

TATTOO TAG: EXAMINING WHAT WOMEN HAVE TO SAY ABOUT
THEIR TATTOOS IN YOUTUBE VIDEOS

A Thesis
Submitted to
the Temple University Graduate Board

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
MASTER OF ARTS

by
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December 2022

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ABSTRACT

Historically, women with tattoos have been fetishized in mainstream media and seen as more masculine, unprofessional, and deviant. I conducted a textual analysis of 42 YouTube videos with a minimum of 100,000 views from 2015 to 2020 uploaded by women who display and talk about their tattoos. Guided by a feminist media theory lens, this study finds that, through the simple vlogging set-up, women talk about the content, motivations, stories, and meanings they associate with their tattoos. The primary reasons to get tattooed in these videos appear to be the meaning of the tattoos and/or the tattoos' aesthetics. These videos help women define their digital identity and normalize their tattoo consumption rather than allow people to control and project a stereotypical narrative onto their bodies. These women reframe their tattoo consumption by using it to express themselves and their autonomy. These women discuss their tattoos in a way that reclaims their agency against stereotypes describing women with tattoos as unladylike, promiscuous, lazy, unprofessional, and manly. These women also emphasize how their tattoos help them represent their identities and connect to certain groups. In addition, by making these videos, which social media followers heavily requested, women can also empower themselves by supporting their digital social presence for social and capital gain.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank Dr. Shaw and the rest of my committee for helping me with this thesis. This project would not have been possible without the support of my mother, dog, and dear friends.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Tattooing is the act of “creating a large dermal wound embedded with particles of pigment and liquid ink” (Farley, Van Hoover, & Rademeyer, 2019). The earliest recording of a tattoo dates back to 3200 BCE (Dadlez, 2015). In Western society, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, tattoos were almost exclusively associated with sailors, criminal activity, and poor moral character (Adams, 1991). The latest trend of tattoos began in the early 90s when people started to get tattoos like they would a new purse or pair of shoes (Sweetman, 1999). Adams (1991) reported how women expressed more interest in tattoos and getting tattooed than men.

The Tattoo Renaissance of the 1950s to the 1980s led to the boom in the 1990s (Rubin, 1988). During this time, more people started getting tattoos, which DeMello argued was a way to go against the white, middle-class, heteronormative society (DeMello, 2000). For men, getting a tattoo during this time added to their masculine image, while women who got tattooed met the notion that there was “nothing ladylike about being tattooed” (Talvi, 2000, p. 200). Feminist scholars found that women have had to find ways to find a way to legitimize themselves and their tattoos to gain acceptance and refute stereotypical notions of femininity (Hardin, 1999; Botz-Bornstein, 2013).

Furthermore, tattoos started developing like fashion trends in society during this change. Because of this, scholars looked at tattoos as they would look at fashion by describing how it impacts a person’s aesthetic image, how trends play a role in getting tattoos (consumption), and how society impacts the design choices, etc. (Hardin, 1999;

Farley, Hoover & Rademeyer, 2019). McCreesh (2017) argued that tattoos are a barrier for women - like a wardrobe except stuck to your skin - to also defend themselves from the male gaze. Also, the growing number of celebrities with tattoos sparked latest trends for getting tattoos (Koch, Roberts, Armstrong, & Owen, 2010).

In 1991, women made up almost fifty percent of the people who got tattooed (Armstrong, 1991). People across more diverse groups than previously were also found to now be getting tattoos (Armstrong, 1991). In 2012, researchers reported that over 20% of people have tattoos (Braverman, 2012). In the United States, 2012 marked the first year more women were tattooed than men (Lokke, 2017). However, the fact remains that the great majority of tattoo artists are male. In 2017, Baritoux (2017) reported that one in six tattoo artists is female in the United States. Scholars observed a growing interest in tattoos through Google search trends, as web searches for information about tattoos steadily increased from 2004 to 2018 (Kluger, 2019).

