

City University of New York (CUNY)

**CUNY Academic Works**

---

Student Theses

John Jay College of Criminal Justice

---

Spring 5-12-2017

## **Tattoos and Criminal Behavior: An examination of the relationship between body art and crime**

Daniel D. Dajani

*CUNY John Jay College*, [daniel.dajani@gmail.com](mailto:daniel.dajani@gmail.com)

**[How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!](#)**

More information about this work at: [https://academicworks.cuny.edu/jj\\_etds/8](https://academicworks.cuny.edu/jj_etds/8)

Discover additional works at: <https://academicworks.cuny.edu>

---

This work is made publicly available by the City University of New York (CUNY).

Contact: [AcademicWorks@cuny.edu](mailto:AcademicWorks@cuny.edu)

Tattoos and Criminal Behavior: An examination of the relationship between body art and crime

Daniel Dajani

12/22/16

**Introduction**

This thesis investigates the relationship between having tattoos and crime. It will examine survey respondents' perceptions on the popularity of tattoos, whether they think persons with tattoos are more likely to commit crime, as well as their feelings towards tattooed individuals. The thesis will also investigate respondents' self-reported rates of deviant behavior and involvement within the tattoo culture. Individuals often develop predisposed notions of other people and other things they come into contact with (Kenne, 2011). Outside appearances of places, tangible items, and even marketing campaigns cause individuals to develop judgments based on what they first see. In fact, those in marketing are banking hoping you make predisposed notions of said things.

The clothing we wear, the vehicles we drive, and even the careers and academic settings we choose speak volumes to those in the habit of forming prejudgments. The aforementioned, along with an individual's attire, hair color/length, and tattoos makes up the individual persona that people pass judgment on. The act of making prejudgments affects our perceptions on other members in society (Fiske, 2010).

Tattooed individuals are often portrayed in various forms of entertainment as being more rebellious than others (Kosut, 2006). Tattooed people are commonly portrayed as rugged and emotionless with an air of deviancy about them, making them appear as outsiders (Post, 1968). Who is more likely to be shown on screen with a full array of tattoos a member of a motorcycle gang or a doctor working within a hospital? Most likely the answer is the member of a motorcycle gang because these organizations are often seen as deviant. These portrayals may influence how most people view those with tattoos.

The notion that tattoos are considered the mark of the misfit is not a novel one by any means. Tattooing has existed for thousands of years with varying levels of influence and each culture has its own unique history involving the art of tattooing. The meaning and significance of tattoos varies across cultures. For example, Lineberry (2007, p. 3) notes that Greek historian Herodotus c. 450 B.C., stated that amongst the Scythians and Thracians "tattoos were a mark of nobility, and not to have them was testimony of low birth." Even today Monks in certain Buddhist temples in Thailand bless people using tattoos in conjunction with chants, bestowing protection upon them, this tattoo style is known as Sak Yant (May, 2014).

The same train of thought can be seen within the ancient Roman culture, particularly with the northern tribe "Picti," which translates to "painted people" highlighting their procurement of early forms of tattoos (Lineberry, 2007). These facts demonstrate that the art of tattooing was not always shrouded in negativity and instead highlights the diversity of opinions about tattooing and its culturally rich history.

Importantly though, tattoos have a deep history of being used to mark the misfits of society. In early Japanese culture, tattoos were introduced as a means of marking criminals, the most interesting method being employed by Hiroshima. Upon first offense criminals received a line on the forehead, then another on the second offense, and a final one on the third offense to make out the shape for the Japanese word "dog" (Kurihara, 2013, p. 2). This is a prime example of tattoos being utilized to mark criminals in society and allow them to literally wear the stigma associated with being a deviant.

This thesis will examine if there is a relationship between body art (for the purpose of this review looking at tattoos) and crime. Previous research has found an association between tattoos and crime. This research will build upon past studies while uncovering new information to further the body of knowledge concerning tattoos and crime. This thesis will first review the relevant prior literature to develop a core set of research questions that will be used to craft a survey instrument. Next the thesis provides a brief description of the survey in addition to the data collection methods utilized. The data will then be analyzed and explained.

### **Literature Review**

A review of past research concerning tattoos, crime and other forms of deviancy demonstrates that a relationship exists to some extent. In addition to the bodies of research, certain authors also pontificate that the tattooing culture and opinions surrounding it has changed. This thesis gathers new data concerning tattoos and crime and adds to the knowledge base by examining the alterations in the correlation.

Koch (2010) tested his thesis that those possessing more body art are likely to report higher levels of deviancy by surveying 1,753 American college students. The survey asked the students to report their level of body art procurement along with their level of past deviancy. Koch's findings showed that body art was indeed frequent in mainstream society. The study also reports that the heavier the rate of procurement of body art, the higher the rate of deviancy (Koch, 2010). Koch measured deviance in terms of legal behavior and illegal behavior and his operationalization of body art procurement included piercings (2010. P.7).

Jennings (2014) examined the causal relationships between tattoos and life-course offending among males (Jennings et al, 2014). Jennings research relied on data gathered from a prospective longitudinal study of 411 males from the Cambridge study in delinquent development. Jennings found that tattooed-males exhibited significantly higher risk factors pointing to greater propensity towards crime and other deviant acts such as smoking and binge drinking (Jennings et al, 2014).

King and Vidourek (2013) conducted a study that aimed at examining associations between tattooing and risky behaviors. The authors utilized data gathered from the survey responses of 998 students enrolled in physical education and mental health classes. Their findings illustrated that tattooed individual are more likely to engage in risky behaviors such as drug/alcohol use and risky sexual behavior.

In addition to the empirical studies listed above, other bodies of literature provide evidence that the art of tattooing is increasing in popularity. Carlsen (2014) argues that the art of tattooing is in the process of becoming more mainstream and as a result has seen a major resurgence, transforming itself from subculture to pop culture. Carlsen supports such claims by citing data from the U.S News and World Report claiming that the tattoo industry is the sixth fastest growing industry in addition to the 147 million tattoo related Google searches produced each month during the time the article was written.

Long-time collectors, enthusiasts, and tattoo artists now share the statistical realm of being tattooed versus not being tattooed with a different populace since more people are getting them. In the early 1980's tattoo shops were often seen as secretive as speakeasy bars, it seems times have changed since it appears tattoo shops are more common and veteran tattoo enthusiasts have taken notice (Arbonne, 2010).

Malucci (2014) concludes that the perception surrounding tattoos has become much more accepting. This conclusion is based off the fact that there are now more than 20,000 tattoo parlors in the United States, with a new establishment being added every day. This surge in tattoo parlors has contributed to the estimated 1.65 billion spent on tattoos annually in the United States.

