tattoos are dualistic in nature; the tattoo reflects one story within the visually framed narrative of another.

3.5 Method: the interview

Qualitative interviews support principles of feminism through questions that are flexible and non-invasive, and offer girls political engagement and the power to be active agents of their own inquiries, to engage in deeper meanings, and to further question their experiences. Anderson and Jack (1991) state qualitative interviewing is an interactive process that reflects a ‘dynamic unfolding’ of participant narratives and enables both flexibility and adaptation throughout. Questions related to: “Why, Why is this worth telling, what is interesting about it?” (Bruner, 2001, p. 29) and why are these narratives exceptional within the context of the research issue should provide meaningful connections in which narratives provide answers and potential solutions. Narrative inquiry is not defined by quantitative proficiency and the application of mandated tasks but “as a mind-set of attitudes” (Johnson & Golembek, 2002, p. 5) in which the researcher engages in an inquiry experience with the participants.

Participant interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim ensuring that all manner of speech including verbal responses, expressions, hesitations, etc. were acknowledged. Riessman (1993) argues that narratives as meaning-making structures “must be preserved, not fractured, by investigators, who must respect respondents’ ways of constructing meaning and analyze how it is accomplished” (p. 4).

Validation of narratives occurred throughout the interview process, through repetition of girls' dialogue, and through questions meant to clarify any uncertainties. Minister (1991) asserts communication is an opportunity to establish relationships, negotiate trust, promote equality, and verbal intimacy. Participants were offered opportunities to review their transcribed narratives¹¹ and although a few requested copies, girls were primarily interested in viewing and receiving photographs of their tattoos used for documentation of this research¹². Myers (1992) noted in his research on body modifications that copies of photographs were also requested by his participants. Photographs were one way to reduce barriers between the researcher and participant and they served, as well, as a "type of cultural brokerage" (Myers, 1992, p. 272).

3. 6 Discourse analysis

Data collected from interviews, notes from phone conversations or other casual conversations such as accidental meetings, photographs of girls' tattoos, and girls' responses to magazine advertisements that use tattooed models were deconstructed and critically examined using discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is a theoretical approach that employs various methods used within this study to analyze issues related to girls' social practices and how it relates to their construction and performance of identity and gender. Rose (2001) defines discourse analysis as the examination of "groups of statements which structure the way a thing is thought" (p. 136), and how these statements become understood and enacted upon. Furthermore, Rose stipulates that discourse is socially produced and as such girls' engagement with body art may reflect social reproduction and not individuality. For example, girls' engagement in tattooing may reflect their interests in and influences

¹¹ Girls were asked at the end of each interview whether or not they would like a transcribed copy. If there was more than one interview copies were brought from the previous session for participants. Only two wanted these copies and the remainder stated that they did not 'need' to see their interviews. It was assumed that these responses signified a relationship of trust with the participants.

¹² A digital camera was used to take photos which permitted girls to view these immediately. As a result girls were able to express which photos they would like in the documentation.

from figures portrayed in the popular media. Other aspects of discourse analysis refer to the inconsistencies that girls articulate through their conversations. For example, girls who engage in social practices of tattooing without parental permission may perceive acceptance of their actions by their parents as an important aspect of their identity. Although girls may perceive and present themselves as independent or rebellious their desire to be accepted can or may only be revealed through their narratives, casual conversations, and tattoo imagery. Consequently, it was pertinent that all dialogue, whether candid, casual, or narrative was used to analyze collected data in this research. Documentation in this study, included girls' personal reasons and influences for getting tattooed; their perceptions of how others observe their tattoos with respect to positive or negative attitudes and related stereotypes; and their awareness of potential risks associated with tattoos and with getting tattooed.

Discourse analysis was used in this study as an interpretation of all texts, visual, verbal, and those that were transcribed. The researcher as an outsider, an older woman without tattoos, considered that the data collected was an interpretive, dynamic and adaptable process which involved both the participant and the researcher. Participants were afforded the choice of responding to questions, they were given opportunities to clarify their answers, and they were insured that all answers were confidential. Analysis of the data incorporated an interpretation of the transcribed interviews¹³ with respect to: similarities or differences between participants; values and attitudes expressed by the participants through their manner of language and narrative; and overall content as a transcribed narration of girls' voices. For example, participants' transcribed interviews were visually scanned and key elements regarding girls' tattoos including their image descriptions, why they decided to get tattooed, and feelings about their tattoos were highlighted and pieced together to form precise individual narratives. As well, transcriptions were analyzed for contradictions or responses that connected with previous

¹³ Three transcribed interviews, Tasha, Breanne, and Rheanna, are included in the appendix.

questions. Although the interviews were conducted in sections; background, influences, perceptions, and risk-taking, the questions and manner in which they were given were designed as a flexible process. In this respect, it was necessary that the entire transcript be read and analyzed before forming an interpretation of girls' narratives and responses.

3.7 Conclusion

Within feminist research the narrative is recognized as a valuable genre for its portrayal of women's collective representations and conditions as shaped or guided by the society in which they live (Oliver, 1999; Chanfrault-Duchet, 1991). The narrative is simultaneously employed to "trace the multitude and overlapping relationships and social processes that shape the social contexts of girls' lives" (Hussain et al., 2006, p. 61) such as illuminating an understanding of girls' perceptions of body image and sexuality (Brumberg, 1997). In this research, narratives were examined with respect to understanding why girls have adopted traditional Western masculine practices of tattooing as expressions of individuality or identity; and they were analyzed with respect to girls' knowledge or awareness of potential risks involved with this form of body art. Medical professionals and health educators have acknowledged the narrative as a valid component in the understanding of individual health problems and in providing an awareness of what works or does not work in intervention and prevention programs (Bleakley, 2005; Riley & Hawe, 2004). According to Hussain et al. (2006), the only way to build knowledge is by engaging in girls' knowledge, their understanding of their experiences, and their sense of place within the world. Narrative inquiry should reflect how girls perceive themselves and their position in society through their understanding and questioning of experiences.

CHAPTER IV: Presentation of data

4.1 Results

The extensive quantity of collected data from each participant is presented and summarized in this chapter. As noted in Section 1 only five participants had permission to get tattooed and all were granted by the girls' mothers. Results collected are from initial contacts with the participants. For example, Tasha had completed grade 10 when first contacted, however changes in her personal life made it difficult to continue the interviews until several months later. During this time she became married, was completing school studies on her own, and was planning to finish grade 12 and commence university a half year earlier than her peers.

Although girls' reasons for getting tattoos differed, responses indicated that immediate family and the visual media played a significant role in influencing this decision. Four girls received tattoos as a birthday present from their mothers and three girls were tattooed for family reasons which included the passing of a family member, and maintaining close family connections. The majority of girls revealed their tattoos to their mothers before informing other family members. Girls did not perceive their tattooed friends as influencing their decisions to partake in this practice.¹⁴ All girls watched or had watched television tattoo reality episodes of *Miami Ink* or *LA Ink*; all girls except one named various musicians, actresses, and other favorite tattooed people presented through visual and popular media; and the majority surfed tattoo websites. For example, a few girls mentioned Kat Von D, the tattoo artist from *LA Ink*, and Amy described her as gorgeous.

¹⁴ All girls had either male or female friends with tattoos. Girls' belief that this was not an influence is questionable considering that peers often participate in the same activities.

All girls were generally happy with their tattoos, all perceived friends as liking their tattoos, and all believed that girls had the equal right to get tattooed. However, the majority of participants acknowledged that although tattoos on girls were ‘more socially acceptable’, societal stereotyping was prevalent. Some girls were aware of the ‘tramp stamp’ association with lower back tattoos and others, including Hanna and Breanne believed people might perceive girls’ tattoos as “trashy” or “bad news”. Despite this, the majority of girls experienced increased confidence with having a tattoo. For example, Tasha stated “it’s certainly affected me cause you strike up conversations with tattoos right, so it gives you a bit more ability to talk to people”; Taylor responded “it was a huge confidence booster for me; it made me feel really like empowered”; and Lisa’s perceived weight problem appeared inconsequential with her excitement of publicly displaying her tattoo. Participant responses varied as to tattoo likes and dislikes relating to tattoos on other young people. Girls were in agreement that tattoos were appropriate if they were perceived as meaningful.

The last section of questions was related to girls’ understanding or knowledge of tattoos as a form of risk-taking behavior. All girls, except two, were tattooed by professional tattoo artists that were known to them through family members or friends. Hanna tattooed herself with a friend’s tattoo gun that was purchased through mail and Tasha investigated tattoo establishments and tattoo artists before reaching a decision on who would tattoo her. Although several participants had received tattoos through one local business¹⁵, girls were not consistent with responses regarding the signing of consent forms or being informed of risks from this tattoo artist¹⁶. All girls agreed that tattoo establishments have a definite responsibility to inform their clients of risks involved. Leanne responded that “tattoo artists know everything so they should share that information that they know with people that they are tattooing” and Lisa stated “if they don’t they shouldn’t be in that field”.

¹⁵ Girls received their tattoos from four businesses in the central Okanagan and one was tattooed in a different community.

¹⁶ Girls may have not remembered signing consent forms or being informed of risks.


Girls varied in their responses with regard to discussion of tattooing practices at school. A few participants believed that parents might think schools were encouraging this activity if it was discussed in the classroom and others considered information presented through the counseling or career centre would be effective.

The majority of girls stated infection as a potential risk with tattoos and acknowledged friends or family as sources for this information. Several girls were unable to explain other than for potential risk why, for example, needles should be changed. Given that there were only a few girls who stated specific potential problems such as allergies to dyes and Hepatitis C, it can be tentatively assumed that either some participants were not aware of other relevant risks or that they considered these to be common knowledge. However girls were well-informed that it was important during the healing process to keep the tattoo clean, use antibacterial lotion, and avoid exposure to sunlight and water. Body piercing was another practice popular among the participants and infection was reported by the girls as a known risk. Girls were asked if they engaged in other forms of risk-taking behaviors and were informed that they were not required to answer if they were uncomfortable with the question. All girls responded, with the majority stating that they had at one time experimented with or were currently engaging in cigarette smoking, marijuana use, and/or alcohol consumption.

4.2 Tables

The 11 tables in the next section serve as a catalogue of data from each participant. The tables are ordered: Sadie, Jessica, Tasha, Amy, Taylor, Leanne, Hanna, Breanne, Rheanna, Carrie, and Lisa. Each includes four sections: background, influences, perceptions, and risk-taking.

Table 1: Participant 1

	Sadie Upper back tattoo
SECTION 1: Background	
Age	15
Grade	Completed grade 10
Permanent tattoo	Yes
More than one tattoo	Yes, 2 tattoos
Age of first tattoo	15
Parental consent to get a tattoo	Yes – from mom
Plan to get another tattoo	Yes
Ethnic background	First Nations, Caucasian
Religious affiliation	Not affiliated
SECTION 2: Influences	
Started thinking about tattoos	“long time ago”
Family members with tattoos	Yes - mom, mom’s boyfriend, aunt
Friends with tattoos	Yes
Influenced by strangers	No
Associated with an event	Birthday present from mom
Watch tattoo reality programs	Yes – <i>Miami Ink</i> , <i>LA Ink</i>
Buy/read tattoo magazines	Yes – <i>Savage</i> , <i>Tattoo</i> , <i>Tattooed</i>
Surf tattoo websites	Yes
Attend tattoo conventions	Yes – Calgary, AB
Have favorite tattooed pop stars, etc.	Yes – Kat Von D
Artist or art influence	Yes – Amy Brown
Cultural influence	Yes - Japan
SECTION 3: Perceptions	
Happy with tattoo	Yes, in general
More confident with tattoo	Yes
Tattoos on girls are an equal right	Yes
Awareness of stereotypes with girls	Yes
Family members like tattoo	Yes – not grandfather
First parent informed	Mom
Perceive friends as liking tattoo	Yes
Treated negatively in public	“older people kind of look down on it”
Like tattoos on other girls	Not generic tattoos
Like tattoos on boys	Yes - Tribal tattoos
Encouraged to not get tattooed	Yes



	Sadie Upper back tattoo
SECTION 4: Risk-taking	
Tattooed in Canada	Yes
Tattooed professionally	Yes
Familiar with artist's work	Yes
Inspected tattoo business or artist	N/A
Asked about medical problems	No – "tattooist lives with my mom"
Informed of risks	Yes
Procedure explained	Yes
Was the experience painful	Yes
Informed of aftercare	Yes
Signed consent form	N/A
Should tattoo businesses inform clients of risks	Yes - "I don't think people are really aware of concerns"
Should schools teach about risks	Yes – "like in the career centre and counseling centre"
Awareness of risks	Yes
Know of anyone who has had a problem	Yes – mom's tattoo became infected
Risks learned from what sources	Mom, tattoo artist, magazines
Knowledge of risks influence you	No
Henna tattoo	No
Problems with tattoo	Yes/no – foot tattoo was dry from sun exposure
Have body piercings	Yes – lip, belly, nose, cartilage
Problems with piercings	Yes – ripped out
Discourage another person	No – "I would want them to take good care of it"
Engage in other risk-behaviors	Yes – "I have nothing to hide"

Table 2: Participant 2

	Jessica Right abdomen tattoo
SECTION 1: Background	
Age	15
Grade	Completed grade 10
Permanent tattoo	Yes
More than one tattoo	No
Age of first tattoo	14
Parental consent to get a tattoo	Yes – from mom
Plan to get another tattoo	Yes
Ethnic background	First Nations, Caucasian
Religious affiliation	Catholic
SECTION 2: Influences	
Started thinking about tattoos	Age 12
Family members with tattoos	Yes – mom, cousin
Friends with tattoos	Yes
Influenced by strangers	No
Associated with an event	Birthday present from mom
Watch tattoo reality programs	Yes – <i>Miami Ink</i>
Buy/read tattoo magazines	No
Surf tattoo websites	No
Attend tattoo conventions	No
Have favorite tattooed pop stars, etc.	No
Artist or art influence	No
Cultural influence	No
SECTION 3: Perceptions	
Happy with tattoo	Yes, in general
More confident with tattoo	Same as before
Tattoos on girls are an equal right	Yes
Awareness of stereotypes with girls	No
Family members like tattoo	Yes
First parent informed	Mom
Perceive friends as liking tattoo	Definitely
Treated negatively in public	No
Like tattoos on other girls	Depends where they are
Like tattoos on boys	Yes, smaller ones
Encouraged to not get tattooed	Yes – by some family members



	Jessica Right abdomen tattoo
SECTION 4: Risk-taking	
Tattooed in Canada	Yes
Tattooed professionally	Yes – tattoo artist was mom’s friend
Inspected tattoo business	Yes
Familiar with artist’s work	Yes
Asked about medical problems	No
Informed of risks	No – “only told not to go out in the sunlight”
Was the experience painful	Yes
Procedure explained	Yes
Informed of aftercare	Yes
Signed consent form	Unsure – mom may have signed
Tattoo artist explained the procedure	Yes
Should tattoo businesses inform clients of risks	Yes
Should schools teach about risks	No – “not in the classroom...could hand out newsletters”
Awareness of risks	Yes – “you shouldn’t use the same needle”
Know of anyone who has had a problem	Yes – male friend, cousin
Risks learned from what sources	Friends, cousin
Knowledge of risks influence you	No – “as long as I was going to a professional”
Henna tattoo	No
Problems with tattoo	No
Have body piercings	Yes – nose, belly button, ear cartilage
Problems with piercings	Yes – infection, allergic reaction
Discourage another person	No – “I would encourage them”
Engage in other risk-behaviors	Yes – tried cigarettes, marijuana, I’ve drank before

Table 3: Participant 3

	Tasha Upper chest tattoo
SECTION 1: Background	
Age	16
Grade	Completed grade 10
Permanent tattoo	Yes
More than one tattoo	Yes
Age of first tattoo	16
Parental consent to get a tattoo	No
Plan to get another tattoo	Yes
Ethnic background	American Jewish, Israeli, Caucasian
Religious affiliation	Pentecostal
SECTION 2: Influences	
Started thinking about tattoos	Age 12
Family members with tattoos	Yes – dad, brothers, sister
Friends with tattoos	Yes
Influenced by strangers	Yes
Associated with an event	Yes – moving away from home, family connection
Watch tattoo reality programs	Not really – have seen <i>Miami Ink</i>
Buy/read tattoo magazines	Yes
Surf tattoo websites	Yes
Attend tattoo conventions	No
Have favorite tattooed pop stars, etc.	Yes – Pink Floyd
Artist or art influence	Yes – art from the band ‘Tool’
Cultural influence	No
SECTION 3: Perceptions	
Happy with tattoo	Yes
More confident with tattoo	Yes
Tattoos on girls are an equal right	Yes
Awareness of stereotypes with girls	Yes – “lower back, ...you’re known as a little bit of a whore”
Family members like tattoo	Yes/no
First parent informed	Mom
Perceive friends as liking tattoo	Yes
Treated negatively in public	Yes – husband’s friend made a derogatory comment
Like tattoos on other girls	Yes – two or three
Like tattoos on boys	Yes
Encouraged to not get tattooed	Yes - friends



	<p>Tasha Upper chest tattoo</p>
SECTION 4: Risk-taking	
Tattooed in Canada	Yes
Tattooed professionally	Yes
Inspected tattoo business	Yes – “I checked out which places I thought were clean”
Familiar with artist’s work	Yes/no – the second tattoo, I knew the artist
Asked about medical problems	Yes
Informed of risks	Yes
Procedure explained	Yes/No – “spent 5 min. telling you how it would feel”
Was the experience painful	No – “it didn’t hurt for sure”
Informed of aftercare	Yes
Signed consent form	Yes
Should tattoo businesses inform clients of risks	Yes
Should schools teach about risks	Yes – it should be discussed
Awareness of risks	Yes – “if they don’t change their needles it’s a big risk”
Know of anyone who has had a problem	Yes – friends
Risks learned from what sources	Tattoo artist, friends, magazines
Knowledge of risks influence you	Yes – “you’ve got to be careful”
Henna tattoo	No
Problems with tattoo	No
Have body piercings	Yes – I have 8 piercings
Problems with piercings	No – not medical
Discourage another person	Yes/no
Engage in other risk-behaviors	Yes/no – tried but don’t engage due to medical problems

Table 4: Participant 4

	Amy Right abdomen tattoo
SECTION 1: Background	
Age	18
Grade	Completed school
Permanent tattoo	Yes
More than one tattoo	Yes
Age of first tattoo	16
Parental consent to get a tattoo	Yes – from mom
Plan to get another tattoo	Yes
Ethnic background	Caucasian
Religious affiliation	Christian
SECTION 2: Influences	
Started thinking about tattoos	Age 12
Family members with tattoos	Yes – mom, brother, step-dad, cousins
Friends with tattoos	Yes
Influenced by strangers	No
Associated with an event	Birthday present from mom
Watch tattoo reality programs	Yes – <i>Miami Ink</i> , <i>LA Ink</i>
Buy/read tattoo magazines	Yes – <i>Tattoo</i>
Surf tattoo websites	Yes
Attend tattoo conventions	No
Have favorite tattooed pop stars, etc.	Yes/no – Kat Von D – “I think she’s gorgeous”
Artist or art influence	No
Cultural influence	Yes - China
SECTION 3: Perceptions	
Happy with tattoo	Yes
More confident with tattoo	Same
Tattoos on girls are an equal right	Yes
Awareness of stereotypes with girls	No
Family members like tattoo	Yes
First parent informed	Mom
Perceive friends as liking tattoo	Yes
Treated negatively in public	Yes – “older people they stare at you ...because you have a tattoo”
Like tattoos on other girls	Yes – not Satanic
Like tattoos on boys	Yes – not on faces
Encouraged to not get tattooed	Yes – grandma



	Amy Right abdomen tattoo
SECTION 4: Risk-taking	
Tattooed in Canada	Yes
Tattooed professionally	Yes
Familiar with artist's work	Yes – “everyone in my family sticks with that one guy”
Inspected tattoo business	Yes – “like it's clean”
Asked about medical problems	No
Informed of risks	Yes
Procedure explained	Yes
Was the experience painful	Yes – “It hurt like hell!”
Informed of aftercare	Yes
Signed consent form	Not sure
Should tattoo businesses inform clients of risks	Yes
Should schools teach about risks	Yes – “discussing it would be alright”
Awareness of risks	Not sure
Know of anyone who has had a problem	Yes – male friend had infection
Risks learned from what sources	Friend
Knowledge of risks influence you	No
Henna tattoo	No
Problems with tattoo	No
Have body piercings	Yes – tongue, lip, nose, bellybutton, 18 ear piercings
Problems with piercings	Yes – swollen tongue, swallowed tongue ring
Discourage another person	Not sure
Engage in other risk-behaviors	Yes/no – was “pretty much experimental”

Table 5: Participant 5

	Taylor Right mid-back tattoo
SECTION 1: Background	
Age	17
Grade	11
Permanent tattoo	Yes
More than one tattoo	No
Age of first tattoo	15
Parental consent to get a tattoo	Yes – from mom
Plan to get another tattoo	Yes
Ethnic background	Caucasian
Religious affiliation	Atheist
SECTION 2: Influences	
Started thinking about tattoos	Age 14 – when “my brother started to get hard core into drugs”
Family members with tattoos	Yes – brother, aunt, cousins
Friends with tattoos	Yes
Influenced by strangers	No
Associated with an event	No – wanted connection with parents and brother
Watch tattoo reality programs	Yes – <i>Miami Ink</i> , <i>LA Ink</i> , <i>Inked</i> , <i>London Ink</i>
Buy/read tattoo magazines	Yes – <i>Tattoo</i> , <i>Savage</i>
Surf tattoo websites	Yes
Attend tattoo conventions	No
Have favorite tattooed pop stars, etc.	Yes
Artist or art influence	Yes – art from band ‘Iron Maiden’
Cultural influence	Yes – China
SECTION 3: Perceptions	
Happy with tattoo	Very
More confident with tattoo	Huge! – “made me feel really like empowered”
Tattoos on girls are an equal right	Yes
Awareness of stereotypes with girls	Yes
Family members like tattoo	Yes
First parent informed	Mom
Perceive friends as liking tattoo	Yes
Treated negatively in public	Yes – question meaning
Like tattoos on other girls	Yes!
Like tattoos on boys	Yes! – “ It’s just that they’re cool”
Encouraged to not get tattooed	Yes – grandma



	Taylor Right mid-back tattoo
SECTION 4: Risk-taking	
Tattooed in Canada	Yes
Tattooed professionally	Yes
Familiar with artist's work	No
Inspected tattoo business	Yes – “mom checked it out”
Asked about medical problems	No
Informed of risks	Yes – pamphlet and artist
Procedure explained	Yes
Was the experience painful	Yes – “It hurt really bad!”
Signed consent form	No – mom may have filled out one
Informed of aftercare	Yes
Should tattoo businesses inform clients of risks	Yes
Should schools teach about risks	Yes/no – “girls should be informed that it's permanent”
Awareness of risks	Yes – infection, HEP C
Know of anyone who has had a problem	Yes – brother had infection
Risks learned from what sources	Mom, pamphlet, television
Knowledge of risks influence you	No – “I wanted it and I wanted it now”
Henna tattoo	Yes - lots
Problems with tattoo	No
Have body piercings	Yes – cartilage ear piercings, bellybutton
Problems with piercings	Yes – bellybutton piercing was ripped out during sports
Discourage another person	No – but check out artist
Engage in other risk-behaviors	Yes – smoking, marijuana, tried but didn't like hash

Table 6: Participant 6

	Leanne Left wrist tattoo
SECTION 1: Background	
Age	17
Grade	12
Permanent tattoo	Yes
More than one tattoo	No
Age of first tattoo	17
Parental consent to get a tattoo	No
Plan to get another tattoo	maybe
Ethnic background	Jewish, Caucasian
Religious affiliation	Not affiliated
SECTION 2: Influences	
Started thinking about tattoos	Age 14
Family members with tattoos	No
Friends with tattoos	Yes
Associated with an event	Yes – “fighting with my parents”
Watch tattoo reality programs	Yes – <i>Miami Ink</i> , <i>LA Ink</i>
Buy/read tattoo magazines	No
Surf tattoo websites	No
Attend tattoo conventions	No
Have favorite tattooed pop stars, etc.	Yes – Lindsey Lohan
Artist or art influence	Yes – Angel jewelry
Cultural influence	No
SECTION 3: Perceptions	
Happy with tattoo	Yes
More confident with tattoo	Yes – I’m proud
Tattoos on girls are an equal right	Yes
Awareness of stereotypes with girls	Yes
Family members like tattoo	Maybe – parents do not like tattoos
First parent informed	Both at same time
Perceive friends as liking tattoo	Yes – ‘the colour’
Treated negatively in public	No – strangers say it’s and nice and it’s bright
Like tattoos on other girls	Yes – if they’re feminine
Like tattoos on boys	Yes – not the whole body
Encouraged to not get tattooed	Yes – grandparents



	Leanne Left wrist tattoo
SECTION 4: Risk-taking	
Tattooed in Canada	Yes
Tattooed professionally	Yes
Familiar with artist's work	Yes – “he’s got good skills!”
Inspected tattoo business	Yes – “I was impressed”
Asked about medical problems	No
Informed of risks	No
Procedure explained	Yes
Was the experience painful	Yes – “but it’s definitely tolerable”
Informed of aftercare	Yes
Signed consent form	No – “I don’t think so”
Should tattoo businesses inform clients of risks	Yes - definitely
Should schools teach about risks	No – “ teachers aren’t really for tattoos”
Awareness of risks	Yes – “if you don’t take proper care of it”
Know of anyone who has had a problem	Yes – friend ‘s was “bumpy” and “scabbed everywhere”
Risks learned from what sources	Friends, internet, magazine articles
Knowledge of risks influence you	No – “didn’t really think about it”
Henna tattoo	No
Problems with tattoo	No
Have body piercings	Yes – bellybutton, nose pierced twice
Problems with piercings	No – know tons and tons of people who have
Discourage another person	No
Engage in other risk-behaviors	“Oh ya”

Table 7: Participant 7

	Hanna Upper right-hand tattoo
SECTION 1: Background	
Age	17
Grade	11
Permanent tattoo	Yes
More than one tattoo	No
Age of first tattoo	16
Parental consent to get a tattoo	No
Plan to get another tattoo	Yes
Ethnic background	Okanagan First Nations
Religious affiliation	Catholic
SECTION 2: Influences	
Started thinking about tattoos	“since I was a little girl”
Family members with tattoos	Yes – mom, dad, brother, sister
Friends with tattoos	Yes
Associated with an event	Yes - Valentine’s Day and best friend moving from BC
Watch tattoo reality programs	Yes – <i>Miami Ink</i> , <i>LA Ink</i>
Buy/read tattoo magazines	No
Surf tattoo websites	No
Attend tattoo conventions	No
Have favorite tattooed pop stars, etc.	Yes – Mandy Moore
Artist or art influence	No
Cultural influence	No
SECTION 3: Perceptions	
Happy with tattoo	Yes
More confident with tattoo	Yes – “just being able to say ya I’ve done it ”
Tattoos on girls are an equal right	Yes
Awareness of stereotypes with girls	Yes – “the trashy kind of look”
Family members like tattoo	Yes/no
First parent informed	Dad
Perceive friends as liking tattoo	Yes
Treated negatively in public	No
Like tattoos on other girls	Yes – “if they have it in the right spot – like the ankle”
Like tattoos on boys	Yes – “when it resembles their life and stuff”
Encouraged to not get tattooed	No – “it was random”



	Hanna Upper right-hand tattoo
SECTION 4: Risk-taking	
Tattooed in Canada	Yes
Tattooed professionally	No – I did it myself
Familiar with artist's work	N/A
Inspected tattoo business	N/A
Asked about medical problems	N/A
Informed of risks	N/A
Procedure explained	N/A
Informed of aftercare	N/A
Was the experience painful	Yes – “it kind of hurt in some places”
Signed consent form	N/A
Should tattoo businesses inform clients of risks	Yes – “definitely...they should go over the basics”
Should schools teach about risks	Yes/No – “if it was in grade 12”
Awareness of risks	Yes – some people don't take of their equipment
Know of anyone who has had a problem	Yes – male friend
Risks learned from what sources	Friends, television shows, movies “Thirteen”
Knowledge of risks influence you	Yes – “definitely want to be able to trust the person”
Henna tattoo	Yes – my own kit
Problems with tattoo	No
Have body piercings	Yes – “I have lots of piercings”
Problems with piercings	Yes – infections with ear piercings
Discourage another person	No – “not if it meant something to them”
Engage in other risk-behaviors	Yes – smoke cigarettes, drink

Table 8: Participant 8

	Breanne Right shoulder-back tattoo
SECTION 1: Background	
Age	17
Grade	11
Permanent tattoo	Yes
Age of first tattoo	16
Parental consent to get a tattoo	Yes – from mom
Plan to get another tattoo	Yes
Ethnic background	Caucasian
Religious affiliation	Not affiliated
SECTION 2: Influences	
Started thinking about tattoos	Age 8 – “probably when my mom got her first tattoo”
Family members with tattoos	Yes – mom
Friends with tattoos	No
Associated with an event	Yes – birthday present from mom
Watch tattoo reality programs	Yes – <i>Miami Ink, La Ink</i>
Buy/read tattoo magazines	No
Surf tattoo websites	No
Attend tattoo conventions	No
Have favorite tattooed pop stars, etc.	No
Artist or art influence	No
Cultural influence	No
SECTION 3: Perceptions	
Happy with tattoo	Very!
More confident with tattoo	Yes
Tattoos on girls are an equal right	Yes – “I think it’s more of an equality type of thing”
Awareness of stereotypes with girls	Yes – ‘girls are becoming more like they’re bad news’
Family members like tattoo	Yes – mom, younger sister
First parent informed	Mom
Perceive friends as liking tattoo	Yes – “they like the meaning of the symbol”
Treated negatively in public	Not really
Like tattoos on other girls	Yes – “shows a little bit more personality”
Like tattoos on boys	Yes – “same as the girls, it show personality”
Encouraged to not get tattooed	No



	Breanne Right shoulder-back tattoo
SECTION 4: Risk-taking	
Tattooed in Canada	Yes
Tattooed professionally	Yes
Familiar with artist's work	Yes – “he’s my mom’s favorite artist”
Inspected tattoo business	Yes
Asked about medical problems	Yes
Informed of risks	Yes
Procedure explained	Yes- “he’s like step by step”
Informed of aftercare	Yes
Was the experience painful	Yes – “different kind of pain that I’ve never felt before”
Signed consent form	Yes – “my mom did and me”
Should tattoo businesses inform clients of risks	Yes/No – “I think it’s 50/50”
Should schools teach about risks	Not – “it’s personal choice”
Awareness of risks	Yes – “just infections”
Know of anyone who has had a problem	Yes – “I’ve heard of many people having infections”
Risks learned from what sources	Tattoo artist, mom and sister, school
Knowledge of risks influence you	Yes – “I was questioning it”
Henna tattoo	Yes
Problems with tattoo	No
Have body piercings	Yes – bellybutton, nose
Problems with piercings	No
Discourage another person	No
Engage in other risk-behaviors	Yes – tried smoking, marijuana and don’t like, drinking

Table 9: Participant 9

	Rheanna Left wrist tattoo
SECTION 1: Background	
Age	16
Grade	11
Permanent tattoo	Yes
More than one tattoo	Yes
Age of first tattoo	16
Parental consent to get a tattoo	No
Plan to get another tattoo	Yes
Ethnic background	Caucasian
Religious affiliation	Not known
SECTION 2: Influences	
Started thinking about tattoos	‘beginning of grade 11’
Family members with tattoos	Yes - mom
Friends with tattoos	Yes
Associated with an event	Yes – a memorial tattoo for a friend
Watch tattoo reality programs	Yes – <i>Miami Ink</i> , <i>LA Ink</i>
Buy/read tattoo magazines	No
Surf tattoo websites	Yes
Attend tattoo conventions	Yes – Salmon Arm, BC
Have favorite tattooed pop stars, etc.	Yes – Mike Ness, Kat Von D
Artist or art influence	No
Cultural influence	Yes –Irish- Gaelic
SECTION 3: Perceptions	
Happy with tattoo	Definitely
More confident with tattoo	No – “I’ve always been pretty confident”
Tattoos on girls are an equal right	Yes
Awareness of stereotypes with girls	Yes – “tramp stamp”
Family members like tattoo	Yes/ no
First parent informed	Mom
Perceive friends as liking tattoo	Yes – “wrist one is their favorite”
Treated negatively in public	Yes/no – students saying you’re dirty if you have tattoos
Like tattoos on other girls	Yes/no
Like tattoos on boys	Yes – “shows character...a little bit of who you are”
Encouraged to not get tattooed	Yes – a couple of friends



	Rheanna Left wrist tattoo
SECTION 4: Risk-taking	
Tattooed in Canada	Yes
Tattooed professionally	Yes
Familiar with artist's work	Yes – through friends
Inspected tattoo business	Yes
Asked about medical problems	Yes – “there's a huge form”
Informed of risks	Yes - pamphlet
Procedure explained	Yes
Informed of aftercare	Yes
Was the experience painful	Yes – “my foot one hurt really bad”
Signed consent form	Yes
Should tattoo businesses inform clients of risks	Yes – ‘definitely’
Should schools teach about risks	Yes – “should be mentioned”
Awareness of risks	Yes – “you can't donate blood”
Know of anyone who has had a problem	Yes – mom had problems with red/pink inks
Risks learned from what sources	mom
Knowledge of risks influence you	Yes – ‘definitely think twice’
Henna tattoo	Yes – “ was experiencing them before I getting a tattoo”
Problems with tattoo	No
Have body piercings	Yes – ‘nose, bellybutton, tongue, ears’
Problems with piercings	No
Discourage another person	No – “ absolutely not”
Engage in other risk-behaviors	Yes – “I've had my fair share, I'm not drinking now”

Table 10: Participant 10

	Carrie Right shoulder-back tattoo
SECTION 1: Background	
Age	17
Grade	11
Permanent tattoo	Yes
More than one tattoo	No
Age of first tattoo	16
Parental consent to get a tattoo	No
Plan to get another tattoo	Maybe
Ethnic background	Caucasian
Religious affiliation	Christian
SECTION 2: Influences	
Started thinking about tattoos	Age 15
Family members with tattoos	Yes - aunts
Friends with tattoos	Yes
Associated with an event	Yes – memorial tattoo for dad
Watch tattoo reality programs	Yes – <i>Miami Ink</i> , <i>La Ink</i>
Buy/read tattoo magazines	No
Surf tattoo websites	Yes
Attend tattoo conventions	No
Have favorite tattooed pop stars, etc.	Yes – Blink 182
Artist or art influence	No
Cultural influence	No
SECTION 3: Perceptions	
Happy with tattoo	Yes – very
More confident with tattoo	Yes
Tattoos on girls are an equal right	Yes
Awareness of stereotypes with girls	Yes
Family members like tattoo	Yes/ no
First parent informed	Mom
Perceive friends as liking tattoo	Yes the definitely love it
Treated negatively in public	Yes – they “think whoa that’ hard core”
Like tattoos on other girls	Yes – “subtle” tattoos
Like tattoos on boys	Yes – not “naked girls”
Encouraged to not get tattooed	Yes – older sister




	<p>Carrie Right shoulder-back tattoo</p>
<p>SECTION 4: Risk-taking</p>	
<p>Tattooed in Canada</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Tattooed professionally</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Familiar with artist's work</p>	<p>Yes – had tattooed boyfriend</p>
<p>Inspected tattoo business</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Asked about medical problems</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Informed of risks</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Procedure explained</p>	<p>Yes – “showed me the needle and all that kind of stuff”</p>
<p>Informed of aftercare</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Was the experience painful</p>	<p>Yes – “really painful, in certain parts”</p>
<p>Signed consent form</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Should tattoo businesses inform clients of risks</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Should schools teach about risks</p>	<p>Yes – “definitely”</p>
<p>Awareness of risks</p>	<p>Yes – “could get diseases if needles aren't clean”</p>
<p>Know of anyone who has had a problem</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Risks learned from what sources</p>	<p>Friends, school</p>
<p>Knowledge of risks influence you</p>	<p>No - “I was thinking of when I was like 80”</p>
<p>Henna tattoo</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Problems with tattoo</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Have body piercings</p>	<p>Yes – nose pierced, “I did it myself”</p>
<p>Problems with piercings</p>	<p>Yes – infection</p>
<p>Discourage another person</p>	<p>Yes/no – “depend on why they are getting it”</p>
<p>Engage in other risk-behaviors</p>	<p>No</p>

Table 11: Participant 11

	Lisa Upper left-arm tattoo
SECTION 1: Background	
Age	16
Grade	11
Permanent tattoo	Yes
More than one tattoo	No
Age of first tattoo	16
Parental consent to get a tattoo	No
Plan to get another tattoo	Yes
Ethnic background	Caucasian
Religious affiliation	Not affiliated
SECTION 2: Influences	
Started thinking about tattoos	14
Family members with tattoos	Yes - dad
Friends with tattoos	Yes
Associated with an event	No
Watch tattoo reality programs	Yes – <i>Miami Ink</i>
Buy/read tattoo magazines	No
Surf tattoo websites	Yes – “just to look at like people’s artwork”
Attend tattoo conventions	No
Have favorite tattooed pop stars, etc.	Yes – Norma Jean
Artist or art influence	No
Cultural influence	No
SECTION 3: Perceptions	
Happy with tattoo	“so happy, so happy”
More confident with tattoo	Yes – not as self- conscious about weight
Tattoos on girls are an equal right	Yes
Awareness of stereotypes with girls	Yes
Family members like tattoo	Yes/no – mom “said it was cute ”
First parent informed	Mom
Perceive friends as liking tattoo	Yes – accept one male friend
Treated negatively in public	No – positive comments from “elderly people”
Like tattoos on other girls	Yes – “if it means something”
Like tattoos on boys	Yes – ‘same thing, if it means something”
Encouraged to not get tattooed	Yes – friends

	<p>Lisa Left upper-arm tattoo</p>
<p>SECTION 4: Risk-taking</p>	
Tattooed in Canada	Yes
Tattooed professionally	Yes
Familiar with artist's work	Yes – did sister's boyfriend
Inspected tattoo business	Yes
Asked about medical problems	Yes
Informed of risks	N/A
Procedure explained	Yes – “he was really good about it”
Informed of aftercare	Yes
Was the experience painful	Yes/no – “it would sting, but it was like bearable”
Signed consent form	No
Should tattoo businesses inform clients of risks	Yes – “if they don't they shouldn't be in that field”
Should schools teach about risks	No – “don't think we should take it quite that far”
Awareness of risks	Yes – “if unclean they could be wreathing ... ”
Know of anyone who has had a problem	Yes – male friend
Risks learned from what sources	Internet, library
Knowledge of risks influence you	No
Henna tattoo	Yes
Problems with tattoo	No
Have body piercings	Yes – have had everything – done some myself
Problems with piercings	No – “I was really thorough, took good care of them”
Discourage another person	Yes/no – “make sure it's something you're 100% sure of”
Engage in other risk-behaviors	Yes/no – “personally I'm kind of totally over that stuff”

4.3 Conclusion

Although data in this section is briefly presented, Chapter 5 will examine and discuss girls' responses in greater detail. Themes respecting family and popular influences, perceptions regarding stereotypes, and the understanding of different potential risks related to tattooing are all items which require further discussion. For example, female actors or musicians with tattoos have influenced participants' tattoo style and the placement of their tattoos, and perception of tattoos on other girls was considered acceptable if the images were perceived by the participants as meaningful and feminine. Also, the following chapter will examine such questions as why girls may perceive older people as "looking down on" their tattoos, as well as why girls are willing to partake in a practice that can involve 20 minutes to sometimes several hours of mild to severe pain? For example, Rheanna's experience with this procedure was perceived by the researcher as distressing.