These web searches for tattoos also include searching for adult content featuring alternative women with tattoos. SuicideGirls.com is an adult content website featuring women with tattoos and piercings that began in 2001. It was *the* website for alternative women to be featured in pornography in the early 2000s. Today, the models who continue to upload this type of content are considered a member of a Suicide Squad, and their internet exposure extends beyond SuicideGirls.com to other digital spaces like Instagram. Feminist scholars have explored whether this content emphasizes the alternative to creating 'empowered erotica' or if the content continues to present women with tattoos in a sexualized light for the male gaze (Healey, 2005; Magnet, 2007). The women who are a part of the SuicideGirls brand have made their tattooed appearance

become associated with sexuality and fetishization. Because of scholars have debated whether they are making a space for the female gaze or the male gaze in a digital space (Healy, 2005; Magnet, 2007).

Another outcome of social media's digital innovations is the fact that the art of tattooing continues to develop. Artists and tattoo consumers share their work and body art through social media platforms. Social media has opened up the possibilities of new tattoo trends as well as new possibilities for what tattoos can look like. In contrast to other popular video platforms like TikTok or Instagram, Bentley, F., Silverman, & Bica (2019) finds that YouTube allows for longer videos. Fifty percent of YouTube videos are between 3.4 to 12.4 minutes long compared to Tik Tok's average of 21 to 34-second videos (Stokel-Walker, 2022). People can talk more in longer videos, so they can choose how long or short they want to talk. Uploaders can share more information in longer videos and avoid the limitations caused by time constraints.

YouTube is the major platform for individuals to share long-form videos to participate in creative, social cultures, and consumerism (Burgess & Green, 2009; Lee & Watkins, 2016). When considering YouTube as a social networking site rather than just a place to watch videos, some scholars noted how people who upload to YouTube appear as everyday individuals (Burgess & Green, 2009; Lee & Watkins, 2016). Burgess and Green (2009) argued that people function as representations of different cultures within YouTube's social space. These representatives also help influence trends in these digital social spaces.

Some of YouTube's video trends are also known as tags. Video blogs, or vlogs, are the video genre where uploaders will most likely share information about themselves

(Ferchaud, Grzeslo, Orme, & LaGroue, 2018). These tattoo tag videos are in the form of vlogs where a person talks (often about themselves) directly to the camera. Lange (2007) emphasized that the significance of a vlog is that it contains the information that the vlogger wants to share. This thesis focuses on the genre of vlogs where individuals talk about and show their tattoos to their viewers. These videos generally get called a tattoo tag or tattoo tour. Essentially, these videos let curious viewers know what others have decided to permanently ink their bodies. While some individuals who have uploaded these videos already have/had a social media following for other reasons (fashion blogging, gaming, etc.), others upload to share their tattoos with others. Because these videos are popular, some people upload them to help their social media accounts gain traction. From people with little to no social media followers and traditional media celebrities like Snooki, a reality television star on MTV, many different types of people have uploaded these videos.

This study explores how sharing this information with the public allows women to support greater feminist agenda and counter how mainstream media and society previously portrayed women with tattoos. Through feminist media theory, we can see how these women use media to empower themselves, redefine their consumerism, express their autonomy, and carve out their image in a digital, social setting.

CHAPTER 2

The following literature review explores the previous applications of feminist theory toward tattoos, YouTube influencers, and tattoo consumption. I identified this subject as an area that needs examination because of the current absence of research looking at YouTube videos uploaded by female vloggers about their tattoos. Because I am looking at videos with a minimum of 100,000 views, previous applications of feminist theory toward influencers can help me understand previous research and what still needs exploration.

