

# Blog 3

Sociology



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Blog Post, Chapter Six Social Deviance In chapter six of Our Social World, we discussed social deviance. I found our discussion to be, on the whole, fairly accurate. Deviance, to me as a " person in the world," helps me discern acceptable behavior from unacceptable behavior. For example, visual indicators can be used as markers of deviance. I read about this in Koch, et. al. One specific example of this is tattoos. If someone has tattoos, then that makes them somewhat socially deviant, in the United States at least. The more visible these tattoos are, the more socially deviant the individuals within society presume that person to be (Koch 153). A back or chest tattoo would be covered from public sight most of the time due to clothing.

Alternately, a full-sleeve or neck tattoo would be more likely visible to the public. The most extreme tattoo that could be presumably a mark of deviance is a face tattoo. This is exemplified by prison tattoos of teardrops that symbolize that the individual with the teardrop tattoo has committed murder. That outward marking signals to the enforcers of a society, which is basically everyone in it, automatically and not necessarily consciously, who would then consider that person a social deviant.

These assumptions of deviance based on outer markers are not always accurate, but sometimes they are. These outward markers allow individuals to judge others based on the behavior that they assume is associated with tattoos. Some tattoos have been labeled " tramp stamps," which is a sort of " slut-shaming" for women who are sexually active. The assumption associated with " tramp stamps" would be that the woman who has one is sexually promiscuous, and therefore deviating from societal expectations about her role as a demure, conservative, virginal female.

These types of outward markers of social deviance are not always accurate.

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They can negatively impact any given individual. For example, what if the person had gotten the teardrop tattoo because his mother died a fiery death, and he was unaware of the cultural messaging behind the tattoo. Society would treat him as a deviant from that point on. Despite the potential negatives of outward social deviance markers, they do serve a purpose. They allow someone to consciously decide how to convey cultural messaging to others. If someone needs to avoid punishment for being deviant, then there are culturally inscribed norms to which they must adhere. In other words, if I want to be sure to fit in within culture at large, then I will avoid visible tattoos. Outward social deviance markers serve as guideposts for individuals within that culture to convey messages to others without necessarily verbalizing. As you can see, there are pros and cons to visual social deviance markers.

#### Works Cited

Koch, Jerome R., Alden E. Roberts, Myrna L. Armstrong, and Donna C. Owen. "Body Art, Deviance, and American College Students." *The Social Science Journal* 47 (151-161). 2010.