I made him stop. I made him stop at first cause he does like each letterI was like **okay, five minute break, I need a smoke, I'm in pain, like it hurt**; it hurt. I almost had tears in my eyes.

CHAPTER V: Discussion

5.1 Section 1: Influences

5.11 Introduction

Permanently marking the body has historically occupied a traditional space within many cultures outside of Western and Euro-western societies. After its appropriation by Western male subcultures in the last few centuries, the tattoo became associated with several prejudicial and/or stereotypic aspects which, to a certain extent, resulted in the devaluation of its original intent. Young women have currently re-appropriated the tattoo resulting in several debates as to the reasons why they would partake in a previously dominated masculine practice.

The emergence of the tattoo in younger female populations is acknowledged by some feminist theorists as a form of ownership and reclamation of the female body. However female tattooing has also been considered as a fad or as a form of fashion that is consumed through what people make ‘popular’ (Fiske, 1990). Tattoos are part of the daily visual experiences girls have with media figures considered popular or relevant in their social and private lives. Margot Mifflin (1997) believes the popularity of girls’ tattoos is an extension of the feminist movement in which ‘baby boomer’ mothers have directly influenced their daughters’ body art practices through their own participation in body art practices.

This first section examines interview responses related to questions concerning girls’ reasons for acquiring a tattoo and for choosing specific images. In addition to responses of “having always wanted one” or “no these did not influence me” there were two significant influences that appeared prominent in the participants’ desire to get tattooed. Girls’ mothers were notably influential in their daughters’ decisions to get tattooed and in the type of image tattooed. Secondly, musicians and other tattooed media figures popular with participants were partly influential with girls’ placement and style

of tattoos. Girls, as well, appropriated various cultural language forms or symbols that were personally meaningful.

5.12 Influences: family

Families have a supportive role in shaping and influencing adolescent perceptions, opinions, and behaviors. Participant responses indicated that tattooing was a familiar practice in eight of the girls' immediate families with mothers being reported as having tattoos more frequently than any other family member. Four girls, Sadie, Jessica, Amy, and Breanne, stated that they had received a tattoo as a birthday present from their mother:

Jessica: "It was my birthday, it was fairly close to my birthday [and] well my mom was going in to get one too so we thought we'd get one together; ya kind of like a girls' kind of thing"

Amy: "She (mom) gave the tattoo on my back as a birthday present. We've always been close....I wanted a tattoo and she decided to get it for me."

The majority of the girls recalled mother-daughter related experiences or memories that were influential to their desiring a tattoo, acquiring a tattoo, and choosing a particular image.

Hanna: "Ever since I was a little girl (I wanted one) because my mom had a tattoo on her ankle and I wanted to get that."

Sadie: "My mom's always had tattoos so I wanted one."

Rheanna: "My mom has tons of tattoos too on her whole leg and her back and everything."

Breanne: "Probably when my mom got her first tattoo, I was about eight I think."

Amy: "My mom influenced me to get a tattoo, but not really like influenced me. She like pushed me to get a tattoo in a away. She got her wrist tattooed¹⁷ and I loved the idea after that."

¹⁷ Amy's mother has 'Amy' tattooed on her wrist.

Some girls described and conveyed their tattoo and tattoo image as a bonding experience with their mothers and other family members. Tasha's first tattoo was related to always remembering her family after moving out of her parent's home, Carrie needed a connection with her dad who had passed away, and Taylor felt her tattoo would bring her closer to a brother who was experiencing difficulties in his life. More than half of the girls participating in this study had tattooed images that were influenced by their mothers, conveyed mother-daughter relationships, or would in the future relate to their mothers.

Rheanna: "Me and my mom were actually going to get matching ones on Mother's Day but my friend's shop was all booked up so next time she comes down here we're going to get one."

Breanne: "My mom's name is Rose so I got a rose on my left shoulder blade...and my mom's favorite colour is pink."

Jessica: "I use to pick the white daisies for my mom."

Amy: "My mom actually drew my tattoo."

Hanna: [My mom has] "a rose and it says my name in it, but I'm going to get one that says her name in it."

Research on mother-daughter relationships has evidenced the importance of a supportive relationship for the development of positive self-identity in girls (Ogle & Damhorst, 2004; Owens, Scofield, & Taylor, 2003). Ogle and Damhorst noted in their narrative research on mother-daughter interactions that appearances, expressions, and beliefs of the female body were shaped by their relationships with each other. Furthermore, Owens et al. assert the relationship between mothers and daughters are critical to how girls define themselves and to how they relate to others. Girls who engage in higher levels of identity exploration are known to have parents that encourage and respect adolescent individuality (Blume & Blume, 2003).

Participants discussed relationships with other tattooed family members to a lesser extent. Tasha was excited at the prospect of getting a family tattoo with her siblings, especially her brother who was in

the Marine Corps; Taylor described how she idolized her aunt who was previously married to a well-known rock musician; Sadie mentioned an aunt who was in the Canadian Armed Forces and had a tattooed Canadian flag; and Hanna was proud of all her First Nations' family members with tattoos. Hanna was the only participant whose father encouraged her to get more tattoos after she had shown him the star tattooed on her hand. Ardelt and Day (2002) report research findings which suggest that older relatives who are considered as peers can influence younger family members' attitudes and behaviors.

Girls stated that their friends did not influence their decision to get tattooed. However the majority of these girls had male and female peers with tattoos. Girls got tattooed with friends, they asked friends to accompany them, or they went to tattoo businesses with their mothers or other relatives.

5.13 Influences: popular figures

A recognizable indicator of tattoo popularity is its increased presence in the visual media (Kosut, 2006). Adolescents are known to imitate and/or identify with people who they consider famous (Ivaldi & O'Neill, 2008; Engle & Kasser, 2005). Furthermore, Kosut states it is easy to find a tattooed star that embraces one's music tastes and life style. Girls referred to 17 musicians and rock bands with tattoos, most of which were male; they named a few actresses; and one respondent's reference to a male athlete was partially due to his association with Posh from the *Spice Girls*. The following images represent a selection of media figures that girls considered interesting.



Figure 13: Blink 182 (*starpulse.com*)

Carrie: "I've always thought they were interesting. They've got one guy, he's like covered in tattoos."



Figure 14: Hedley (Medley, 2008)



Figure 15: Lil' Wayne (*starpulse.com*)



Figure 16: Birdman (*mbs ventures.com*)

Tasha: “Ya his father is Birdman and they’re rappers and they sing together and he’s got teardrops down his eyes.”



Figure 17 : Norma Jean (*daylife.com*)

- Lisa: “Well I listen to kind of like Punk, Indy Hard Core, a mix of that so it’s like when I go to concerts it’s like guys with their sleeves so it’s kind of like I see tattoos on everyone, and I guess my favorite band at one point was Norma Jean and they’ve got like sleeves and like and you know I’ve never really looked too closely but it just looks like they’re really nice and some of them are really colourful...it’s not trashy at all it’s just colourful, it’s just ‘beautiful’, like it just looks gorgeous... and they’re like musicians right.”



Figure 18: Mike Ness (*noexpiration.blogspot.com*)

Rheanna: “Actually he’s like a wild act.”



Figure 19: Tommy Lee (*starpulse.com*)

Taylor: “My aunt, she has a tattoo that she doesn’t like; it’s like a naked lady but like a nymph. [She got it] because she was married to Tommy Lee and she thought it would be cool....”



Figure 20: David Beckham (Dexie, 2008)

- Taylor: “That’s like Posh from Spice Girls, that’s her husband; he’s like a big soccer star”

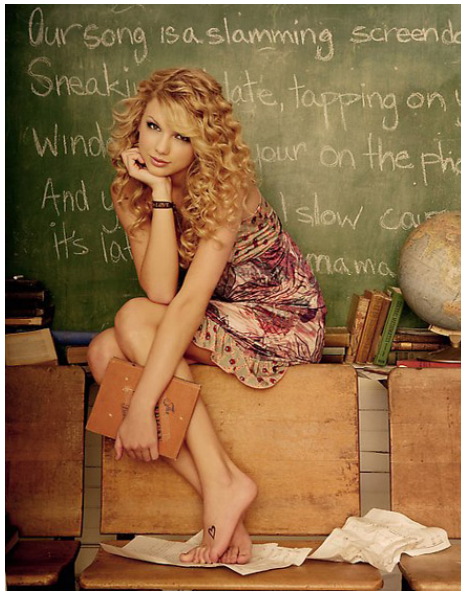


Figure 21: Taylor Swift (*starpulse.com*)

Hanna: Taylor Swift, she has a tattoo; like a little heart I don't know what it resembles to her but it's pretty cool."

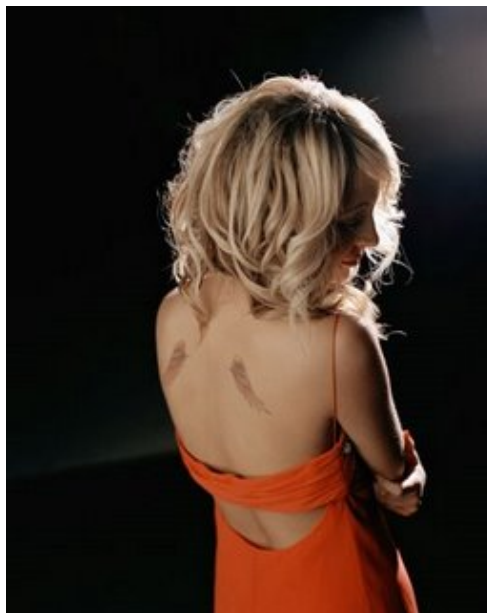


Figure 22: Nicole Ritchie (Hussey, 2008)

Leanne: "I really like the wings on Nicole's back."



Figure 23: Kelly Osbourne (*bbc.co.com*)

Lisa: “She’s got a few tattoos on her wrist and she did modeling for one of the stores in the mall, like her pictures were up everywhere in that store and I thought ‘where are her tattoos’ and they like covered them all up and it was just like, it was stupid ... I actually went further into it, not being rude or anything but I was just really curious as to like why. I actually talked to the manager of the store; she was in that day and they said that basically they wanted to portray a ‘proper’ image.”



Figure 24: Megan Fox (*starpulse.com*)

Rheanna: “I know the chick from *Transformers* ... Megan Fox, I believe, she’s got one along her side and some people think it’s a **hot** tattoo.”



Figure 25: Pink (*Celebrity Tattoos*)

Tasha: “She’s got a cobra right on the back of her thigh, that’s pretty sweet.”



Figure 26: Mandy Moore (*Just Jared.com*)

Hanna: “She’s the one that plays on *A Walk to Remember*. She’s also a singer...like in the movie they have her with a butterfly on her shoulder.”

Tattoos on celebrities can be perceived as endorsing and authenticating girls' own tattoo practices and experiences. Ivaldi and O'Neill (2008) report adolescents admire the dedication, talent, and image presented by musicians. Girls' idolization of male musicians is related, in part, to the commercialization of a culture in which girls engage in and in which they subsequently perceive celebrities, celebrity related products or image associations as objects or ideas for consumption (Engle & Kasser, 2005). Rheanna stated that celebrities "definitely" influence the placement of tattoos, and they influence the style of tattoo. Girls reported liking tattoos that were associated with the artwork from such bands as *Tool*, *Iron Maiden*, and *Pink Floyd*. Megan Fox's poetic tattoo on the left side of her back and Lindsay Lohan's small star tattoos on her wrist and hand were considered popular locations for tattoo placement. Leanne responded that several of her friends had stars on their wrists and that was "like a Lindsay Lohan thing".

The intolerance society has with those who do not conform to traditional norms is not equally relegated to celebrities. Unconventionality or the grotesque according to Russo (1995) is associated with power and a self-fashioning of the body that disrupts patriarchal norms and desire. Female musicians including Pink, Eve, and Bif Naked and actresses Angelina Jolie and Megan Fox are only a few who proudly assert their careers, their independence, their self-confidence, and their dominance as women in a society that continues to resonate patriarchal norms of beauty.

5.14 Influences: reality television, websites, and tattoo memorabilia

Tattoo reality television programs, *Miami Ink* and *LA Ink*, were watched regularly by all participants except Tasha who was not impressed with the series "conflicts and issues" and with the "yelling" she observed between the reality performers. Girls who regularly viewed these programs stated that they considered the stories and reasons behind why people get tattooed and the images which people had tattooed as interesting, entertaining, and enlightening. Papachariss and Medelson (2007) state that

people will watch reality television if they perceive its content as realistic and if the information presented is perceived as useful.

Sadie: "I met Kat Von D, the girl tattoo artist, she's on Miami Ink. I never knew who she was and I got pictures taken with her so I started watching TV shows to try to find out more about her."

Lisa: "The shows they're kind of weird because they like have the person who's getting tattooed like talking about it; like people have pretty good reasons for getting them."

Hanna: "Most of the people when they come in are mostly getting a tattoo for a good reason. They always have a personal side to it; some of the stories can actually get quite touching."

Jessica: "I notice that most of the people who come in there and get a tattoo kind of feel that it represents something....It's interesting to hear their stories [and] watch a really good tattoo artist."

Previous research by Reiss and Wiltz (2004) suggest that watching reality television was related to status and appeal: motivators in which people have a perception of superiority when viewing reality performers and in which different psychological needs can potentially be fulfilled such as voyeurism or vengeance. June Deery (2004) states reality television programming is 'advertainment' in which programs are "designed to sell as it entertains (p. 1). However, Papachariss and Medelson (2007) believe interest in reality programs is based on the observer's level of involvement with the activity. Girls' interest in *Miami Ink* and *LA Ink* was directly related to their own tattoo experiences and to their desire to obtain information related to body art practices. Furthermore, I believe girls' interest in watching these programs may potentially be perceived as sense of belonging to a subculture. For example, after Leanne had her wrist tattooed she was informed by tattooed others that she was "in that group now", she was "part of a family".

Tattoo websites, as indicated by the participants, were not influential in their desire to have a tattoo. However, more than half of the participants stated that they surfed the Internet to obtain images or ideas for their own tattoos.

Lisa: "I was on this website, it was a tattoo website actually, and I saw this one picture of a bird and I like how the wings were set on it but I didn't like the rest of it so I kind of went on Google and found some like 30 pictures of birds and printed them off."

Carrie: "Actually I did find it over the computer searching for zodiac signs."

Rheanna: "It actually wasn't a tattoo website, it was a henna website and it was just a design on there."

Sadie: "There are a lot of images on Google, a lot of stuff will come up, and there's one site I don't know what it's called but it has a Flash on it and you will see different types of tattoos and possible ideas and I just scan through those."

Adolescents are reported as perceiving the Internet as a place of consumption that encourages the consumption of products and ideas (Lee & Hii, 2003). Other potential sources such as tattoo magazines or tattoo conventions did not impact girls' desire to get tattooed. Only two participants had previously attended a tattoo convention and only four girls' read or browsed tattoo magazines.

Lastly, all participants were previously exposed to various forms of non permanent body art including stickers, temporary tattoos, and body paint.

Taylor: "When I was younger I had so many temporary tattoos. I still have a box, I love them....that totally influenced me. I know it did cause I had this tiger tattoo and I still have it. My auntie gave it to me."

Hanna: "I could definitely say for like younger kids cause especially since they have like little fake like tattoos that you just put on yourself and they come off. Little kids are probably more influenced to get it when they're younger; they're like 'oh I want to get this and I want to get that'..."

Children are exposed to a plethora of items that potentially subject them to future body art practices and to societal stereotypes. These have included, in part, and continue to include tattoo colouring

books, *Mattel* Butterfly Art Barbie, *Girl Crush* tattoo airbrush, *TaT2* electronic pulsating tattoo pen kit for boys, and lower back tattoo stickers sold through vending machines at various retailers. Lisa and Carrie stated that they loved the removable tattoos that they had received from teachers or that they had purchased at dollar stores. Another favorite pastime several girls participated in was drawing tattoos on each other with felt or gel pens. Girls coined this activity ‘body graffiti’.¹⁸

5.15 Conclusion

Adolescents spend a third or more of their day devoted to media (Roberts, 2000) consequently influencing their social practices and associations. Girls are exposed to body art through the television programs and music videos they watch, through the magazines they read, and through the people they idolize including actors, models, musicians, and athletes. Tattoos have become popular through consumption and through the plethora of images and items presented in popular media and consumer marketing. Young people now live in tattoo-friendly and tattoo-flooded cultural landscape (Kosut, 2006). According to Featherstone (1991), consumer culture in contemporary society has become more than a lifestyle, it is now a life project that presents a stylistic statement of individuality; and one that “allows people to imagine themselves differently” (Kenway & Bullen; 2001, p. 19) through desire and fantasy. However, consumption does not define identity, rather it is “a vehicle upon which young people construct their identities: (Miles, 2002, p. 183).

¹⁸ Some girls stated that they had participated in body graffiti parties in which friends would write messages and draw pictures on each others clothes and skin.

5.2 Section 2: Perceptions

5.21 Introduction

Questions in this section are concerned with stereotypes and attitudes girls experience or perceive with having tattoos. Participant narratives discussed are related to their interactions with strangers, friends, or family members; their notions of ideal or appropriate tattoos and tattoo placements; their general position that “if boys can do it so can girls”; and their association of tattoos and self-confidence. The central theme which emerges is the continued presence and lingering of dominant Western norms regarding femininity and the female body.

Stereotypes and attitudes toward girls and women with tattoos are embedded in a history that associates these practices with male dominant or male deviant behaviors including sailors, bikers, gang members, and criminals and with women who were either lower class or considered the ‘exotic other’ (Atkinson, 2003; Burton, 2001; DeMello, 2000). The difficulty in extinguishing these associations rests with how femininity and the female body are defined and continues to be expressed through discourse. Braunberger (1999) states tattoos continue to remain associated with older images including the 1960s perceptions of tattooed women as ‘hippies’ and as ‘biker chicks’. In order to contextualize this perspective a brief history on women and tattoos is discussed.

5.22 Historical overview

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries tattooing was a fashion indulgence practiced secretly or overtly by women. The visibly tattooed body was associated with the grotesque and the carnivalesque and represented an exotic otherness one that portrayed danger, excitement, fascination, and fantasy. Featherstone (1991) notes the grotesque body was in opposition with the beautiful and ideal classical body and was a direct challenge to mainstream cultural associations and attitudes. It was as well,

oppositional to the beliefs of middle and upper classes whose demeanor described as prudish and sexually frigid characterized a Victorian era of strict dress, behavior codes, and sexual repression. The female tattooed body represented prostitution and promiscuity; her display of skin and her markings depicted impurity and a lower or working class position. However, upper and middle class women also sported tattoos under layers of clothing which concealed their practices from societal and patriarchal pressures (DeMello, 2000; Mifflin, 1997).

Tattoo practices significantly increased after the invention of the electric tattoo machine by Samuel O'Reilly in 1891 (Atkinson, 2003). With faster and easier applications of less painful and cheaper tattoos, tattooing became the popular practice of white working class males (DeMello, 2000). Also, the number of women tattooed by their carnival partners increased and "the tattoo show became a form of soft pornography in which women would strip before the crowd, adding a libidinal element to the veritable peep show" (Atkinson, 2003, p. 35). The association of tattooing with females of undesirable character led, in part, to this practice being discontinued by upper and middle class women. However this did not discourage their attendance of or fascination for carnival freak shows (DeMello, 2000). Outrageous stories told to gawking and horrified or excited crowds of how these women were captured by savages, tattooed against their will, and who as well experienced sexual encounters, added elements of eroticism and fantasy to female viewers who maintained expected ideal feminine practices (Mifflin, 1997). Atkinson (2003) writes:

The presentation of alternative body styles and pursuit of libidinal body play at circuses and carnivals actually reaffirmed dominant cultural ideas about the sanctity of the body. Marked bodies were depicted as vicious, savage, and, in some cases, prehistoric and subhuman. The tattoo sideshow became a vehicle for exploring deviant yet exciting body practices, a means of engaging in forms of corporeal subversion strictly forbidden in everyday life (p. 36).

The years after the carnival attractions, until the seventies, saw a decline in newly acquired tattoos as it was perceived unladylike and culturally unacceptable. DeMello (2000) writes "the tattooist, like the

woman's other male keepers, took it upon himself to keep 'nice girls' (i.e., attractive, middle-class, heterosexual women) from transgressing the class and the sexual borders of the time and of turning into tramps" (p. 61). Working class women, considered as lacking in or excluded from the stereotypical beauty of wealthier classes indulged in the tattoo as an alternative form of beautification (Braunberger, 1999). Although working class women have used their tattoos as a way to destabilize dominance (DeMello, 1995), the increased consumption (which often increases cost) of these practices in recent decades has had the opposite effect. Tattoo has become, once more, the practice of elite young women popularized through visual media presentation.

5.23 Contemporary stereotypes and attitudes

In the last decade the female practice of tattooing has become a symbol representing assertiveness and visual defiance of dominate norms regarding femininity and the female body. Bell (1999) believes tattoos on females will never achieve mainstream status as there will always be women who will get small tattoos in concealed locations, thereby reinforcing societal norms regarding femininity and the unblemished skin. However Schildkrout (2004) argues that tattooing is an emerging mainstream practice and it is only through the images and through the degree to which tattoos cover bodies that this practice continues "to push the limits of acceptability" (p. 337). While studies have primarily focused on adults with tattoos, little is known about girls' tattoo practices with respect to Bell and Schildkrout's convictions. The primary purpose of this section was to examine girls' responses with the intention of gaining insight into their perceptions of how tattoos and femininity are interconnected and considered as a female practice.

The majority of girls throughout the interview process described their tattoos, tattoos on other girls, or how their friends perceived their tattoos as: 'girlish', delicate, subtle, cute, pretty, elegant, and classy. Participants believed that societal norms respecting girls' behaviors were different than those experienced by their mothers.

Tasha: “back in the 70s my mom would never think about getting a tattoo....they just looked like young ladies then; you had to keep yourself up per se, you had to keep up your personality and your outward appearance. Now it’s a girls’ thing for sure.”

Jessica: “well back then it was kind of more like you had to be proper and stuff ... you had to be polite....back then it would be outrageous to have something like that...”

Girls also believe that getting a tattoo was an equal right, however their descriptors of tattoos were an unequivocal indication that dominant norms of femininity remain. Tasha asserts “men or women are always going to have similar likings...it’s just equal you know, do what you want to but don’t over exaggerate it”. For example, Leanne responded that tattoos on girls should be “a little feminine and complimentary, and not ridiculous like you know a half sleeve”. When participants were shown an advertisement of a bride with a back tattoo girls believed that “she should be proud to display it because it obviously meant something to her”. However when shown an advertisement of a young woman with a sleeve, girls believed these tattoos were inappropriate and signified deviance such as a “biker chick” reputation. One possibility attributing to this opinion is what Bell (1999) categorizes as aesthetics versus signifier. Heavily tattooed people, she asserts, “are always in the process of being tattooed; the meaning is in the act, and importance becomes placed on personal aesthetics” (p. 6). Considering that the majority of participants have tattoos signifying strong connections to family or friends, the notion that ‘tattooing is a performance’ may be incomprehensible. One distinct tattoo has meaning but several together suggest a disengagement of meaning.

Reasons why girls get tattoos on locations that are easily hidden from the public are not necessarily intended as an adherence of female body notions. Tattoo popularity among high school girls, as indicated by several participants, has become a discrete practice; one that functions as an adolescent following without the negative stigma and one that remains hidden from parents¹⁹. Participants noted

¹⁹ Many adolescent girls who do not have parental consent get tattooed in places concealed from parents.

other circumstances in which their body markings necessitated covering including career status, social events, and family interactions.

Tasha: "I'm not going to sit there and display my tattoos to people....at an authority level you know, you've got to show that you are somewhat committed; so ya there's probably times to cover them and there's times when you let them hang out"

Amy: I won't get a tattoo in a place that I can't hide it....if I was going for a nice dinner like I don't want tattoos all over my arms so I pick places that if I want to show them off I can and if I don't, I don't have to"

Sadie: "he knows I only have one too and if he knew about the other one he probably wouldn't want to talk to me anymore" (referring to grandfather)

Dowd (2002) insinuates women's choice of tattoo placement is "defined by the conditions of flirtation" (p. 11). However the majority of girls attributed their tattoo placement to liking the way it looked, having a desire to see it themselves, and as previously discussed, being influenced by others who had tattoos on specific locations. Although five participants had back tattoos and two others expressed an interest in having one, back location was an important consideration with respect to tattoo placement and associated stereotypes.

Amy who sported a lower lumbar tattoo believed it was 'pretty', however Lisa's response that girls who wear "little belly shirts" with 'half the tattoo sticking out' implied something other than showing it off. Five participants stated that lower back tattoos on girls were their least favorite and they were aware of, as well, associated names such as 'tramp stamp', 'target', and 'bulls eye' used to describe these:

Carrie: Even with the guys when they see a girl with one those you know they see them as easy...they automatically think of that...I don't really think it's fair....

Tasha: "I know it doesn't sound that nice but lots of that tattoo now is pretty much towards (pauses), if you get one you're known as a little bit of a *whore*...I know lots of girls that have it and don't have it for that reason and that's why you shouldn't judge but it is a stereotype that's gone out there right."

Tasha suggested that the general attitude was “why else would you get it there, other than to show it off”. Rheanna used the word ‘dirty’ to describe how some people perceived girls with tattoos. Girls’ tattoo practices are described by some members of society as “disrespecting the sanctity of their female bodies” (MacCormack, 2006, p. 67).

The association of tattoos with sexuality or sexual deviance is a cultural stigma that originated in the early 18th century after the female body subjected to new scientific methods was linked with sexual primitivism (Pitts, 2003). Body art, instead of being considered a cultural mark of beauty, custom, adornment, respect, status, or lifestyle became marked as deviant by a society that did not understand and that believed anyone who was not white was the ‘other’: primitive, exotic, dangerous, freakish, and sexually wild. Pitts (2003) states whereas white bodies often signify the ‘modern’, coloured bodies are presented as ‘primitive’. As well, body perception became associated with the skin and as a result, the skin “is continually read and interpreted in all social situations, that human beings have understood and misunderstood it as an expression of depth, of soul, of inner character” (Benthien, 2002, p. 11). Consequently tattoos on women continue to be associated with the ‘other’ or coloured women continue to be represented as ‘primitive’ in the visual media (Pitts, 2003).

Considering that tattoos on the female body is a violation of previous gendered norms, girls were asked if they thought any stereotypes previously associated with ‘guys’ who had tattoos were now associated with tattooed girls. Participants responded:

Amy: “no, no, when you see a tattoo on a guy, yes that could come to your mind but when you see a girl on the beach with like a flower tattooed on her ankle you’re not going to be like ‘oh she was in jail’ (laughs)”

Lisa: “oh ya for sure like I think there’s always going to be the stereotype that if you have a tattoo you’re in a gang or something like that anddoesn’t matter if it’s like the happiest tattoo in the world I think some people are still going to think you’re like rebelling and you’re like a trouble maker kind of thing”

Leanne: “well I know some people have made, not necessarily negative comments but they, like the people I hang out with, you know some have done some wrong things in their life and all of them have tattoos and some of the older guys that are around like my friend’s mom’s boyfriend have prison tattoos and I don’t know, some of them have made comments that you know I’m ‘in that group’ now, like I’m part of the family, like we all have our markings and you know this is how it is, but I don’t know. I guess somewhat because you know like Kelowna we have all these gangs and things like that. I don’t know it’s just assumed sometimes but that I’m part of a bad group maybe because who I hang out with, we all do have tattoos”

Stereotypes or negative attitudes toward girls with tattoos can reinforce societal perceptions that the female tattooed body as unfeminine is associated with deviance or the deviant behaviors of ascribed masculinity.

5.24 Girls’ tattoos and family acceptability

The majority of girls in this study had strong connections or desires to remain closely connected to their mothers. Research has considered mother-daughter relationships critical to girls’ positive development, their self-esteem, their relationship to others and to how they define themselves (Owens et al., 2003). As previously indicated participant moms were significantly associated and influential with their daughters tattooing practices and were often the first family member informed. Tasha notes that “you always have one parent who’s a little bit easier than the other”. Girls had various reasons for not informing their fathers.

Carrie: “My step-dad didn’t like it. He doesn’t like tattoos in general; he doesn’t think there is any point to them”

Lisa: “well, um my mom just said it probably wasn’t a good idea to tell him. Like I was planning on telling him right after my mom found out but instead of telling him I asked him like “dad can I get a tattoo” and right away he was like “no, if you get a tattoo you’re not coming back in this house.”

Tasha: “at first I didn’t really tell him. I just went and got them done and then he didn’t like them at first. He thinks that you should wait until you reach of age and then once you hit 18 then you’ve thought about it long enough then that’s a good age to do it, which makes sense.... you could tell my mom and she wouldn’t ground you;

tattoos you tell my dad and you'd probably be in your room for a good six months (laughs)."

Rheanna: if my step-dad [saw] it he would *flip out*. He's an old fashion farm guy and is totally against tattoos and piercings.

Hanna: He thinks I should have thought about it a little bit more cause it was kind of on the spot."

These same girls perceived their mothers as more receptive to their daughter's tattoos. Lisa, who initially perceived her mom as being 'mean', acknowledged that her mom's expression was rather, one of disappointment for not being told and not one of anger. Other girls who did not have consent chose public locations or methods they considered comfortable or nonthreatening. Carrie went to her mom's place of employment to show her, Rheanna told her mom over the phone, and Leanne met her parents for coffee. Open communicative adolescent-parent relationships are known to contribute to increased self-esteem and to decreased problems of risky behaviors (Owens et al., 2003).

The problem that some girls could perceive with telling their fathers was verbalized by Lisa:

I think dads are really as much as they probably try not to be, they're really like old fashion still, like they believe that like girls you know how like back in the day girls were like, were 'proper' right, most girls were pretty proper (proper I use that word loosely) and nowadays girls are like so much different and like guys and girls can do the same things now and it's not like looked down on; so I think dads are all like *daddy's little girl*, you know she's an angel, doesn't have tattoos, doesn't have piercings, doesn't drink, doesn't do anything bad; she's my little angel so I think that's why dads are kind of just like *no* (laughter).

Several girls also perceived negativity toward their tattoos by other older family members such as grandparents: Sadie perceived her grandfather and older people in general as "looking down on it"; Carrie believed her grandparents who lived in another province "wouldn't be too thrilled"; Hanna stated "if my grandma and grandpa found out I'd definitely have to say it [was] ink because they don't even know that my mom has tattoos", and Rheanna responded "she's not really impressed with them". Breanne's grandmother's religious beliefs opposed the marking of one's body and Leanne was

informed by her cousin that her 'Jewish grandmother' on her father's side was 'supposedly' removing Leanne from her will:

I hope she's joking (laughs). Maybe, maybe not, but apparently that was the deal that she told us all when we were younger. If we ever got tattoos we'd be right out of the will (laughs). I don't know she's not even that religious.

Rani and Sharma (2004) note, adolescents in the 16 age group often view their grandparents as people that do not understand or treat them fairly. However, other grandparents were perceived as having different reactions:

Leanne: I just went and showed them (mother's parents) just because my mom was like have they said anything yet. So I showed her and she thought *it was so pretty and so colourful* and I went and showed my grandpa and he was just shocked that I could never get it off my skin; he just didn't understand it's permanent.