Feminist Theory

A significant amount of the research examining women with tattoos and their representation utilizes feminist theory. Researchers considered whether tattoos provide liberation or confinement when applying feminist theory to women and tattoos. Young (2005) argued that in society, women get viewed as an “object of the gaze” of another. Constantly being examined by others and viewing others is a significant source of a woman’s “bodily self-reference” (Young, 2005, p. 148). Carolyn Korsmeyer (2004) remarked that feminist artists often use “the presentation of the body as a component of art” (p. 118) to promote the artist’s or woman’s agency.

Hardin (1999) argued that by adding meaning to tattoos, women legitimize themselves for having tattoos and, in turn, become more accepted as women with tattoos. Using an intersectional feminist lens, Dann & Callaghan (2019) observed that while women give meaning to their tattoos to justify their tattoos, the depth of meaning is becoming less intense for women across diverse cultures and backgrounds. Women no

longer feel as great a need to have tattoos with significant symbolism; they get tattooed for the sake of getting tattooed (Dann & Callaghan, 2019). Gill (2017) expressed that tattoos allow women to perform in a way that creates their femininity, a facet of a post-feminism era where women can construct their bodies' outward appearance. McCreesh (2017) argued that tattoos are a barrier for women to defend themselves from the male gaze.

Previous scholars have conducted interviews and surveys to study tattoo motivations (Koch, et al., 2010; Swami, 2011). Swami (2011) found women get tattoos to improve how they look in the long term. Other women get tattoos to help define their unique selves and improve their image (Tiggemann, & Hopkins, 2011). Women also get tattoos to feel sexier (Tiggemann, & Golder, 2006). Some scholars previously argued that women get tattoos to mark ownership of their bodies (Khair, 2022; Stirn, 2007; Farley, et al., 2019).

Botz-Bornstein (2013) equated tattoos to a form of body graffiti and argued that tattoos help create a social space or social labeling. Once someone gets a tattoo, they enter this tattooed space. Scholars studied this space as a platform for analyzing women's actions and motivations (Botz-Bornstein, 2013; Rose, 1993). Also, from analyzing blogs in 2006, MacCormack (2006) reported that women's motivations to get tattooed included taking ownership of this "space." In contrast, other research has found that, unlike women, men are more likely to get tattoos to affirm their membership in a group or community (examples include the military or time in prison) (Alter-Muri, 2020). Women were more driven to emphasize their individuality (Alter-Muri, 2020; Mensah, Inyabri, & Mensah, 2019).

Media scholar Jean Baudrillard (1979) referred to a woman's blank skin as a "void" on which men project their lusts and attractions. With this analysis in mind, Botz-Bornstein (2013) argues that tattoos give a woman a choice regarding how she is marked or covered. Skeggs (1997) finds that women with tattoos contradict society's definition of beauty, which centers around women being pure and natural. The significance of this corresponds with how women express and tap into their version of femininity (Dann, Callaghan, & Fellin, 2016). Demello's (2000) research described that on women, some tattoos are found to be more "small" and "tasteful" while others are labeled "ostentatious," "tacky," and "mistakes" (we see this especially in the label "tramp stamp" for a lower back tattoo). Yuen Thompson (2018) considered that commitment to a tattoo collection extends beyond time and money and goes into an individual's social environment. Specifically, women who become heavily tattooed risk negative social responses, are associated with negative stigmas and are seen as conforming to masculine rather than feminine gender norms.

Feminist Media Theory

Scholars explored media about tattooing through a feminist lens. Linda Steiner argued that feminist media theory "applies philosophies, concepts, and logics articulating feminist principles and concepts to media processes...to patterns of representation..." (Steiner, 2014, p. 359). Steiner emphasized that debating whether media supports the feminist movement requires one to question where the representation disguises underlying sexism. For example, Fenske (2007) reported that women with tattoos are strongly associated with working-class groups. DeMello (2000) reported how some

people see tattoos as tacky drawings on the body rather than pieces of decorative artwork. Swami & Furnham (2007) used line drawings of women with tattoos to survey people's attitudes and perceptions towards people with tattoos. These scholars found that people perceived women with tattoos as being more unattractive, promiscuous, and likely to be heavier drinkers (Swami & Furnham, 2007). Meanwhile, the same surveys using line drawings of men with tattoos reported varied attitudes toward the men's attractiveness, promiscuity, and drinking habits (Swami & Furnham, 2007).