Based off the literature suggesting tattoos have grown in popularity, this study crafted survey questions aimed at determining just how popular tattoos have become. This study also aimed at determining how the respondents feel about the newfound popularity of tattoos, tattoos in general, and whom they think most likely has tattoos.

In order to ensure the study succeeded in this, I expanded on the locations where we gather data pertinent to the research and will attempt to reach populations of interest previously neglected by past research . Members of law enforcement, college students, and tattoo collectors and artists all have a unique relationship to the criminal justice system and/or tattoos. Gaining participation from these populations of interest will be crucial to differentiating this research from prior bodies of research and will address the weaknesses prior research had by failing to include these groups.

Law enforcement has a tangible connection with the criminal justice system, college students will allow the determination of the popularity of tattoos, and tattoos collectors and artists will provide data that will intrinsically explain how those deeply involved in the tattoo culture feel about the changes and the potential for such a correlation to exist. Out of the 300 participants, I had hoped for an even number of participation from each population of interest totaling at least half the respondents.

Preconceived notions, in particular the stereotyping that often occurs with tattooed individuals is a central issue when investigating the correlation between tattoos and crime, largely because it fuels opinions on the matter. Keene (2011) notes the different types of social bias that can occur, and how each form of bias has its own unique influences on individual's perceptions. Thus, an examination of individual's perceptions concerning tattoos and the persons having them is needed in this research just as past bodies of research have done to determine if anything has changed.

This thesis relies upon the prior studies discussed to develop survey questions centered on the theme that tattoos and crime are related. This thesis extends the previous literature by tapping into the respondent's perceptions about persons with tattoos and crime, in addition to their self-reported involvement in both categories. This study investigates these issues by surveying individuals to see if tattoos have really grown in popularity, and if so, can any insight be gained in terms of who are joining the foray. The survey also investigates the deviancy of respondent's and their perceptions concerning tattoos and those with them. These important questions will allow this thesis to contribute to the knowledge base concerning tattoos and crime.



### **Research Questions**

This thesis proposes that tattoos have grown in popularity over the years. This hypothesis is based off the aforementioned literature that provides justification for such a claim to hold merit. This thesis also sets forth the hypothesis that tattoos and crime still maintain a relationship to one another, but the strength is diminishing due to the newfound popularity of tattoos. The anticipation of such relationships comes forth from the results of prior empirical studies that have shown similar outcomes. The anticipation of a diminishment in the strength of said correlation is based off the literature showing evidence of the popularity of tattoos increasing and the perceptions surrounding them altering into a more positive way.

We hope to add to the supporting data. The survey used in this research asked individuals if they thought tattoos have become more popular in the last decade; and how many of their friends had tattoos. The survey also had individuals self-report the amount of tattoos they have in addition to the amount they want to have in the future.

To gain a better understanding of the responses gathered from the survey, insight on the perceptions the public holds regarding tattoos and those with them is needed, hence the survey asks respondents how they feel about tattoos in general and their feelings towards those with tattoos. The survey also asks respondents questions concerning types and rates of crimes in their area. These questions are put into place to determine how often the respondents is exposed to crime and if in turn the rate of exposure comes to effect whom they view as perpetrators of crime.

It also gathered data regarding their procurement of tattoos and opinions about tattoos in relation to crime such as whether they have become more popular the last few years. Another research question investigated whether the tattoos and crime relationship has undergone dramatic changes within the last few years since perceptions about tattoos have changed. (See **Appendix A for the survey**).

### **Methods**

This thesis used the survey method and participants were recruited via a mix of in-person and online strategies. As noted, the survey asks a variety of questions aimed at gathering demographic information, each participant's level of exposure to tattoos and crime, as well as their overall feelings towards tattoos and those whom they think are more likely to possess them. Social media was the main method in which targeted participants aside from CUNY students were reached. I was fortunate enough to meet with certain colleagues within different sectors of law enforcement as well as those within the tattoo industry to ask permission to share the survey link with their co-workers via email and text messages in hopes of gaining participants. In-person recruitment for John Jay College participants took place November 18<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-3:00 PM.

Online recruitment focused on the utilization of social media platforms to garner participation. Other strategies included using Facebook postings that contained a link to the survey in survey monkey (a website that allows surveys to be filled out online without having to reveal any identifying information). This site also included the oral consent script that explains the survey and mentions that participation is anonymous and voluntary.

All included respondents voluntarily participated and were at least 18 years old. Those excluded for legal consent purposes were under the age of 18, those unable to freely consent; and/or declined to participate. The inclusion and exclusion criteria remained simple to enhance participation while minimizing the probability of having to discard completed responses for failing to adhere to required protocol.

Participants were asked to complete the survey taking as much time as needed while understanding that not all questions had to be answered. Once 300 responses were gathered, the data was inputted into SPSS data files. I decided on this figure for my sample size due to the fact that it is a reasonable number that would grant me the best odds for a successful response rate (87.4%) while adhering to the allocated amount of time and resources I had at my disposal.

Recruitment took place all throughout November and into the beginning weeks of January. In-person recruitment yielded 73 responses, while online recruitment generated 227 responses (total n= 300). In addition to the general public, recruitment efforts were directed at gaining participation from members of law enforcement, those heavily involved in the tattoo industry, and students at John Jay College. Recruitment garnered 73 responses from John Jay College, 43 from law enforcement, 47 from members of the tattoo industry, and 139 members of the general public (those with no strong affiliations to any of the above specific sectors).

The sample drawn not only matched our expectations of gaining at least 150 respondents from the populations of interest, it actually exceeded it. we were able to gather 161 respondents combined from the populations of interest. The sample size collected provides a representative sample of the population due to its variance in those whom participated in the survey. Although majority demographics were present; varying age groups, ethnicities, and educational backgrounds that were present within those whom responded to the survey allow me to confidently say a representative sample size was gathered.

## **Results**

Again, the 300 survey responses were reviewed to ensure all inclusion and exclusion parameters were followed and then entered into SPSS. It should be noted 6 survey respondents were excluded from this research due to providing information that is considered a personal identifier. For this research, personal identifiers were considered anything that can uniquely identify an individual. The results of the data yielded interesting results that answered the research questions in entirety, but also yielded results that was not anticipated.

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the survey respondents that allows the data to be seen with visual clarity. 55.3% of survey respondents were male, 56.7% were aged 26-40, and. 47.0% as white. 48.7% of respondents had earned a Bachelors degree and the large majority of respondents were also employed full time (77.3%).