Taylor: My grandma didn't want me to get one...but I showed her after I got it and she really liked it. She was "wow, that's cool"; she's like "I want one now". My grandma is 59.

Lisa: She paid for me to get my second hole on my ears pierced.... and she gave me this big lecture on how I have to be my own individual when I'm older and I have to be unique and stuff and when she was growing up she was like if she got her ears pierced even she'd get in so much trouble and so I thought it was kind of really cool that she let me get my second hole for my ears....It's nice that my grandma said that cause I think she'd be pretty accepting of the tattoo.

Amy attributed older people's stereotyping as "still having that thought in their head" that tattoos are a cult practice. Taylor's experience at work one evening illustrates the attitudes that girls perceive from some 'older' people:

There was like this really elderly customer and he's like "I don't want to get served by you"; and she's like "well why not" and he's like "well you have a tattoo on your wrist, that's a sign of you being in a cult" and so he came over to me and I didn't really want to serve him but I had to because it's work right. Ya, it's really weird. I didn't think anybody would think like that cause all it was, was like a music note. It wasn't anything bad, it wasn't some weird symbol; and it was just a music symbol, about the size of a loonie.

Lisa's experience with 'elderly' people differed:

I'm a cashier so people are always like coming through my till I have a lot of elderly people commenting....Like this one lady she's like, she was telling me about how she's seen so many youth with tattoos that just look so trashy and how they're totally going to regret it in a few years cause it just looks *dum*, like a skull with a heart you know... then she was just going off on how she thinks [my tattoo is] so nice and it can represent so many different things.... She was probably 80 too right, so in her time it was like if someone like a girl had a tattoo, like that would be like the worst thing ever. It was really nice that she said that, it just shows that people can kind of accept the way the world's changing.

The majority of the girls expressed an awareness of 'old' notions regarding tattoos on the female body, especially adolescent girls. Sadie stated, "well my tattoos are all in places that are hidden and I generally try to hide them just in case I offend somebody...the occasional old person you know they get offended with things". Amy responded "especially like older people, they just stare at you when you walk down a street because you have a tattoo. *Oh, kids these days.* It's pretty funny."

Older people may perceive tattoos on girls as offensive and perceive girls as rebellious and aggressive. Gross and Hardin (2007) found in their study on adolescent stereotyping that adolescents who are perceived as being rebellious become subjected to negative stereotyping. Furthermore, research has indicated that negative media representations of girls have assisted in promoting uneasiness, anxiety, and other concerns about young people (Chesney-Lind, Morash, & Irwin, 2007; Kelly, 2006). Chesney-Lind, Morash and Irwin (2004) state media suggestions that girls are becoming more like boys are unfounded in research related to girls and violence. They suggest that the negative relabeling of girls' rebellious behaviors is related to increased social control of girls by a patriarchal society.

5.25 Tattoos and self confidence

“Tattooed skin provokes response.... [and] demands engagement” while simultaneously attracting and resisting the gaze of others (MacCormack, 2006, p. 77). Considering the negative reactions some participants had experienced, girls were asked if they were disturbed or ‘bothered’ by people’s staring. Girls’ responses indicated that they were aware of people staring but they were not outwardly affected by this.

Sadie: “I don’t really notice half the time when people stare...I try not to let it bug me because I’ll never see them again.”

Jessica: “It depends like if you were to have a whole bunch all over your body then I think you’re kind of doing it for attraction.”

Leanne: “Some people stare, ya in class and stuff. It doesn’t really bother me.”

Taylor: “I really don’t care if they see my tattoo and they want to look at it. I expected that when I got it ...I couldn’t care less, maybe they’re thinking in their head ‘wow that’s really cool’.”

Lisa: “ya a few, but it’s mostly just like people in my lineup at work, I can see them staring at my arm and it’s kind of like I want to show them but can’tI definitely like the attention.”

The likelihood that tattoos invite public interaction and potentially provoke negative responses or girls’ self-perceived positive responses can be conceived as an act of political resistance against dominant conceptions of femininity. If tattoos are perceived as a form of resistance then how would this affect their self-perception and could the act of having a tattoo be employed as a means to gain popularity or attention? Respecting this, girls were asked if they felt more confident or sociable with having a tattoo.

Sadie: “When people ask me about my tattoo it makes me feel good to say that I drew it myself and they go ‘oh you drew it yourself, that’s neat, I like it’.”

Lisa: “I use to be like, like I’m a little bit chubbier so I’m kind of self-conscious and I’d always wear like sweaters to cover up my stomach but it’s kind of difficult to wear a sweater when I want everyone to see my tattoo so I don’t wear sweaters as much as I did now and it’s kind of nice cause then I’m not overly hot in the

summertime either. I guess it has kind of boosted my confidence a little bit. I want to show off my tattoo so I don't wear sweaters; I don't cover myself up."

Taylor: "It was a huge confidence booster for me; it made me feel really like empowered."

Leanne: "I'm just proud of myself that I went and got it done and now it kind of makes me a unique individual."

Hanna: "Ya it makes me feel that I've done something that like people who haven't gotten tattoos that they haven't experiencedjust being able to say ya I've done it; it's made me more confident for sure."

Tasha: "a little bit probably ya ...cause you strike up conversations with tattoos right so it gives you a bit more ability to talk to people. You're in the middle of the street and somebody will go "that's a nice tattoo" and then get a conversation going from that."

Other responses indicated girls would have increased popularity with having a tattoo since other peers would see them as engaging in a practice that they were not allowed to or having the courage to get tattooed without parental permission. Although the majority of girls verbally stated that their tattoo was not a form of resistance several of the interviews indicated otherwise, especially with respect to not having parental consent.

5.26 Conclusion

"Tattooed persons are still defined as tattooed persons" (MacCormack, 2006, p. 79). Participants in this study perceived themselves as distinctly different from others who were without tattoos. Raby (2006) discusses Munoz's notion of disidentification as a form of girls' resistance in which dominant norms are challenged but are maintained through their actions or practices. Practices such as tattooing, body piercing, deviant clothing and hair styles are meant to signify a "look what I can do" mentality that provokes negative responses from others. Lisa and Amy both admitted having participated in 'Goth' in early adolescence. Amy noted "it's all about how you present yourself" that invokes positive or negative attitudes.

5.3 Section 3: Tattoos as a risk-taking practice

5.31 Introduction

Tattooing has been documented, from numerous sources, as a practice that involves various degrees of potential risk (Vanston & Scott, 2008). One major component of this study was to investigate not only girls' understanding of tattoos as a risk-taking practice but also their awareness of potential risks associated with this activity. Questions were designed to initiate responses that would encourage girls to impart their experiences and perceptions respecting body art practices and risk with the intention that these responses could be used by professionals in an educational capacity. It was apparent from the stories disclosed and interactive dialogue that this experience provided an opportunity for girls to construct personal meaning-making and understandings through their reflections. Responses generated a wealth of material related to girls' awareness of tattoo safety protocols and potential risks, their willingness to experience pain, their engagement in other forms of risk-taking practices, their defining and perception of risk; and their attitudes toward the education of tattooing practices in schools and through body art establishments.

5.32 Girls' awareness of potential tattoo risks

Considering the prolific nature of this practice among girls, information about potential risks should be easily accessible and, as well, girls should have experienced prior education informing and advising them of potential risks and safety precautions. This is not necessarily the case. Several participants stated that they believed there were associated risks, however less than half were able to, or offered to identify specific risks. Infection was the main risk that girls associated with tattoos. This finding echoes the results reported by Montgomery and Parks (2001) as they stated local infections and allergies as adverse health reactions are the main risks associated with tattoos. Specified potential risks other than infection were also known to participants through people they associated with. For example, Taylor was informed by her mother, who worked in the dental field, of a young female

patient in her twenties who had contracted Hepatitis C (HCV) from getting tattooed in an unsafe body art establishment. Evidenced by the Hepatitis Foundation International (2003), one hundred and seventy million people are infected globally with HCV, and tattooing and piercing are one of the primary sources for this infection in developing and under-developed countries. Rheanna's knowledge of ink allergies stemmed from her mother's reactions to pink and red tattoo pigments. Allergic reactions to red inks, known as the 'red reaction', are documented and can occur several years later (Aberer & Krünke, 2003; Shagam, 2005). Consequently Rheanna stated she would never get a coloured tattoo. Sadie's awareness of the relevant risks also related to her mother's experience of a severe infection which had confined her to bed for several days:

She was lying in bed for a while and it still kind of pokes out of the skin, like if she turns to the side you can see little bumps of where the scab had formed. I definitely took consideration into how to take care of [my tattoo] cause I don't really have any health problems.

Sadie's knowledge of the risks was also attributed to her mother's boyfriend who was a professional tattoo artist. Tasha who had some medical problems commented; "You've got to be careful who you go to for sure". However, the majority of participants considered that risks associated with tattooing were a result of improper aftercare and not from unsafe establishments or practices. Recent research and literature on adolescent knowledge and beliefs regarding blood born viruses such as Hepatitis B found that adolescents who engage in high-risk activities (e.g., adolescents with tattoos, piercings, and more than one sexual partner) perceived their risk for infection as low and believed precautions to protect themselves were not necessary (Slonim et al., 2005; Youth Culture Inc., 2001). Although several girls in this study stated that they had thought about getting tattooed for a long time, most participants' reasons had to do with permanence and not risk factors.

Other known associated complications with tattoos were familiar to individual participants. Rheanna was aware that one could not donate blood after having a tattoo.²⁰ Taylor stated that her brother's infected tattoo caused the inks in the tattoo to be rejected and Amy's older cousin was refused an epidural during child-birth for having a lower lumbar tattoo. This is not uncommon since anesthesiologists are concerned with puncture-related complications and potential long-term associated problems including epidermoid tumours and arachnoiditis (inflammation of nerve roots within the filum terminale) with lower lumbar tattoos (Kuczkowski, 2006; Stevenson, 2004; Douglas & Swenerton, 2002).

Discussions were initiated through Leanne and Rheanna's familiarity with ultraviolet (UV) tattoos:

Rheanna: "actually my friend has one and when we went neon bowling his whole arm was glowing....I don't think I'd get it done, I can't see it being healthy"

Leanne: "well it's probably not good to have glow in the dark ink in your skin for your whole life, like there has to be some kind of chemical in there but *it's so cool*. I like it; it's a really neat look"

Girls were informed that UV tattoos contain phosphorus or other UV chemicals that are used as tracking agents for fish (Brown, 2006). Leanne immediately responded "Oh, I don't know if I would want that in my system". Although it was not the intent of the researcher to 'teach' girls about potential risks or complications, opportunities arose which necessitated further discussions. Vanston and Scott (2008) state that perceptions of such practices as a 'cool thing' "may indicate limited knowledge that these forms of body art can result in possible health ... problems (p. 2). This was also the situation with henna tattoos. Although only a few girls had henna previously, only one participant, Tasha, was aware of allergic reactions and skin scarring from black henna containing paraphenylenediamine (PPD). Tasha was familiar with henna related concerns through school activity

²⁰ "The Canadian Blood Services requires a six month waiting period for donating blood from anyone who has had tattoos and body or ear piercings; and the American Red Cross recommends a 12 month waiting period in states that do not regulate tattoo and body piercing facilities (Vanston & Scott, 2008).

clubs. Health Canada (2003) banned PPD in Canada and issued a public alert; however “health-related alerts are not always public knowledge, resulting in the continued performance of risk-related practices” (Vanston & Scott, 2008, p. 6).

5.33 Sources of information regarding tattoos and potential risks

A question in mind was: How do girls become knowledgeable about their risk-related practices? Seven participants stated that potential risks associated with tattooing were learned from the tattoo artist; others mentioned family and friends; a few had read news and magazine articles or pamphlets; and three identified television programs including *Miami Ink* and *LA Ink* a source for information. Lisa who had researched tattoos through websites found that some sites offered good information, although she found others were not helpful:

I went to another website and it was using these big scientific words.... like I was 14 at the time, didn't understand a single word and I was like how is this going to benefit anyone.... like the heading of the article was what caught me cause it said 'Tattoos for Youth' so I was like oh that should be easy to read, right, *no wrong*, it was like reading a medical book.

Lisa further stated that the book she found in the local library “was more for adults and it was really like medical terms, proper terms so it really wasn't that helpful cause I couldn't understand it”.

When participants were asked if “possible tattoo risks should be discussed in the classroom or at school” girls were divided. Some believed it was a personal choice and others believed that parents might consider schools as promoting tattoos. Other girls' reasons related to negative comments from teachers with respect to their tattoos and tattoos in general. The participants who suggested that it should definitely be discussed in the school setting stated that pamphlets/flyers in the career or counseling centres as appropriate places for distribution of relevant information on tattoos particularly those that addressed potential risks and safety precautions. Although, several girls believed tattoos

were a form of art, only one suggested that this practice could be addressed in the art classroom “like graffiti”²¹. Obviously this is an issue that needs further discussion.

5.34 Girls’ experiences of getting tattooed

When participants were asked “tell me about your experience with getting tattooed”, it evoked several interesting responses and stories. Some of the exact words used to describe girls’ experience were stinging, aggravating, irritating, annoying, awkward, weird, different, numb, and bearable. All girls, except one reported that getting tattooed was a painful procedure. Taylor suggested “anybody who says it doesn’t hurt to get a tattoo is just trying to act tough”.

Although girls admitted to being scared and nervous, they equally admitted to being excited at the prospect of getting a tattoo. Breanne declared:

I was so scared; I was shaking ...**oh my God!** My mom says “you’ll be fine but if you want to turn back now”, and I’m “no I really want this, I’ve been waiting forever to get this, I really want to get it done”.

Considering that participants in this study reported that getting tattooed was a painful procedure why would girls want to experience this sensation other than really wanting a tattoo? One participant, during the initial meeting, admitted to her dad that getting tattooed was “like an adrenaline rush”. Painful stimulation according to Wohlrab, Stahl, & Kappelar (2007), “is associated with a release of endorphins in the body, generating positive emotions in addition to an anesthetizing effect” (p. 91). Brickman (2004) also states that views regarding pain and body modification have ranged from experiencing spiritual enlightenment to a willingness to forge a self-identity. Girls noted varying degrees of pain during tattooing:

²¹ Graffiti is one form or style of tattoo.

Carrie: “like the first line or so, like it was really painful...after awhile it starts to get numb”

Amy: “**it hurt like hell**...needles going in and out of your skin **hurts**”

Leanne: “like a burning sensation of like pins dragging across your skin...
I was squeezing her hand (a friend) for a good 20 minutes”

Sadie: “uncomfortable cause I sat there for over two hours”

Lisa elaborated on her experience noting that the tattoo artist was extremely sensitive to her ordeal:

...so I was really like cause in the back of my mind I was afraid it was going to hurt but at the same time I was **so** ready and I was **so** pumped. Went to the tattoo shop, couldn't even wait, I was like, I was like let's just do this, **go please, please**. Like I was so pumped and like he was really good about it. Like I lay down and I had my friend hold me and I kind of squeezed her hand whenever there was a sharp twinge and like [the artist] was really good about it, he like was walking me through and telling me when to take deep breaths and stuff and like he'd tell me when he was about to put the needle in my skin. So, it was like, it was good...I was afraid of, I was kind of afraid of I was going to cry and he was like “no you won't cry, you'll be fine” and I'm like (pauses), he was telling me like about a few people. Oh he told me I took it really well, which I did cause I was kind of sort of laughing at some points and he was telling me about how some people like cry and bawl their eyes out. He'd feel **so bad** and he was just relieved that I was able to take it as good as I did.

Myers (1992) in an earlier study of extreme body modification with both men and women of different ages reported that “pain was greeted “with a gamut of emotions that ranged from eager anticipation to trembling fear, with most people simply registering a stoic acceptance of the fact” (p. 292). Atkinson and Young (2001) state that the physical appearance of having a tattoo can demonstrate toughness and the courage to engage in such practices. However the majority of participants in this study believed their tattoos were about ‘freedom of choice’.

Breanne: “I don't know how to explain it but it's not more self-control, it's kind of ... like it's your choice you can put a tattoo on your body and it's something that, you can change your body if you wanted to do that.”

Sadie: “Well it might have been a little bit different if my mom was like closed minded toward the situation about me getting tattooed especially... [She told me] “Well just make sure you know what you want”. So it makes me feel like I have some control.”

Leanne: “It’s kind of given my parents a bit of a reality shake knowing that I can pretty much do what I want to my won body and they just need to respect my decision.”

5.35 Girls’ engagement in other risk-related activities

Now the question is, what precipitates this enthusiastic participation with tattooing other than influences from family, friends or the visual media? “It usually begins with piercings” replied one respondent and all respondents when asked if they had participated in other forms of body art or adornment replied yes to body piercings. Tasha stated that she was a piercing fanatic and had eight piercings. However other participants who did not consider themselves as piecing enthusiasts responded:

Amy: “I have my nose pierced, my tongue pierced, my bellybutton pierced, my ears pierced 18 times, um I’ve had my lip pierced”

Lisa: “well I’ve had both my snake-bites, my tongue, the anti-eyebrow, septum, have had my nostrils pierced, like up here done (upper ear cartilage), I’ve had one of my hips pierced....well one day I was just kind of bored so I just shoved a needle through and I had barbells cause when I, I had this done at the time (anti eyebrow) and I always get extra barbells just in case and so I had like six barbells and so I pierced right there, you can’t see, there’s no scar from it or anything cause I only had it in for like 20 minutes and I was like “**oh I don’t like it**” so I took it out (laughs)”

The majority of girls had admitted problems with their piercings or knew of someone else who had relevant problems. Issues noted were related to infection as well as scarring, keloids, and being “ripped out’ by clothing or by sports-related activities.

Other risk-related activities that all girls, except one, had participated in were cigarette smoking, marijuana use, and alcohol consumption. These activities are often associated with adolescents who engage in body art practices as reported by other researchers. However girls in this study responded that they were either currently or not currently engaging in these practices.

Amy: “my mom knows everything. I’ve done drugs and like all that stuff; did stupid things when I was very young. I shouldn’t have done it; it was pretty much experimental”

Breanne: “I quit; that was part of my past”

Leanne: “I don’t know, it’s like a lifestyle. It’s like all the teenagers participate in it and I don’t know it’s been that way for like years”

Jessica: “I’ve heard stories...and I’d never want to be in that situation”

Tasha: I’ve tried it; I’m not really supposed to do it. I have some medical problems so these are things I’m supposed to stay away from”

Lisa: “I’m kind of totally over drinking and doing drugs and stuff like that. All my friends do it all the time but I’ve made new friends and they’re pretty cool, they’re like Christians....and they’re really chill like they’re happy all the time and they’re aren’t drunk or on drugs...”

Leanne’s perception that participation in these behaviors was a ‘rite of passage’ and Lisa’s association of these activities as peer related issue is substantiated through numerous research studies in this area (Blume & Blume, 2003).

One underlying risk indicated in this study relates to informed consent. Sadie reported that she knew several girls who were getting tattoos in places that could be easily hidden from their parents. For example one female friend was tattooed underneath her ‘bra’ line. Although, the majority of tattoo shops have policies respecting parental consent if adolescents are younger than 18 years of age (Vanston & Scott, 2008), these are not always adhered to as indicated by this study. Consequently girls place themselves in vulnerable situations if they are tattooed or pierced by a male artist. The tattoo artist, as well, is in a position of liability.

5.36 Conclusion

A final issue that was indicated in girls’ responses was their defining of potential risk. Hanna referred to risk as a “gate” and implied that participation in risk-related activities such as smoking and

drinking could potentially lead to something worse. Rheanna stated risk was being rebellious and had previously asserted that she was an “extremist and always rebelling”. Several girls responded that risk was related to ‘knowing that something was bad, but doing it anyway’. However all girls indicated that despite their knowledge regarding potential risks associated with tattooing they would nevertheless participate in this practice. Knowledge about potential risks related to tattoos or other risk-taking practices does not necessarily discourage risk-related behaviors (Vanston & Scott, 2008). With the increased popularity of this practice, increased education concerning potential risks would allow girls the opportunity to make informed decisions regarding their bodies.

CHAPTER VI: Participant narratives

6.1 Introduction

In this section, I present the personal narratives of 11 adolescent girls who participated in my study. These stories provide a partial insight into their lives and how they use tattoos as social practices of meaning making in their personal experiences, relationships, and beliefs and how they express themselves or perform their identities through visual image, dialogue, and body marking. Gover (1998) states narrative and identity cannot be separated, each serve to legitimize the other, publicize the private, and confirm our identity. The body as a political and creative vehicle has become “the locus and primary symbol of simultaneously acquiring, articulating, and negotiating particular understandings of the world” (Bloustien, 2003, p, 75 - 76). Girls’ not only have the desire to visually express themselves, but they want to be heard and they want their identities and voices acknowledged.

6.2 Participant narratives

The following individual stories presented in their own words and through their own voices were compiled from selected segments of the interview transcripts. It is in this respect that “narratives [become] dialogic in nature, as they are co-constructed by both the researcher and subject” (Heitz, 2007, p.13) and as well, become formed both within and outside of the interview process.

Sadie (age 15)

My first tattoo was for my birthday. I remember always wanting tattoos. My mom's always had tattoos so I wanted one. She got her first one when she was 21. I like tattoos in general and the artwork, and I like the fact of having something for the rest of your life cause it means something and it makes me feel like I have some control.



My mom's boyfriend is a professional tattoo artist and he did my tattoo. I wanted to have my own artwork on me. I remember this one artist, Amy Brown, she draws lots of fairies and she has beautiful cards of fairies, that's where I got the general idea, from her website. When people ask me about my tattoo it feels good to say that I drew it myself.



The one on my foot is the whole Japanese culture and I found out my name so I got that one in Kange. Kange is a type of Japanese writing. I really like the Japanese culture. I took Japanese in school so I wanted something Japanese and figured that I might as well put what my name means so that I have some sort of relationship to myself.

The guy who tattooed me, Sugar, he taught my mom's boyfriend and he was really sick and so I wanted to get a tattoo done on my foot before he passed away. When Sugar was in town he was doing a tattoo on my mom and she got her tattoo for the same reason. So I got one on my foot and I can see it the easiest and hide it the easiest.

A lot of my friends like my tattoos but I hide them a lot. A lot of older people kind of look down on them. I figure save it for the beach when there are more teenagers around. My grandpa disowned me. I knew he'd get mad because of my age but, I don't know. He knows I only have one too and if he knew about the other tattoo he'd probably wouldn't talk to me anymore. My grandpa's new girlfriend has a tattoo. A kid stabbed a pen into her leg and she got a butterfly over top of it, it's kind of ironic.

I like seeing people with different perspectives on good tattoos. There are a few tattoos that I've seen and I think what's the point of getting that, like star tattoos, they're just generic. They'll be there for the rest of your life so you kind of

have to put a lot of thought into your tattoos. I like tattoos that have a lot of meaning behind them. I think that's what tattoos should be for. My aunt she's in the army and she's got a Canadian flag tattoo.

I don't know if I'll get any tattoos after my early 30s. Tattoos are more of a young person's type of thing. I think young people enjoy it more for the thrill but when you get older you're more mature and it's not a 'girl's thing'.

Jessica (age 15)

I think I first started thinking about getting a permanent tattoo when I started drawing quite a bit, around 12 or 13. When I was little I always use to put the fake ones on me and I always kind of wished that they were real. My mom has two rose tattoos and I always thought that was kind of neat.



I drew the tattoo myself. It was for my 14th birthday and my mom was going in to get one so we thought we'd get one together. It was kind of like a 'girls' kind of thing'. Normally I would have to be 18 but the tattoo artist was one of my mom's good friends so he said he would do mine. I kind of got the tattoo cause my mom's always liked flowers. I use to

pick the white daisies, the ones that grow on the side of the road, for my mom. I drew the white daisy; it was really simple, kind of cute and elegant, and 'girlish'.

My friends like where I have my tattoo. I think tattoos on other girls look good depending on where they are. I don't think they look good if someone has their whole arm done or their body but just a little one somewhere looks good. My tattoo is just below my tan line on the right side of my stomach. It kind of half sticks out depending on what kind of style of bathing suit I am wearing.

I'm happy with my tattoo; it's just not exactly what I thought it was going to be. I thought the shading was going to be on the inside of the petals and not on the outside. But I was just so excited to get it done that I didn't really care. My cousin and my mom would like me to wait before I get another tattoo. She would like me to be more of age and know what I want exactly this time.

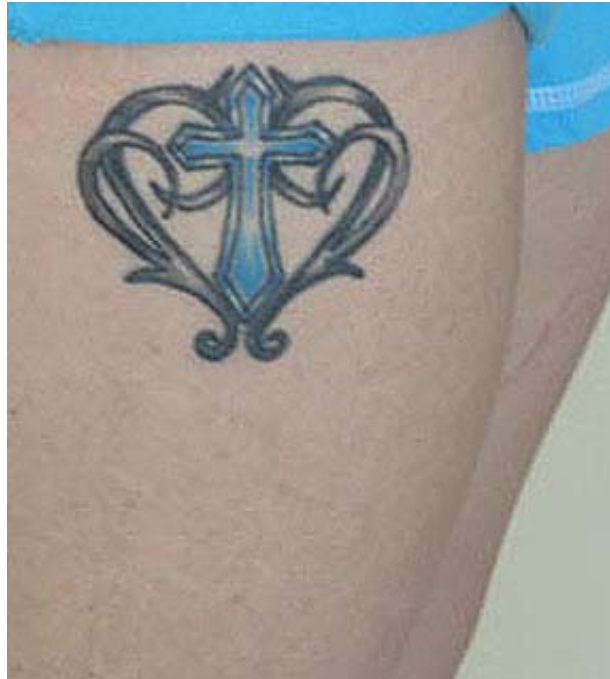
Tasha (age 16)

I was about 12 when I saw a lady come into where my mom works at Dairy Queen and she had a really, really, really pretty cross on her ankle and it was like all colours, like red and yellow so I decided that I was going to get one eventually.

My favorite tattoo has to be my brothers'. He's in the Marine Corps and he designs his own tattoos and he has a big tribal cross on his upper arm and it says USMC for United States Marine Corps. I went onto this website and I found this tattoo that I really liked and I showed it to my oldest brother and he was always into art so he ended up changing it around a little bit and I added the colours that I wanted and we made it into my own design. My other brother wanted to draw my second tattoo but all his drawings weren't really me. They were all more like skulls and things like that. I like to keep some femininity to me. He says "well ya, I can draw some more feminine looking ones" and it turned out to be a heart with a spear through it and I was like "Nooo"!

My brothers and my sister, we all got our tattoos at the same time and we're going to get another tattoo together. Everyone's going to put a little bit of each other into their tattoo so it has some kind of family meaning. My family was always very close; we always connected variously with each other. Well, we all grew up in a Christian home so the

tattoos, it's all about remembering your background and what you grew up with and I guess my first tattoo really reflected upon that. Growing up in a Christian home and with a dad as a Pastor I didn't want to end up like leaving home eventually without forgetting you know all of it so I decided I would get a tattoo to always remember and remember my parents more. They're so far away and I can look at it as something I got for them.



My mom likes my tattoos. My dad's not too happy, but well, they're permanent. He thinks you should wait; once you hit 18 then you've thought about it long enough.

My other tattoo is just because I've gone through a lot in my life. It's a tribal heart and above it is a whole bunch of flames and the heart is I guess emotionally how I feel about things and how things affect me and how you always need to have a part around you that gives you comfort and love and never lose it. I love this tattoo. It reminds me that everyone should have passion, fire in their heart, like never let it die. So many people do and it makes me sad. Always love your life.



Amy (age 18)

I first thought about getting a tattoo when I was 12. My mom influenced me to get a tattoo but not like really influenced me, she got her wrist tattooed and I loved the idea after that. She gave me the tattoo on my back as a 16th birthday present. I wanted a tattoo and she knew why I wanted a tattoo and she decided to get it for me. We've always been close, we do things together. My mom is my best friend.

The tattoo on my back is a butterfly; it's just like being free. We had a rough background, we were all in an abusive relationship with my brother's dad, and that's one of my reasons for getting a tattoo. My mom actually drew my tattoo and I looked up butterflies on the Internet, like tattoos of them, and those were the colours that I liked, pink, blue, and white.



My second tattoo was a random idea, it wasn't planned at all. We just went into the tattoo shop, me and my mom. I knew I wanted a frog with a Chinese symbol but I didn't know which one. I have a pet frog named Jean-Bob after the frog in "Swan Princess". I've always loved frogs and it's my favorite animal. The frog I got tattooed is just green and the Chinese symbol means love, for my mom. I'm going to get a matching frog on the other side of my stomach.



I won't get a tattoo in a place that I can't hide it. I pick places that if I want to show them I can, and if I don't, I don't have to. Some people have their entire face tattooed, I'd

never do that. My friends, they've all said they like my tattoos but none of them really know what's behind them.

I love looking at different tattoos. I really like my friend's tattoo. She just had a baby and she got her baby's footprint tattooed on her shoulder. I just think it's like art, I love art. I guess it's just a way of like marking yourself with you. I think it's important to be different from other people, definitely.

Taylor (age17)

My brother started getting heavy into drugs when I was about 14 and drinking and stuff and he like attempted suicide and so I wanted to get my tattoo for him. I felt like he would be closer to me if I got it and I went to Vancouver after I got it and showed him and he cried. He's stopped and he's actually doing really good right now; he's a lot better.

I have a Chinese symbol for family on the right side of my back. I think it means mother and father; they don't really have like one symbol for family. I was going to get like a tiger around it but my mom didn't want me to get too big of one so she said "why don't you just get the symbols and then later on you can add on to it what ever you want to" and I thought okay that's a good idea. It took like a month of just straight nagging her and being like it's really important to me and like it's not like I'm getting like a flower, I'm getting something really important to me and it's for you mom, you know. I just tried everything and finally she said okay.

I am very happy with my tattoo. It's in the perfect spot; I can cover it up or when I go to the beach I can show it. Everytime when I go in the shower I always catch it in the mirror and I look at it and I love it. I wish it was somewhere more visible though so I could look at it but I still love it.



A lot of people just say that they like my tattoo because it's really simple but it's really effective. I've had comments that it's really classy and my boyfriend says it 'screams me'. It totally does; I'm very passionate about my family. I think it definitely does represent who I am; like I think it really represents my personality like what's important to me. I think that's what tattoos should be. My grandma didn't want me to get one but I showed her after I got it and she's like "wow that's cool, I want one now". My grandma is 59.

Leanne (age 17)

I started thinking about getting a tattoo when I was 14. I always wanted one; I was just really scared to get one. I had to grow up a bit before I went and got needles in my arm and you know, I thought my parents would flip out. Well, my mom had said when I was younger I couldn't get a tattoo until I moved out or something like that. At the time when I went and got my tattoo I had been fighting with my parents a lot so I was living at my boyfriend's house. I just went in and did it with a friend and then met with my parents for coffee later in the week and just showed them and they weren't really that mad. They just said "you know how we feel about this". It's kind of given my parents a reality shake knowing that I can pretty much do what I want to my own body and they just need to respect my decision.

I got a tattoo for my own personal reasons. It represents freedom of my soul and heart and not being attached to anyone and just doing things for myself. I got it on my wrist because I can look at it and see it whenever I want and I guess it's a kind of thing with all my friends because we all have tattoos on our left wrists and some on our right and that's like a Lindsey Lohan thing. It's kind of becoming a thing for us to identify with each other too, like you know we've all got them between the ages of 15 and 17.

I really like the wings on Nicole Ritchie's back, but I've had the idea for wings since I was 14. Personally, I like tattoos that are a little feminine still and complimentary, not ridiculous like you know a half sleeve. Like a few tattoos that are not too crazy. My friends like my tattoo because most of my friends didn't get coloured tattoos and I guess it's kind of 'shockingly bright'.



Hanna (age 17)

Ever since I was a little girl I wanted a tattoo because my mom has one on her ankle; it's a rose and it says my name in it and I wanted to get that. It's the next tattoo I'm going to get but I'm going to get one that says her name in it. My dad has a bunch of tattoos all over him, my brother has a tattoo of his baby girl on his arm, and same with my sister. She has a lot of like tattoos all over. My dad has like an Indian man type guy with feathers all around it. The feathers kind of represent like pride, like being native and stuff.

I did the tattoo myself with a gun and everything. My friend Tyler has the set. He has like tattoos all over him and he was tattooing his inner lip and I was like I want a tattoo too so we sterilized the needle for three hours in boiling water. I had the star drawn on my hand in pen. It was just a random star and I chose pink because pink's my favorite colour. I wanted to get something that I could see everyday, something to remind me of why I got it.

I got my tattoo on Valentine's Day, it was a special day, it was a full day of love and I was with friends. That's why I got it. It was because of Kayla. She moved away with her boyfriend and we made this pact that everytime you'd look at the Big Dipper you'd think of each other, no matter where we were. The star resembles the Big Dipper, I guess.



My dad thinks I should have thought about it a little bit more cause it was kind of on the spot but then it actually has like a meaning and stuff so he was okay with it. He definitely wants me to add onto this tattoo, like get something that goes up my arm or something that connects to it. I think my mom was probably disappointed cause she wanted my first tattoo to be the rose. If my grandma and grandpa found out I'd definitely have to say that it's ink, like normal ink because they don't even know that my mom has tattoos yet.

Breanne (age 17)

I probably started thinking about getting a tattoo when my mom got her first tattoo. I was about eight, I think. My tattoo was actually a 16th birthday present from my mom. I asked for it and she said ya. I actually found the image on a sheet, like a bed sheet that was hanging up on our window because the blinds were all off. I cut a piece off and I told the tattoo artist like “that’s what I want”.

My tattoo is a pink rose and my mom’s name is Rose and her favorite colour is pink. I got the rose on my left shoulder blade because I kind of liked how it looked on that side. My tattoo is exactly what I had pictured in my head before I went and got it done. I like what it represents with my mom. She’s very important to me and it’s just like the bond I have with my mom, it represents a symbol of that.

My friends like my tattoo and they like the meaning of the symbol behind it a lot. My older sister who is 20 was surprised; she thought it would be something kind of tacky, something that was kind of out there. When she saw it, she was like it looks really good, like she was surprised. My other sister is 19 and she said it was too big. My little sister is 14 and she was like “oh I love it, now I want one”.



I like that tattoos on girls and boys show personality. It shows what they're like and what their interests are and what's really important to them cause a tattoo has to be important for them if they get it. You get to know them better by their tattoo and where they have it, is very important. I just kind of keep my tattoo to myself so most people don't even know I have one. My friends know and nobody really judges me on it; like it's your choice that you can put a tattoo on your body. It's kind of something that's mine and I like showing it off but I like to keep it covered sometimes.

Rheanna (age 16)

I didn't start thinking about getting a tattoo until the beginning of grade 11. I use to always draw on myself and I always wanted a tattoo on my wrist. I always draw there so it was my first thought. My mom has tons of tattoos too, on her whole leg and her back and everything. Me and my mom were actually going to get matching tattoos on Mother's day but my friend's shop was all booked up.

I didn't really know how my mom was going to react to me getting tattoos because I'm much younger and she never got her first tattoo until she was 38. I told her over the phone cause she doesn't live here and she said "oh you got one" and I said "well I kind of got two". She's like "oh" and next time she's here we're getting one together; we're going to get the pagan symbol of protection.