Research on women with tattoos and the internet media has examined websites like Suicide Girls in this manner (Magnet, 2007; Heckerl, 2020). Suicide Girls is a website that launched in 2001 and sold access to pornography of "alternative" models. The name comes from removing oneself from conventional society and the phrase 'social suicide' or 'social death.' Several investigations found more conclusive evidence that this website tried to use the face of being a feminist to profit from a woman's sexuality by enticing the "male gaze" and harming any feminist argument (Magnet, 2007). In addition, some research supported this objectification and dehumanization through the "male gaze," and this fetishization is even more severe against women of color (Heckerl, 2020). The takeaway of Suicide Girls as a media platform is that it branded women with tattoos as alternative sexual beings.

Dann, Callahan & Fellin (2016) have looked beyond alternative media and examined how tattoos and women appeared in the media with an intersectional feminist lens. They looked at hegemonic ideas of femininity and how this compares with other cultures (Dann, Callahan & Fellin, 2016). Heckerl (2020) argued that this intersectional feminist lens could help us understand how women with tattoos of various backgrounds

and identities are perceived and objectified. For example, because the lower back tattoo is commonly referred to as the tramp stamp and is associated with promiscuity, we see how society still projects its meaning on tattoos on women (Dann, Callaghan, & Fellin, 2016). Researchers have not yet examined how women are readopting the lower back tattoo, as it has grown in popularity in recent years.

Meads and Nurse (2013) found that articles about tattoos often focused on gender and continued to question why more women continue to get tattooed. Kosut (2000) argued that this line of questioning and inability to understand or respect a woman getting tattooed or a woman's motive to get tattooed leads to the connotation that tattoos symbolize deviance. Swami et al. (2015) also found that the media continues to emphasize a link between tattoos and aggression. Swami (2012) argued women's aging appearances get more scrutinized than men's, and their choices to get tattoos early on continue to get questioned. As tattoos are permanent, people consider getting tattoos (specifically young people getting tattoos) reckless. Because of the history of tattoo stigmas, a great deal of the social sciences research focuses on how this relates to employability (Francisco & Ruhela, 2020; Schwendeman, 2019; Henle, Shore, Murphy, & Marshall, 2022).

There remains a significant gap in research on how tattoos and tattoo content get presented throughout social media. Some research found that the word 'tattoo' got used with the word 'woman' in article titles (Dann et al., 2016). However, tattoos hardly got mentioned in the articles, leading the researcher to surmise that the media use the word 'tattoo' as an attention-grabber (Dann et al., 2016). Beyond studying Suicide Girls, in-

depth examinations into how media has or has not normalized women and tattoos are missing in academic research, so I hope to fill this gap with my thesis.

Feminist Media Theory in a Postfeminist Era

Feminist scholars argue and critique that we are in an era of post-feminism. Gill (2017) describes this era as a time when women's bodies have turned into "her asset, her product, her brand and her gateway to freedom and empowerment in a neoliberal market economy" (p. 616). Banet-Weiser (2007) identified the ability to control self-representation and help define how one gets seen through the media as central to this viewpoint. Rosalind Gill (2007; 2017) described themes of expressing one's choice(s) and empowerment as central to feminism. Women can gain power by using media for their agenda (Gill, 2017). This media also emphasizes self-surveillance that, in turn, shapes an image, identity, or branding (Gill, 2017). This angle also encourages using media and social media platforms to express oneself and gain autonomy (Banet-Weiser, 2015). Scholars applied this theory and framework to study influencers on YouTube. These studies looked to see how female influencers use the empowerment gained from media are operating and interacting with their audience in a capitalist society (Mohlin, 2021; Archer, 2019). Scholars found that people get influenced by mediated communication and can use these platforms to carve out how they identify, want to identify, or establish themselves as a part of a group through platforms like YouTube (Sábada & Vidales, 2015).