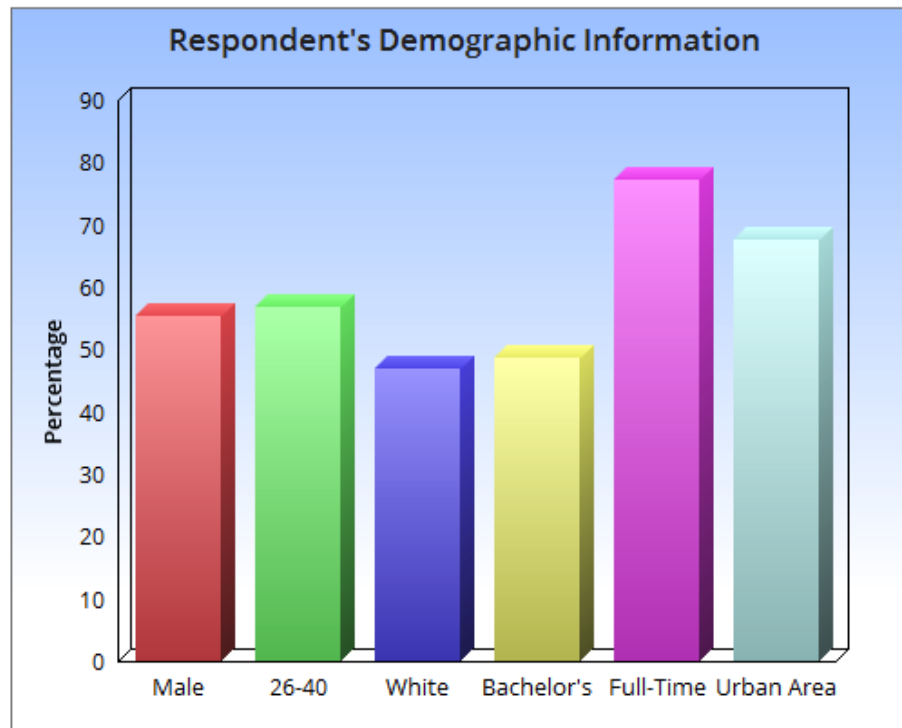
**Figure 1**

Figure 2 provides insight to the kinds of areas respondents lived in. By determining what type of area the individual resides in, a better understanding of what underlying factors may have motivated their responses is gained. This in turn provides an indicator of the population size they are part of and the chances of seeing individuals with tattoos as well as the potential exposure to varying types of criminal activity.

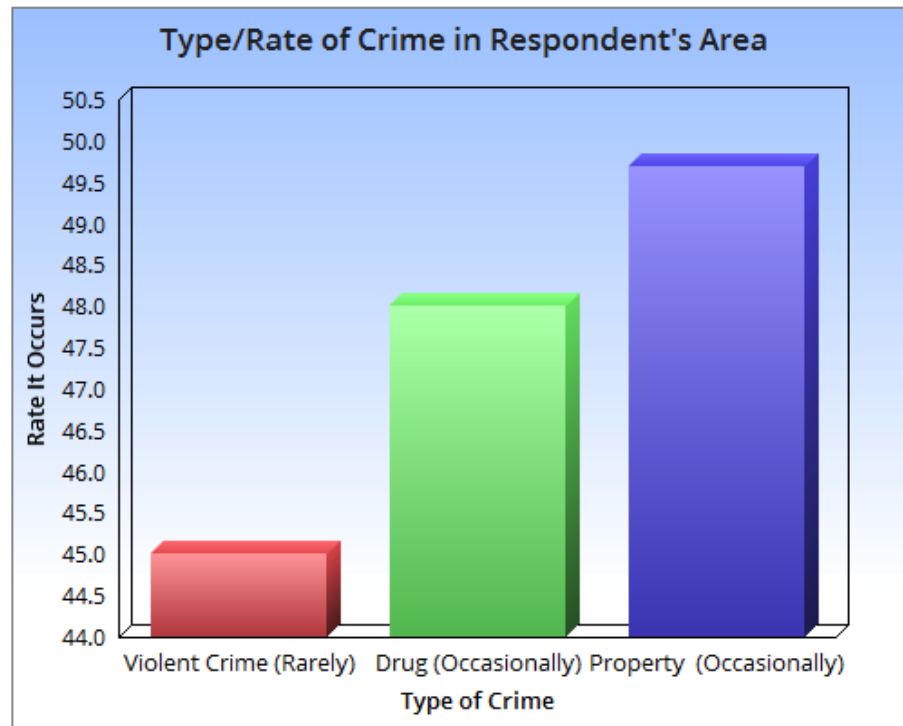
**Figure 2**

Figure 2 consolidates the data gathered from questions 8-10. These questions were concerned with tracking the type of crimes that occur in the respondent's area and their opinions on the rate of occurrence. Question 8 was designed to determine the level of exposure the respondent has to violent forms of crime. The leading percentage is rarely with 135 individuals (45.0%). Question 9 was designed to determine the level of exposure the respondent has to instances of property crime. 149 respondents (49.7%) answered that they occasionally see it occur. Question 10 determines the level of exposure the respondent has to drug related crime. The majority of respondents (144 individuals totaling 48.0%) claim drug related crime occasionally occurs in their area.

**Figure 3**

### How Would You Describe The Area In Which You Live In

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Rural	13	4.3	4.3	4.3
Urban	203	67.7	67.7	72.0
Suburban	84	28.0	28.0	100.0
Total	300	100.0	100.0	