I'm kind of like the extremist in the family, like I always go all out. I'm always rebelling or something like that and my mom she's always like "oh you Gemini" So my first tattoo, I'd say has to do with my birth month. The tattoo I got, I think it's something that I haven't seen anyone have before cause it's called 'Elfin'. It is in Elf language; it means Gemini and so it was different. I found it on the Internet on a henna website. Out of all my friends my wrist one is their favorite one because it's different, totally different, original, and they say it suits me. It's hot and stuff.



My second tattoo is kind of a memorial tattoo for a friend who passed away. Me and one of my good friends, she use to date him, we were both probably his closest friends so we both got the same foot tattoos. We're both Irish and so our tattoo means 'everlasting friendship' in Irish-Gaelic. It was a really big spur of the moment thing after we both found out.



I'm not big on colour tattoos and I don't like the ones where people get like a 'powder puff' girl or spider man or things like that. Tattoos show character and like, just a little bit of like who you are.

Carrie (age 17)

I got my tattoo when I was 16 and had started thinking about getting one when I was probably 15. I was terrified when I went into the shop but my boyfriend at the time went with me. He has 13 tattoos and I guess that made it easier for me to get one in the first place.

My tattoo is a tribute to my dad who passed away and never got to have a funeral. It's a pinkish-red scorpion, his zodiac sign, along with a white flower which means new beginnings and there's a greenish ribbon going through that tie it all together. It's an image I found over the computer and I like how much it means to me. It's like closure and all that stuff.

I didn't tell my mom and step-dad that I was getting one because I didn't know if they'd be calling around to all the tattoo places like don't tattoo her and all that. I went to my mom's work and showed her and she thought it was a really cool idea in this situation; it actually made her cry. But my step-dad didn't like it. He doesn't like tattoos in general.

I like tattoos on girls that are fairly subtle. My friends definitely love my tattoo. They like the colour mostly and that it looks pretty feminine for a scorpion. I first liked the location of my tattoo and the way it was shaped on the back of my shoulder, it just looked best there.



Lisa (age 16)

I've been talking about getting a tattoo since grade 9. I was like really young and like really afraid and then grade 10 came around and I was still a little bit nervous so finally in grade 11, I was like I'm going to do it.

My idea was to get two doves with some kind of scripture. I was on a tattoo website and saw this one picture of a bird and I liked how the wings were, but I didn't like the rest so I went on Google and found some like 30 pictures of birds. I printed them off and kind of just took what I liked from each bird and made it my own.

My tattoo is a dove and it says HAVE HEART underneath. It kind of just means like in everything you do, like just be loving, be accepting, you know have a lot of heart when you do it. Put passion into what you like and into what you dislike. The dove represents beauty, free-spirit, and free-will.

I'm so happy with my tattoo. I'm a little bit chubby so I'm kind of self-conscious and I'd always wear like sweaters to cover up my stomach, but it's kind of difficult to wear a sweater when you want everyone to see your tattoo. I guess it has kind of boosted my self-confidence a little. I want to show off my tattoo so I don't wear sweaters anymore.



My grandmother when I was 12 gave me this big lecture on how I have to be my own individual when I'm older and I have to be unique and stuff. I kind of see my tattoo as an expression of my self. It's like an art form to me. I feel tattoos kind of enhance you because it's making you look more like how you ultimately want to look.

My mom found out that I had a tattoo cause I had my sleeve rolled up at work cause I had the wax on it. She's kind of mad that I didn't tell her but she thinks it's really nice and she actually said it was cute. She's excited for me to get my other one. It's like the reverse image of this one and it's going to say HAVE HOPE.

My dad doesn't know I have a tattoo. I think dads are, really as much as they try not to be, they're really like old-fashion still. Like they believe that girls, you know how like back in the days when girls were 'proper' and nowadays girls are like so much different and like guys and girls can do the same things now and it's not looked down on so I think dads are all like daddy's little girl, she's an angel. She doesn't have tattoos, doesn't have piercings, doesn't drink, doesn't do anything bad, she's my little angel so I think that's why dad's are kind of just like NO.

6.3 Conclusion

Tattoo photographs portrayed aspects of girls' personalities that were not expressed through their verbal narratives. Several participants had commonalities regarding their tattoo influences and perceptions however their photos presented each girl as distinctly individualistic. Harrison (2002) states that "new understandings can arise in the interrogation ...of any image or image(s)" (p. 102). For example, Carrie was adamant the her tattoo which represented her emotional attachment to her father was photographed without a t-shirt strap overlapping, however Breanne decided her photograph should express how others would view it in everyday life and perceived her t-shirt strap as relevant to her presentation. Amy wore pajamas during her interview sessions and during her photo sessions. Other visual presentations that included holding flowers or a coffee drink, displaying the peace sign, and clothing worn were images in which girls wanted to express more than their tattoo. According to Berger and Mohr (1982) photographs frame the narrative and context is developed through the utilization of both, through interconnecting what is connoted.

CHAPTER VII: Girls' perceptions of tattoos in advertisements

7.1 Introduction

The majority of research on girls and advertising, and girls and the magazines they read has focused on issues related to body image, self confidence, and social expectations (Gill, 2008; Blood, 2005; Napoli, Murgolo-Poore, & Boudville, 2003; Chow, 2004; Bordo, 2000; Currie, 1999; Duke & Kreshel, 1998; Phoenix, 1997). Although these are significant topics of feminist inquiry, this chapter focuses on girls' perceptions of advertisements that use models with body art to promote and sell their products. Since tattoos were previously constructed as a masculine practice, tattoos on female models in advertising can challenge traditional norms of femininity consequently creating a discourse with how girls are perceived as the 'other', or as 'the female lacking'.

Discourse in advertising or in any visual media presents itself as an illusion based on the concept that consumption of objects, practices, beliefs, etc. provides gratification. Illusion is created through the deceitful implication that girls can become what they perceive as the 'aesthetic other', a fantasized mirror image that projects disappointment if the real mirror image does not fulfill perceived expectations (Haug, 1987). With respect to the 'female lacking', Harms and Kellner (n.d.) write "advertising promotes 'commodity fetishism' and a fetishized consciousness that invests goods, services, individuals, etc. with symbolic properties, associating products with socially desirable traits" (para. 16). These traits are presented as images that culturally sanction or delegate behaviors and attitudes deemed appropriate in society (Leiss, Kline; & Jhally, 1986). For example, girls' magazines are filled with advertisements that promote products alleged to beautify the skin and enhance physical appearance, and they are filled with images that illustrate how girls should present themselves as slim, innocent, unblemished, and desirable. Martin and Gentry (1997) believe girls are vulnerable to notions of femininity especially when their bodies are undergoing dramatic changes and when 'beauty' becomes defined by patriarchal social norms.

Advertisements of models with tattoos project the female body as lacking innocence and purity, imparting negative associations and creating a discourse with how these images are perceived. Considering that female tattooing has significantly increased during the last decade, girls could potentially perceive this practice as a norm and as one that defines femininity. However the size, style, and location of tattoos on models may also affect girls' perceptions of this body art as being either feminine or as visibly overpowering.²²

7.2 Method

Discourse analysis was used to interpret and deconstruct girls' narrative responses and casual conversations with respect to their perceptions of magazine advertisements and photos. Eleven female participants, 15 to 18 years of age, with tattoos were individually interviewed and presented with a series of eight images of women and girls with tattoos. Images were found in *Elle Canada*, *Elle*, *InStyle*, *Lou Lou*, *Allure*, and *Teen People* magazines and were chosen according to the age of the model and subject content. Advertisements were defined within the context of this chapter as images that attract the female consumer to products that promote fantasy and fiction through "the creative manipulation of languages, the exploitation of ambiguity and indeterminacy, and the appeal to personal and emotional experience" (Downing, 2000, p. 4). Subsequently, girls were asked if they thought whether the tattoo in the image was being used to sell the product or if the tattoo would be something that would interest or influence younger girls into getting tattooed. Primary interest focused on girls' reactions to and perceptions of these advertisements and photos. Although a few girls were limited in their responses, others voiced strong opinions respecting image content.

7.3 Results

Girls were initially asked the question: Do you believe advertisements that use models or celebrities with tattoos encourage or influence tattooing in young people? All participants except Amy

²² Refer to Chapter V, Section 2 regarding tattoo size, style, and placement on girls and women.

responded with a “yes”. However, Amy’s statement that “some kids will do anything” related to someone famous implied that celebrities could influence adolescents. Advertisers are acutely aware that adolescents will identify with and admire celebrities that they consider popular (Ivaldi & O’Neill, 2008) and advertisers knowingly use this information to “send powerful messages to young adults and teenagers” (Adomaitis & Johnson, 2006). Participants described tattooed female models and actors as famous people who could influence young people to get tattoos by imparting the message that it was a ‘cool thing’ to do and by generating the view that they could be more like them. Girls’ responses included:

Breanne: “...because people who are my age kind of look up to them as what to do, it’s kind of like when they see other people do it then they think it’s cool and that’s what they should do, so then they want to get one.”

Jessica: “If someone is in love with a model or something in an advertisement they may want to get the same one just to be like them.”

Tasha: “Lots of people see it and look at it as something cool to get, celebrities influence because they’re famous.”

Lisa: “I guess it’s kind of a big thing because a lot of girls, they’re like, they want to be a model right, so it’s like they’re all trying to be them and now that models have tattoos I guess girls are kind of like, the model has it I can have it kind of thing, so that’s probably a huge factor But for me personally like if you ask me if someone has a tattoo and they’re famous I won’t even know.”

Escalas and Bettman (2003) state that consumer attraction to a particular brand or practice associated with a celebrity is based on either aspiration or membership: the “degree to which the consumer would like to become more like a particular celebrity ... or to the extent to which the consumer feels they are similar to the celebrity” (p. 458). Celebrities or models idolized or admired have strong abilities to influence younger people with respect to what is socially acceptable and what is perceived desirable.

Secondly, girls were asked the question: What magazines do you regularly buy or look at? Six participants stated that they bought *COSMOPOLITAN* or *COSMOgirl!*. Other magazines included

fashion magazines *ELLE*, *GLAMOUR*, *VOGUE*, *InStyle*, and *metro.pop*; music magazines *RollingStone* and *AP* (Alternative Press); celebrity magazine *Teen People*; and tattoo magazines *SAVAGE*, *TATTOOED*, and *TATTOO*. Rheanna stated that she was not a magazine person; “like I never buy magazines ever if I see them I would just look through them and stuff”. The four girls who regularly bought or looked at tattoo magazines enjoyed browsing through or reading about different tattoos and tattoo artists. Sadie’s response to reading *SAVAGE* was “they show a lot of my favorite artists; David Bolt, they have a lot of his work in there”. Leanne who enjoyed fashion magazines responded:

I know I like looking through magazines and cutting things out and making big collages out of cool fashion things and you know, I really like following trends and stuff in magazines.



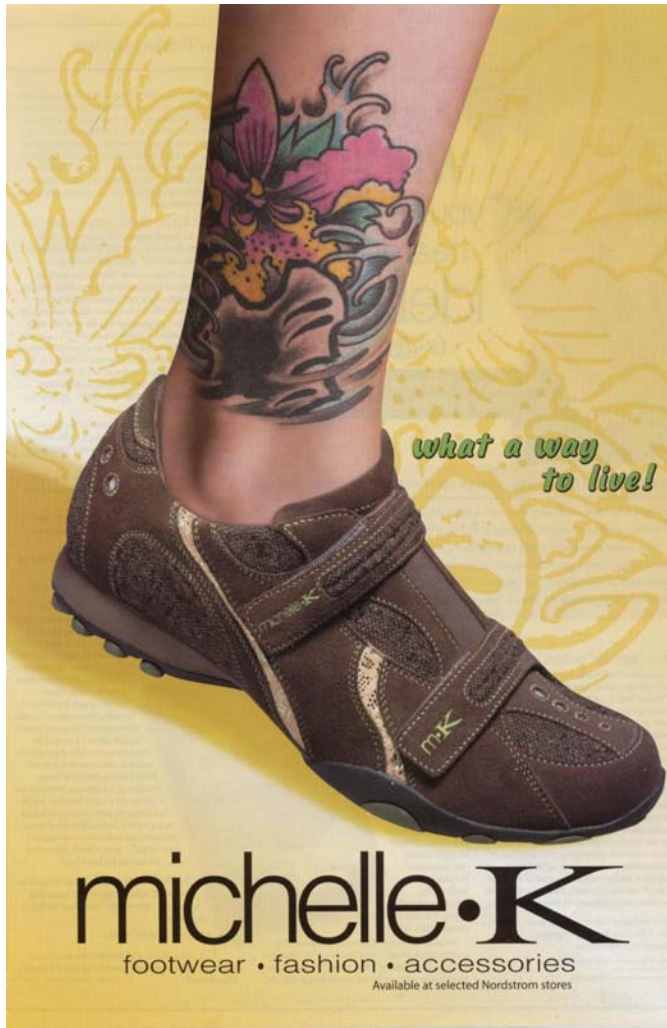
Figure 27: *metro.pop* magazine

Lisa described *metro.pop* as a bimonthly unique and artsy fashion magazine directed at a younger crowd. Intellectually and artistically creative, “metro pop features unique designers, artists, musicians, and pop personalities who break away from the pack to become innovators in their fields and leaders of tomorrow’s style”.

None of the girls bought or expressed any interest in reading *seventeen*, a magazine used in several studies to examine messages girls perceived or messages they may perceive from teen publications and advertisements (Peirce, 1990; Durham, 1998; Currie, 1999; Chow, 2004; Adomaitis & Johnson,

2007). Girls generally believed this magazine was too young in content and too 'boring' for their age group. Considering that *seventeen* was initially published during a period when girls between 16 and 18 were conceived as immature and lacking in knowledge about everyday occurrences this magazine could be considered as not keeping up with 'the times'. Also most girls were in their senior years of secondary school and were nearing graduation which meant that magazines fashioned for women were more appealing and relevant to their future lives and offered or "were accepted as 'realistic' images of femininity" (Currie, 1999, p. 470). Furthermore, since all of the participants in this study had tattoos, considered themselves "equal to guys", believed in the phrase "if guys can do it so can girls", and perceived their tattoo as a form of art, the magazine *seventeen* may have been considered too 'cutesy' or not artistically progressive in content for their interests.

Lastly, participants were told that they would be shown a selection of images from various magazines of models with tattoos. Girls were asked if they thought whether the tattoo in the image was being used to sell the product or if the tattoo would be something that would interest or influence younger girls to want a tattoo. Some of these advertisements had been previously seen by girls who had bought magazines in which images were initially found. The images and girls' perceptions are as follows:

Image 1**Figure 28: michelle·K footwear (Elle)**

Participants were not familiar with michelle·K footwear and were not familiar with their series of advertisements depicting similar images. Eight girls liked the tattoo and described it as nice, cool, bright, colourful, bold, deep, and different. Most participants had no comments regarding the product advertised and only one considered purchasing it. Consterdine (2002) states that surveys on advertisements have reported that adolescents use these same or similar descriptive words to describe ads they find appealing. This may explain participants' initial interest with the image. Carrie

Lisa:

The tattoo...it's cute so it's something that would appeal to teenagers.

Carrie:

I don't think anyone really cares about the shoe.

observed; “the first thing you look at is the tattoo; it’s a big part of the picture”. Breanne’s comments were:

um it’s kind of like ‘what a way to live’ like given the idea that the new lifestyle is to get a tattoo and it’s not like the first thing you see is not the shoe which is what it’s suppose to be advertising, you see the tattoo which is what when teenagers look at advertisements they usually take out what they see the most because they just flip through it, so the first thing they’d see in this one is kind of like the tattoo and the background doesn’t really match the shoe itself, it kind of matches what the design of the tattoo is, so it’s kind of giving off more of the idea I think to get a tattoo than to get an actual shoe itself ...

The visual image is often the first feature in an advertisement that readers normally look at and use for decoding messages (Bovee & Arens, 1986). Consterdine (2002) states that magazine readers have ‘selective perception’; advertisements must convey a meaningful connection with the product image in order to maintain interest. With the exclusion of or an allusion to a female model it is difficult for girls to make comparisons or connections with themselves. Adomaitis and Johnson (2008) found girls between the ages 18 to 21 had difficulties connecting with an advertisement that portrayed an athletic female model who they perceived as less feminine and subsequently only one participant in their study indicated that they would have an interest in purchasing the advertised product. Sadie’s opinion that the tattoo was “just kind of like ‘blotched’ on there”, that the location of the tattoo reflected a male practice, and that the shoe was ‘ugly’ further necessitates the importance of meaningful connections for girls with advertisements.

Image 2

Tasha:

It's a good way to get 10 or 12
year olds to get tattoos.

Figure 29: Advertisement for Ralph Lauren perfume
(*Lou Lou*)

Girls described the tattoos in this advertisement as cute and as fake, painted or stenciled on, airbrushed, and as accessories that could influence young people to get involved in and consume similar practices. Breanne indicated that the model depicted the 'all American girl' and Tasha jokingly commented you would look like this model if you used the perfume; "it will be like a magic spray". One girl who was not familiar with the perfume advertised in this image indicated that it was the orange shorts which attracted her attention. Ralph Lauren 'Rocks' perfume is the third in a series

of coloured scents which are directed at younger, sassy and assertive consumers. The original promotion of this perfume included an orange tank top with the word 'ROCKS' printed in a script lettering that is popular with tattoo enthusiasts.

Gill (2008) writes that advertising "is one of a number of sites in which sexualized representations of (young) women are ubiquitous" (p. 39) and represents the 'growing trend within contemporary advertising to promote products targeted at [girls] using a discourse of empowerment" (p. 36). Breanne acknowledged:

Ralph Lauren's a big, big company that everybody knows about and if he's using tattoos on his models then 'it's sexy, it's new, it's what everybody wants to do' kind of thing.

Furthermore, Gill asserts the 'midriff' fashion has become a significant shift in advertisements that represent 'power femininity' in which sexually assertive, attractive and empowered young women choose to present themselves in a playful manner and not as mere objects of desire. The young model's tattoo-like drawings on her midriff are suggestive of a new agency that reconstructs, disciplines, and regulates femininity and as well may imply "an obligation to be sexual in a highly specific kind of way" (Gill, 2008, p. 53). Midriff advertisements in magazines and in television commercials often reveal girls with bellybutton piercings, lower back and lower stomach tattoos. "I'm just blown away" was Lisa's response after observing that the symbol was the same as hers. The dove "um just kind of like you know free-spirited; it's like beautiful right so it represents like beauty, free-spirit, free-will kind of thing". In this respect, Ralph Lauren was using the dove as a metaphor that represented and connected both perfume and the contemporary girl.

Image 3**Figure 30: Motorazr: Miami Ink collection**
(InStyle)

Most girls liked this advertisement and expressed an interest primarily with the phone. The tattoo was secondary and was perceived as an image that connected with the phone or as a visual aid that helped create a 'flowing' and 'tasteful' experience. Taylor stated

....ya, that's the phone I wanted so badly....I actually have this phone I just don't have the base plates for it.

Breanne:

She's got like a sweet little look and she would probably make somebody want to get a tattoo.

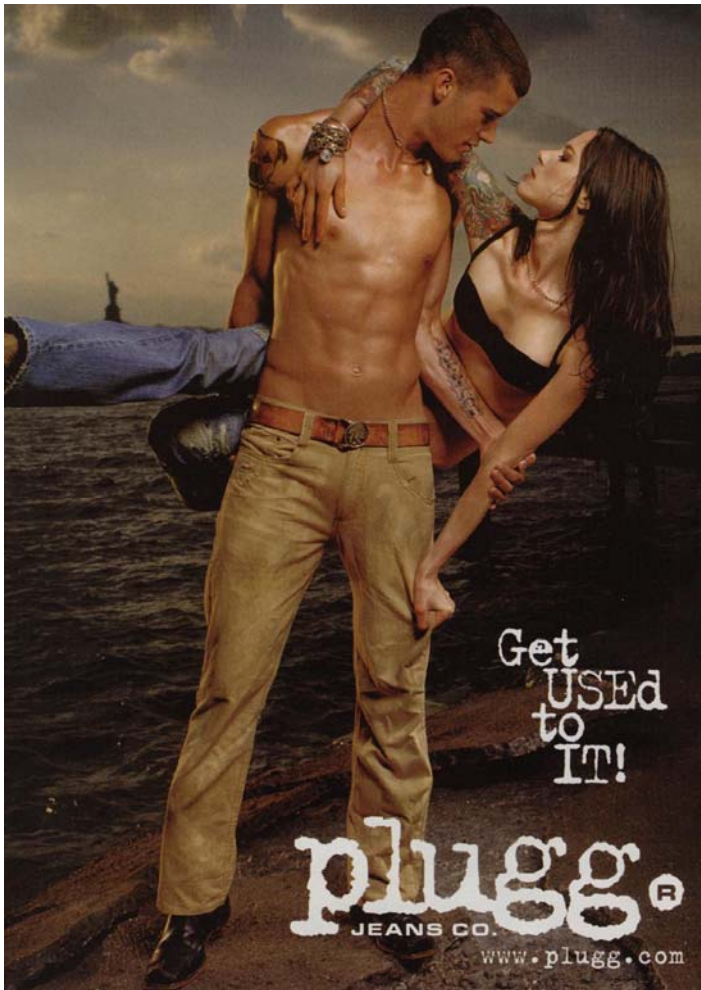
The question that needs to be asked is: why girls would want to buy a phone that is obviously outdated in size and in technology. Both the product and the brand name *Miami Ink Collection* convey a personal connection to the girls. All girls in this study except for one watch *Miami Ink* regularly and all girls desire to have their own phone. Consterdine (2002) states that peoples' interest in an activity portrayed by an ad, their previous connection to the subject of an ad, and their perception of an intriguing or interesting device in an ad are all key elements in promoting product interest and purchase. Furthermore, girls who regularly buy a specific magazine or consistently watch the same television series develop a relationship of trust and informed friendship and will value information presented accordingly. The fact that *Miami Ink* is perceived as endorsing this product is substantial and this was acknowledged by the participants:

Sadie, It's always about the names, names are really big;

Lisa, I think that's kind of a good marketing advertisement; and

Amy, They're using the tattoos to sell their product because it's *Miami Ink*.

Secondly, the model in this ad is presented as flirtatious or as a girl with "a sweet little look". The ad's ability to promote this phone rests on the notion that the model reminds girls of themselves (Consterdine, 2002) or someone that they would like to be; independent, assertive, and in control. The underlying message is 'I've got what you want'.

Image 4

Jessica:

“I’ve seen this one...she’s seems kind of like not one of those models, she looks more like a biker chick kind of...like he looks more like a model, but she looks more like a tom boy kind of rough girl.”

Figure 31: Plugg Jeans Co. advertisement
(*Teen People*)

Five girls found this ad and the tattoos on the female model as attractive, sweet, or cool. The male figure or his tattoos was barely acknowledged. Other girls considered the female model as sexual, seductive, edgy, and hard core. Hanna referenced the advertisement to ‘fear’, a tattooed word which she observed on the male model’s forearm. Leanne’s thoughts were:

It might scare some people cause it’s so bold and it’s too edgy. I think people might be turned away from it because of that; cause she’s got her whole arm done and it’s got crazy writing and stuff.

Girls in general felt that the female model's tattoos were too distracting to the advertisement.

Although a 'sleeve' can be conceived as contemporary and progressive on a female model, old patriarchal notions of femininity are obvious and continue to dictate girls' attitudes of what is proper. Image content in this ad is engulfed with messages that symbolize aggressiveness, domination, and seduction. The ominous background, the 'bulldog' and 'fear' tattoos, the domineering stance of the male, the suggestion of struggle, the 'Get USED to IT!' and more indicate some advertisements have not changed. Women or girls who are represented as active and as desirable sexual subjects beyond the conventional heterosexual framework of femininity are subject to advertising discourses that continue to position them as objects constructed for the male gaze reinforcing traditional patriarchal attitudes and social norms (Gill, 2008; Amy-Chinn, 2006). Jessica's reference that the female model looks like a tomboy, someone considered unfeminine, 'butch', or as the 'other' reflects an ongoing stereotyping of the female body and one that may become internalized at an early age.

However, the term 'Get USED to IT!' and the couple's 'iron grip' can imply different meanings to different people. For example, Breanne noted that this image also invokes a different binary perspective:

...could be somebody that looks like that and they're having a good time and they're in love and it might give off the idea that if you have tattoos it's more attractive, that you will get something like that.

Duke and Kreshel's (1998) research on young adolescent female magazine readers concluded that girls either constructed their own meaning with advertisements or perceived them in its intended manner. As well, advertisements can be perceived as negotiations or interpretations which suit the reader's desires (Hall, 1980). More than likely, girls' reaction is conceived through their resistance to an image they perceive as negative.

Image 5

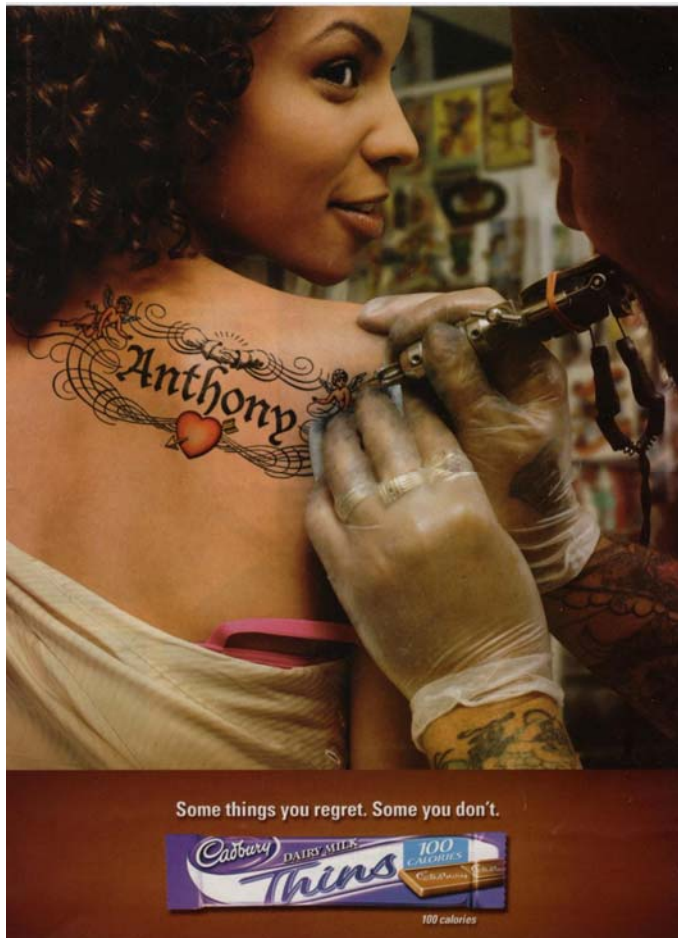


Figure 32: Cadbury advertisement
(Lou Lou)

All girls considered this advertisement ‘funny’ and were adamant that people should not get names tattooed on them. Comments regarding *Cadbury* chocolate were minor.

General responses were:

Breanne: “This one’s more like what not to do cause people like want to get like people’s names tattooed on them...this is more teaching somebody not to get a tattoo.”

Taylor: “...some things you regret, oh that’s harsh. I would never do something like that; I think that’s just something to make you laugh.”

Amy:

This is obviously *not* influencing people to get tattoosno, I’d never get anybody’s name tattooed on me ever never, not even the dog.

Sadie: “Do not get somebody’s name tattooed on you!”

Hanna and Rheanna believed getting a name tattoo would be justifiable if you were with a person for a long time, for example 10 years.

It is difficult to access the advertiser’s use of a black model without making assumptions. Limited portrayal of black females in advertising, the presentation of the exotic ‘other’, or the conveyance that only young black girls would be foolish to get a bold and garish name tattooed on themselves can all be considered as an intentional advertising strategy. Although participants did not reference skin colour in this image or in the *Miami Ink* advertisement, literature reviews on black women portrayed in magazine advertisements have noted continued stereotyping and derogatory perceptions which characterize them as primitive, exotic, predatory, sexual, antagonistic, loud, aggressive, limited in intelligence or unskilled (Millard & Grant, 2006; Pitts, 2003; Plous & Neptune, 1997). Since girls in this study live in a community where there are relatively few black people they may not have had exposure to racial discrimination and as a result may not perceive or consider this aspect relevant in advertisements.

A second component highlighted in this advertisement centered around hygienic and safety practices. Girls were asked how they felt or what did they think about the tattoo artist wearing gloves. Participants generally believed that wearing gloves was important validating some awareness for safe body art practices. Hanna believed it was sending young readers “a safe message”. Sadie who had lived with her mother and her mother’s boyfriend, a professional tattoo artist, emphasized:

I know that’s definitely good because they should always be wearing gloves and it’s not even really for your safety, it’s for their safety....

Image 6

"Let them see you, not your tattoo."

Solution: Fade Away Your Tattoo.

I'm Tina:
 "It all started when I walked down the aisle. The smirks; the giggles; the regret - the old tattoo from college sprawled across my back. Two years of my life getting ready for this very moment and all I felt was remorse. 'My day' ended up with a fight with my in-laws and then led to an ugly divorce soon after. I knew I should have removed the tattoo years ago, but didn't know how... Well, I'm about to get married a second time, and I'm not making the same mistakes that I made in the past. Thank God for WreckingBalm® Tattoo Fade System!"

TATTOO FADE SYSTEM

Doc Sez:
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*Use complete system including Branding Butter™ Concealer **Shipping & handling non-refundable.

Leanne:

My mom actually pulled this ad out and put it on the counter.

Figure 33: Doc Wilson's advertisement for tattoo removal
(Cosmopolitan)

Girls reacted strongly against this advertisement and most considered the product and product information a scam. The two participants who initially believed it could work changed their opinions after carefully analyzing the ad for additional facts. Consterdine (2002) reports condescending ads do not attract young people, especially with respect to a group of tattooed girls who were proud of their tattoos and had little apprehension with revealing them when they wanted to. Furthermore, the girls were outraged that an advertisement would stereotype them as illiterate. Their reactions are reflected in the following responses:

Taylor: "I've read this one (spit, spit, spit), yep (spit, spit, spit), no I don't think it would work at all...she should be proud of it though. When you get a tattoo you

should be proud of it, you shouldn't like want to cover it up; you shouldn't be ashamed of it. I'd feel like that's my tattoo and it's special to me."

Amy: "No I don't think they're going to fade away like that...I wouldn't get a tattoo removed because some people 'laughed' at me at my wedding or made remarks. I mean you obviously got the tattoo because it meant something to you so why would you take it off your body."

Carrie: "Oh hurtful, like she's marrying the guy, he knows she has this, it's accepted, same with her family and his family and their friends. He's seen the tattoo, it's obvious. I think it shouldn't be that big of deal."

Some participants were also familiar with tattoo removal and laser surgery; a costly procedure that can cause potential scarring and traces of the tattooed image (Bernstein, 2006).

Lisa: "I think that's a scam because it says here "use in combination with the technology" so you have to use a tattoo removal device, that's laser surgery basically and then this cream; it's probably like a fancy lotion to stop your skin from drying out after you've lasered it to death."

Sadie: "Ya, actually I've seen this one before...*definitely not*...most people spend lots of money getting it lasered off and yet you can still see it like when you tan and stuff."

Another inference which initiated further debate was the association of alcohol with a tattooed young female. Participants were informed of a recent study in which tattooed women were stereotyped as heavy drinkers (Swami & Furnham, 2007). Amy asserted that there was not a problem with the advertised image. "It's expected, it's her wedding... you drink wine at your wedding". However several girls were not impressed with this association or with the probable inference of this stereotype as projected in the ad.

Lisa: "I think they did that because like she's got a tattoo and she's showing the tattoo, they put the alcohol in there to make her look *worse* right."

Taylor: "I think that's kind of like symbolic, I'm not a big drinker I don't like alcohol and I have a tattoo."

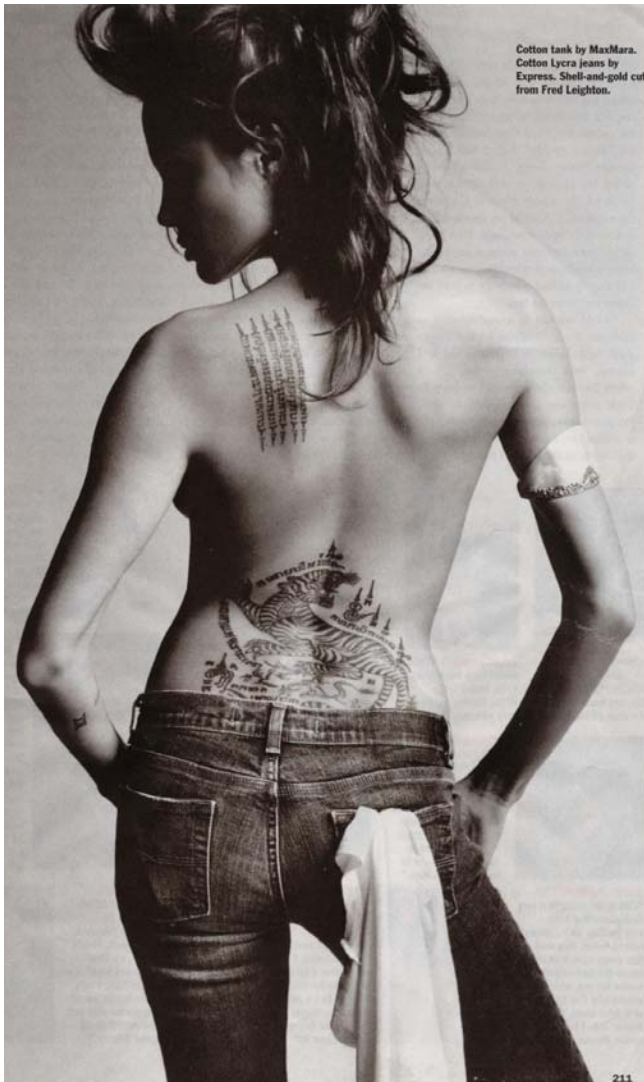
Rheanna: "Pretty much tattoos, smoking, alcohol, and piercings are all like wrapped into one, like people wrap that all together – oh I think that's *bogus*, rubbish."

Sadie: “Ya, well it’s kind of hard to stereotype because I don’t know everybody’s put into different types of groups and stuff and teenagers in general always get stereotyped into being the *bad* drinkers and drug abusers and stuff.”

Breanne: “...that’s kind of attached like they’re trying to advertise like, cause younger kids like they’re more attracted to alcohol and the edgier tattoos kind of thing so I think they’re really, really trying to appeal to a younger audience cause it’s like “oh look at her, she’s on her wedding day, she’s drinking wine, she has a tattoo” and if you don’t want your tattoo it’s easy to get rid of; like it’s all sweet and it’s all good.”

Leanne: “...Oh she is drinking isn’t she; I don’t know they kind of make her out to be this *sad* person. She’s got a glass of wine, she’s talking about something about the altar and people are looking at her, and she’s got this huge thing on her back and they’re trying to make this look like a negative image of this girl with a tattoo and that she can change her life and go back this way.”

Several girls mentioned knowing other girls with tattoos who did not consume alcohol and considered it insulting and inappropriate to categorize all females in this manner.

Image 7**Figure 34: Angelina Jolie**
(Testino, 2004)

Girls were shown a magazine photo of Angelina Jolie. Earlier responses indicated people they perceived as famous could influence girls' tattoo practices. Lisa insinuated that being famous was not enough; it was more important to be recognized as a positive and caring individual.

Lisa: "...like she's kind of becoming like a big sex symbol right now with her big lips and all that and like I think a lot of girls look up to her and she's got talent, like she's a good actress and she's really nice like she's helping out kids in third world

Leanne:

"I guess they make tattoos look like sexy."