Paulsen Mulvey (2019) expanded on Gill's arguments about power through media and argued that the influencer industry posits women's bodies as the means of power.

Because of this emphasis, female influencers must continuously monitor and be mindful of their bodies, as their brand depends on their image (Mulvey, 2019). With this power, women can market their bodies to earn capital (Gill, 2017). This practice relates to the debate Jill Steiner (2014) spoke about when trying to understand if this supports underlying sexism. Pruchniewska (2018) explored the idea of authenticity in digital spaces in a growing neoliberal economy that focuses on carving out the self as a content creator. Pruchniewska (2018) found that because this work requires constant self-promotion and self-branding feminist creators must constantly negotiate and reframe their work to ensure they present content true to a feminist agenda.

Scholars explored the significance of individualism in this postfeminist era through the influencer industry and how this impacts a feminist agenda. To successfully differentiate themselves in the media industry, McRobbie (2004) argued that women must separate themselves as individuals to find their own defined success (whether this gets rewarded with something like financial gain or an award). This individual success can be at the expense of feminist success because it focuses on the individual uplift women as a group. We can relate this to how today, female influencers strive toward individualism to build their brand to strive towards success. McRobbie (2004) argued that when women act on their individualism and follow through with their unique choices, they attempt to show that they have experienced freedom from society's social constraints. When women stress their achievements and choices, a feminist view suggests that this allows women to get closer to being on equal footing with men (McRobbie, 2004).

Only one study has examined these issues regarding women showing their tattoos on YouTube (Frankel, Cuevas, Lim, & Benjamin, 2022). These relationships have been addressed with YouTube and women with tattoos when examining social media influencer and tattoo artist Kat von D (Frankel, Cuevas, Lim, & Benjamin, 2022). Frankel et al. argued Kat von D's presence as a tattooed woman on YouTube, and the discourse in the YouTube comments emphasizes themes of "empowering autonomy over one's body" and connecting over "shared consumption experiences" (Frankel, Cuevas, Lim, & Benjamin, 2022, pp. 219-220). This thesis expands on this study by using a feminist media theory perspective to explore a specific type of YouTube video uploaded by women. I focus on videos uploaded by forty-two different creators rather than looking at many videos from one creator. This study hopes to examine how women with tattoos describe themselves and their tattoo consumerism in these videos. By looking at such personal media content, we can understand more about how media can give women with tattoos the power to control conversations about their bodies.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Researchers have considered the significance of public and private meanings behind tattoos and how this relates to tattoo consumption (Richins, 1994; Pentina & Spears, 2011; Pakarinen, 2016). Joel Watson (1998) explored gender and tattoo consumption to find that women who reported having a higher feminine identity based on Bem's Gender identity scale tend to get tattoos in more hidden places. These people also had tattoos with greater personal meaning (Watson, 1998). These women get considered to have more private tattoo consumption. In contrast, women who scored lower on feminine identity on this scale had tattoos in more public places and, therefore, more public consumption.

Watson (1998) identifies tattoo consumption as a unique behavior because of its permanence. Consumer culture theory refers to looking at consumers in the marketplace and how their consumption relates to or has cultural meaning(s) (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Patterson and Schroeder (2010) applied consumer culture theory with feminist theory to observe tattoo collectors as consumers. They argued that people could see tattoos as a way to outline their consumer identity (they cost money, demand time, and help outline someone's style) and engage with culture (Patterson & Schroeder, 2010). This argument ties into Banet-Weiser's (2015) applications of feminist media theory because it emphasizes using media to shape one's identity. Mohlin (2021) found that promoting consumption through YouTube can be seen as a feminist act because it shows a way to empower women. Mohlin (2021) described that influencers emphasize that women can buy items to make themselves feel better and look better. Frankel et al.'s

(2022) study found that tattoo influencers and women with tattoos have a history of being suppressed in mainstream consumer culture, so women with tattoos can find a space in social media to gain presence and share experiences.