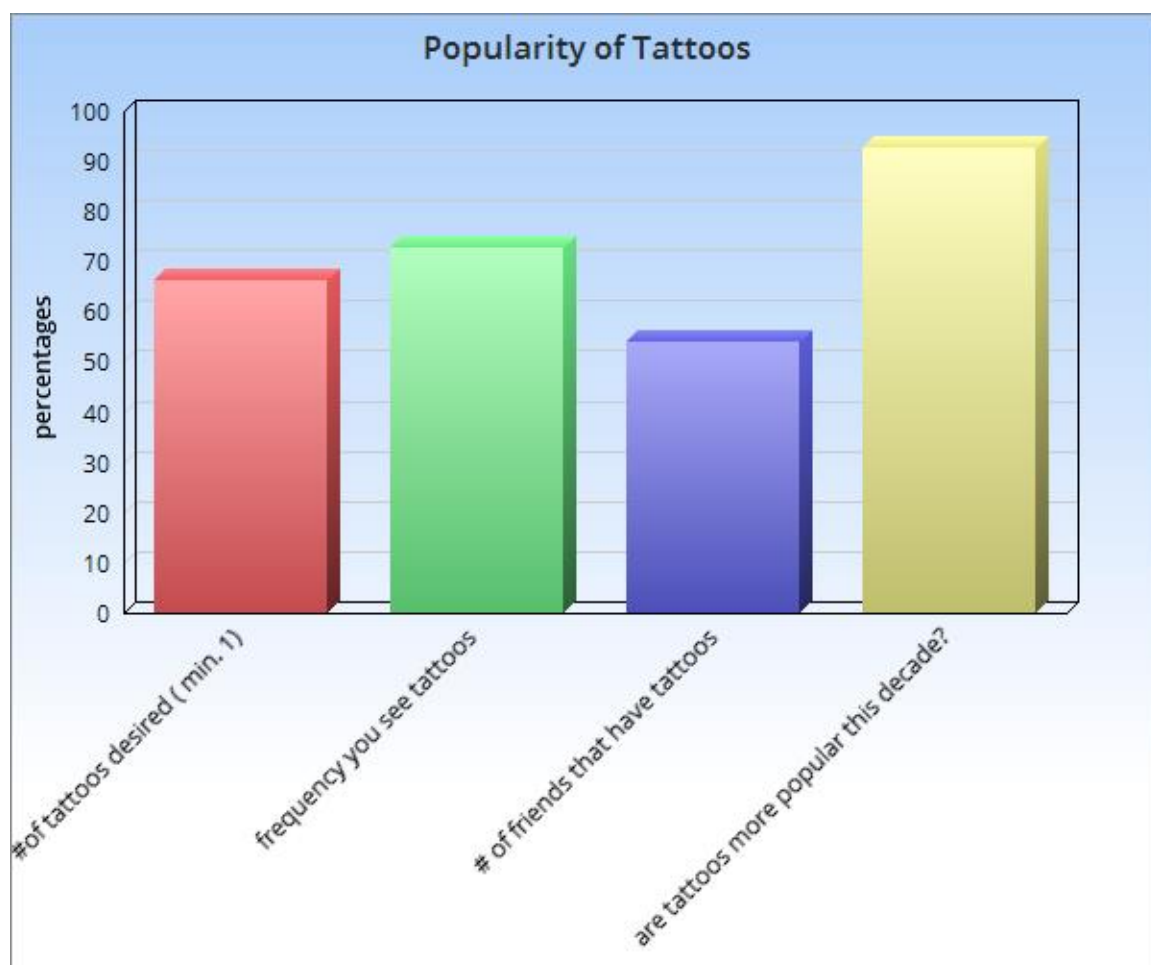
**Figure 4**

### How Long Have You Lived In Your Current Area

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-12	41	13.7	13.7	13.7
1+-2	32	10.7	10.7	24.3
2+-5	49	16.3	16.3	40.7
5+	178	59.3	59.3	100.0
Total	300	100.0	100.0	

Figure 3 shows 67.7% of survey respondents answered that they reside an urban setting. Respondents lived in their current area for an average of 5+ years (59.3%) (See Figure 4). It is important to note that the longer a person lives in their area, the better their chance of experiencing the varying factors present in their area. If they live in an urban setting but only for a short time, they may not have grown accustomed to the levels of criminal activity or variations of those individuals residing there.

Figure 5



The following set of questions as seen in Figure 5 establishes the popularity of tattoos. Question 13 asks how many tattoos you would like; looking back at the previous response I was expecting the leading reply to be no tattoos. 66.3% answered that they would like to have a tattoo. This shows tattoos are growing in popularity since not all respondents have tattoos; but the majority wants to have at least one. These percentages seem to coincide with the findings that show Americans aged 18-25 have at least one tattoo (Carlsen, 2014)



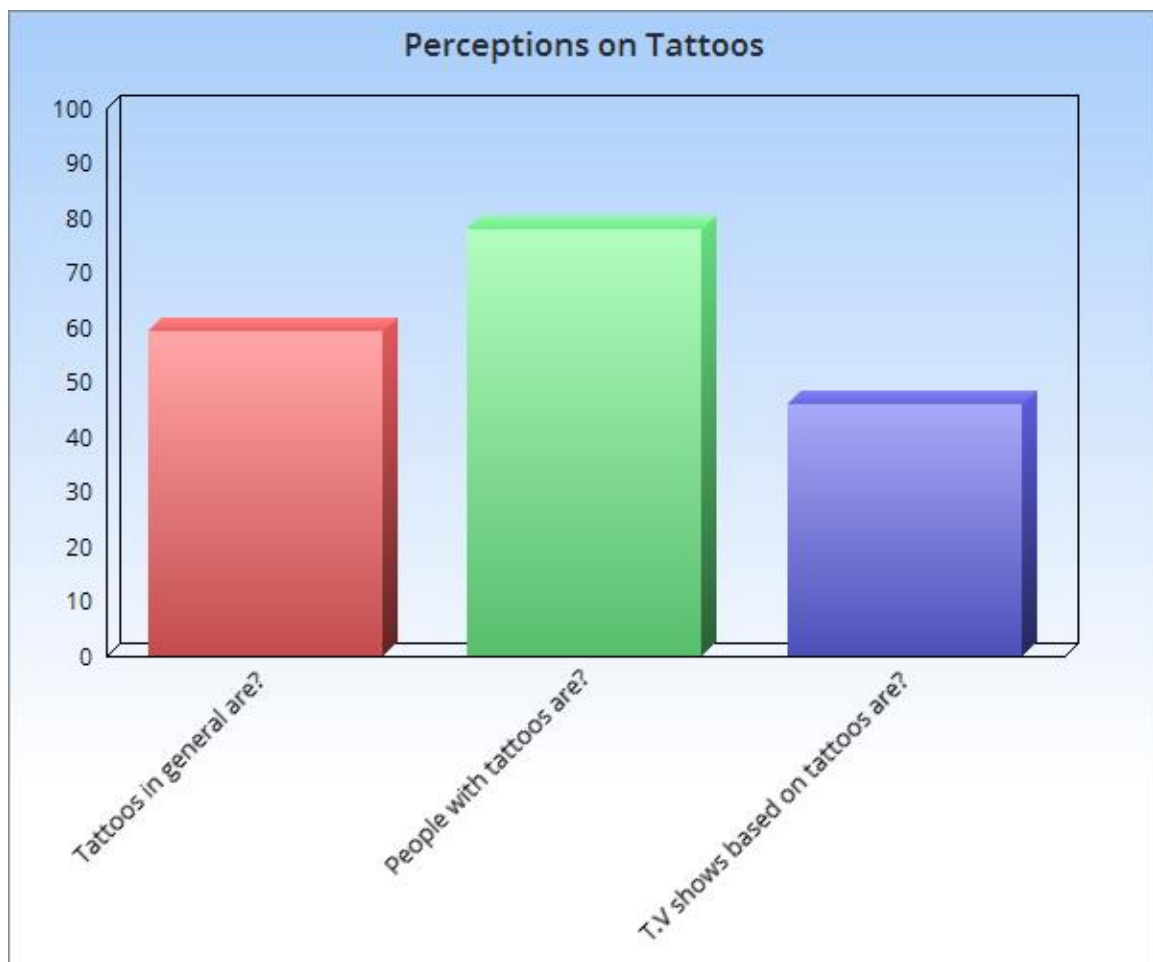
Question 17 asks how often respondents see people with tattoos. Figure 5 shows that 72.7% of survey respondents responded that they always see people with tattoos. This is the single most important percentage to begin to look at evidence that suggests that tattoos have risen in popularity within the last few years. Question 18 asks how many of your friends have tattoos. 54.0% of survey respondents replied that 8 or more of their friends have tattoos. Question 26 asks if the respondents think tattoos have become more popular in the last decade. An astonishing 92.7% (278 respondents out of 300) answered that tattoos have become more popular within the last decade.