Taylor:

"I think she's cool; it's kind of what I wanted to get."

Tasha:

"Lots of my friends like the whole Angelina Jolie like arm band."

countries so I think she'd probably be an influence to me ... I admire the fact that she's helping out kids."

Most participants responded favorably to Angelina's tattoos and commented that it was a sweet picture, it was cool and sexy, and she was showing pride. Others thought the tattoos were related to her travels and experiences. Breanne believed Angelina's tattoos signified power and resistance:

Everybody thought it was like the perfect body and then she went and like made it her own like, made it kind of different, added her background and her culture ...this is what she wants to do with her body...she's this big movie star but she can still get away with putting a little bit of her into her image.

The intolerance that some people have toward those who do not conform to traditional norms is not equally relegated to people connected with and admired through the popular media. Body art as a practice that involves many facets including rebelliousness or a suggestion of 'grotesque' is associated with power and a self-fashioning of the body that is employed by many within the popular as an assertion of their independence, self-confidence, and achievements as women in a society that continues to resonate patriarchal norms of beauty.

Image 8



Figure 35: Singer/musicians Tegan and Sara
(Mosenfelder, 2005)

Image 9



Figure 36: Cover photo - Veronicas

Leanne:

“I use to listen to them three years ago and they’ve got tattoos and piercings.”

Breanne:

“I think they appealed more to younger kids, so that’s probably like they were kind of looked up upon and she’s got piercings and like a lip piercing and tattoos and stuff, it’s kind of like I mean gives kids the wrong idea like if you get them, if you look like this you might become what I am and get the success that I have.”

Tegan and Sara are twin sisters who were born in 1980 and raised in Calgary Alberta. They entered the music scene in 1998 as a folk-rock dual and are often presented by the popular media in a manner that will attract young people. They performed at the Kelowna Community Theatre in September, 2007.

Girls were shown a picture from a celebrity magazine of Tegan and Sara in a natural/realistic pose without makeup. Half of the participants stated that they were familiar with these sisters even though they had performed recently in Kelowna. There were very few comments regarding these sisters other than being described as cute girls with good music that connected with younger audiences.

Alternatively if Image 9 had also been presented to the participants, more girls may have remembered Tegan and Sara and discussed them in comparison to the popular Australian musicians and twin sisters Lisa and Jesse who were born in 1984. According to Hood (2003) the perception of a celebrity or model dramatically increases when they are presented on magazine covers. As well, Adomaitis and Johnson (2006) reported that girls in their study experienced difficulties relating to realistic images of models presented to them through advertisements. Advertisements which use attractive models and images have a stronger sense of appeal to the adolescent consumer (Consterdine, 2002).

7.4 Conclusion

Visual images of tattoos in advertisements influenced girls' perceptions with respect to product and model presentation. Girls valued tattoos that they perceived as feminine; they enjoyed ads that they could identify with; they connected with images of tattoos which referenced meanings; and they identified with models that had tattoos on similar locations to their own. For example, more than half of the girls in this study have tattoos or have expressed an interest in getting a tattoo on their back.

Girls were adamant that magazine images of models and actresses with tattoos could influence or discourage girls to engage in body art.

Tasha: "It's true, you could look at that and go that's cool; I wouldn't mind that and get it done especially when they're promoting jeans, phones, and chocolate."

Jessica: "Well some people get like obsessed with them right. 'Oh I want to be just like them!' I've heard of people like even going to get like cosmetic surgery to look like them."

Breanne: "Well before if you kind of like had a tattoo you couldn't model so maybe like if somebody has a tattoo and they think they're good enough to model they may want to model for an ad."

Carrie: "Wol! What are they trying to say here...as well as getting a guy's name tattooed on you! Ya, I would think that would influence you to not get tattoos."

Although the discursive nature of advertisements continues to reference patriarchal social norms and stereotypes, girls were not without their own biases. In their discussions, some girls casually alluded to behaviors, practices, and body images that were based on traditional norms. Jessica labeled the model with the tattooed sleeve in Image 4 a tomboy and butch, and Breanne thought the model "look[ed] like somebody that would have a tattoo". Lisa stated Angelina Jolie would influence "people like 'stupid' young girls" to get a tattoo, Jessica believed the actress was too old to be getting tattooed, and Carrie mentioned "she's that type of actress to have tattoos" and "you know, it's expected of her". Other preconceived notions were noted by Sadie who believed that girls got "cutesy" tattoos and not butch-like ones. Although she referred to stereotyping of adolescents by other people, Sadie believed that "somebody who gets something like ugly, flopped on them, they do it just for the hell of it and they probably you know drink more and have like all the piercings".

Postmodern feminist critiques believe advertisements can be used as a medium for political and social change. The concept that advertisements relay messages that are based on societal attitudes and norms is an area which generates considerable debate. Future research that examines the influences of body

art in advertisements might generate some knowledge that could address various socio-cultural aspects of tattooing that are beyond the scope of the present study: such as, age, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, and community locations.

CHAPTER VIII: Conclusion

This study set out to address three research questions:

- Why are some girls adopting previously defined male social practices, specifically tattoos, as expressions of individuality and identity?
- How does visual culture, specifically advertisements and magazine photos of models and celebrities influence girls' social practices and their self-perceptions?
- Given the fact that getting tattooed is a known risk-taking activity, what educational information is provided and how are adolescents informed of the various risks and possible complications?

8.1 Future inquiry and curriculum development

This study has shown that some girls are adopting previously defined male social practices, specifically tattoos, as expressions of individuality and identity and the research confirms that by examining social practices and exploring adolescent identities students and educators can develop respectful, empathetic, and understanding attitudes; concurrently developing an awareness for how identities are formed and influenced within communities (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Although this research examined girls' social practices of tattooing, aspects related to popular influences can also be applicable to adolescent boys' body art practices. Future research can examine how boys are influenced within their visual culture and how they perceive their social practices as aspects of identity formation. In an era when art educators are increasingly concerning themselves with popular visual culture this study presents evidence that visual culture, specifically advertisements and magazine photos of models and celebrities, was shown to influence some girls' social practices and their self-perceptions. Paul Willis (2003) notes that educators are often fearful of the negative or predatory effects that the popular visual culture has on the desires and vulnerabilities of adolescents

and as a result “pedagogic voices are shockingly quiet about issues of social content” (p. 413) and with issues considered too sensitive or too uncomfortable for classroom discussion. However educators need to be cognizant of adolescent social practices and acknowledge adolescent voices with respect to issues important in their daily lives. Everyday life, including cultural sites of visual images such as magazine advertisements, play an important role in forming “attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs” (Duncum, 2002, p. 5). Furthermore Paul Duncum asserts that everyday aesthetics or visual experiences, invites participation and girls’ consumption of these experiences and their engagement in body art practices are Duncum (2003) notes forms of reproducing meaning in their lives. Unfortunately, as noted in this study and by other authors (Freedman & Schuler, 2002)), the choices girls embrace may not be in their best interests. Freedman and Schuler assert that adolescents “are becoming part of a consumer culture and constructing their visual identities with little critical reflection” (p. 19). Embracing popular culture in the classroom enables opportunities for girls and boys to become knowledgeable and critical consumers and it can allow students to develop a greater understanding of how the visual popular culture can influence identity development and social practices. As well, it can facilitate students’ experiences with an understanding of advertisements or other visual imagery as a process that is always developing or transforming in relation to their everyday lives (Tavin, 2002).

In addition to its implications for art and visual culture education this study establishes precedence for future research and discussion respecting girls, or in general, adolescent understanding of potential risks involved in their body art practices that can assist in the development of educational programs and the distribution of related information. In order to provide a supportive and informative role for adolescent decision-making, parents, educators, professionals, and academics need to re-examine their own prejudices and policies regarding body art practices. Risk-taking practices such as tattooing can be purposeful, goal directed, and fulfill multiple goals central to adolescent development and

maturity (Spruijt-Metz, 1999) and can be recognized as a culturally positive practice rather than a negative one (Brooks et al., 2003). Material regarding tattoo practices and potential risks must be presented as unbiased, concise, and as credible information and be pertinent and personalized to adolescents and to everyone involved (Rimer, 1997). Furthermore data from this research supports Vanston and Scott's (2008) conviction that "communication within and across schools and communities can assist in developing programs that encourage healthy practices and encourage adolescents to be diligent in their assessment of these practices with respect to shop cleanliness and equipment sterility; and with respect to the artist's education, experience, performance, and artistic and technical ability" (p. 9). For example, campaigns promoting healthy choices including school posters stating "Get the good design, not a bad disease" (msnbc.com, 2004) and the school resource video entitled "Tattooing and body piercing: Thinking smart about body art" can encourage adolescents to consider potential health risks and to be observant of unsafe body art establishments. Anderson (2003) states that as well as addressing health risks this video presents a cultural and historic overview of body art offering art educators opportunities to explore and discuss an ancient and controversial art form with their adolescent students.

Finally, contemporary tattoos are considered as 'art on the body' by the majority of people who are tattooed. Museums and galleries recognize and exhibit the tattoo as a cultural and contemporary art form in which the popularization of the tattoo can be partially attributed to exhibitions that present body art practices as mainstream culture and as a result obscure "the distinctions between high and popular culture" (Kosut, 2006, p. 10). For example, the Baltimore Museum of Art presented in March 2008 'Baltimore Ink: Patterns on Bodies' which showcased national and local tattoo art; The American Museum of Natural History exhibited from November 1999 to May 2000 'Body Art: marks of identity; and the Peabody Essex Museum is presenting until February 2009, an exhibit on the Maori Tattoo. Future research can investigate tattooing as an art form that is permanently exhibited

on the female body and investigate how this practice has represented and become meaningful in girls and women's lives throughout history. Art educator, Viktor Lowenfeld (1982), has stated that "art is not the representation of things but the representation of experiences which we have with things" (p. 321). Participants believed that their tattoos represented and communicated their experiences, their relationships, their interests and were, as well, meaningful reflections of their lives. Girls repeatedly referred to tattooing as a form of art. Sadie stated "I like tattoos in general, the artwork" and Amy responded "I just think it's like art; I love art. Art, Duncum (2001) states (and with respect to body art in this study), has become a dialogue which is ordinary as everyday speech.

Although only one participant suggested that body art could be addressed in the art classroom, the tattoo is emerging as an integrated curriculum topic in which adolescents explore identity development and issues, research historical perspectives and cultural significance, and gain insight into the controversies surrounding this practice. Art educators are acknowledging body art or the tattooed body as a powerful hook for attracting student interest and motivating them to engage in further inquiry without encouraging participation in this practice (Blair, 2007). Wendy Strauch-Nelson (2004) designed a body art unit that examined this practice as both an art form and a universal social behavior. Students explored websites and used other resources to increase their awareness of social, cultural, and political factors that influenced body art through examination of its origins and traditions; concurrently engaging in aesthetic critiques respecting these practices and critical debates around issues of permanence and change. Secondly, students used their knowledge to experiment on each other with non-permanent body art materials and thirdly, students created clay heads which they adorned with body art. As well as examining body adornment, art educators can prepare lessons that incorporate the use of body art on other objects. For example, tattoo designs are used by fashion designers in the clothing industry, as etchings on dinnerware, and as graphics on music instruments. The company B.C. Rich in 2004 revealed their Body Art guitars as a piece of art that included art

from visual artist Bruce Kroeber and guitar styles by weapons designer Kit Rae who has previously created destructive objects or weapons for several films and television series including “Star Trek” (Harmony Central, 2004). Although tattoos are associated with the body, they have historical connections with rock paintings, sculptural pieces, ritual objects, pottery, etc. The Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibited cultural objects from the Marquesas Islands in 2005 which illustrated a fervent use of tattoo both on skin and object (Karlins, 2005). Included in this exhibition were elaborately tattooed wooden legs and arms thought to be furniture supports. Examination of the tattoo as an art form used to enhance the aesthetic quality or cultural meaning of an object can offer a foundation for students to create and design tattoos for objects that are meaningful in their lives such as snowboards, cell phones, and computer screens.

Furthermore, debates, reflections, and discussions, interactive activities or art projects respecting the tattoo as an art form present opportunities for students to develop skills to critically analyze or discuss the use of tattoo in the visual arts. Several artists have used tattoos in their work or have incorporated the tattoo as a metaphor to signify the skin as a boundary that distinguishes us from others. Spanish artist Jaume Plensa’s “Tattoo” series were large polyester resin and stainless steel glowing figures tattooed with questions inspired by children’s books. In the Exhibition Catalogue (Massachusetts University Gallery, 2004), Plensa’s 2003 “Tattoo” sculpture was described as:

A spectrum of internal light lends a transformative quality to the otherwise static figure, the “skin” of which has been inscribed with questions taken from a children’s book that helps the young reader begin to define the world that surrounds him/her. Our skin, of course, is the delicate boundary that maintains our shape and separates us from other beings and entities, but it is also a porous membrane, allowing us to breathe in, absorb, process, and finally breathe out. “Tattoo” speaks of a cyclical system whereby that which we inhale, both literally and figuratively, is composed of myriad other exhalations.

This piece speaks of the narrative relation of skin and how it serves as a border of individuality, defining who we are through our interactions, knowledge, and transformations. Critical questions

reflecting Plensa's "tattoo" can address issues of permanence or whether or not a tattoo's meaning becomes fixed in time or a transformation with age. In this respect, the tattooed body invites questions and serves as a continuous narrative mark.

Artist Sheri Wood examined the tattoo through her "Tattoo Baby Doll Project". Wood embroidered tattoo images drawn by female tattoo artists eclectic in their religion, race, and sexuality on cloth dolls found at thrift shops. Wood (Craftzine.com, 2008) writes:

Like embroidery, tattoo seems to carry on a similar tradition of deeply symbolic images that worked to form community and served to define and empower those within the community in various ways.... The Tattoo Baby Doll Project serves to break down barriers and prejudices about women's work and roles, tattoo subculture, craft and art. The project strikes a subtle balance between these varied traditions and the communities they represent, the questioning the lines that define, separate and empower each tradition...

Furthermore, Wood describes her work as a metaphor intrinsic to women and to tattooed women that reflects cultural hierarchies and personal prejudices. Art that addresses social issues such as stereotyping and prejudice becomes "art as activism" (Barndt, 2006, p. 18). Both Pransa and Wood's pieces engage the viewer to question our interactions and perceptions and offer a basis in which students can extend and critically reflect their understandings about the body and identity.

In conclusion, one issue that was not addressed in this study was girls' appropriation of cultural images, forms, or symbols for their tattoos. Although some girls had original images Sadie, Amy, Taylor, and Rheanna used cultural images from other countries. Sadie's use of Kanji reflected her interest in Japanese culture and having learned this script in secondary school; Rheanna's use of Irish-Gaelic language reflected her Irish decent however Amy and Taylor's appropriation of Kanji/Chinese characters reflected their desire to have an image that was private and personal. Tattoo artist, Don Hardy (2000) writes:

I think tattooing is the great art of piracy. In fine art it's fashionable to talk about 'appropriation' in the post-modern visual arts and architecture of the 1980's. It's certainly always been going on in tattooing because its today bastardized art. Tattoo artists have always taken images from anything available that customers might want to have tattooed on them" (p. 200).

Tattoos have become a 'mishmash' of appropriated images (Hardy, 2000), in which their original meanings can be equated with not respecting, failing to recognize, or devaluing the significance of a cultural form and its distinctive relevance within another culture. Furthermore, the unlimited accessibility to cultural images and art images on the Internet has contributed significantly to this 'piracy'. Lorrie Blair (2007) states that issues of appropriation relate to whether or not one has the right to wear certain images and as such can offer opportunities for students to critically reflect on their own actions or practices.

Future research with girls and studies that follow girls' practices over several years will reveal significant information regarding adolescent-adult transition. For example, questions such as 'will girls continue to engage in body art practices'; 'will girls regret their adolescent decision to get tattooed five or ten years later; or 'will girls' tattoo practices affect their future employment opportunities' can provide a foundation for further research in understanding girls' social practices.

8.2 Limitations

During the course of this study I became aware of some limitations that could affect the data collected and influence the research outcome. The signing of a parental consent form for participants 18 years and under created a significant limitation. It was difficult to find participants who were able to have forms signed by parents as not all parents were aware that their daughters were tattooed. The majority of girls who participated had mothers who either influenced their daughters' decision to get tattoos or were previously informed by their daughters of their tattoos. This severely limited the scope of girls' participation and as well may have biased the research results by not including girls who for various

reasons would not be able to obtain parental consent because they were part of a religion or culture in which tattooing was forbidden. Although pamphlets were distributed at UBC Okanagan campus and at local tattoo businesses no participants were acquired through this method. University students who are 18 or even 17 and who are not living at home should not be required to have consent forms signed by parents living in another province or living outside of Canada. Furthermore, girls live in a society that has become eclectic in terms of its family units and living arrangements. As previously noted, not all girls in this study lived at home. Rheanna remained in Kelowna to finish her secondary school and graduate with her friends while her mother lived and worked in another region of British Columbia. Leanne who has recently graduated from secondary school and who has not turned 18 has moved away from British Columbia to live with her boyfriend. Also the minimum legal age of enrollment in the Canadian Armed Forces is 17 (Canadian Heritage, 2004). These are only a few reasons why girls may not be living at home and why they should not be required to have a consent form signed for participation in a study that was designed to understand girls' motives for acquiring a tattoo and designed to enable girls to have a voice concerning their lives, perceptions, beliefs, etc.

Additional limitations with this research are related to its administration in a community populated primarily by Caucasian and First Nations' people and by its deliverance through a researcher who was, herself, not tattooed. If the research had been conducted in a diversely populated community such as Vancouver there may have been participants whose tattoos were significant to their cultural and family backgrounds. Girls' perceptions of people with tattoos including their likes and dislikes, their influences, and their tattooed images may have resulted in different research findings. As well, respecting that people who have tattoos are perceived or consider themselves as different from those who do not have tattoos (Kosut, 2000; Bell, 1999), it may be argued that a researcher without a tattoo may not fully comprehend girls' reasons for getting a tattoo or identify with their experiences of having a tattoo. However, the researcher was perceived by the participants as being genuinely

interested in their motives, concerns, and tattoo experiences. Girls were interested in telling their stories and they wanted their tattoos photographed and exhibited. For example, Rheanna invited the researcher to attend a tattoo session and Jessica decided that she would present her tattooed self in a collage. Jessica's collage reflected Pink, a soloist who was one of her favorite musicians and it reflected as well, Jessica's fondness for flowers.

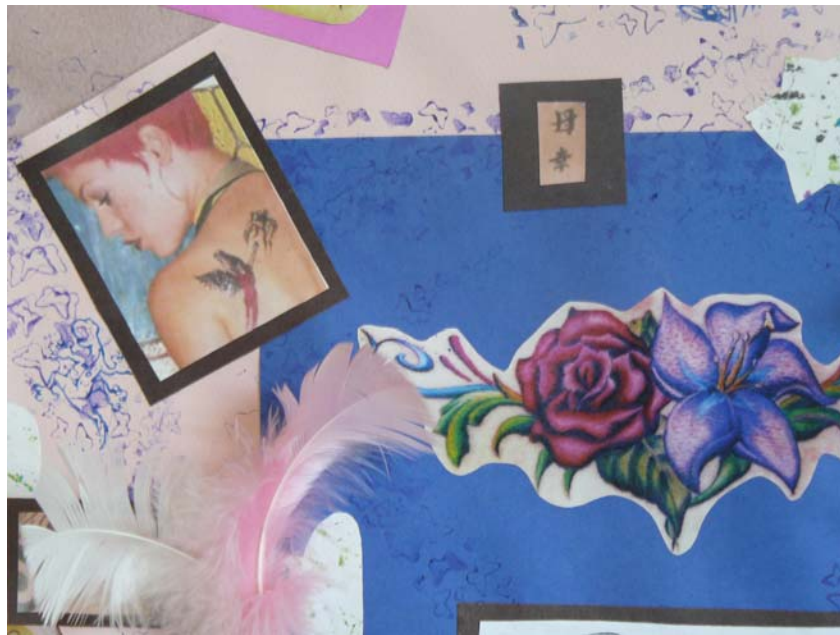


Figure 37: Jessica's collage (detail)

Girls were not concerned with being given a pseudonym. The majority of girls would have preferred to use their own names however they respectfully allowed the researcher to choose their pseudonym. Reasons for desiring that their own name be used in this research can be attributed to their desire to be recognized through their own voice and to their acknowledgement that photographs of their tattoos could identify them.

8.3 Summary

The results from this study indicate that the majority of girls' tattoos reflected close family connections and signified close mother-daughter relationships. Secondly, mothers and popular media figures, specifically tattooed musicians, were influential with tattoo placement and style. Girls, as well, appropriated tattoo images from various sources including Internet websites, tattoo artists, and bed sheet designs. All girls agreed that advertisements of models with tattoos could influence or encourage and in some aspects discourage girls to engage in body art practices. Finally, the size, placement, and image of girls' tattoos, their own biases, and their experiences with older relatives including grandmothers and some fathers indicate that traditional Western attitudes regarding femininity and the female body continue.

Girls stated infection was the primary risk that they associated with getting a tattoo and they considered that this related to poor hygienic practices after being tattooed. Participant knowledge of potential risks was learned primarily from tattoo artists and girls' relatives and their knowledge did not deter participation in this body art practice. However, participant knowledge of potential risks was limited and it may be questionable as to exactly what type of information was provided or presented to the girls at the tattoo shop before getting tattooed. Consequently, it can be assumed that girls were not provided with sufficient information in order to make an informed decision respecting this body art practice.

In conclusion, girls' voices need to be respected and acknowledged by those who work with girls or who associate themselves in any capacity including educators, academics, medical doctors, parents, etc. Girls believe that they have the right to choose how they enact and experience their gender and how they assert their individuality through their everyday practices. This includes the right to make informed choices in their daily lives.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Participant 3 - Tasha

Section 1 – Background

1. **Grade** – 10, going into grade 11
2. **Age** – 16 (now 17)
3. **Permanent tattoo** - yes
4. **More than one** – yes, 2
5. **Age of first tattoo** – the week after my 15th birthday - **what about your second tattoo?** – 6 months ago – spring break
6. **Plan to get another tattoo** – yep – **when do you think you might get another tattoo?** – possibly American Thanksgiving – I’m going to see my brother and my sister is coming and we might all get a family tattoo
7. **Is having a tattoo against your cultural background** – no not where I grew up
8. **Ethnic background** – American Jewish/other Arabic(Israeli)/Caucasian
9. **Do you have a cultural heritage in which tattoos are important** - no
10. **Against religious background** - nope
11. **Religious affiliation** – Pentecostal – **You have some Jewish in you but** – we don’t follow it – **you don’t follow so it doesn’t affect you because it is against** - it’s against that religion but were all like – I don’t know – we’re just part Jewish – **okay** – we don’t actually follow the religion so – **what is Pentecostal?** – um – like I guess more you know Baptist - more outgoing – more upbeat – **okay**

Section 2 - Influences

1. **When did you first start thinking about getting tattooed?** – about 12 - I saw a lady come into where my mom works at Dairy Queen and she had a really, really, really pretty cross on her ankle and it was like all pretty colours like red and yellow, so I decided that I was going to get one eventually (laughing) – **so what influenced you was this stranger that came** – yes – **okay** - pretty
2. **We’ve already talked about this lady/stranger - did any of the following specifically influence your decision to get a tattoo? - did you have friends that have tattoos** – not at the time – no and I don’t really have any friends that have right now – **tattoos on fashion models** – no – **tattoos on music stars** – not ones that I like – **not ones you that you like** (laughter) – **who don’t you like that have tattoos?** – um - ...- **group membership** - no - **have you ever been to a tattoo convention** – no - **okay** – **family members have tattoos** – um – my brother and my sister but we all got our tattoos at the same time – **okay** – **tattoos on actors** – no – **any tattoos on athletes** – no – **advertisement** – no – **so just from that one stranger that came in** – my dad told me some experiences he had when he was younger (laughs) - **so did your dad influence you** - he was cool - but he always would try to tell me not to get them – but they still looked pretty cool – **maybe, would you mind sharing any of those later** – okay - **so you’ve already described how you were influenced and did you talk to that lady or did you ask her anything about her tattoo or did you just look at it** – not really – she said hi to

- me and I said nice tattoo and I said where did you get it done and she said Calgary and that's about it – **okay**
3. **Do you watch any tattoo reality shows, etc.?** – not really – I've seen a few episodes of Miami Ink, but I don't like the way they always yell – they always have conflict and issues – **oh okay, that happens with a lot of reality shows**
 4. **Do you buy any tattoo magazines?** – um – I sort of look at the pictures - I didn't really buy them, I just look at them – **they had them at the shop for you to look at – so what kind of things did you find interesting** – like the design – **the design** – um – I really like the crosses but one of my favorites tattoos I ever saw was on a back of a girl and it was a big picture of this Asian girl and she was all wrapped up and it had a bunch of flowers going around it and it was black and white with some red and blue – really pretty – it was on her back - really nice
 5. **Do you visit tattoo websites at all?** – oh ya (laughing) – **like what sites – are there any specific ones that you can remember** – usually I just go to tattoo.com or else I'll search around to find new ones – I have them on my computer – **so you do have some – maybe you might want to share one that is a particularly favorite one – you might want to share that with me – I know there's one that I like – National Geographic – they tell a lot about tattoos and the history of tattoos and other facts – there's also website called celebrity tattoos**
 6. **Can you think of any other things that are particularly memorable other than the Asian woman that has the tattoo on her back?** – I think my favorite tattoos that I saw on someone else, it has to be my brothers' – he's in the Marine Corps – **okay** - and he designs his own tattoos and he has a big cross on his arm like upper arm and it says USMC for United States Marine Corps but the U is like shaped out like a tribal looking at the top of the cross and the S and M are on the like sides of the cross and it looks like one big tribal cross –so when you really stare at it you can see the USMC - **it's just one colour** – ya, it's all black – **is it a theme in your family – the crosses** – ya well we all grew up in a Christian home so it's all to remember your background and what you grew up with I guess – **okay, thank you**
 7. **Who are your favorite – if you have any - tattooed movie stars, musicians, athletes, or models?** – um, to be honest, I don't really like any of the movie stars – I haven't seen that very many with them on – I guess I haven't seen any on people - I like some of the bands and their drawings – **can you name any of those bands** – like Tool – **Tool?** - they have really nice artwork - amazing that people get it done – it's just like the 'trippiest' work you've ever seen – and then Pink Floyd has some really good tattoos out there so – **okay, Tool's the name of the band** – ya – **okay, I'll have to look them up** – they have some crazy stuff – **okay**
 8. **Do you believe advertisements that use models or celebrities with tattoos encourage or influence tattooing in young people?** – um – most definitely yes – lots of people see it and look at it as something cool to get – ya – **are there any advertisements that you can specifically think of that you may have seen** – not one that influenced me but lots of my friends like the whole Angelina Jolie - like arm band – **okay, I have some advertisements too and some images that I may show you later on during the study and you can tell me what you think of them**
 9. **How do you believe that tattoos on these people – these celebrities or what some people would call role models – how do you think they might influence other people to get tattoos?** – um, they're famous (laughs) – **they're famous** – **okay** - everyone would like - they're famous '**go get it done**'! – **so if they're famous would that be a type of a connection or is it to be more like them or** – pretty much I guess – in my age group lots of it is trying to be cool as we can, I guess – **so okay, if that movie star has a certain tattoo and you get it you're cool like the movie star** – well, I don't think so but lots of people do – **okay, thank you**

10. **Now you did mention this before in the first section but I'm going to ask you to expand on it – did you associate getting a tattoo with any of the following events in your life - birthday – no - so that one tattoo wasn't for your birthday –** I had the picture for 6 months and I wanted to really know if I wanted it or not and so I just got it a week after my birthday – **so it wasn't associated with your birthday – no – a religious event –** um I guess growing up in a Christian home – my first tattoo really reflected upon that – **okay – personal relationships –** no, hm – **any illness –** nope – **a move –** no – **family illness –** no – **secondary school -** no - **boyfriends –** nope – **anything other –** um - no – I summed up one of my tattoos as just like, I guess – 'your life and the excitement you need', so it's just one big round about everything – **okay -** nothing particular – **you basically wanted to get one because it shows who you are with your Christian background– religious background –** ya, ya – **okay**
11. **Why was it so significant for you to get a tattoo for that reason? -** I felt at the time growing up in a Christian home, ever since I was born, my dad – he was a Pastor – **okay** – all my life – and so growing up with all that I didn't want to end up like leaving home eventually without forgetting you know all of it - I want to always have it with me – so I decided I would get a tattoo to always remember it so – **okay, thank you – now are both your tattoos for those reasons –** no, no – my other one is just because I've gone through a lot in my life and so I figured that with one of them I would make it mean more – **okay, so the other one has a personal meaning to it –** ya – **okay, you don't have –** it's okay - **to say anything –** it's a heart, it's a tribal heart and above it is a whole bunch of flames and the heart is I guess emotionally how I feel about things and how things affect me and how you always need to have a part around you that gives you comfort and love and never lose it – pretty much – and the flames just like you know you can't always get stuck in what you do - you need to have some excitement in life so that's what I say – **okay – okay, thank you**
12. **Are there any other reasons that we haven't discussed for you getting a tattoo? –** no - **any reasons why you might get another tattoo –** oh yes, definitely - um my brother is living in Arkansas and my sister and I were living together for a while and we all really like tattoos and what they mean to us and so when I go down to visit them we are all going to hopefully get one together – **do you think you will get –** it's going to be a family tattoo – **do you think they will all be the same tattoo or will they be a kind of a tattoo that is related in some way –** were still thinking about it – it will all be related – we don't want the same tattoo – we all like different artwork so if we end up getting the same, one of us will hate it and the other one will 'ouuu' – **you could basically get the same symbol but in a different type of artwork or form –** ya, exactly
13. **Now how did you choose the first image for your tattoo? -** um, well - I went on a website and I found this tattoo that I really liked and um I showed it to my oldest brother and he was always really into art and so he ended up changing it around a little bit and I added in the colours that I wanted and he switched the cross and the heart a little bit and we made it into my own design – cause it was like the perfect size and like exactly what I wanted but we wanted to alter it to me – I guess – **well that was really neat that your brother helped you – where is your tattoo (shows) so when you see the tattoo it must kind of remind you of a connection with your brother –** ya – **okay** – my family was always very close – we always connected variously with each other – **that's really nice – a lot of families aren't like that –** no they're not – **so what about your second tattoo –** um I did that one all myself – ha ha – my other brother he, ya wanted to draw my second tattoo for me but all his drawings weren't really me – they were all more like um – skulls and things like that – **ya most guys that want to get tattoos all go for something bold -** ya – **something not kind of delicate –** ya and so I was like – I don't think I want to get that on me – I like to keep some feminine to me – **ya -** and he says well ya I can draw some more feminine looking ones and it turned out to be like a heart with a spear through it - **oh okay** – and I was like **nooo!** (laughing) – no, no – I drew the heart and I actually got him to make it look better because my drawing isn't very good – so he made it – I gave him what I wanted and he made it more tribal I guess and then I went in and had to sort of explain because I wanted my flames to come up towards my neck and at first they were suppose to come up sideways but the tattoo artist and I had a big discussion about it and he was like well if you end up like fluctuating it will change into a big blob of ink eventually cause your body will reject it and put it together, I guess – so he drew a whole bunch of different flames and I got to pick which one I liked – **oh that's nice that he did that –** ya

14. **Is there any particular type of tattoo that you like – I know there is the tribal design – everyone has their own little theme – is there any kind of theme you follow with your tattoos?** – so far my theme is pretty much hearts - **okay – hearts and crosses?** – ya – I’m not planning on getting another cross but it’s definitely – **okay**
15. **So on the side of your leg you have a cross? – and a heart – and a heart - can you describe that more for me – um – like the colour –** the heart’s black with light shading in it and then the cross inside of it has black outline with I guess a sky blue with white in it – **okay, so your choice of choosing that image was basically to do with your religious background – ya – and does it have any other personal meaning to you –** um, well I knew I was going to be moving out of the house soon so the fact that I got it was just like – I guess when I look at it I remember my parents more and it’s like – because they’re so far away I can look at it and look at it more as a you know – like something I got for them – **they live on the other side of Canada –** no, they live in the States – **oh, they live in the States –** they live in Arkansas – **did you grow up in the States?** – no, I was born in the Yukon – **ha**
16. **Now why did you choose your colour?** – um I wanted to go just black because then it doesn’t fade as easily in my opinion but I thought like I wanted him to do my cross protection black but as he was starting to do it I realized it would look prettier with different colours and um when my brother was helping me with it he said that you know blue would probably look nice in it even though he doesn’t like colours either – **okay –** and so as we were going I realized that you know this blue would look nice in it so I asked him to stop (referring to the artist) and he did blue and white in it and the white glows under a black light (laughs) – I just found out this year – **ya – white usually glows under a black light**
17. **Did the tattoo artist offer any suggestions for the colour when you were doing it?** – he wanted me to do it in red – ha ha – **ya, red and black usually are –** ya - **very tribal –** very much – **that would really stand out**
18. **Okay, now tell me about your second tattoo – you’ve got flames coming out from a heart –** no, it’s just like right here (points) – **okay –** and the flames come up to here so I can hide them if I want to - **okay and what colour is that –** it’s all black – **it’s all black and what were your reasons for getting it all in black –** well, I didn’t want to draw too much attention to that area and it’s already enough attention like with the tattoo there and with more colour it would just be more bold and I don’t know – **okay – it would just stand out –** ya – **so that’s right at the breast bone –** ya, it’s right in between where the Heimlich maneuver would be ya – so if I ever choked they would know exactly where to go (laughing)
19. **So the next question is where do you have the tattoo – so the second tattoo is normally where you would do the Heimlich maneuver - how big is it – like 2 inches or 1 inch –** probably about two and a half inches – **and your other one is on your left hip –** ya, no wait – my right just below my hip – **and why did you want to get it on the right side as opposed to the left –** my favorite side I guess – **so no particular reason**

Participant married and interview resumed 5 months later

Did you get another tattoo with your brother this past Thanksgiving? – no, I didn’t – I’m going to see them some time this summer – so hopefully in June, July I’m heading out to Arkansas – **and that’s where you grew up in Arkansas –** no I grew up all over Canada (laughs) – **well that’s quite an experience –** it was, it was fun

When you get a tattoo with your brother and sister will it be a tattoo that connects with each other – ya, it’s all going to be different styles because it’s all different art work that we like better and we can’t agree on one single one but everyone’s going to put a little bit of each other in their tattoo so it has some

kind of family meaning – **okay** – it might end up being like a nice family tree – just like a nice small one somewhere that has everyone’s name coming off of a branch but that’s our idea (laughs) – **that’s interesting** – ya

Okay you said that you watch tattoo reality shows and you mentioned that they often have conflicts and issues, can you tell me about any of the conflicts or issues that you’ve seen – Miami Ink - I watched this one where one of their trainees wasn’t suppose to do tattoos but he was alone in the shop and this person came in and well “I want to get this tattoo done” and it was just really easy – three stars – and he’s like alright and he did the tattoo for him and then the like main guy from *Miami Ink* came in and got all angry and started throwing stuff at him and was like **“I can’t believe you tattooed without my permission”** – and I was like **holy – how did the tattoo turn out – it turned out good**, like it looked good – he was just wasn’t suppose to do it cause he was new right – **was he an apprentice** – ya, just an apprentice – and then he got his skull tattooed and he wasn’t suppose to get his skull tattooed – **who the apprentice?, he wasn’t suppose to get his skull tattooed** – no he got in trouble for getting his skull tattooed – ya the manager was like **“I think it looks dum”** – I was like oh (laughs) – **okay**

