Body art

The number of people getting tattoos seems to be on the rise. According to the most recent Harris Poll, conducted in the summer of 2007, approximately 40% of Americans ages 25-40 have at least one tattoo, as compared to 3% 20 years ago (Hawkes, Senn, &ump; Thorn, 2004). The increased popularity of the tattoo is apparent if you compare those findings to the 1936 Life magazine estimate that 10 million Americans, or approximately 6% of the population, had a tattoo (Swan, 2011). According to Kang and Jones (2007), tattooing is especially popular among teenagers and college students. At a stage when young people are seeking to assert their independence, tattoos may provide a way to ground a sense of self in a seemingly changing and insecure world. Tattooing has a long history; it was thought that tattooing was primary an ancient Egyptian practice dating from circa 2000 B. C. (Nadler, 1983). It was brought to the New World in 1769 by sailors returning from voyagers to the South Pacific (Post, 1968; Sanders, 1991). The practice of tattooing became more widespread and socially acceptable in the Western world after that time (Sanders, 1991). In ancient times tattooing was a projection of Jungian psychological elements, which was used be projected onto holy symbols, onto the self as a manifestations of self-expression coinciding with a decline in traditional religious adherence (Mercury, 2000). Piercing has almost as long of a history as tattooing. It was practiced by Egyptian pharaohs, Mayans, and Romans (Armstrong, 1996). Body piercing is sometimes studied along with tattooing, partly because people with tattoos often have piercings (Buhrich, 1983; Frederick &ump; Bradley, 2000). For women, ear piercing has come to be viewed as a mainstream practice but piercing eyebrows, nose, cheeks, or other areas appears to symbolize one's disaffection from society, much like tattooing (Sanders, 1988). Regarding

piercings, 69. 7% of women compared to 28. 2% of men reported having piercings (Huxley &ump; Grogan, 2005). The gender difference was significant. A way of being mischievous for a woman or going over the edge or developing a sexual identity is to have a piercing: navel, nipple, and nose (Saunders &ump; Armstrong, 2005). The piercing can also draw attention to areas that the woman wants attention drawn to. Risqué-piercing may enhance the desire to use piercing for sexual attention. It may be that women may become pierced more for reasons of rebellion and men may become pierced more for reasons of self-identity (Caliendo, Armstrong, &ump; Roberts, 2005). The younger individuals begin piercing the more likely they are to exhibit antisocial tendencies (Frederick &ump; Bradley, 2000). Piercing is perceived as being less extreme than tattooing because one is able to remove the jewelry and the hole is able to heal in most cases (Armstrong, 1996). Previous research has indicated several stereotypes about those with tattoos and piercings, such as coming from broken homes, being unsuccessful in school, having an unhappy childhood, rarely attending church, having poor decision-making skills, and being an easy victim to peer pressure (e. g., Armstrong, 1994; Roberts &ump; Ryan, 2002). Tattooing has been viewed as impulsive or irresponsible behavior and has been associated with psychiatric disturbances (Eksteen &ump; Jankowski, 2002; Hawkes et al., 2004; Lane, 2004). Measey (1972) found that there was a positive correlation between personality disorders and the number of tattoos one possessed; 48% of those with no tattoos had a personality disorder whereas the percentage increased to 58% for those with one to four tattoos and up to 82% for those with more than 16 tattoos. Historical attitudes toward tattooing in North America have been varied and have usually been related

to issues of social class (Braunberger, 2000; Gray, 1994). Hawkes et al. (2004), suggest tattoos produce a feeling of power or control over oneself and reflect self-concept. Basic psychological processes create a tendency to judge based on appearance, tattooed people have been stigmatized to be socially deviant. Goffman (1963) defined a stigma as evaluating a person negatively on the basis of one factor. A person who was stigmatized had a negative, soiled, social identity. Most see their tattoos as unique aspects of themselves, but sociologists who study tattooing focus on group patterns and overall trends (Kang &ump; Jones, 2007). Researchers examine the influence of media and consumer culture and the influence of gender, sexuality, race, and class on body politics. While no single explanation accounts for the increasing popularity of tattoos, researchers find that people use tattoos to express who they are, what they have lived through, and how they see themselves in relation to others and to their social worlds (Atkinson, 2003). Some individuals may not identify themselves as modern primitives yet still consider themselves part of a tattoo community. Often referred to as " tattoo enthusiasts, " they not only have lots of tattoos but also share a commitment to associating with others who have tattoos and to a lifestyle on which tattoos are central (Kang &ump; Jones, 2007). We predicted that if one had tattoos and piercings they were more sociable and outgoing. Research on tattoos has documented a connection between people with tattoos and antisocial personalities (Post, 1968; Raspa &ump; Cusack, 1990; Taylor, 1968). In the current study, the concept that tattoos and/or piercings are an act of deviant behavior and antisocialism is apparent. However, little evidence has been found to present that there is an association between body art and one's sociability.