The next set of survey questions gathered data concerning the respondent's perceptions on tattoos. These questions were designed to provide an insight as to what fuels people's opinions on tattoos and those who have them. Question 19 asks the respondent's how they feel about tattoos in general. The choices were a waste of time, defiant, beautiful, or meaningful. 59.3% answered that they thought tattoos were meaningful.

Question 20 asked most people with tattoos are? The choices were stylish, criminals, uneducated, or interesting. 78.0% answered that they thought most people with tattoos were interesting; further elevating the likelihood that tattoos are increasing in popularity. Question 27 asks the respondent how they feel about television shows based on famous tattoos artists and their shops. 46.0% of respondents answered that they thought the shows were eventful.

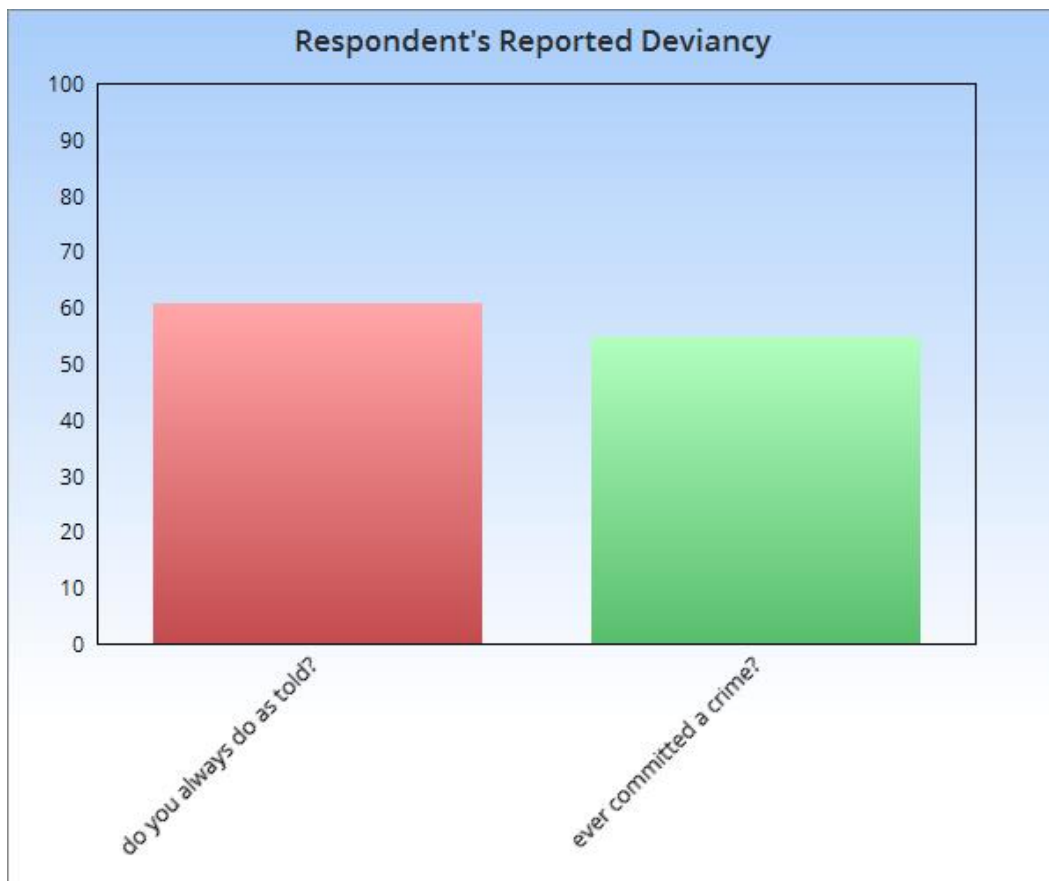
These answers allow the assumption that the perceptions around tattoos seem to be changing in recent years. Attitudes surrounding the art of tattoos seem to be fashioning themselves in a more accepted light. This can be caused by the increasing popularity of tattoos since new individuals are becoming involved, thus diversifying the pool of individuals concerning themselves with the art form and giving their opinions on the matter. The graph (Figure 6) below highlights the findings of the SPSS data gathered.

**Figure 6**



The next set of questions is meant to see how people feel about tattooed individuals and if they are more likely to be associated with crime. These questions provided us the data that allowed us to answer the central question of this research regarding the correlation between tattoos and crime. Broad questions were asked to see the level of deviancy the respondents engaged in. These questions inputted into the survey gave us an idea on how the respondents feel about criminal behavior, tattoos, and those with tattoos. It also surmises the level of involvement the respondents have with deviancy in their own lives, which can be further transcended into the general public since the respondents are representative of them to a certain degree.