Now you said that your dad had told you some interesting experiences – about his tattoos, ya – **ya** - like he got some of them done by his buddies – so it wasn’t like the greatest tattoos that you get done in the world but (laughs) – **so they weren’t done professionally** – I think maybe he had one done professionally but when he was younger him and his friends liked to try to do them themselves and so they have kind of faded – you can’t really like – he has a dragon that kind of like looks like a horse now (laughs) – **they did it themselves they’re not going to ...**

What did your dad think about you getting a tattoo – at first I didn’t really tell him (laughs) – I just went and got them done and then he didn’t like them at first – he thinks that you should wait until you reach of age and then once you hit 18 then you’ve thought about it long enough then that’s a good age to do it, which makes sense – then you have time to think about it and be like is it dum if I get that done – do I want this on me forever but he kind of likes one of them I have – my mom likes my tattoos – **which one does he like** – he likes the cross – **okay, ya – oh ya** (laughter) – **so did he get the tattoos before he was a Pastor or after** – ya before - probably 18, age 16 to 20 probably (laughs) – **did he ever have anyone say anything about his tattoos with being a Pastor** – as a Pastor – ya, he’s had quite a few questions about it but most people go “oh you must have had a rough background” – and he’s like hmmm (laughter) – but you know – **did your dad have a rough background** – he did ya – well he moved from England when he was 14 to Canada to Toronto – then he moved out of the house at 16 then I don’t know, he was everywhere – **okay**

You said you visit some tattoo websites – have you gone to any tattoo websites recently that are interesting – not recently, not really – **so I went on the Internet and looked up Tool and I thought their artwork was quite ‘interesting’** – ya (laughs) – **so I can see why you like it** – ya they do a good job on their artwork – it’s something you’ve never seen before – **are there any other musicians that you** - look at – **ya** – for artwork – not really – not really tattoo wise – Lil’ Wayne has some interesting tattoos – **who’s that** – he’s a rapper, a reggae rapper – **Lil’ Wayne** – ya, his father is Birdman and they’re rappers and they sing together but there’s a picture of him and he’s got tear drops down his eyes cause his dad has them done – his dad has two – **I think – ya I know who you’re talking about now – what do you think about Pink** – she has some interesting ones – she’s got that cobra right on the back of her thigh there – that’s pretty sweet – **she just had a new song out recently – but I remember two or maybe it was three years ago well Pink has her tattoos up here – one on each side of her chest – she has a tattoo here – paw prints** – no that’s not Pink that’s Eve – **and I went to a Canada Day event at City Park – ya – and they were handing out stickers – tattoos of red maple leaves and all the young girls were putting them exactly on the same place** – (laughter) – **now there’s an influence right there** – ya really – that’s funny – I love Canada Day

You said you had your one picture for your tattoo for six months – was that the cross – ya – did you display it on your wall or where – I just kept it in my nightstand by my bed – **and you just looked at it all the time to make sure that was what you wanted** – I even checked it with makeup like an eyeliner

and I just like went around on my body and figured out what spot I liked the best on it and I like would take my pants and be like if I had these shorter shorts on it then would it still cover the tattoo and if I don't have these shorter shorts on – you know – that's what I did – I like checking out where's the best – everywhere – **that's a good idea** – ya (laughs) – **that is, then you know for sure** – **exactly**

Section 3 – Perceptions

1. **Are you pleased/happy with your tattoos?** - yep – **and why are you happy** – constant reminder – they're always good to have on you memory wise – **are you pleased with both of your tattoos** – ya
2. **Do you think your friends like your tattoos?** – ya (laughs) – **what do you think they like about them** – um well for most of my friends they're probably just happy that I was able to get them and they can't (laughs) – **why is that** – parental consent – you need parental consent or else you can't get it done unless you know the tattoo artist (laughs) – **so okay but I don't think you had parental consent** – **how did you** – I knew the tattoo artist and **I was just bad** (laughs) – **the first one you went to you said you booked an appointment** – ya I did – they never even asked for ID – I just walked in - this is what I want done, this is what I want done, can you do it and he's like ya and I was like okay – **was this in Kelowna or Penticton** – it was in XXX – XXX, okay – **oh XX** – ya (laughter) – **why XX** - **you look young now, you must have looked really young then** – **walking in I was like I'm 14 I'm going to be 15 in two weeks** – **do my tattoo** – **okay** (laughs)
3. **Do you have any friends that dislike your tattoos?** – not really – I think they're just too nice to really say anything if they really don't like them – probably just keep to themselves – **can you think of any particular comment that a friend has said about liking your tattoos** – from liking it um I don't know - I've got **'sweet man, that's awesome'** (laughter) – **that sounds like a guy** – ya (laughter)
4. **Does having tattoos or piercings affect who you hang around with or who your friends are?** – um for some people yes, for others no – it really just depends on your personality – like you could really love tattoos but not be really drawn toward people who have them you know – you could hang out with different kinds of people – **for me** I hang out with **everybody** **so** – people without tattoos, people with tattoos, piercings, no piercings, Christian, non Christian – doesn't really matter - **that answers my second question too about the friends you associate with whether they modify their bodies in anyway** – **you just said you hang out with everyone** – ya
5. **So for your first tattoo you didn't have parental permission** – **no, no** - **and for your second tattoo** – **no** – **okay** – **and your second tattoo was done by a different artist** – it was, he was in Kelowna ya – **and your parents now know that you have tattoos, did they know about your first tattoo** – my mom found out about the one on my chest probably about a good three months after I got it done – **that was your second one** – ya and she found that just because I was wearing a shirt that went around my shoulders and I bent down to get something and I guess you could see it and she was like **"what is that"** (laughter) and I was like **um** – **it was a shock** – ya it was a bit of a shock – I bullshitted my way out of it but I shouldn't have **cause I was bad** – **how did you bullshit your way out of it** – I was like it's a henna tattoo – it was a dark one and you can get henna tattoos that are **exactly** like it right, so you can't say anything about it cause it lasts up to three weeks and they even bring them into Mount Boucherie sometimes – we have those clubs and you put like little henna tattoos on yourself and they look just like tattoos and I just told her it was that and then I was out of the house anyways in a month and I was like **holy** – it wasn't a henna tattoo – **did you say that over the phone** – no no, it was in person – **okay what did your mom say** – um she was like "I kind of knew" (laughs) – **moms ya** – mothers know, they act dum but they know – **how far after did your dad find out about your tattoo** – my dad um I think I told him about them – **before your mom** – ya before, my mom never really told my dad those things – cause I don't know, we have different levels with my parents – **okay** – ya so you could tell my mom and she wouldn't ground you – tattoos you tell my dad and you'd probably be in your room

for a good six months (laughs) – **I think that's with a lot of parents** – ya you always have that one parent who's a little bit easier than the other you know (laughs) – **your dad's okay with them now** – ya he's good – **what was his reaction** – he actually surprisingly, he wasn't that surprised – like I showed them to him and he was like **"yep I figured"** (laughs) but he was like "at least you didn't get any dum ones" – ha ha ya – not too happy but – **but he didn't say a lot** – no – well they're permanent what are you going to say – **ya too late** - (laughter) – **take them off - you can't** (laughs)

6. **Okay other than your friends or family have you had any positive comments from strangers?** – ya um I worked at Dairy Queen for a while and I actually had a lady come in with a 'Tool' tattoo right up here and it was a man crouched like this and it was all in dots – **in pointillism** – ya – **a crouched person** – ya he was crouched and they did it all in dots – ya right here (points) – **on upper shoulder** – ya exactly – and I commented on it because I had it on my CD cover of a 'Tool' one – and I was like **you have that from 'Tool'** – and she's like **"ya"** and she's like **"you have tattoos"** - **I'm going to have to take a look at that CD cover** – ya it's nice – **so did she say she got it because she liked 'Tool'** – she said she's been listening to them and been to like every concert they've had out in Vancouver and Kelowna and she's just like **"I love them so much"** – and I was like "I like them"- **so she liked your tattoo** – ya – **of your flames** – ya she did, it was good – she was a nice girl – **what did she say exactly** – exactly um she just said it was nice and where did you get it done and we compared stores and prices (laughs)
7. **Do you think having tattoos or piercings make you stand out in a crowd?** – **ya – in what way** – well if I was walking down with sleeve tattoos and I was in the middle of New York among a whole lot of business people you'd probably pick me out of all the people (laughs) – **what about yourself** – myself – **ya, when you have just a t-shirt on with your tattoo (pointing to upper chest)** – ya I get some looks (laughs) – **you get some looks** – definitely – **how does it make you feel** – ah I just shrug them off (laughs) cause you can't tell what they're thinking right – like you could be paranoid and "oh they're thinking bad about my tattoo or you could be like "oh they're thinking good about my tattoo – I don't know – **okay**
8. **Now have you ever experienced any negative or 'off the wall' comments from people other than your family or friends?** – well ya the one here (points to one on chest) I'll get the odd comment like – I had one of JJ's friends over a while back – just hanging out with them – and I come out wearing my bikini and I was like I'm going to go sun tanning and this guy goes **"what's in-between your 'boobs'"** and I just looked at him and **"excuse me"** (laughs) – I said **"what"** – and he was like "well you got like a tattoo" – and I was like "ya, a tattoo" and I was like "do not approach a woman like that" (laughs) – I was so angry but – **what did he do afterwards** – shut down and didn't say a word (laughter) – **that did you give you some power right** – ya it does, it does (laughs)
9. **Do you ever feel that you have been treated differently with having a tattoo for example from a sales clerk or I have read about people with piercings having problems going through security at airports** – ya different piercings – like if I was to go to an airport and I go through that little metal detector I would beep (laughs) – guarantee that I'll beep and it's like you know kind of why I've never been on a plane just because I don't want to go through that hassle because if you've got certain piercings you've got to tell them where they are and then if they don't believe you, they've got to – **and that could be uncomfortable** – exactly – **because it's to a total stranger** – yes – and then there's like a big line up of people (laughs) – I don't like it too much – **you are going to want to travel** – you can get like plastic ones right, but they're a bit more expensive so you got to kind of – if you know you're going to travel save up to get plastic bar bells – **so you can just replace them** – exactly – **so do you think people with tattoos have any problems** – ya I guess I can see it like when I worked at Petro Canada my manager actually refused to hire a guy that I knew was a really good worker – I knew him – I went to school with him – really good worker – he worked as a chef for a good while and he wouldn't hire him because he had his nose pierced (bullring) – and he was like my manager said change your face –

he says (manager) “I think it’s disgusting that people can violate themselves like that” and I looked at him – **violation** – yes he said violation – and I looked at him and I was like I have 7 piercings and 2 tattoos and I’ve been working for you for a good year and I was like, you think it’s disgusting now (laughs) – it was just like – after that it was just like ‘you’re dum’ – like you can’t judge people because of their appearance – like as much as you want to – like as freaky and dum looking as they can look with the amount of piercings on your face – well whatever man – **so did he say anything to you after you told him** – no, **he** had no back bone at all – he just looked at me and it was like ‘oh’ and he just walked out the door and came back next shift – **what about – obviously you’re a really good worker** – ya he didn’t say anything to me because I pretty much ran that store for him when he wasn’t there – I could have been a manager – I was just too young – **what about visible tattoos** – visible tattoos I don’t know – I’ve never really experienced a problem with that – I’ve been told to wait outside when I went to a gas station once – **you were** – ya (laughs) – well I went in with two of my buddies and there’s me and two other people in there and like “I’m sorry we only want two people in here can you wait outside” – **oh so you were centred out** – ya (laughs) – I was centred out – **do you feel that you were centred out because you had the tattoo** – ya, and I was like what – **I have another story from a girl that I interviewed and she said that where she was working the girl that she was working with had a tattoo on her inner arm of a musical note** – oh ya – **and this elderly gentleman came in and would not have her serve him because he said she had a tattoo and she was a member of a cult gang** (laughter) – that’s really dum (laughter) – **so people have different** – a musical note man that can’t be a cult – **ya** – if it was then it’s a very nice cult

10. **Now the stereotyping of tattoos especially before with guys being a biker, or being a prisoner or the association with sailors and even gangs – how do you think when someone sees a girl today with a tattoo – do you think any of those stereotypes have rubbed off onto girls?** – sometimes, ya – cause I’ve known some girls thinking that about tattoos but you never know why something gets attached to you and you shouldn’t jump to conclusions and you shouldn’t be judgmental until you know the facts you know – cause there’s always different stories, there’s always different reasons for it – **have you heard of any stereotypes that have been associated with girls** – with girls – probably the biggest stereotype right now is like the whole like tribal tattoo on your back, lower back and I know it doesn’t sound that nice but lots of that tattoo now is pretty much towards – if you get one you’re known as a little bit of a ‘whore’ – you know just because it’s like why else would you get it there other than to show it off – I know lots of girls that have it and don’t have it for that reason and that’s why you shouldn’t judge but it is a stereotype that’s gone out there right – **so have you heard of the term that’s associated with that** – no – **it’s called a ‘tramp stamp’** – a tramp stamp ya I’ve heard that one – **I actually was watching last week ‘CSI’ – the original one, not Miami or New York but the CSI and it was one of their new episodes and this girl had been killed and she was brought in and she had money tattooed, money symbols tattooed (dollar signs) all around her lower back and partially around her front – and the girl (Catherine Willows) from CSI said “oh look she’s got a ‘tramp stamp’” – not only that but her husband was prostituting his wife out and every time she came home after being with someone he tattooed a new money sign on her and when he saw her body he said “oh, that’s too bad we almost got it all the way around” – whoa – when I heard that I thought okay I have to use – **holy** – and the first time I had heard of that term was two and a half years ago – I was at the doctors’ and I was telling him about my research and this was at UBC and he told me that was what doctors referred/used – ya – okay (laughter) – wow I didn’t know it was that big of a stereotype – I knew it was a stereotype now but **holy – yes** – ha ha**
11. **Do you like tattoos on other girls?** – ya, I find some of them pretty nice – I’ve never been a really big fan of lots of tattoos on ladies – I’ve always found the odd one to a couple have been pretty nice but on females such as sleeved arms I’ve never found too attractive – **do you watch American Idol - so what do you think of Carly with her** – oh I never saw that one – **you never saw Carly – she has her whole arm tattooed and she was booted off two weeks ago** – well I never really watch it – I watch it on U Tube so – **Carly was one of the top singers – she was**

number 6 I think and she has a sleeve – oh wow – and her husband who was in the audience had tattoos all over (laughs) even on his face – oh man – so if you get a chance take a look – but no one ever said anything about her tattoos – ya – even Simon – I mean there were some conversations on blogs on the Internet but given that Simon says these things about people's weight, people's hairdos, people's clothing – never said anything about – her tattoos – ya – at least he isn't singling out people and being old fashioned about it – accepts them for who they are except if your fat (laughs) then – can't understand the hairstyles or dress – he's very conservative – all he ever wears basically is t-shirts – ya – very conservative in his dress

12. Is there any particular tattoo that you have seen on another girl that you really liked? – that Tool one – what about a tattoo on a girl that you didn't like – didn't like – the barbwire – oh yes I remember you told me about that barbwire one – the Angelina Jolie tattoo that goes around her forearm – up here (points) and it's just like a barbwire – there's no meaning for it – there's no use of it – it just apparently looks good – everyone gets that – now are you aware of the tattoo that goes all the way around and makes a circuit because it connects – if you have a lot of iron in the tattoo - dark tattoo that goes all the way around there can be some difficulty with a MRI – oh ya, ya – wouldn't it like mess with the ink – it creates a circuit – it can cause some discomfort or depending on the tattoo a bit of a burn – a bit of a rash – it depends upon the amount of iron in the tattoo – ya, I've heard of it but it's never been fully explained to me – have you ever watched 'Myth Busters' – just once – they did something with tattoos saying that it was a myth – getting an MRI with a tattoo and getting a burn but they did it in a different way – and they stated that nothing happens but there is a lot of magnetic pull in those machines and they're getting stronger all the time – I have a friend who is a radiologist so he knows about this
13. What about tattoos on guys – on boys – do you like them? – I like them – is there a specific one that you have seen that you really like – I saw, well actually it's one of my brother's good friends – he's got a scroll right on his inner arm here (pointing to upper inner arm) – and it's like a Bible verse – he's a religious man so he's got like this nice old looking scroll and then underneath it is this old handwriting and it's got like a Bible verse in it and it looks nice so the artist did a really good job – is it just in blacks and shades – ya it's in black and it's all shaded out and he's got big forearms so it's like a good size tattoo – it's probably about the size of my hand if not bigger (about 6 inches) – can you remember what it said – he was in the Marine Corps so it was something like "God will give me justice" – one of those kind of – or strength – ya – there's one "God will give me strength" or – ya there's like "ye though I walk through the shadow of death I will fear no evil" – they have those ones too – like I've seen like my brother's in the Marine Corps so I use to visit him once a year and I would walk into the Marine Corps and the second you would get past those guards and into like the big complex it's tattoos everywhere – it's like tattoo city mania like you walk in and there will be tattoos everywhere like people have their platoons on their arms and just up their forelegs and lots of crosses everywhere and you won't pretty much meet a marine that doesn't somewhat believe in God – like even if they aren't Christians – it's like "oh no there's a God up there" (laughs) – so it's always like tattoos everywhere – now I do know that there is a law with the marines and all the armed forces that you can only have so much of your body tattooed – ya – I'm sure they're going to get it in places that show because as marines they want to show them – ya – my brother is on his eighth tattoo – he has them on his upper back and arms but only two are showing – is there a tattoo on a guy that you haven't liked – like the mom tattoos – like the heart mom tattoos that are bright red or pink that have your mom's name in the middle of them (laughs) – I'm sorry, I don't know – I guess I just don't like mama boys (laughs) – it also seems a little bit old fashion too – it does ya – I've seen quite a few which surprises me – you're expecting the 50s – I knew that was a big trend in the 50s – I don't know – I guess even getting someone's name in a heart – ya it's a little iffy because so many people don't stay together nowadays right – does your husband have tattoos – ya, he has two – what are they of – one's a Canadian flag between his shoulder blades and the other one – he was in a band for a good five years so him and all his band members got a tattoo on their upper chest/shoulder – of the band – yes – what is it – it's a CCD – I can never remember what it

stands for but it's the name of their band and his is a base guitar – **okay so that's what he played** – ya exactly – **so then the drummer would have probably got drums** – ya – **that's neat** – it was simple (laughs)

14. **You've said that your family members have tattoos – other than your brothers or sisters or your dad do other members in your family have tattoos – your mom** – no my mom hasn't got any – **grandparents** - I think ya my grandpa on my dad's side – so my dad's dad has one but he wasn't big on them either but he was in the army too so he got them done with his army buddies – **grandmothers** – no (laughs) – what has your grandmother thought about your tattoo – oh **"soo cute"** – it's like they're a grandma – somewhat supportive – **oh so your grandma was somewhat supportive – most of the participants I've talked to their grandma's or grandparents haven't been supportive** – ya the old fashion ya – my one grandma is really old fashion – I leave it alone – she's my dad's mom and she loosing her memory but when she heard about my dad getting a tattoo she 'racked' him out about that – when he was younger - so when he found out that I had tattoos he was like just don't mention it to your grandma so (laughs) – **but your other grandmother** – ya my other grandmother's good
15. **Has anyone tried to discourage you from getting a tattoo – well your dad said he wished you had waited until you were 18 – any friends try to discourage you** – um, ya I had a few friends tell me that I should maybe think about it a little bit more but you know you are the only person who can tell when you're ready for one you know – **what were their reasons** – their reasons – just don't get something on you that you are going to regret for the rest of your life – **and your family wanting you to wait** – till I was 18 – **is that the same kind of reason** – ya I think so – **tattoo artist try to discourage you at all** – not really – they're more like "oh we could make it look better like this" and I was like okay (laughs) – **okay – ya you told me about the one tattoo artist with the flames** – ya
16. **How do you view yourself as a person who has a tattoo – do you think having a tattoo has made you more confident with who you are or more outgoing** (laughter) – a little bit probably ya – it's certainly affected my – cause you strike up conversations with tattoos right so it gives you a bit more ability to talk to people – you're in the middle of the street and somebody will go "that's a nice tattoo" and then get a conversation going from that – **ya a good conversation starter** – ya exactly – **it breaks the ice and** – ya – **you feel like you have something in common or even if you don't have something in common people still ask you about it** – ya exactly, it's a good way to start a conversation and get to know people – **okay**
17. **Would you say having a tattoo is a form of self control over who you are or is it more like a rebellion** – for me personally, it's just for myself – I don't know about other people – it could be like for anything but personally I just have them for myself – the one, my heart with flames I love it – it reminds me – everyone should have passion, fire in their heart, like never let it die – **okay** – so many people do and it makes me sad – **ya** – love your life – **I think it happens to people who go through rough things in their lives and they just start to give up** – ya they can't see the fire or reasons for living anymore – **and if you have something that kind of reminds you – I kind of wish that when I was younger I wrote more and wrote about my memories more**
18. **Why do you think more girls are getting tattooed today then say 20 or 30 years ago, for example in the 70s?** – it's more socially acceptable now – you know back in the 70s my mom would never think about getting a tattoo when she was younger – they just looked like young ladies then – you had to keep yourself up per se, you had to keep up your personality and your outward appearance - you just had to show that you're a woman you know and now you can do that by displaying pictures and doing what you want to your body and still not be thought badly – it's not like your on the streets you know - you can still be a good person with tattoos – **okay thank you**
19. **Taking off from that question – because it use to be more of a guy thing** – ya – **getting a tattoo and today there are a lot more girls getting tattooed and guys getting tattooed** – how

do you think things have changed with girls and guys today compared to 20 or 30 years ago? – feminist (laughter) you mean – yes I can see that – ya, that has a big part to do with it – **do you think there should be any difference between girls and guys and what girls and guys get to do** – mm tattoo and piercing wise no, not really – I think it's personal choice for everybody you know – men or women are always going to have similar likings - everyone likes tattoos, some people don't like tattoos, some people like piercings, men and women like piercings – I think it's just equal you know – do what you want to so but don't over exaggerate it you know – **ya – so girls should just have as much right** – ya – **as guys who have tattoos and piercings** – tattoos and piercings yes, other things in the world maybe not (laughs) – **no I understand** – ya

20. **Do you feel a need to hide you tattoos** – in some places yes – like if I'm in the future I am going to med school so if I go in to be a doctor I'm not going to sit there and display my tattoos to people because as an authority level you know - you've got to show that you are somewhat committed – so ya there's probably times to cover them and there's time when you let them hang out whatever (laughs) – **so you're planning to do that** – ya med school – **that's exciting** – January hopefully – **wow are you excited** - ya

Section 4 - Risks

1. **You said a professional tattooist gave you your first tattoo** – yes – **and your second one** – yes – **now how did you choose who would give you your tattoo** – um I kind of just walked around Kelowna and went to Penticton and Vernon and checked out which places I thought would be the cleanest – **okay, did you find any places that didn't look very clean** – yes – **okay** (laughter) – definitely - **it didn't give you a very good feeling** – ya
2. **So tell me about your experience with getting tattooed – anything memorable** – not really – it was just regular - it wasn't anything horrible or great – it didn't hurt for sure – **didn't hurt** – no – **most people say it hurts** - it does hurt for some people but it didn't hurt me I guess – **do you think it's the location where you got your tattoo** – probably – maybe if I got it on my inner thigh or maybe on my spine there would be more pain involved but it didn't hurt too much – **yes some people say if you get it right on the bone it hurts – I heard the ankle** – ya
3. **Before you got tattooed did the tattoo artist ask you if you had any medical problems** – yes – well the one place I went you had to fill out a little thing to make sure you hadn't been drinking within 72 hours because you could bleed too much – **okay – I noticed in Primal that they have a sheet asking you if you have diabetes or any heart conditions now** – oh really (laughs) – that's cool – **and they didn't have that before** – no
4. **You said your permanent tattoos were done here in Canada** – mm - **have you ever had a henna done in another country** – no, that would be stupid – **you have to be careful about getting some of those done by street vendors in other** – ya – **you know there's a substance called PPD in** – I heard about it – I never paid too close attention - **how did you hear about it** - well it was just something that my teacher had to bring up once – it was in my homeroom class and we had a man come through and it was just regular because we do – we have different clubs sometimes – **okay** – and there's like henna clubs and stuff – one of my friends has done it and I just heard from the guy that came in – **so this henna club had this person who came in and talked about it** – **okay that's really interesting – what high school was that** – just Mount Boucherie – **Mount Boucherie** – ya
5. **Do you think there is any risk involved with getting a tattoo** – **definitely** (laughs) – **what kind of risk** – ah if they don't change their needles it's a big risk (laughs) – a very big risk – um, I don't know, if they don't clean off the seats after the people leave – people have different bacteria on them – if you drop anything on the seat and then pick them up with your fingers bacteria and that – you've just got to make sure it's nice and clean all the time – (laughs) - **okay**

6. **So what are the risks you have heard about** – well when my sister went in to get a tattoo, the tattoo artist she had went out and smoked a joint before he did her tattoo (laughs) – ya – **oh okay** – ya, maybe it helps sometimes to concentrate a little bit better but that's pretty iffy – scary (laughter) – especially while they're tattooing you – **well this book that I just bought 'Permanence' by an art instructor in Santa Barbara who interviewed all these people who have tattoos and one guy said to really trust your feelings about a tattoo artist – if they look kind of iffy then don't go with them – he said they tattooed him so hard that he got a keloid and he can feel the bumps on his tattoo – ya – trust your gut instincts**
7. **So what sources have you learned about the risks involved in getting a tattoo – you said your sister – ya – and you said your own gut feelings and you said the people that came into the high school that talked about henna – any other – like the tattoo artists – did they talk about the risks at all** – the second tattoo artist that I went to sat down and talked to me but it was just short – I think he spent about 5 minutes just telling you how it's going to feel and the fact that you're getting it done and if you're willing to take that pain – **okay – newspaper articles** – a few of them, a few of them I've read but nothing too big – I don't, I don't know – I listen to what they say and then I like to figure it out for myself to judge it a little bit better – **website** – not really – **friends** – **ya for sure**, ya – **what have your friends said to you** – ah God (laughs) there's been a lot – a few of my friends who didn't get professional tattoos because they're '**dumb**' and went and got it done by friends have severely regretted it – they get infected – **gross** – I saw one tattooed women who had a little rose done and one of the little rose petals got infected and so there was this tiny tattoo and the one petal was all 'poofed' and pussy and ahh – **it was gross** (laughs) – **oh** – ya – **church** – not really – **books or magazines** – you read about it for sure like, I don't know, you pick up a book about tattoos and it will say the risks involved and then they'll be like **but** (laughs) – **television shows** – not really, they mostly encourage them (laughs) – **parents obviously** – ya (laughs) – **doctor** – not really, not really – **can you think of any specific thing that a newspaper or magazine article may have said** - um I don't know (laughs) – **what specific magazine – was this from the "Rolling Stones" or** – no they're just little ones that I pick up – they're nothing big and stuff so it's just more like just tattoos it says and then it's got pictures of different tattoos – **oh a tattoo magazine** – mm – **oh, okay** – different sections of your body – **okay**
8. **Were the risks you read about taught or expressed in a positive way – like just be careful – but not as a scare tactic – like if you get a tattoo then this is going to happen** – you're going to get HIV, AIDS (laughs) – ah kind of both – I've had it from different sides so I've had the positive and the negative (laughs) – **so how would you describe the positive** – positive – do what you want but **be careful** – you know – make sure they're clean – **how would you describe the negative** – your going to get HIV (laughs) – but not too negative – just being careful – **was that from your friends or** – that was from many people
9. **So did your knowledge of risks influence your decision to get tattooed in anyway** – oh ya, you've got to be careful who you go to for sure
10. **Have you ever experienced a physical or medical problem with a tattoo?** – not with any of my tattoos, not at all – um I've seen it but I've never experienced it – **so people that you have seen who have had problems how did they deal with their problem** – well most of the people who I saw that got them done and it got infected it was usually their fault – **did they go to a doctor** – ya – **did they go back to the tattoo artist** – um I'm not really sure – I mostly just saw it – **you don't know, okay** – ya – **other than infections did they experience any other problems** – not that I know of
11. **So what other forms of body art or adornment do you have or have you tried? – you obviously have body piercing** – ya – **can you tell me about your body piercings** – what about them – **like how many you have or where** – um – **I notice you have them inside your ear - what's that one called - is there a name for that location** – there is, I just don't remember it – but ya I got both of these done – I got this one done in Kelowna and ya this one done in Kelowna

too (pointing to) - I never pierce myself - I don't think it's good - **do you have a tongue piercing** - no I don't have any facial or tongue piercings I've got the body piercings - **do you have your bellybutton pierced** - no, not yet - I had it done once but I took it out because I didn't want it but now I'm going to get it again - and you have piercings in other places - ya I have 8 piercings - **8** - ya, **ya** I'm a piercing fanatic - **you have piercings on your chest** - ya - **okay - did that hurt** - not the first one but the second one hurt a lot - **okay - have you ever had removable tattoos** - yes - I didn't like them - **you didn't like them** - no (laughs) - **scarification** - ah not really - **implants** - **no** - (laughs) - no - **hair alteration** - no (laughs) - **anything else you can think of** - not really

12. **Do you think there are any risks involved with other forms of body art or adornment?** - yes - it's just getting like tattoos and piercings you know that there are going to be risks involved - you've got to be smart about it - hopefully - **have you ever had any other problems other than with the one piercing really hurting** - **have you ever had any problems** - um I've had them fall out just randomly - like you'll be sleeping and you wake up in the morning and the piercing has just fallen out - **okay** - it means your bar bells are too old and you've got to buy a new one (laughs) - **ya someone else had theirs fall out too** - ya - **from their bellybutton** - I've had one of my piercings fall out and then I had to re-pierce it cause it grew over - I'm never doing that again (laughs) - **never get it re-pierced** - oh no, I would just never pierce myself again - **okay** - there's something about piercing yourself that I cannot wrap my mind around - I know other people can do it to me or I can do it to other people but doing it to yourself is like why am I doing this (laughs)
13. **Would you encourage or discourage any other person from getting a tattoo?** - um, I'd probably tell them to do what they think is right - I don't know - **so that's what you would say, would you tell them how to go about** - **oh ya definitely** - I mean if they want to know where to go and what's the best place to go I'll tell them
14. **Do you believe tattoo shops have the responsibility to inform people about possible health risks involved with getting a tattoo?** - oh ya, for sure - if they tattoo you they better be telling you what's going on cause if someone doesn't know and it's their first tattoo and they don't wash it regularly it could turn out badly - **okay - it's really important to take care of it afterwards** - oh ya
15. **Do you believe that possible tattoo risks should be discussed in the classroom?** - nowadays yes, not so much probably back (laughs) but ya more people are getting tattoos - it should be discussed - tattoos and piercings - how to clean them, how to keep it nice, where to go if you're going to get one - **do you think that was a good idea when they brought in those people that were the** - henna - **ya** - definitely because bringing in the henna isn't like bringing in a tattoo artist and not just for fun, **right** - **do you think bringing in a tattoo artist would be a** - I would, if I was the principal of the school I would definitely bring in a piercing and a tattoo artist and send them around different classrooms - **okay**
16. **If you were aware of possible health risk, well you already were aware of the health risks like HIV** - ya - **and other viruses** - **blood born viruses** - **did you think twice before going into tattoo shops** - ya, for sure cause you got to be careful going in them - would be like do I really want the tattoo - **did you talk to a tattoo artist at all before you** - ya well I went in and I set up a little appointment with him first and we sat down and talked for about like 15 minutes and then I left and came back 2 weeks later to get my tattoo - **okay** - that's what I did anyway - **that's a good idea** - ya, **I was in Primal the other day and there was this girl and she wanted to get a tattoo right then, I think she was about 22, and she says do you have any appointments right now or sometime in the next little while and he says we don't have any available appointments until later in the day and she says cause if I don't do it now I'm** - **I might not do it** - **and I'm thinking then you shouldn't do it** - (laughter) - **you'll regret it**

17. **So you don't regret having any of your tattoos?** – no, I still like them
18. **Have you ever engaged, you don't have to answer these questions, have you ever engaged in any other forms of risk behavior such as smoking or –** like cigarette smoking – **ya cigarette smoking** – I've tried it but I'm not suppose to smoke – **marijuana** – I've tried it – I'm not really suppose to do it – I have some medical problems so these are things I'm suppose to stay away from – **okay so you don't engage in drugs or stuff like that** – no, I'm not suppose to – **and what were your reasons for just trying them** – just trying them – well I don't think you can judge them until you really tried it with like the smaller things – with like crack and stuff – **you know don't have to try it – it's pretty bad** – but with marijuana it's like it's herbal – so many people have tried it that you can't just come up to someone and be like that's a bad thing to do if you've never done it, right - so trying it and seeing that it's not that harmful it's better than people getting drunk and being abusive for sure – in my opinion anyway – **and what about your piercings – when did you start getting your piercings** – probably 2 years ago – **and what made you decide that you wanted to** – to do piercings – I think I just liked the way it looked – **okay** – I don't know - I think body piercings that are done right can look really nice and I don't know (laughs) – **okay**
19. **How would you define risk?** – risk – **ya** – ah (laughs) – knowing that it could be bad but doing it anyway – **okay** – for sure

Advertisements

Have you seen this one? – (laughs) it's for chocolate – ya this is funny – oh man – **what do you think of that** – it's horrible (laughing) – **someone getting Anthony tattooed on**

This is an ad created by Miami Ink – for cell phones – **ya - do you think that's typical of Miami Ink that type of tattoo** – I guess, it's funny, who does it - maybe

Not bad tattoos – **this is for a jean ad – she kind of reminds me of Kat Von D – what do you think of –** a jean ad aye (laughter) – **ya** – could be why so many people are getting tattoos – for sure (laughter) – everywhere

I don't know about this one (shoe ad) – I think that's painted on – oh ya, totally or a least a nicely drawn picture

Do you think any of those might influence? – it's true – you could look at that and go that's cool, I wouldn't mind that and get it done – especially when they're promoting jeans, phones and chocolate

This is an ad for Ralph Lauren perfume – a very popular perfume with younger people – got little tattoos over her arm and tummy – **but can you get white tattoos** – yep – **you can** – I have white shading in one of my tattoos – **now I didn't know if these were real or painted on** – they definitely look painted or added on by the computer or something – but ya because I have white tattoos but they're never that white unless they've got them touched up right away – **well that's what I kind of thought too** – ya – **well I thought the bracelet was the same as the tattoo** – that's what I noticed too - ya then it's got the little name on top – 'Ralph' – **ya it's a Ralph Lauren fragrance but I don't see the fragrance in there at all** – no (laughter) – you'll look like her – it will be like a magic spray (laughter) – **so what do you think of that ad** – it's a good way to get 10 to 12 year olds to get tattoos – it's like I watched this Dairy Queen commercial the other day and it's like this little girl, she was like seven or eight and they had her on there and they have her look over at this other little boy and she just looks at him and she smiles and she turns to her mom and she's like mom "just order one dessert" and her mom's like okay and the next thing you know this little boy is sending over a dessert and she's like "just as easy as eating pie" something like that – **she's like seven – ya I've seen that one – strong messages in advertisements and on the TV**