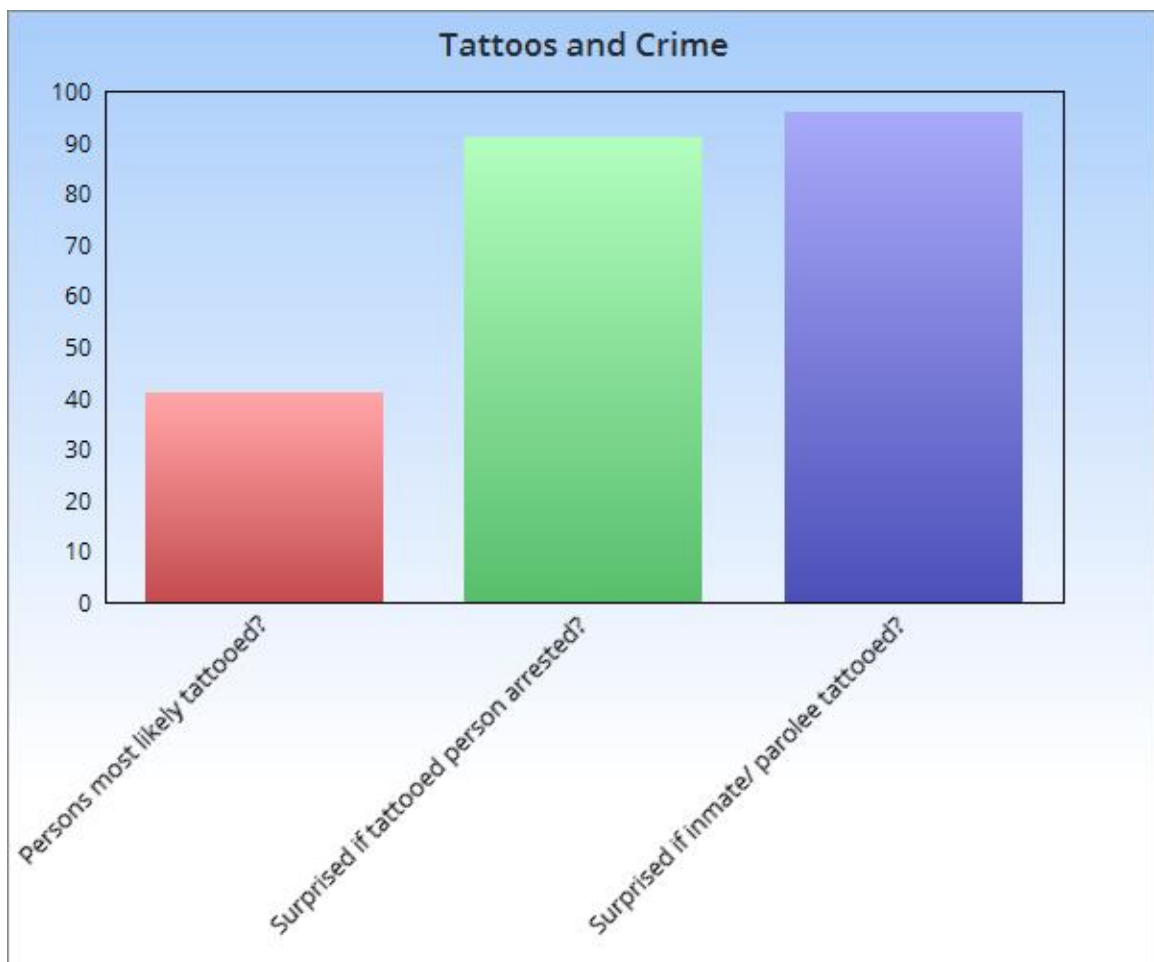
**Figure 7**

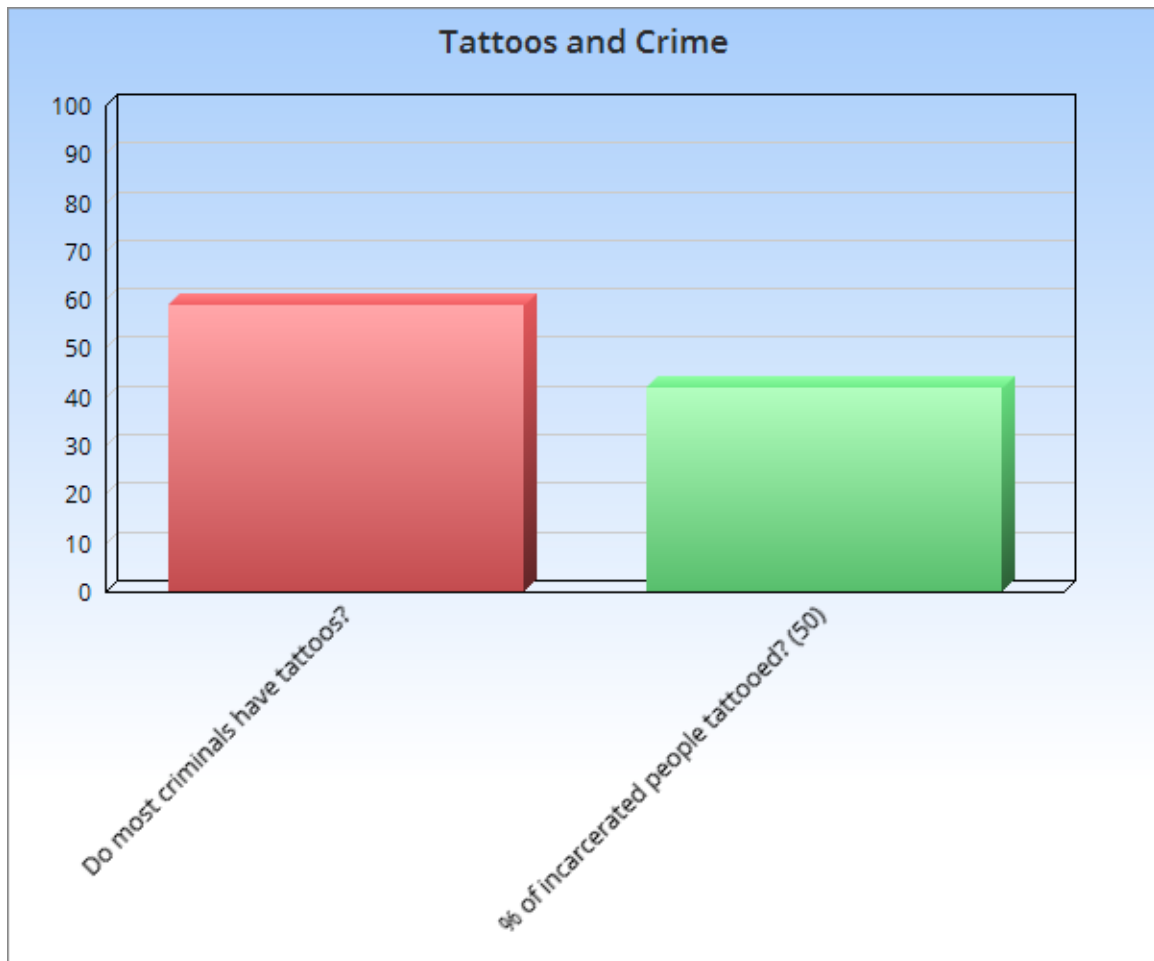


Question 14 asks if the respondent always does as they are told. 60.7% of individuals answered that they do not always do what they are told (See figure 7).

Question 23 has the same objective as question 14 with an added element that makes it a much more delicate question to ask. The survey is now asking the respondent if they have ever committed an act they would consider a crime? This is one of the more sensitive questions and played a vital role in understanding the respondent's level of involvement with crime. 54.7% of respondents answered no to this question.