And you mentioned Angelina Jolie – ya – **has she influenced you at all** – not really – **do you like her tattoos** – I'm not big on many of her tattoos but they're definitely not bad looking

What about Tegan and Sarah – (laughs) – **I know some people like them** - that's funny

Appendix B: Participant 8 – Breanne

Section 1 - Background

1. **Grade** – 11
2. **Age** – 17
3. **Permanent tattoo** - yes
4. **More than one** – just one
5. **Age of first tattoo** – 16
6. **Plan to get another tattoo** – ya – eventually – **after school** – ya later in life
7. **Is having a tattoo against your cultural background** – nope
8. **Ethnic background** – White/Caucasian
9. **Do you have a cultural heritage in which tattoos are important** – nope
10. **Against religious background** – no
11. **Religious affiliation** – I don't really have a religion

Section 2 – Influences

1. **When did you first start thinking about getting a tattoo?** - probably when my mom got her first tattoo – I was about eight I think – **okay and what did your mom get a tattoo of** – all her siblings - got um like older sister, younger sister, older brother, younger brother – there's the four of them and she just got them in Chinese symbols on her lower back – **so there's some family meaning to it – do you know what it means** – they're just like little brother, little sister ya it's really cute – **do you know why she got it in Chinese lettering** – I think my mom thought it was pretty looking so that's why she chose it – **okay, thank you**
2. **Did any of the following other influences influence you to get a tattoo?** – friends' have tattoos – no – **tattoos on fashion models** – no – **tattoos on actors** – not really – **tattoos in any magazine advertisements** – not really - **just family members** – ya - **anything else** – just my mom
3. **Do you watch any tattoo reality shows?** – ya – **what do you watch** – *LA Ink* – **did you watch Miami Ink before** – ya I watched *Miami Ink* then *LA Ink* came on and I was like 'oh this looks better' so I watch this one so – **is that because of Cat Von D** – ya (laughs) – **okay – is there any particular series that you remember or anything that was particularly memorable on a show that you really liked** – portraits, when people get portraits I think it looks really pretty – **okay – any favorite tattoo artist** – Kat Von D (laughs) -**do you have any favorite tattooed movie stars** – um not really – **what about musicians or bands** – no
4. **Do you believe that advertisements that use models or celebrities with tattoos encourage or influence tattooing** – yes – **how do you think this might be encouraged** – um because people who are my age kind of look up to them as what to do – it's kind of like when they see other people do it then they think it's cool and that's what they should do – so then they want to get one
5. **Did you associate getting a tattoo with any of the following events in your life?** – a birthday – no – a personal relationship – no – a move – no – other – mm –so you got your tattoo when you were

- 16 and was it spring break or a holiday or what** – it was actually my birthday present from my mom – **okay it was a birthday present from your mom** – yep so it was in March of last year - **okay – was the tattoo something you had asked your mom for or had your mom just decided to give it to you** – um I asked for it and she said ya – **okay - so she was very okay with that because some parents aren't, some parents are** – ya – **and do you have any other reasons for getting a tattoo** – nope just my mom
6. **Now how did you choose the image for your tattoo – did you get it from a tattoo artist, did you draw it yourself** – I actually found it on a sheet, like a bed sheet – ya we hung it up on our window because the blinds were all off so I cut a little piece out of it and I told the tattoo artist like **“that’s what I want”** – **so it was the pattern from a bed sheet** – okay (laughter) – **okay that’s interesting** (laughs) - **how long did you have your image of the tattoo before you decided to get it** – oh almost a year – **almost a year so you kind of looked at it and did you have it posted it in your room** – ya – I **looked** at it everyday and I was like ‘ohhhh’ – **so you really, really thought about it before you decided to get it** - yep
7. **So what image do you have** – I have a rose – **a rose** – my mom’s name is Rose so I got a rose on my left shoulder blade – **so you chose an image from a sheet that you really liked and can you tell me more about the rose – its colour or** – it’s pink – um my mom’s favorite colour is pink and it’s just a plain rose – **how big is it** – (shows) **okay so it’s about four to five inches** – ya about that I guess – **and you have it on your left back shoulder – what was your reason for putting it on this location** – I kind of liked how it looked on that side – no specific reason – **kind of random** – ya – **so you cut the rose out of the sheet and you took it to the tattoo artist, so did he have to draw it larger or was it the same size as the image on the sheet** – it was the same size – **so he just did a stencil of the image** – ya – **so did the sheet have a colour in it already** – no – **so it was just like a black** – it was kind of a pinkish colour – **he added the colour to it and did you discuss the colour before** – um ya he kind of gave options of what kind of pink I wanted like a little colour palate thing and he showed me like the different colours of pink – **so is it in shades of pink or is it just pink** – it’s in shades of pink, it kind of goes dark from a darker pink to a lighter pink – **with black outlines or** - ya – **so just black and pink – no other colour** – and then there’s green and yellow on the leaves – **did you get the tattoo here** – ya - **okay, thank you** – your welcome

Section 3 – Perceptions

1. **Are you pleased/happy with your tattoo? – very** – **can you describe why you are happy** – because it’s exactly what I had pictured in my head before I went and got it done - um I like what it represents with my mom – she’s very important to me and it’s just like the bond I have with my mom, it represents a symbol of that and I just really – I like it – **okay – did you get it done by yourself** – I went with my mom and my little sister
2. **Do you think your friends like your tattoo** – yep – **Is there anything that they’ve said about your tattoo** – they liked it and they like the meaning of the symbol behind it a lot – I told a lot of friends what it means and what it means to me and the meaning behind it and why I got it – yep – **okay are there any friends who dislike it** – um not that I know of (laughs) – **okay thank you**
3. **So you obviously had parental permission because your mom gave it to you as a birthday present** – ya – **what was your mom’s reaction when she saw it completed** – um at first when she saw the stencil on she thought it was a little bit too big but then after it was done she was like “ya that’s a good size, it looks good” and she really liked it – **okay what about any other family members** – um my sister was surprised, she thought it would be something kind of tacky – something that was kind of out there – **which sister was this** – my older – **how old is she** – 20 – when she saw it, she was like it looked really good like she was surprised that it looked good – **does she have a tattoo** – no – **and what about your little sister** – she was like “oh I love it, now **I want one**” so – **how old is your little sister** – she is 14 – **14 – okay so she’s at that age where she is going to think about** – ya getting one – **getting a tattoo** (laughs)

4. **So have you experienced any other comments from aunts or uncles, grandparents** – my uncle and my aunt like it and then my grandma um she's part of a religion where they don't really believe in tattoos and she doesn't really like the idea of tattoos so she doesn't really know that I have one so – **okay it seems that it's the grandparents that have a harder or more difficult time with having a tattoo** – ya definitely (laughs)
5. **Have you experienced any positive comments from people other than family or friends** – yep – somebody – well I usually keep it hidden so that it's not just out there unless I wear a tank top – and somebody was “oh my gosh, you have a tattoo” and I was like ya and she was like “oh I really like it” – like she seemed to like it – **okay**
6. **What about negative comments, have you experienced any negative comments?** – my other older sister is 19 and she said it was too big – **your other sister said it was too big** – ya – **okay and what about from strangers – any stares** – no – **so everything has been very positive - in the summertime when you are wearing a short t-shirt or a bathing suit do you think your tattoo would make you stand out in a crowd?** – um probably – I noticed that when I do show it off people kind of like they look at it, they notice it but they don't really say anything – **so does it bother you if people stare** – no
7. **Do you ever feel that you have been treated differently in public like when you have gone into a store or** – not really
8. **Do you like tattoos on other girls?** – yep – **okay what do you like about them** – um I like that they add a little bit of their personality in it and like it shows what they like and what their interests are and what's really important to them cause a tattoo has to be important for them if they get it so it kind of gets to know them a little bit better if they have a tattoo – shows a little bit more personality and like – **okay - is there any particular tattoo that you've seen on another girl that you really liked** – um there's a girl that has a cross on her mid back, on the middle of her upper back - and I think it's really pretty, it's really simple, it's kind of just black, it's very elegant – **is it big** – about (showing) – **okay about four inches** – yep – **okay is there any tattoo that you've seen on a girl that you didn't like** – there's a girl in my school and she has a butterfly on her bum – **oh okay –that 's interesting** – (laughs) ya she showed me and I was like “**oh my goodness**” – and it's not like a tiny one, **it's huge** on her butt – **it's a huge butterfly** – yes it's a **huge butterfly** – **is it coloured** – ya it's a little ridiculous so I was like “**oh my goodness**” – **do you think there are a lot of girls that have tattoos at your school** – yep there's a fair amount – **what would you say percentage wise if you were counting out of 10 – would it be five out of 10 or lower or higher** – probably 3 out of 10 – **okay for every 10 girls there's 3 of them that have tattoos** – that's what I would guess – **okay thank you – what about boys – do you think there are many boys with tattoos** – there's a couple but not as many – **so more girls have tattoos than boys** – ya - **okay**
9. **Now do you like tattoo on boys?** – ya – **what do you like about them** – um same as the girls it shows personality, it kind of shows what they're into and like and where they have it is very important – like if they have it somewhere that's out there it's kind of just like oh well you showing it off right, but if it's somewhere important to them it shows them a little bit more of what they're into and get to know them better by seeing what they're kind of like – **is there any one that you've seen that you really liked on a guy** – not really – **is there any one that you've seen that you disliked** – this guy has the letter 'M' on his neck — **an 'M'** – ya an 'M' on his neck – **the letter** – ya it takes up the majority of the left side of his neck – **do you know him – I wonder what that means like M for male or M for Mike or M for mother** – (laughter) – **what kind of tattoo would you like to see on a guy** – just simple ones, not too out there – **do you like the tribal tattoos** – ya those they show a connection with their past and like their family – **okay**
10. **Do any members in your family other than you mother have tattoos?** – no just me and my mother – **okay**

11. **Has anyone ever tried to discourage you from getting a tattoo? – no – so no tattoo artist tried to discourage you or friends – no – did you tell any friends that you were getting a tattoo – no but it was just “oh by the way guys, yesterday I got a tattoo” – it was kind of like they just didn’t know – what was their reaction – they were just like “no” and then I showed them and there were “ya that’s not real” and I’m like “ya it’s real” – they were surprised, they liked it though – okay great thank you – your welcome**
12. **Does having tattoos affect who you hang around with or who your friends are? – not really – I just kind of keep it to myself so most people don’t even know I have a tattoo – okay – so it’s kind of just like, my friends know and nobody really judges me on it - so do you feel or do you have a need to cover your tattoo – um I just don’t feel a need to have to show it off – okay – it’s kind of something that’s mine and I like showing it off but like I like to keep it covered sometimes – something that’s yours and yours to share if you want to – ya – okay, thank you - yep**
13. **What about the friends you associate with do they have tattoos or piercings or – um not really, they have their ears pierced but that’s basic – okay**
14. **Do you think having a tattoo has made you more confident or are you the same as before? – same as before – okay**
15. **Would you say that having a tattoo is a form of self control or ownership of your body– you said if you wanted to show it you’ll show it and – yep it’s not really rebellious or anything but it’s kind of just like something that I know that I did and that – I don’t know, I don’t know how to explain it but it’s not more self control, it’s kind of but you could do that, like it’s your choice you can put a tattoo on your body and it’s something that, you can change your body if you wanted to do that – okay**
16. **Why do you think more young girls today like yourself and other young girls are getting tattooed now then say 20 or 30 years ago like when I was in high school – um cause I think people kids nowadays are getting away with a lot more and like if they get a tattoo that’s like saying that they can get away with it kind of thing – okay what about girls because it use to be guys that just got tattooed at one time – well mostly guys, there’d be the odd girl – um I think it’s for attention like most girls nowadays are looking for attention and to get attention they tattoo their body and they pierce their face or what not and I think that’s what it’s about – it’s just more, that’s how they’re trying to get attention – okay at one time guys got tattoos girls didn’t get tattoos, guys got to do this girls didn’t get to do that – do you think now that girls are getting tattoos it’s saying “well I’m just as equal with you, I can do what guys always got to do” ya because kind of before it was looked down upon when girls got tattoos and um like if you see older men they have their army tattoos like when they were in the army but you don’t see older women with tattoos and if they do have tattoos it’s kind of like newer tattoos that they got – like I use to work at ‘Save On’ and I noticed that there were no older women that had tattoos and if they did have a tattoo it was newer – I think it is more of an equality type of thing, they feel they can do what the boys can do without being judged against – okay thank you**
17. **Okay talking about stereotypes you mentioning the older men being in the armed forces, tattoos were often associated with men being in the armed forces, or in prison, or being bikers – do you think that any of these stereotypes have rubbed off onto girls who have tattoos – ya I think so – I mean they’re a little more rebellious with tattoos, like they don’t do exactly what their parents say – kind of like rebellious – girls are becoming more like they’re kind of bad news – okay so that kind of stereotype – are there any other stereotypes that you have heard about with girls – not really – just that they’re bad news – okay – that’s not very nice – (laughs) ya – that’s kind of scary (laughter) – I was told this one story about a girl who worked at a gas station and she had a music note tattooed on her inner arm and an older gentleman who came into the store said to her “I don’t want you to serve me, you have a tattoo and you belong to a cult” - oh my goodness – so stereotyped perceptions I think run with different age groups too – ya definitely – it would be**

interesting to interview some older people like elderly people to ask them what their views are – ya for sure – okay thank you

Section 4 – Risk-taking

1. **Now who gave you your first tattoo – you said it was a professional tattoo artist** – ya it was a professional – **and you got it done here** – ya I went to XXX – **and was that XX** – ya
2. **Now how did you choose who would give you your tattoo?** – um he’s my mom’s favorite artist so he did most of my – all but one of my mom’s tattoos – so that’s kind of how I picked him – **so how many tattoos does your mom have** – um she has five – **five** – she has two on her back, she has the yin yang symbol and then she has a butterfly coming off of the symbol and then she has a rose on her ankle and then she’s got around her ankle um like a little vine with all our names on it because she has six kids – **oh wow** – in like three groups of two she put our names around her ankle and then from there she added on a humming bird um coming out of the rose – kind of thing – **so she’s quite familiar with XX’s work** – ya – **and so that was her idea to take you to his tattoo shop** – yep
3. **So tell me about your experience with getting a tattoo** – oh my gosh – **were you scared** – I was so scared, I was shaking – oh my God – my mom says “you’ll be fine but if you want to turn back now” – and I’m “no I really want this, I’ve been waiting forever to get this, I really want to get it done” – so when I was sitting on the table it didn’t really feel bad but then he actually started getting in there and I was like “oh my God” and then after a while it kind of started numbing out so it didn’t hurt as much – **but it originally hurt** – it originally felt really awkward and different – like it’s a different kind of pain that I’ve never felt before so it was kind of like **weird** but then after that it was just fine, kind of like whatever, kind of just numbed after a while – **okay** – **so which hurt more the outline or the shading** – outline definitely hurt more – **and how long did it take** – an hour – **and do you, do you know how much it cost** – it was 100 dollars – **100 dollars** – yep
4. **So before you got tattooed did the tattoo artist ask you if you had any medical problems** – yep – **okay what did he ask you** – just if I had any blood problems, clotting, if I had any allergies – that’s pretty much – I can’t remember any more – **great that’s really good** – **now did you have to sign a consent form** – yep my mom did and me, we both did – **okay**
5. **Have you ever had a henna tattoo** – yep – **and have you had a henna tattoo outside of Canada** – no – **no okay, so I’m not sure if you are familiar with getting a henna tattoo outside of Canada just because in some countries there’s a substance – PPD – and it’s banned in Canada and it’s in the really black henna – some people develop allergic reactions and once you get an allergic reaction you can get an allergic reaction if you dye your hair – some hair dyes are now including in the package “have you ever had a tattoo” warning so this is something to be careful of in other countries** – okay
6. **Do you think there are any risks involved with getting a tattoo?** – um infection – that’s the biggest one – XX like made me understand that I can’t touch it – like when I first got it done I can’t touch it, I can’t rub it, I can’t have people poking at it and he made sure that I covered it for 24 hours, and to make sure I washed my hands, and to put crème on and he was like very specific as to what kind of lotion I was to use – it was to moisturize, it wasn’t suppose to be scented and he made sure that like after, he wanted me to check in and see how it was going – so make sure there was no infection but um I’ve heard of many people having infections after and having like really, really bad - like really bad reactions to it so especially with touching – I noticed that when I first got my tattoo and when everyone gets tattoos everyone one wants to touch them – ya so that was one thing that you had to be careful of – **did he have a sample of a crème to give you** – yep he gave me a sample but my mom had Polysporin – it’s pretty much Polysporin but I think it’s a bit stronger and you’re suppose to put that on and that’s what she got for her tattoos so – **okay** – **have you had any problem with your tattoo, fading or anything** – not at all – **so any other risks you’ve heard about** – just infection and um ya just infections – **okay**

7. **When you went into his shop was it clean, did he show you exactly what he was doing** – yep um before I went in my mom was getting a tattoo when I was 15 and I went with her and he was showing me what he was doing and like how to keep it clean and he's like step-by-step because he knew I wanted to get tattoos so he was just wanting to give me details – and when I went in to get mine done he was like telling me what was going on and stuff like exactly – okay now I'm going to do this, now I'm going to do that – you'll feel this – and I'm okay – **so you were very familiar and he had you very comfortable** – ya – **that's really good** – ya – **did he have any pamphlets or information around that talked about being careful of infection** – I think so, I don't know I can't remember – **books around of his artwork** – yep
8. **Now from what sources have you learned about the risks with getting a tattoo other than the tattoo artist?** – school – **school** – my mom went over what could happen just in case and my sister when I was doing this she told me about infection and like what could happen so my sister kind of helped me in a way because she told me what to like if I got infected, what to expect so – **and what did you learn at school** – um just from people telling me and um from teachers cause they saw the tattoo and one class, I was in PE and my teacher he was just like, he had just got a tattoo too, and he was just like you've got to keep it covered, don't get too much sun on it, like it could get really like burnt so – **just basically put suntan lotion on your tattoo** – ya definitely – **I think some people think that when they have a tattoo it protects the skin** – ya, it doesn't really, not all
9. **So the risks that you learned about were they expressed positively** – not really – it was kind of brutal – **oh** – not brutal but like frank, like they told me frankly that this was how it was going to go down, like this is what would happen **if you did do that** – and I put that into perspective and like my mom had an infection before and I saw what it felt like and it hurt, like she wasn't very comfortable but I still really wanted to get it and I knew the risks going in and I took it – **okay** – no problems yet – **so it wasn't if you get a tattoo you're going to get this** - it wasn't like that it was just like there's a chance if you do this and kind of like there's a chance you can get an infection and there's a chance that something could go wrong and so – **so with your knowledge about the risks you were just being very cautious** – yep – **you said you never experienced any problems with your tattoo** – not at all – **okay how long did it take to heal** – um I think it took six to eight weeks – **six to eight weeks** – ya, it was like 24 hours that I had to keep it covered but it would still like rub off on my clothes, for all the ink to set it took like six to eight weeks – like a month or two months – **okay thank you – other than your mom do you know any one else that has experienced a problem with a tattoo** – not really, just my mom
10. **What other forms of body art or adornment do you have (reads definition)?** – I've dyed my hair – **what colours** – it's actually like a dirty blonde, like a darker blonde – **any wild colours such as pinks and purples** – no just blonde and brown mostly – um I have my bellybutton pierced, I had my nose pierced but I took it out and I just have a piercing in my ear – **the cartilage** – yep
11. **Do you think there are risks involved with other forms of body art such as piercings?** – with piercings definitely, with hair it can wreck your hair pretty much um dry it out – um piercings, infection is the number one problem – not letting it heal properly, changing it – getting it ripped out is another risk – **have you ever had any problems** – nope – **so why did you take the nose one out** – um it actually fell out when I was sleeping – **oh I've heard of piercings falling out** – yep – somebody else told me that when they got their nose done that their piercer told them to put a piece of tape over it so it wouldn't fall out when you were sleeping so when you picked at it, it wouldn't fall out – I didn't know that so it fell out when I was sleeping so – **you just decided not to put it back in** – ya
12. **Do you think tattoo shops have the responsibility to inform people about possible health risks** – I think so, I think it 50/50 like you should make sure that they know the risks and that they have some background knowledge on what could happen but I also think that it's also the person who is getting the tattoo – I think that they're putting themselves at risk if they do so, they should have background knowledge and they should get like other people's opinions and like look it up on the internet - like make sure they know the facts before they go in and just get a tattoo – **okay thank you**

13. **Do you believe that possible tattoo risks should be discussed in the classroom or in the school?** – um no because I think it is a personal choice, I don't think the school has any like say in what the students do – I think they should have information available for somebody – **okay – so that would be fine – what kind of information** – like just like what could happen, what could eventually happen if you decide to get a tattoo – **how could the information be given** – um – like if somebody had decided to get a tattoo like in the career centre there's little pamphlets or brochures for like OC and what to do with planning your life – they could just put one up there so if somebody was questioning it and they were sitting waiting for a counselor that could get some information - **okay that's a good idea – that was suggested also by someone else** - ya
14. **If you were aware of possible health risks would you think twice about getting a tattoo again?** – I did twice – I was questioning it but um I think, I think everybody should think at least twice anyways just in case – you're going to have it all your life so I **do** think you're going need to put it in perspective before you get a tattoo done – **okay thank you**
15. **Do you regret having your tattoo?** no
16. **You don't have to answer this question but have you ever engaged in any other forms of risk behaviors such as smoking or** – um smoking I quit, I tried it I didn't like it, I quit – that was part of my past – I tried marijuana I didn't really like it, I've done it since grade 10 so – drinking of course - **so why did you engage in these behaviors** – peer pressure, peer pressure that was what everyone else was doing so I might as well try it
17. **How would you define risk?** - risk is something that you bring yourself in harm – you know that you may be put in harm but you're still going for it so you're taking a risk but you know what the outcome might be – that's what I define risk as – **okay great thanks**

Advertisements

What magazines do you regularly read or buy? – just 'Cosmo', it I do get a magazine it's just 'Cosmo' – **I think 'Cosmo' has to be one of the most popular magazines among young girls** - ya

I have a number of advertisements here to show you – okay

This one here is a shoe ad – okay – **have you seen this one before?** – I have not – **okay what do you think of this advertisement** – um it's kind of like 'what a way to live' like given the idea that the new lifestyle is to get a tattoo and it's not like – the first thing you see is not the shoe which is what it's suppose to be advertising – you see the tattoo which is what when teenagers look at advertisements they usually take out what they see the most because they just flip through it – so the first thing they'd see in this one is kind of like the tattoo and the background doesn't really match the shoe itself it kind of matches what the design of the tattoo is so it's kind of giving off more of the idea I think to get a tattoo than to get an actual shoe itself – **okay so you think that might influence – do you like that tattoo, that kind of tattoo** – it's girly, it's cute, it's kind of something I wouldn't get because it's not very – it doesn't seem like something that would be important to somebody but it's cute so it's something that would appeal to teenagers – **okay thank you** – your very welcome

This is an ad for Ralph Lauren perfume – mhm – **have you seen this ad before?** – ah nope – **are you familiar with the Ralph Lauren perfumes** – mhm – this one's focused more on her and not the tattoo – the tattoo doesn't look like she actually has it – it kind of looks a little bit fake – **so why do you think it looks a bit fake** – um just because it looks like it was kind of stenciled in – like it looks maybe airbrushed on, um it looks like it's graphic and it doesn't really go with the lighting of her arm – it kind of just looks kind of fake and it doesn't look like something she would get – **also the flowers mimic the bracelet** – oh ya – **what about the one on her tummy** – oh I didn't see that one um I'd rather have the shirt – that one to me looks like it would be a little more important to her so maybe if somebody did notice they would say "oh that's cute" and maybe be **white** – "I've never seen white" and maybe they'd want to get it if they were

like tanning or what not – they would think it looks cool – **what about the location – I wouldn't get it on my stomach** – I think if you were like to get pregnant ever, it would stretch, it would just look so bad, I would never get one on my stomach – **okay – do you think this kind of influences girls** – probably ya because Ralph Lauren's a big, a big company that everybody knows about and if he's using tattoos on his models then 'it's sexy, it's new, it's what everybody wants to do' kind of thing so maybe ya – **okay thank you** – ya

Have you seen this ad for Cadbury chocolate – oh my goodness, I've never seen this tattoo, this ad– it's really funny – um this ones more like what not to do cause people want to get like people's names tattooed on them - they think like that's a sign of love or something – I think this is more teaching somebody not to get a tattoo cause it's saying "some things you regret some things you don't" – ya so I think this would probably scare away somebody from getting a tattoo – **what do you think about the person wearing gloves** – um it seems clean but the gloves seem kind of used – dirty – there's lots of ink on them

What do you think about this ad for jeans? – oh my goodness this one is definitely something that would attract somebody to getting a tattoo cause they both have tattoos and they're both being kind of being sexual I guess so it's kind of like if you get a tattoo you'll look sexy, you'll attract women that will have sleeves and stuff like that – so ya I think this one would definitely attract somebody to getting a tattoo – **so would you say that this type of ad would attract people who already have tattoos to buy their product or would it attract people who don't have tattoos** – um well before if you kind of like had a tattoo you couldn't model so maybe like if somebody has a tattoo and they think they're good enough to model they may want to model for an ad – but it could also go both ways and could be somebody that looks like that and they're having a good time and they're in love and it might give off the idea that if you have tattoos it's more attractive – that you will get something like that – **okay that's a good point that you brought up about before people who had tattoos weren't allowed to model** – mhm - **what do you think of the look, of the positioning as opposed to this one which is kind of sweet (referring to perfume ad)** – well innocent – this one looks like an all American girl – she looks like somebody you'd see down the street from you – this one's kind of more like – this guy looks like he's working – those pants remind me of work pants – this guy reminds me of every other guy – **okay what about the girl** – the girl um she's kind of more edgy – um she looks like somebody that would have a tattoo – like if you saw her face you probably would think that she is a little more edgy – **so do you think because she is more edgy that this is what this ad is trying to portray that girls are becoming more edgy and out there** – ya – **and dominant now** – ya definitely that they are coming out of their shell and doing things that the guys were doing and stuff so – **okay thank you** – yep

Have you seen this ad for Miami Ink – ya I've seen it – I like the tattoos, it's very cute but um it's kind of advertising both the tattoo and the phone at the same time because the phone and the tattoo have similar designs – she's got like a sweet little look and she would probably make somebody want to get a tattoo – **okay – have you seen this kind of tattoo done on Miami Ink in the past** – yes – **okay**

What do you think of this ad – have you seen this one in Cosmo – ya (laughs) – this one is probably – like this one is probably advertising that if you get a tattoo you can get like it's easy to get rid of like if you get a you want to get a tattoo there's a way of getting rid of it – like I know that getting a tattoo and taking it out – it is not comfortable – like it's not a very comfortable situation – so it's just looking like it's a simple like – **do you think that this could actually be done using some little removal device** – probably not – **and then a balm** – I don't think so – **anything that removes has to have a lot of bleach in it** – ya – **plus they're showing these little pictures of before and after (reads)** – ya – **what do you think about showing her, well of course she's wearing a wedding dress but showing her drinking alcohol** – that's kind of attached like – they're trying to advertise like – cause younger kids like they're more attracted to alcohol and the edgier tattoos kind of thing so I think they're really, really trying to appeal to a younger audience cause it's like – 'oh look at her, she's on her wedding day, she's drinking wine, she has a tattoo' and if you don't want your tattoo it's easy to get rid of – like it's all sweet and it's all good – **do you think that's a stereotype that girls, that young girls who have tattoos also drink** – ya there's definitely a connection there – **ya there's a study out about people's views of girls who have tattoos that they think**

they drink more – oh really – **so I see this ad and I think they're taking this stereotype and using it** – yep

What do you think about Angelina Jolie – **um** – **have you seen her tattoos** – yep um I think it's just her way of like expressing her background and this is like her and this is what she wants to do to her body – everybody thought it was like the perfect body and then she went and like made it her own like, made it kind of different, added her background and her culture – like the writing on here that's probably part of her background – um just what she feels like, this is what she likes, this is what she wants to do with her body – she kind of feels like ya she's this big big movie star but she can still get away with putting a little bit of her into her image – **okay that was interesting about what you said about having the perfect body** – **she already had the perfect body and she added the tattoos** – **it's like saying "I still have the perfect body"** - ya – **"you'll still come and watch my movies"** – great thank you – yep

Now are you familiar with Tegan and Sarah – **they were quite big at one time and were on the front pages of magazines** – um cause they were, I think they appealed more to younger kids – **ya** – and so that's probably like they were kind of looked up upon and she's got piercing and like a lip piercing and tattoos and stuff – it's kind of like I mean gives kids the wrong idea like if you get, if you look like this you might become what I am and get the success that I have – **okay – so you think that influences** – ya

Can you think of any other movies stars or bands that might influence – I don't really pay attention to artists and their tattoos- if they have a tattoo or if they don't have a tattoo I don't really pay attention so I wouldn't real be able to answer that question – **okay thank you** –

Appendix C: Participant 9 – Rheanna

Section 1 - Background

1. **Grade** – 11
2. **Age** – 16, 17 in June
3. **Permanent tattoo** - yes
4. **More than one** – yes , two
5. **Age of first tattoo** – 16 and they were both fairly recent in the past two months
6. **Plan to get another tattoo** – ya – **do you have any idea when you might get another tattoo** – probably within a month
7. **Is having a tattoo against your cultural background** – nope
8. **Ethnic background** – White/Caucasian
9. **Do you have a cultural heritage in which tattoos are important** – nope
10. **Against religious background** – no
11. **Religious affiliation** – don't know

Section 2 - Influences

1. **When did you first start thinking about getting a tattoo?** – um the beginning of grade 11 – okay – probably
2. **Did any of the following specifically influence your decision to get tattooed?** – friends that have tattoos – yes - tattoos on fashion models – ah yes - tattoos on music stars – ya Mike Ness – I'm not familiar with Mike Ness – I think I'm really out of the music scene lately (laughter) – actually he like a wild act, I don't know – okay – what about group membership, like you have friends that all have the same tattoo – oh, no – what about family members – yes – tattoos on actors or actresses – no not really – on athletes – no – magazine advertisements – ya – have you ever gone to a tattoo convention – yes – okay
3. **Describe how you were influenced** – I use to always draw on myself and then I pretty much found one thing that I really liked and then got it done – my mom has tons of tattoos too on her whole leg and her back and everything so – you said she has a sleeve – ya a leg sleeve – a leg sleeve – ya it's full, from there all the way to there – from the knee down to the ankle – yep – wow – ya – I thought when you said a sleeve you meant her arm
4. **You said you found an image that you liked, where did you find it?** – on the internet
5. **Do you watch any tattoo reality shows** – *LA Ink* – do you watch *Miami Ink* – ya – do you buy tattoo magazines – no – you visit tattoo websites because that's where you got your image – ya – and you have been to a tattoo convention – ya – can you tell me anything memorable that you saw on *LA Ink* or *Miami Ink* – um just some of the thought people put into their tattoos and what they get – anyone that particularly stands out – just portraits and things, things like that – what about tattoo websites – have you come across a tattoo website that you really liked or you really didn't like – ah not really I just like surfing through them – what tattoo website

did you find your image on – it actually wasn't a tattoo website, it was a henna website and it was just a design on there – **what about the tattoo convention, where was this held** – Salmon Arm – **when was that** – one of my mom's really good friends owns XXX so we all went out there and there was a convention going on – **was that recently** – no it was last year

6. **Who are your favorite tattooed musicians, movie stars, models, athletes – you said** – Mike Ness – **do you have any other ones** – um Kat Von D – I like the one on the side of her face other than that – **the stars** – yep – **what about models any models that you can think of** - no
7. **Do you believe that advertisement that use models or celebrities with tattoos encourage or influence tattooing in young people?** – ya definitely – **how do you think it encourages** – um well like lots of things today – magazines, TV shows, all that stuff encourages younger people like to do certain things – like a model having a tattoo – “oh I can be like them if I have a tattoo” - **okay**
8. **Did you associate getting a tattoo with any of the following events in your life – a birthday** – I'd say a birthday cause um it means Gemini – okay – so I'd say it has to do with my birth month – **is that your first tattoo and your second tattoo** – I got it for one of my really good friends who passed away – - **can you describe why this birthday tattoo was so significant** – um I don't know some tattoos that people get like the Virgo sign and the Gemini sign and the Libra sign those signs and the one I got I think it's something that I haven't seen anyone have before cause it's called 'Elfin' it in Elf language - **Elf language wow** – it means Gemini – so it was different and then I'd seen a different one that I wanted to get but – **and your second tattoo** – we were really good friends and we pretty much helped each other through like a lot of hard times so it's kind of a memorial tattoo – **are there any other reasons that I may not have mentioned for getting a tattoo** – no – **you said you were going to get another tattoo soon do you have a specific reason for that one** – um ya, me and my mom were actually going to get matching ones on Mother's Day but my friend's shop was all booked up so next time she comes down here we're going to get one – **so your mom doesn't live here** – no
9. **Now you said you saw the image for your tattoo on a henna website** – ya – **and that's the one on your wrist** – ya – **now how did you choose your second tattoo** – um me and one of my really good friends um we were both friends of him and she use to date him and then we both kind of got the same foot ones because we were probably his closest friends – so we both got it – it means 'everlasting friendship' – **okay** – **and the image you're going to get with your mom** – um it means protected, the pagan symbol of protection – **and where did you get that idea** – a book I'd say
10. **Can you describe the image you have on your left wrist** – I don't really know how to explain this but I kind of found it myself – hidden in it – here's the G and then sideways it's an E and then an m and then an i and then an m i, like it's hidden in it but um – **and you said it's in elf language** - Elfin

ya – it's like elf language like elf script – **did you get that idea from the Towers the trilogy** – no not at all actually I just I'd seen it and it was something that I really liked – **okay thank you** – **and that's in just black so why did you choose black** – just black – I'm not big on colour tattoos I don't know – **and why did you decide to have it on your inner wrist** – I'm left-handed and I'm a Gemini and I don't know – I've always wanted a tattoo on my wrist – I always draw there so it was my first thought – **okay** – **so it seems like quite a few people are getting tattoos on their inner wrist these days** – yep – I would have to say probably every single one of my friends has one now – **on their wrist** – on their inner wrist ya – **now your second tattoo where is it located** – on the right side of my foot – **and what language is it** – it's Irish-Gaelic – um me and my friend are both Irish so we kind of got it in that language – **and what did you say it meant again** – 'everlasting friendship' – **now why did you decide to get it on the outside of your foot** – um I don't really know – this is a really big spur of the moment thing after we both found out – it was like okay lets go in and get it done like right away so

we both kind of went in – **it's an interesting place to have a tattoo** – yep it hurt **really** bad there – **did you have any problems getting a tattoo on your foot** – the thing with getting a tattoo on your foot is the healing process because your foot's always rubbing against things so it will wear the ink down really fast, you usually have to get it touched up – **you didn't have any problem with the tattoo artist refusing to tattoo you on your foot** – no – **because I've heard that some people have tried to get their foot tattooed in Kelowna and everyone has refused** – yes some people won't do feet or neck or behind the ear – certain spots like that – **do you think that's because of the pain** – I don't really know – probably – **and this tattoo is also in black so will the tattoo you are going to get with your mom be in black** – just black ya – it's really small about the size of a nickel – **now where are you were thinking of getting it** – it's going to be right behind my ear – **behind your right ear** – ya – **now what's your reason for getting a tattoo in that spot** – um it can be hidden when you have your hair down and like if you want to show it you can put your hair up and it shows – same as my foot one you can have it showing or not – **okay thank you**

Your were telling me about poems that you liked and how you would like to get one tattooed on you - if I see a poem that I like I will just write it down or something just like get a bunch and I was thinking about a sleeve - they become intertwined and there's couple like –

“Live well, laugh often, laugh always”

or a long one

Time is too slow for those who wait,
too swift for those who fear,
too long for those who grieve,
but for those who love,
time is eternity.