**Figure 8**



**Figure 9**

The survey then examines the respondent's opinions on tattoos and those possessing them by asking what categories of people are most likely to have tattoos? 41.0 % answered athletes would be most likely to have tattoos. (See figure 8). This shows the correlation between the two has begun to diminish since tattoos have sky rocketed in popularity within the last few years, perhaps even the respondents choosing athletes (individuals constantly being displayed on television) speaks to this newfound popularity the tattoo culture has gained.

Questions 21 and 22 are meant to see if people associate tattoos and crime. This is achieved using questions concerning tattooed individuals and if they would associate them with populations of people that have committed crime. Respondents were asked if they would be surprised if a person who just got arrested had tattoos; along with if they would be surprised if an inmate, parolee, or someone on probation had tattoos.

These questions involve individuals in the criminal justice system, just in varying times. An individual who just got arrested is in the beginning stages of the criminal justice system. An inmate is in an advanced stage of the criminal justice system by having already been convicted of a crime and being sentenced. A parolee and/or someone on probation are at a latter stage in the criminal justice system by having already served their sentence. Figure 8 shows 91.0% replied that they would not be surprised if a person who had just been arrested had tattoos. 95.7% replied that they would not be surprised if an inmate, parolee, or someone on probation had tattoos. This shows that although tattoos are being acknowledged as a growing culture, individuals still believe it is linked to crime.

Next respondents were asked if they believe most criminals have tattoos and the percentage of incarcerated people whom have tattoos. Figure 9 illustrates that 59.0% of respondents replied that they do not believe most criminals have tattoos, yet 42.0% of respondents replied that they believe at least 50% of incarcerated people have tattoos. This data seems to show the respondents carrying a conflicting view of criminals and their relationships to tattoos.

**Discussion**

This research adds to the body of knowledge concerning tattoos and crime in three main ways. First and foremost, it has shown that possessing tattoos is related to criminal behavior. 91.0% of respondents answered that they would not be surprised if a recently arrested had tattoos. An even more impressive 95.7% of respondents answered that they would not be surprised if an inmate, parolee, or someone on probation had tattoos.

Further evidence can be found when comparing the answers to Questions 12 and 23. Question 12 asks if you have any tattoos, which 52.3 % of respondents answered that they do not currently have a tattoo. Question 23 asks if you have ever committed an act that would be considered a crime, to which 54.7% of survey respondents answered that they have not. This comparison shows that a majority of respondents have not committed a criminal act and do not currently possess tattoos.

Second, this research also shows the strength of the correlation between tattoos and crime is weakening. The diminishment is seen in the responses to questions 11, 24, and 25. Question 11 asks which group of people do you think is more likely to have tattoos? The choices were Celebrities, Athletes, or Inmates. The significant difference between these groups in relation to this research is the fact that only inmates have a purely associative relationship to the criminal justice system. 41.0% of respondent's thought athletes would be the group of people most likely to have tattoos over inmates, highlighting that the correlation is not as strong as it was.

Question 24 asks if they think most criminals have tattoos. 59.0% (177 out of 300) answered that they do not think most criminals have tattoos. Question 25 asks which percentage of incarcerated people do they suppose have tattoos. Judging from the answers of the previous questions I would not be wrong to assume that a majority of respondents would have gone with the higher percentage choices as their responses, considering the 95.7% of respondents that would not be surprised if an inmate had tattoos. But respondents elected to go with 50% with 126 selections accounting for 42.0%. Reiterating the diminishment in correlational strength between tattoos and crime.

Third, this study has shown that the popularity of tattoos has increased since the early 1980's (D'Arbonne, 2010) and even as recent as 2010 when Koch concluded his study. This research shows that 66.3% of respondent's answered that they would like to have at least 1 tattoo. 54.0% replied that 8 or more of their friends have tattoos. 72.7% of respondents claimed to always see people with tattoos. Based on these findings and the literature put forth by Carlsen and Malucci it can be inferred that along with this newfound popularity a more positive attitude towards tattoos is developing.

In addition to the aforementioned evidence, an astonishing 92.7% (278 respondents out of 300) answered that they thought tattoos have become more popular within the last decade. When asked how they feel about television shows based on famous tattoos artists and their shops, 46.0% of respondents answered that they thought the shows were eventful. From these results it can be concluded that most respondents have a positive attitude towards tattoos since 59.3% of them find them to be meaningful and 78.0% think those with tattoos are interesting.



In conclusion, although past studies have proven a correlation exists and this study has shown a similar outcome, it appears to have diminished as tattoos soar to newfound heights of popularity. It only makes sense that as the popularity increases the group of people with tattoos diversifies, thus altering the correlation. The data has shown that the perception surrounding those with tattoos is not as adverse as previously thought, although the stigma of the aforementioned correlation still exists. It can also be said with certainty that tattoos are no longer thought of as an art form living in the shadows of society. It has stepped out of the shadows and into the limelight and will continue to shed the negative paradigms associated with its past. It is truly intriguing to see what the future holds regarding the relationship between crime and tattoos. One thing is for certain; change is surely on the horizon.

This study is not without its limitations. Although the attempt was made to garner even participation from the populations of interest, out of the 300 survey responses gathered, only 43 respondents were from law enforcement and 47 respondents were members of the tattoo industry. We had hoped for more participation from both of these groups that have their own unique relationship to the correlation being discussed since this data would prove to be the differentiating factor in this research. Regardless of these limitations, the findings pave the way for further analysis of a similar nature to occur in the near future. Perhaps with this study serving as part of a larger foundation for research of a similar type more extensive research can be conducted in the near future and build upon the findings present in this body of research.

## References

- Carlsen, M. (2014). *How Tattoos Went From Subculture to Pop Culture*. Huffington Post. Retrieved May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016, from, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mik-thobocarlsen/how-tattoos-went-from-sub\\_b\\_6053588.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mik-thobocarlsen/how-tattoos-went-from-sub_b_6053588.html).
- D'Arbonne, J. (2010). "Bad enough to wear a tattoo: Study connects body art and social deviancy". Blast Magazine. Retrieved May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016, from <http://blastmagazine.com/2010/02/10/bad-enough-to-wear-a-tattoo-study-connects-body-art-and-social-deviancy/>.
- Dickson, L., Dukes, R., Smith, H., & Strapko, N. (2014). Stigma of ink: Tattoo attitudes among college students. *The Social Science Journal*, 51(2), 268-276.
- Fiske, S. T. (2010). *Social beings: Core motives in social psychology*. Hoboken.
- Heywood, W., Patrick, K., Smith, A. M., Simpson, J. M., Pitts, M. K., Richters, J., & Shelley, J. M. (2012). Who gets tattoos? Demographic and behavioral correlates of ever being tattooed in a representative sample of men and women. *Annals of epidemiology*, 22(1), 51-56.
- Jennings, W. G., Fox, B. H., & Farrington, D. P. (2014). Inked into crime? An examination of the causal relationship between tattoos and life-course offending among males from the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 42(1), 77-84.
- Keene, S. (2011). Social bias: Prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination. *The Journal of Law Enforcement*, 1(3).
- King, K. A., & Vidourek, R. A. (2013). Getting inked: Tattoo and risky behavioral involvement among university students. *The Social Science Journal*, 50(4), 540-546.
- Koch, J. R., Roberts, A. E., Armstrong, M. L., & Owen, D. C. (2010). Body art, Deviance, and American College students. *Social Science Journal*, 47, 151-161.
- Kosut, M. (2006), An Ironic Fad: The Commodification and Consumption of Tattoos. *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 39: 1035–1048. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-5931.2006.00333.x
- Kurihara, J. (2013). "History of Japanese Tattoo". Iromegane. Retrieved April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016, from <http://www.iromegane.com/japan/culture/history-of-japanese-tattoo/>.
- Lineberry, C. (2007). "Tattoos: The Ancient and Mysterious History". The Smithsonian Magazine. Retrieved April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016, from, <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/tattoos-144038580/?no-ist>.

Malucci, T. (n.d.). "*Tattoos rising in popularity, becoming a cultural norm ..*". Billings Gazette. Retrieved October 22, 2016, from [http://billingsgazette.com/news/local/tattoos-rising-in-popularity-becoming-a-cultural-norm/article\\_eb4f4801-65ac-576b-bd1f-fddf9ee7a92b.html](http://billingsgazette.com/news/local/tattoos-rising-in-popularity-becoming-a-cultural-norm/article_eb4f4801-65ac-576b-bd1f-fddf9ee7a92b.html)

May, A. M. (2014). *Sak Yant: The transition from Indic yantras to Thai" magical" Buddhist tattoos*. The University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Post, R. S. (1968). The relationship of tattoos to personality disorders. *The Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology, and Police Science*, 59(4), 516-524.

Rich, S. (2012). "*Tattoo Recognition Database Could Help Combat Crime and Terrorism*". Government Technology. Retrieved April 11<sup>th</sup> 2016, from <http://www.govtech.com/public-safety/Tattoo-Recognition-Database-Could-Help-Combat-Crime-and-Terrorism.html>

## Appendix

### Appendix A.

Tattoos and Criminal Behavior: An examination of the relationship between body art and crime

*Dear Participant,*

You have been selected to take part in a research study exploring the relationships between possessing tattoos and criminal activity. The research team would like to thank you for taking the time out of your day and helping us build the knowledge needed to fully understand the ever-evolving fields of tattoos and crime. Please do not enter your name or any contact information on this survey. Our intentions are that it remains anonymous. Information submitted by you will be gathered using a coding system in order to further protect your identity.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask them now. If any questions regarding the study come up in the future, feel free to contact me via email at [Daniel.Dajani@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:Daniel.Dajani@jjay.cuny.edu). If you have other questions, comments, or concerns regarding the study and wish to speak to someone other than myself, you may contact the Chair of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice Institutional Review Board at (212) 237-8961 from Monday-Friday 9:30 am to 5:00 pm or by email: [jj-irb@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:jj-irb@jjay.cuny.edu)

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY CIRCLING THE ANSWER THAT SEEMS MOST RELEVANT TO YOU.

1). Gender

A). Male

B). Female

2). Age

A). 18-25

B). 26-40

C). 41-60

D). 60+

3). Race/Ethnicity

A). White (European American)

B). African American

C). Latino (Could be of any race)

D). Asian American

E). If other please specify:

4). How would you describe the area in which you live in?

A). Rural (Area outside towns and cities)

B). Urban (Areas within towns and cities)

C). Suburban (Area will elements of both rural and urban locations)

5). How long have you lived in your current area?

- A). 0-12 months
- B.). 1+ to 2 years
- C). 2+ to 5 years
- D). 5+ years

6). What is the highest educational degree earned?

- A). High school diploma
- B). Associates degree
- C). Bachelors degree
- D). Masters degree
- E). J.D; PhD, MD
- F). If other please specify:

7). Are you employed full time (35+ hours a week)?

- A). Yes
- B). No P/T employee
- C). No- unemployed

8). How would you describe the amount of violent crime in your area?

- A). Rarely occurs
- B). Occasionally occurs
- C). Regularly occurs

9). How would you describe the amount of property crime in your area?

- A). Rarely occurs
- B). Occasionally occurs
- C). Occurs most times

10). How would you describe the amount of drug-related crime in your area?

- A). Rarely occurs
- B). Occasionally occurs
- C). Occurs most times

11). In your opinion, what categories of people are most likely to have tattoos?

- A). Celebrities
- B). Athletes
- C). Prison Inmates

12). Do you have any tattoos?

- A). No
- B). Yes

13). How many tattoos would you like to have?

- A). 0
- B). 1-3
- C). 4-6
- D). 7-9+

14). Do you always tend to do what you are told?

- A). No
- B). Yes

15). Do you think people are treated differently if they have tattoos?

- A). Never
- B). Rarely
- C). Sometimes
- D). Always

16). Do you ever feel the need to conceal your tattoo(s)?

- A). I don't have a tattoo
- B). Rarely
- C). Sometimes
- D). Always

17). How often do you see people with tattoos?

- A). Never
- B). Rarely
- C). Sometimes
- D). Always

18). How many of your friends have tattoos?

- A). None
- B). 1-3
- C). 4-7
- D). 8 or more

19). In General, I feel tattoos are?

A). A waste of time

B). Defiant

C). Beautiful

D). Meaningful (the artwork has a particular meaning or message)

20). Most people with tattoos are?

A). Stylish

B). Criminals

C). Uneducated

D). Interesting

21). Would you be surprised if a person who just got arrested had tattoos?

A). Yes

B). No

22). Would you be surprised if an inmate, parolee, or someone on probation has tattoos?

A). Yes

B). No

23). Have you ever committed an act that would be considered a crime?

A). Yes

B). No

24). Do you think most criminals have tattoos?

A). Yes

B). No



- 25). How many incarcerated people do you suppose have tattoos?
- A). 5 %
  - B). 25 %
  - C). 50 %
  - D). 75%
- 26). Do you think tattoos have become more popular in the last decade?
- A). Yes
  - B). No
- 27). Shows based on famous tattoo artists and their shops are?
- A). Silly
  - B). Eventful
  - C). Boring
  - D). Emotional