– **and you were thinking about getting that** – down my side – **down your side** – ya – **would you get it in a script or** – a script definitely – the first one is kind of a general like it's on lots of thing like shirts and a like bunch of things

Section 3 – Perceptions

1. **Are you pleased and happy with your tattoos?** – definitely – **both of them** – yes – can you describe why you are happy with them – um they both turned out exactly the way I wanted them – I have to get them both touched up – um – **now why do you have to get them touched up** – the wrist and the foot are probably the two most hardest places to heal because you're constantly like moving - using your hands and things and you can bump it real easy so it affects the healing and what will happen it will scab over a bit and sometimes when you bump it, it will lift the ink up so it will rise ink up – same with the foot constantly rubbing in the shoe and things like that – **okay**
2. **Do you think your friends like your tattoos?** – ya, out of all my friends my wrist one is my favorite one – I'd have to say – everyone always likes it – **can you remember anything that someone had said about your tattoo** – different, totally different – um original and it suits me, it's hot and stuff – **okay** – **anyone of your friends say they didn't like it** – um yep but I think it's probably cause I told her I didn't like hers because she put a boy's name in it – (laughter) – so I was like, no not smart – **so she was like trying to get back at you** – ya
3. **Now did you have parental permission to get your first tattoo?** – **no** – **your second tattoo** – **no** (laughing) – **okay** – **does your mom know you have tattoos** – she does now – **ya** - she's fine with it sort of thing – **what was her reaction** – I told her over the phone cause she doesn't live here, she lives in XXX and I talked to her on the phone and I told her, I said so “I kind of got a tattoo” and she said “oh you got one” – “well I kind of got two” and then she's like “**oh**” and next time she's out we'll get one together – **okay** – **so you told you mom over the phone that you got a**

tattoo, was there any reason for not wanting to tell your mom that you were going to get a tattoo – um not really I just I don't know – I didn't really know how she was going to react because I'm much younger – she never got her first tattoo until she was like 38 – **okay – she got her first tattoo when she was 38 and now she has all kinds of tattoos** – ya – **do you know what her reason was for getting a tattoo when she was 38** – um actually ya – her and her two girlfriends um they're like all really, really like good friends cause they all work at the drop in information centre for the homeless and everything – so mom was like always the dragonfly person and her other friend was always the butterfly person and the other one was dragonfly too so they all went in and got a dragonfly on their foot and the one friend got a butterfly – pretty much as a friend's thing - **okay so that's kind of a group membership between friends** – ya

4. **Have you experienced any positive comments about your tattoos from other people other than your family or friends?** – ya at work just moving around and everything – just people questioning it like what does it mean – and like I'm surprised people have actually heard cause when I say it's Elfin, the script is elf writing there's a couple of people who have said "oh that's the type of stuff I want" so other than that nothing – **okay what about a negative comment, have you experienced any negative comments** – um yes actually you know it's kind of funny cause in my English class this year we kind of had a big argument between me and a bunch of students cause they were really stereotypical – they were pretty much saying well you're dirty if you have tattoos or piercings – and I was like how does that make you dirty or something – so we had this big argument about it – like my teacher was agreeing with this other student and so I was completely shocked and he was "well why do you have a tattoo" and I was like "ya I have two like is that bad" or whatever so we had like this huge argument about it so some people just don't agree with them – **ya stereotypes** – ya – **that's a stereotype saying that your dirty** – ya I was shocked when I heard it I was like **wow – that's not a nice stereotype – no**
5. **Do you feel that you have been treated differently in public like in a store by strangers?** – not overly I think maybe if I'm like downtown and like having a smoke or something and somebody can see my tattoos it's "oh" like, like that kind of look you get from people – other than that not really – **okay - do you think having tattoos or piercings makes you stand out in a crowd** – um kind of a bit probably – I know tattoos definitely do - like at my school me and my girlfriend – like there's a couple girls and we all like have them and we're just kind of like, I don't know how to explain it – **but you don't have a very big tattoo** – ya I know, it's nothing like bold – they're like "oh you have a tattoo" it's like ya and it's like "oh sweet" something like that – **so have you felt a need to hide your tattoos in any way** – nope not at all – **okay**
6. **Now do you like tattoos on other girls?** – a couple of ones, I've seen some that I like and some that I don't – **okay can you describe one that you really liked** – um she's not really one of my good friends but um it was a memorial tattoo she got on her whole side – right side – and it was little drama faces like one smiling and one happy – it was both of those and it said "laugh now cry later" – and it was memorial with all of the stuff, his birth date and everything – **okay that sounds like a nice tattoo** – ya - **what about a tattoo that you've seen and you didn't like** – um I don't like the ones where people get like a 'powder puff' girl or spider man or things like that – **have you seen girls with a powder puff** – **oh ya** definitely – I'm not big on them – **what about location, is there any location on a girl that you don't like** – um 'tramp stamp' I don't know if you've heard of that – **okay yes** – um I don't know I don't really like them there but other than that no – **(talking about tramp stamp reference on CSI) - oh that's so harsh** – it's so stereotypical some people just like blow it out of the water – **yes they do, they just take it from one extreme to the next extreme** – ya
7. **Okay do you like tattoos on boys** – ya I'd say so – **what do you like about them** – um they give someone character I think – it's just like it's something like about you I think – it just show character and like just a little bit of like who you are I think – **is there any tattoo you've seen on a guy that you really liked** – um I've seen a couple sleeves um not like pictures of anything but like designs in black – **were they tribal** – not really tribal, I don't know how to explain it, it's like

I don't know – not like doodles but I can't describe – **okay – any colour** – I don't really like colour tattoos – **have you seen any on a guy that you really disliked – yes! – that's a pretty strong yes** – (laughs) **absolutely** - um someone I met last summer on a beach has a tattoo that says “stop staring and suck it” (pointing to lower stomach area) – I was like **floored** when I'd seen that – **that's awful** – I know – ya so I **definitely** did not like that one at all – **okay** (laughter)

8. **Does having a tattoo affect who you hang around with or who your friends are?** – um – not really but as clicky as our school is, just cause I have the tattoos and piercings you get like labeled as that ‘smoke pit person’ – **smoke pit** – smoke pit, it's like the smoking area – the smoker and you have piercings and stuff like that and then there's like the ‘MPR’ – it's all the preppy like I'm so ‘goody good’ people – **the MPR** – ya the multi purpose room where all the preppy people go - **now do the friends you associate with have piercings and tattoos** – ya they have piercings – I think we all kind of do that – **you change your hair and stuff like that** – ya
9. **You said your mom has tattoos; do any other family members have tattoos?** – nope just me and her - **not even your sister, what does she think of your tattoos** – um I'm kind of the extremist in the family like I always go all out and so ah she didn't really think I was going to get it done and then I went and got it done and I showed her and I think she's jealous – she's scared to get one done – I think she's jealous – **oh I was going to say she's probably scared** (laughter) – **does she like them** – ya she likes them – **what about any other family members uncles, aunts, grandparents** – my dad likes it, if my step dad seen it he would **flip out** – oh my goodness my step dad would flip – **why** – he's an old fashion farm guy who lives in Alberta and is totally against tattoos and piercings and all that so – **okay – grandparents** – grandma hates it (laughter) – **does she live** – in Kelowna – um I know she's seen them and she'll give this stare but she doesn't think you're suppose to mark up your body in any sort of way so – no piercings nothing – **ya I've heard that with a few grandparents so that's why I asked** – ya she's really not impressed with them – **okay**
10. **Has anyone tried to discourage you from getting a tattoo – friends, family?** – a couple of my friends just said really think about it before you get it done because they have some that they regret getting done so – I put a lot of time and thought into both of mine of what I wanted to get done besides my foot which was a spur of the moment but – **you said you had a couple of friends regret it; what did they regret** – she said she regretted it but I think she's like off and on about it – she just got one – I know she didn't get it in Canada so it's behind her ear and she got three stars which I think a couple other girls have now – people have seen hers and have gone and got it done – **maybe that's** - it was something different but now it's not – **it's not unique anymore** – ya – **the whole euphoria is gone** – ya – **any family members try to discourage you** – nope except my grandma – **so did you tell your grandma that you were going to get a tattoo before** – **noo** I just let her see them herself – **what about the tattoo artist** – he liked both ideas, I think he liked my wrist one, no he likes both of them I'd say – we really didn't talk about the foot one because it was a touchy subject at the time but – **okay**
11. **Would you say that your tattoos are a form of self-control over who you are or a type of rebellion?** – um I don't know – **like an ownership of your body** – my mom always – like I am such an extremist and I'm always rebelling or something like that and she's always like “oh you Gemini” or something like that and I don't know – **okay - so has having a tattoo made you feel more confident or were you just pretty confident before?** – um I've always been a pretty confident person so not really – I think some people maybe – **so you've never had any problems stating a conversation with someone because a couple of people have said that they were normally shy but having a tattoo was a great conversation starter** – I'm good with that – I'm like really out there – I'm always like I don't know – **okay**
12. **Why do you think more young girls are getting tattoos now than perhaps 20 or 30 years ago like when I was in high school?** – it's kind of the thing to do – they think it's cool – **okay – guys**

got a lot of tattoos back then and now girls and guys are getting tattoos; do you think there should be any difference – nope if guys can girls can too – okay

Section 4 – Risk-taking

1. **Who gave you your first tattoo?** – XX from XXX – **and he’s a professional tattoo artist** – yes – **and both of your tattoos** – ya – **do you think you will go back to XX for your next tattoo** – **absolutely** – there’s only two people in this world that I would get tattooed by – **and who’s the other person** – XW, he’s done all my mom’s tattoos so – **okay - so it’s good to be familiar with the tattoo artist** – definitely – **and to know their work** – work, absolutely
2. **So how did you choose who would give you your tattoo; like how did you know XX was good?** – um I’ve known XW for awhile just because my mom’s gotten tattoos from him a long time ago; with XX um I met him with a friend out partying sometime and then she had done my friend’s tattoo, she’s got ‘KARMA’ up her arm and um I know they became friends and then she started dating him so when I wanted to get my tattoo I checked out his work and then he tattooed my arm
3. **Most of your friends have tattoos, what do you think the percentage is out of 10 of young girls these days with tattoos; would it be higher than five or lower than five** – young girls like under 19 – **in high school yes** – um percentage wise I’d say probably 6.5 – **okay and that would be more than the guys** – definitely more than the guys, absolutely – **okay**
4. **Tell me about your experience with getting tattooed?** – um my wrist one didn’t hurt at all – it actually like I remember the first one didn’t hurt but one of the dots was like right on my tendons so when that happened I could feel the tendon moving it was just like a gross feeling – (laughter) - I was like “ooh” no but the wrist didn’t hurt at all but KK who owns the shop she said like clench your fist and it doesn’t hurt that bad so I did that and then when I got my foot one done I could of screamed as loud as I possibly could – my foot hurt so bad cause um I don’t really know how to explain cause the foot like right in there (pointing) – right in the like crevice, right there **just killed** on top of the foot – like on the wrist your skin’s so soft and the foot is so much harder so and I’m pretty sure the needles are a little more thicker that they use on your foot – **they probably have to go deeper too** – ya definitely have to go in deeper so my foot one **hurt** really bad – **how long did it take for the one on the wrist to do** – to heal – **no to get tattooed** – say 15 minutes – **okay and to heal** – heal probably a week maybe – **okay and the one on your foot how long did that take** – probably two weeks because what happens is that it scabs on the top and it will slowly peel off so there’s just ink underneath – **how long did it take to get it tattooed** – my foot I made him stop – **oh** – I made him stop, I made him stop at first cause he does like each letter and after he did that I made him break once before he got to the S – **okay** - I was like “**okay, five minute break, I need a smoke, I’m in pain**” like it hurt, it hurt, I almost had tears in my eyes – **you went through that for half an hour** – I’d say 25 - ya definitely – **okay oooh**
5. **Before you got tattooed did the tattoo artist ask you if you had any medical problems?** – yes – **that’s good** – **what did he ask you** – there’s a huge form that you get with like all of these questions questioning you if you’re diabetic anything like that – it was like all these questions – **oh that’s good**
6. **Now when he was tattooing you was he explaining what he was doing?** – um yep, my friend actually with her KARMA one before I got this done, he touched hers up – so I watched what he did so when he did my wrist I was right in watching – he was explaining what he was doing and like cleaning it and then like I don’t know – he gets his needle all ready and then just started on it and I just watched and then ya – **okay** – he does the outline and then he fill it in – **were you nervous** – a little bit, a little bit and I just went “**okay lets go**” – **you got the one done and it didn’t hurt; what about your foot** – I was like oh my foot won’t be anything and SS went in first and she got hers done and she’s like “ho holy, holy it hurt so much” and I’m like “**holy, XX stop**”, like XX stop – **what did SS get on her foot** – well we got the same tattoo but she got hers on her left foot

7. **Have you ever had a henna – ya – have you ever had a henna outside of Canada – no – okay – where did you have your henna** – I had a huge one on the back of my leg – a peace sign and doodles and I got it done downtown like on the boardwalk – ya I got that done – I’ve had a hand one before and I had one around my arm before – **how did you like the henna** – I liked them – they like faded away – I was like experiencing them before I knew what I wanted for tattoos and ya – **okay that was a good thing to do – ya definitely – the reason why I asked is because if you get a henna outside of Canada for example the Caribbean or the Mediterranean, the street vendors or beach vendors may have a substance called PPD in their henna which makes the henna extremely black but it can cause an allergic reaction in some people - but it’s banned in Canada and once you get this reaction you can develop allergies to other products such as hair dyes – some of the hair dyes are now including a warning if you’ve ever had a tattoo – wow – just to let you know if you ever get a henna outside of Canada to be careful – yes, I’m good – and it is on a government website but it’s not something that most people know about - wow**
8. **Do you think there are any risks involved with getting a permanent tattoo?** – definitely – with tattoos I know some people’s skin will react to the orange or pink or red ink – like my mom she has psoriasis, she like has it on her elbows and stuff and I know when she got her leg done some of the flowers in it, she used the red and pink ink and she has it on there now so she always has to put lotion on it – sometimes that will bring out psoriasis or like things like that – um other than that I don’t really know – like I know once you get tattoos you can’t donate blood, I know that – **okay that’s good – how did you find out about that one** – my mom always use to do it like donate blood like all the time and then I went in and once they do all the questions, once you have a tattoo you can’t so I couldn’t do that – **so I think after a year – yep – cause of blood diseases and viruses** – yep
9. **From what sources besides your mom have you heard about risks? – school program** – no just my mom – **what about the tattoo artist** – no not really I haven’t – **okay – nothing in newspaper articles or on websites** – no – **okay**
10. **When you went into the tattoo shop did they have any signs or pamphlets warning about risks** – um I think so, I think there’s a sign with stuff on it – I know like when you first get it you get this piece of paper and I’m pretty sure like it says risks on it – **okay** – like how to clean it and everything – **okay**
11. **So you learned about the risks from your mom; can you tell me if they were expressed to you in a positive way – like did you mom say anything about being careful** – ya just be careful like getting them – **okay**
12. **Tell me what you know about the glow and dark tattoos** – um actually one of my friends has one and when we went neon bowling his whole arm was glowing – there’s one way you can do it, it can have the outline of the tattoo – like say you have a heart and it hollow inside you can fill the heart and it kind of lifts your skin like a tiny bit like I don’t know how to explain it like it will lift your skin a bit like swelling when you have it done and then under a black light or whatever it glows or you can just like have the glow in the dark with no black around it and then you can’t like once it heals you can’t even see it – **do you think that kind of ink would be good for your system** – um I don’t think I’d get it done – I can’t see it being healthy for you um other than that I don’t really know too much about it – **okay – I just know through my readings that in the States that the glow and the dark tattoos, the dye they use is used for tracking fish and the FDA is investigating it for harmful effects** – ya, I just don’t know too much about it - **okay**
13. **Did your knowledge about risks influence your decision to get tattooed in any way?** – no I kind of like – I probably should have looked more into the risks than I did cause I didn’t really know – **I know you only like the black tattoos and your mom’s had a reaction to the red inks; did this influence you at all** – ya I think that kind really like stood out to me too – me and my mom are so much alike and like so I just wanted to keep to the black ones – **okay – now have you experienced a problem with your tattoo at all** – no not at all – **so the healing and scabbing was fine – did the tattoo artist give you any crème or explain to you how to take care of your tattoo** – the one thing you never put

on it is Vaseline because it's a petroleum jelly like a petroleum base which will um clog it like don't let it breathe and like it has to breathe for the healing process – so what happens once you get it done he will put Vaseline on it and then he wraps it up and once you get home you like wash it really good with like warm soapy water – **okay** – and other than that Polysporin cause it helps it heal – there's certain like special tattoo crèmes you can get but it's kind of like an advertisement for crème – **okay – there was one girl that said you were not suppose to put Polysporin on a coloured tattoo because it wasn't good for the coloured ink – have you heard of that** – not really, I know like some places I've heard you're not suppose to use Polysporin - I think it's all dependent on the tattoo shops like what they do so – **okay – do you know of anyone that has experienced a problem with their tattoo other than your mom** – nope – **okay**

14. **Now what other forms of body art or adornment have you tried – piercings – I know you have piercings** – nose, bellybutton, tongue, ears – **okay what about removable tattoos** – no haven't done any of that – **you've had henna tattoos; have you done hair alteration** – no I've never done my hair ever – **so did you have any problems with any of your piercings** – nope, my tongue got really swollen and painful – I couldn't even talk at work I was like yul yul yul yul but other than that no – **how long did the swelling last** – um I think three days – **I bet you were thankful afterwards** – oh ya my tongue hurt the most out of everything I think like just the swelling process – **okay**
15. **Do you think there are any risks involved with any other forms of body art? – absolutely** um one really bad one - when I got mine done, my tongue pierced - you have to miss your veins underneath your tongue and when I got mine done my veins are really close together so I had to get it done sideways kind of so it couldn't like pierce my vein so that was kind of a risk I had to take but other than that – **were you not concerned** – (laughter) – no I was, I was kind of like I don't really know – I got my tongue done when I was really young so – not like really young but 15 – **so why did you get your tongue pierced** – definite just spur, just random – I kind of I got my nose done, then I got my tongue done, then I got my bellybutton done – **you said the tongue was a big thing** – ya – **okay brave** (laughter)
16. **Would you encourage or discourage another person from getting a tattoo? – nope** – absolutely not, if they want one go get it done I think – **okay what about a tongue piercing** – ya I know a couple of people who've got them done – I know people who want to get two of them done which I would never get done – no I don't like it but I would never discourage anyone from getting something done – **so you said you knew a couple of people who got them done** – ya like two tongue piercings one in the front and one in the back – **do you know of anyone else that had a problem with a tongue piercing** – no – **okay – anyone one have a problem with other piercings that you know of** – ah don't think so – **okay**
17. **Do you think tattoo shops have the responsibility of informing people of possible tattoo risks? - you said he had a consent form for you** – ya when you get your consent form there's like a bunch of information all on it – how to clean it - **do you think that's a good thing to do** – ya definitely
18. **Do you believe that possible tattoo risks should be discussed in school or in a classroom setting? –** um not overly – ya I think it could be like mentioned a bit but I think if you're going to get it done then it should be more like the shops are going to tell you about it – **but some people go to a shop and get one done and are not told** – ya – **or they do it themselves** – ya I think that's stupid if you do it yourself like everything of mine has been done professionally so – **do you have any suggestions as to how tattoos could be discussed in a school setting or just at school in general** - I don't know, I'd say - like in a class? – **in a class or in the school itself** – um I think it could be done in planning – I know piercings and tattoos were brought in like - planning this year – I know it was talking about stereotypes and everything and piercings got brought into that and I think also in art it could be brought in, definitely in art – **so when it was brought into the school did they have a tattoo artist come in** – no it was just like something that got brought up with the students like say in certain things – it just got brought up like as a topic – **how do you think it could be addressed in the art classroom** – um I think it's kind of you know like some people look at graffiti like as certain kids tagging stuff but I

think also graffiti could be like a type of art – some people could do that like I know people that do it as murals, as like painting shirts – I’ve done graffiti myself on shirts – like it could be brought in as art like ideas for it – **have you ever gone to a graffiti party** – no – **where everyone wears white t-shirts and everybody** – tags them – **ya** – no that would be pretty sweet though I’d have to say – **well graffiti is something that is everywhere** – **so those are good suggestions** – **thank you** – no problem

19. **If you were aware of possible health risks would you think twice about getting tattooed?** – yes I would – **in what way** – well if it was something like really risky I’d definitely think like twice about it and like – **like your tongue** – ya definitely, **that was painful**
20. **Have you ever engaged in any other forms of risk behavior such as smoking?** – yes I smoke – um drink - **risk behavior is going to be something more than the occasional drink like binge drinking** - I’ve had my good party days of drinking I definitely would agree to that – right now I’m going a month strong with not drinking – I’m going through a cleanse so – I’d say I’ve had my fair share of drinking and smoking – I’m trying to quit smoking though – **what about marijuana** – **I smoke weed** ya (laughs) – ya
21. **So what were your reasons for engaging in or trying these?** – um smoking I don’t know why I started – I remember being 10, 11, 12 always like telling my mom to quit smoking and now I smoke but um I don’t know – if I like I know cause um if I get like really stressed out I smoke, it just calms me down – I know that for sure – **what about any peer pressure or boredom or** – never been peer pressured – I’m like with smoking weed it’s never been peer pressure but like it’s sucking being the only one not stoned so (laughs) – **okay so it’s like being part of the whole crowd** – ya – **okay**
22. **Now how would you define risk?** – like – **well if someone just asked you what is risk what would you say** – rebellious stuff like that like um – like always taking a risk like being a rebel or something like that – **being a rebel** – ya – **okay so you’re doing something that people are saying you shouldn’t do so you are being a rebel** – ya extreme, rebellious and things like that – **okay thank you**

Advertisements

What magazines do you regularly read or occasionally buy? – I’m actually not a magazine person like I **never** buy magazines ever – **do you look at any magazines** – the odd time I would – don’t know any names – if I’d see them I would just look through them and stuff – **okay**

Okay I have some advertisements here to show you and you can tell me what you think of them whether they would influence younger people to get a tattoo or buy the product

This one is a shoe ad – (pause) - **what do you think of this tattoo** – it’s different, it’s nice – I could see some people seeing the tattoo and then like looking at the shoe and then like “oh like cool” or something like that – **do you think that might influence a younger person to get a tattoo on their ankle** – possibly ya – **okay**

what about this ad for Ralph Lauren – definitely influences young people I think – **why** – cause she’s a young girl – Ralph Lauren like right there – she’s got a tattoo on her arm – it’s something small oh and on her stomach – something small and like simple – **okay so the small and the simple would be attractive** – ya – **have you tried this perfume** – ya I like it – **so do you think it’s a good ad** – ya definitely

Now you might laugh at this, what do you think of this ad – (laughs) – **I hate it** – **for Cadbury** – um I’m not really big with names for tattoos – **you said you had a friend well not a friend but an acquaintance that has a tattoo with a name** – yes – um I don’t know I think that unless there’s been 10 years or something I don’t think there should be a name in it – **so what do you think of the association that Cadbury is using** – ah I think it’s a horrible ad (laughs) – ‘some things you regret some you don’t’

um – **they’re referencing a weight issue too** – ya – I don’t know it kind of works – **what do you think of the tattoo artist wearing gloves** – **good**, very good, all tattoo artists should wear gloves – all do though

How about this ad for jeans – that’s sweet – um I think it’s good – it works for people in their mid 20s or 30s maybe – I think it works – **do you think it would attract people who have tattoos** – ya - **because of the extreme nature – she has a sleeve** – definitely I think so – say someone sees it like “oh cool” then they’re like “oh what is it, jeans or something like that” – **how do you feel about using models these days that have tattoos** – um I don’t know – if it works it works I guess um

Have you seen this ad for Miami Ink – ya – **what do you think of this one** – I like this I think that’s sweet um it definitely like – I don’t think *Miami Ink* is a huge thing but for those who like it – they see the *Miami Ink* thing and they’re like “oh I could have that phone” type of thing – I think that’s a big one putting *Miami Ink* on it – **so that’s a good ad** – ya – **which ad is your favorite** – I’d probably say this one – **Miami Ink** – ya – **okay** – and this – **and the jeans** – **okay**

Have you seen this ad; this is out of ‘Cosmo’ – (pause) – no I haven’t but I know you can do that – **oh you know you can do that – like using a home device and a crème once a week to fade your tattoo – that’s what they’re saying** – oh no – **it’s not a laser it’s some device that you get from ‘Doc Wilson’ – oh boy – and it says ‘lower back tattoo, these results are not typical’ – ‘use as directed’** um oh boy um – **do you think that could actually work or do you think that’s some type of scam** – definite scam – **but do you think this could be the type of thing that somebody might** – ya like don’t do that you’ll regret it but okay maybe this will work and then go try it – **okay – what do you think about using a girl who has a wedding dress on, but her back has a tattoo and you see this ad which is implying that you might want to remove your tattoo before you get married** – I think if you’re going to get a tattoo you shouldn’t be ashamed of it like on my wedding day if I have a sleeve like I’m going to show my sleeve – that’s part of who you are, that characterizes you so – **especially with a tattoo** – ya - **what about the association with her drinking** – ya kind of – pretty much tattoos, smoking, alcohol, and piercings are all like wrapped into one – like people wrap that all together – **ya what do you think about that stereotype** – um I don’t know – **there is a study on people’s views of young women who have tattoos; they say they drink more** – oh I think that’s **bogus**, rubbish – **okay so when I saw this ad I thought it was playing on those stereotypes** – definitely


Okay have you seen Angelina Jolie – I love her tattoos (laughs) – I absolutely do um like I’ve seen both of these I’ve seen this picture – I think it’s a sweet picture um I definitely think if people seen that, it would be like “oh wow, that’s sweet” or something – like I think this is a big one too – like the people who really like having tattoos – I know the chick from um ‘Transformers’ I can’t think of her name right now, Megan Fox, I believe – **okay** – she’s got one along her side and some people think it’s a **hot** tattoo – **so where tattoos are located on an actor or actress it would influence location** – yes definitely – **okay**

Are you familiar with Tegan and Sara at all because they were – no – **okay because they were on front covers of magazines and they were here a few years ago**

Appendix D: Informed consent form

Girls and Gendered Spaces: Investigating the Social Practices of Symbolic Markings of Identity

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Faculty of Education
Department of Curriculum Studies
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z4

Tel: (604) 822-5422 Fax: (604) 822-4714

INFORMED CONSENT

Girls and Gendered Spaces: Investigating the Social Practices of Symbolic Markings of Identity

Principal Investigator
 Dr. Graeme Chalmers
 Centre for Cross-Faculty in Education
 University of British Columbia
 Phone: (604) 822-4234
 E-mail: f.graeme.chalmers@ubc.ca

Co-investigator
 Deborah Vanston, PhD Candidate
 Curriculum Studies (Art Education)
 University of British Columbia
 Cell Phone: (250) 859-9482
 E-mail: dvanston@interchange.ubc.ca

Attention: Parent or Guardian

Your daughter has expressed the desire to participate in a study about girls and tattoos. As your daughter is under the age of 19, we required to obtain consent from a parent/guardian before she can participate in this project. UBC policy requires that anyone under the age of 19 must have a consent form signed by a parent or guardian to participate in this type of research study. We will request your daughter's assent as well.

Please note that this study is both confidential and voluntary. Only investigators and participants will have access to data collected.

Your daughter will choose a pseudo name for this study; and is free to withdraw at anytime and have her data withdrawn.

Study Purpose

This study is designed to examine the ways in which adolescent girls use tattoos as markers or expressions of identity; and to examine their understanding of this practice as a form of risk-taking.

Study Procedure

This study will involve 2 to 3 hours of participation. Interview sessions may last from 15 to 60 minutes. Approximately 2 to 3 sessions may be scheduled for interview completion. Participants are not obliged to answer any questions that may make them feel uncomfortable.

Interviews will not be conducted during school hours.

Initial interview sessions will be held at the Faculty of Education, UBC Okanagan.

Deborah Vanston

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10/1/2008

Girls and Gendered Spaces: Investigating the Social Practices of Symbolic Markings of Identity

Phone: (250) 807-9176

Shorter interview sessions or meetings may be held at one of the following coffee shop locations in the Kelowna area.

Mosaic Books
411 Bernard Ave, Kelowna
Phone: (250) 763-4418

Cher's Gourmet Cup
100-1460 Pandosy St, Kelowna
Phone: (250) 712-1250

Parents/guardians will be notified of dates, times, and interview locations by e-mail or phone.

Interviews will be taped and recorded on paper.

Dr. Graeme Chalmers (Research Supervisor), PhD candidate Deb Vanston, Drs. Penney Clark and Iraj Poureslami (Ph.D. committee members), and your daughter will be able to review recordings and view transcribed copies of the interviews. All participants will have the opportunity to discuss narratives from other group members after the data is collected.

Your daughter will be asked to create a montage from photographs, drawings, poetry and/or creative writing related to her tattoo experiences. Photographs will not show individual faces; however, as tattoos are often distinctive, we cannot guarantee that participants could not be identified by their tattoo(s). Pseudo names will be used to identify quotes, tattoo photographs or drawings.

All participants will have the opportunity to examine collected data, review study findings, and offer further input. This research will be used for a Ph.D. dissertation and may be published in academic journals or presented at educational conferences.

Participant Costs

Participants will be provided with bus fare for all interview sessions, disposable cameras if needed, photo processing costs, and supplies for the montages. Participants will receive a non-alcoholic beverage during all interview sessions, and receive a free large pizza voucher upon completion of this study.

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject and as a participant in this project, please contact the Office of research Services at the University of British Columbia (604-822-8598).

Further questions can be directed to Deb Vanston or to Dr. Graeme Chalmers.

I look forward to speaking with you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project.

Sincerely,

Deborah Vanston
PhD Candidate
Curriculum Studies (Art Education)
University of British Columbia
Cell phone: (250) 859-9482
E-mail: dvanston@interchange.ubc.ca

Research Supervisor
Dr. Graeme Chalmers
Centre for Cross-Faculty Inquiry in Education
University of British Columbia
Phone: (604) 822-4234
E-mail: f.graeme.chalmers@ubc.ca

Consent

By signing this consent form, I confirm that I have read and understood the information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my daughter's participation in the study is voluntary and that my daughter is free to withdraw at anytime and without cost. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. Your daughter voluntarily agrees to take part in this study, to have her interviews recorded, and to have any visual material (tattoo photos and drawings, poetry or other creative writing) used for the purpose of this research.

I _____ (Please print), agree of my own free will, to participate in this study.

_____ (Signature)

_____ (Parent/guardian signature if under 19)

_____ (Date)


Please supply a contact number for interview purposes. _____

*** Please return page 3 of the Consent Form in the return envelope provided.**

Appendix E: Participant's assent form

Girls and Gendered Spaces: Investigating the Social Practices of Symbolic Markings of Identity

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



**Faculty of Education
Department of Curriculum Studies
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z4
Tel: (604) 822-5422 Fax: (604) 822-4714**

Participant's Assent Form

Girls and Gendered Spaces: Investigating the Social Practices of Symbolic Markings of Identity

April 1, 2007

<p>Principle Investigator Dr. Graeme Chalmers Centre for Cross-Faculty in Education University of British Columbia Phone: (604) 822-4234 E-mail: f.graeme.chalmers@ubc.ca</p>	<p>Co-investigator Deb Vanston, PhD Candidate Curriculum Studies (Art Education) University of British Columbia Cell Phone: (250) 859-9482 E-mail: dvanston@interchange.ubc.ca</p>
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Dear Participant,

We are asking you to take part in a research study about adolescent girls and tattoos. We want to learn about why girls want tattoos and if girls are aware of any potential risks involved with getting tattooed.

If you agree to partake in this study, you will be asked to participate in 2 to 3 interview sessions which may take 2 to 3 hours total of your time. Some sessions may only last 15 minutes. Most interview sessions will be held at UBC Okanagan in the Education Department. Other meetings will be held at coffee shops including Mosaic Books and Cher's Gourmet Cup. Interviews will be taped and recorded on paper and will be conducted after school or on non school days. You will receive a non alcoholic beverage during all meetings or sessions. You will also receive bus fare to and from meetings and interview locations.

You will be asked to submit photographs, drawings, poetry and/or creative writing related to your tattoo experiences and create a montage (a type of collage) from these items. You can work on this at home or during our interview sessions at UBC Okanagan. Any supplies that you need will be provided including a disposable camera. Your montages will be digitally scanned for the research and returned to you.

Deborah Vanston

April 10, 2008

Girls and Gendered Spaces: Investigating the Social Practices of Symbolic Markings of Identity

Your photographs, drawings, and narratives should not identify who you are. However, your tattoo or tattoos may be unique and may be identifiable. You can choose a pseudo name for the duration of this study. All interview recordings will be confidential. You parents will not see or hear any of your responses from the interview sessions.

On completion of the study you will receive a free pizza coupon as a thank you for your participation.

You may have the option of withdrawing from this study at any time and for any reason. You also have the option of choosing to not answer questions or editing previous answers. Signing here means you have read this form and that you are willing to be in this study.

Signature of participant _____ Date _____

Participant's printed name _____

Signature of investigator _____ Date _____

Appendix F: Certificate of Approval

		The University of British Columbia Office of Research Services Behavioural Research Ethics Board Suite 102, 6190 Agronomy Road, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z3	
CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL- MINIMAL RISK RENEWAL			
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: F. Graeme Chalmers		DEPARTMENT: UBC/Education/Curriculum Studies	
		UBC BREB NUMBER: H07-00514	
INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CARRIED OUT:			
Institution		Site	
UBC		Okanagan	
Other locations where the research will be conducted: Primary interviewing will be held at the Education Department at UBC Okanagan Secondary interviewing (collection of materials that participants will submit such as poetry and photos and editing of information that involves no risks) will be held at one of the following community coffee shops: Cher's Gourmet Cup 100-1460 Pandosy St, Kelowna Phone: (250) 712-1250 Mosaic Books 411 Bernard Ave, Kelowna Phone: (250) 763-4418 All coffee shops are located within a one block radius of downtown Kelowna. Due to the location of UBC Okanagan and the length of time involved for a participant to travel by bus, coffee shops are suitable for shorter meetings. Coffee shops are public meeting places and are considered comfort zones for young people. Conversation is allowed at these shops provided beverages are purchased. These shops were notified about the project and will be notified before each meeting.			
CO-INVESTIGATOR(S): Deborah Vanston			
SPONSORING AGENCIES: N/A			
PROJECT TITLE: Girls and Gendered Spaces: Investigating the Social Practices of Symbolic Markings of Identity			
EXPIRY DATE OF THIS APPROVAL: April 11, 2009			
APPROVAL DATE: April 11, 2008			
The Annual Renewal for Study have been reviewed and the procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.			
Approval is issued on behalf of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board Dr. M. Judith Lynam, Chair Dr. Ken Craig, Chair Dr. Jim Rupert, Associate Chair Dr. Laurie Ford, Associate Chair Dr. Daniel Salhani, Associate Chair Dr. Anita Ho, Associate Chair			