When studying specifically women with many tattoos, some researchers have combined consumer culture theory which dives into this idea of looking at how getting tattoos to fall under a deviant act (or deviant consumption) and considers how this opposition impacts consumption. (Holbrook et al., 1998) (Essentially, this is when someone consciously changes their appearance that goes against the societal standard to make a spiritual, ethical, or social argument). Scholars have looked at the relationship between tourism and tattoos to expand on consumer culture and tattoos. Informed by feminist theory, this thesis plans to explore how talking about this consumerism works as a means for a woman to control the conversation about her body and develop her digital identity. Specifically, I ask:

Research Question 1. *What do women who make these videos say about their tattoos?*

Patterson (2018) argues that tattoos can give meaning to lived experiences. Previously, Hardin (1999) argued that meaning helps women legitimize their choice to get tattooed. Other research reports that this meaning can be entirely driven entirely by liking the look of a tattoo in addition to using a tattoo to connect with others or still have symbolic meaning (Tsang, 2014; Pentina & Spears, 2011). According to Dann & Callaghan (2019), women no longer feel the great need to give significant meaning to a

tattoo. In this study, I examine what women say about their tattoos in these videos. I seek to find out if they talk about their tattoos' meaning. By breaking down what people say in these videos, we can also understand more about what these tattoos mean to these women share about their tattoos and garner how they derive joy from consuming tattoos.

In previous studies, women with tattoos rated themselves as less attractive than women without tattoos rate their attractiveness (Kertzman, Kagan, Hegedish, Lapidus, & Weizman, 2019; Molloy & Wagstaff, 2021). Molloy & Wagstaff (2021) argue that this could be because tattoos are commonly known as a man's activity (their study found women with tattoos found men with tattoos to be more attractive than men without tattoos). However, these findings could also support the idea that women get tattoos to try and feel more attractive. This study did not consider tattoo sizes and locations on the body and how that relates to perception. Kertzman, Kagan, Hegedish, Lapidus, & Weizman (2019) found that young women with tattoos had lower self-esteem than women without tattoos. They also found that women who get tattoos tend to associate their self-esteem with their body image, appearance, and tattooed self (Kertzman et al., 2019).

In contrast, another study found that female college students gained greater self-esteem with tattoos (Ball & Elsner, 2019). Pajor, Broniarczyk-Dyła, & Świtalska (2015) found that while there is no correlation between happiness and life satisfaction and one's tattoos, people with tattoos tend to have higher self-esteem. The studies on tattoos and having high vs. low self-esteem remain inconsistent. Women may also want to normalize their tattoos because it makes them feel better about themselves (Tiggemann, & Hopkins, 2011; Tiggemann & Golder, 2006).

Women's self-esteem around their tattoos is also affected by how others perceive their choice to get tattoos. Historically, women getting tattoos get judged based on stereotypes (Botz-Bornstein, 2013; Horne, Knox, Zusman, & Zusman, 2007; Swami & Furnham, 2007). This stigmatization may be changing. Dickson, Dukes, Smith, & Strapko (2014) have found great acceptance for all genders among younger populations to tattoo acceptance from the overall population. In addition, people without tattoos hold fewer stigmas against tattoos when they have friends and family who have tattoos (Dickson et al., 2014). Since these videos have garnered at least 100,000 views and get uploaded by many influencers, they relate to how vloggers cultivate parasocial relationships with their followers (Frankel et al., 2022; Sábada & Vidales, 2015). Rasmussen (2018) described how these people become like a friend whose opinions and thoughts these audiences listen to and engage with. These videos also contain self-disclosure, strengthening these influencer and follower relationships (Fazli-Salehi, Jahangard, Torres, Madadi, & Zúñiga, 2022). Because these videos support the idea of relationships with influencers, I want to explore how these videos break down the sexualized reputation of women with tattoos in media and show these women with tattoos as normal people. To that end, I ask:

Research Question 2. *Do these videos attempt to normalize women with tattoos?*

CHAPTER 4

METHODS

Content Analysis Overview

In media, women with tattoos have a history of being taboo, seen as objects for the male gaze, and associated with adult content. Platforms like YouTube, however, allow women to control the tone and discourse around their tattoos and bodies. In this study, I apply a conventional textual analysis approach to examine what women have to say about their tattoo consumption in YouTube videos where women show and talk about their tattoos. Mckee (2002) describes how “we interpret texts...in order to try and make sense of the ways in which, in particular cultures in particular times, people make sense of the world around them” (p. 8) when conducting a textual analysis. A textual analysis allows me to glean the patterns and themes within these videos to make sense of how they operate through a feminist framework. These patterns provide the information I can use to create an interpretation of these videos.

Selecting Videos

Because I needed to narrow down a list of videos from YouTube, I first randomly gathered a list of over 60 videos with over 100,000 views uploaded by women by searching for key phrases that appear in these videos’ titles. These searches were “Tattoo Tag,” “Tattoo Tour,” and “my tattoos.” I do not have control over what populated in my searches in YouTube or control how their algorithm promotes search results, so I tried to select, scroll, and select again through the search results to avoid what came up first on the list. While I was unable to get a set number of what number exactly constitutes a popular video, I could determine that setting a minimum of 100,000 views would capture

a wide audience but not be limited to only what previous scholars have considered viral videos. For example, according to Bauckhage, Hahiji & Kersting (2015), a video with less than 500,000 is not considered viral. Although there are videos on the list that have amassed millions of views, those that have accumulated just over 100,000 views still reached a considerable amount of people.

After I had a list of 60 videos, I randomly selected 45 videos to look at in-depth to further randomize the final selection. I based this final number of videos on similarly structured textual analyses of YouTube videos previously published in peer-review journals (Kong, LaVallee, Rams, Ramamurthi, & Krishnan-Sarin, 2019; Gao, Hamzah, Yiu, McGrath, C., & King, 2013;). Since this list got created, three creators have made their videos private. Hiding these videos brought my list to 42 videos. There are no ethical concerns surrounding this video selection because these videos are publicly available, and I removed the private videos from the study's analysis. 41 out of the 42 videos are in English. One video is in German, so I relied on English captions and visuals to mark the video. I also downloaded every video's transcription directly from YouTube.

After finalizing the list of videos, I identified the accounts on this list that have amassed a minimum of 100,000 followers to see if the account already had a social media following on their YouTube channel. This allows us to see if people who do not already subscribe to this person's content are watching their tattoo-related video. Readers can locate this information in APPENDIX A.

Analyzing Data

To understand the content of these videos, I watched and rewatched them to identify key themes and topics that emerged in the women's discussions surrounding their tattoos. This process allowed me to create a blank outline in a spreadsheet of the common themes and discussions I wanted to track in these videos. As I watched each video, I would mark how each video fit or did not fit into each category. I developed the categories to guide the data analysis by watching all the videos and writing down common phrases, topics, and patterns. I then grouped similar responses. For example, something that came up was people talking about traveling to get a tattoo, so I summarized this through a category asking, Did the person talk about traveling to get a tattoo? Many people mention an experience getting a tattoo, and these experiences have common traits. These categories help define this genre of video content and show viewers how women describe their tattoos and tattoo journeys.

I tracked the number of videos that fit each of the categories with a spreadsheet. I finalized the categories in Table 1 after observing recurring themes throughout the videos. These categories also help support the responses to my research questions. (See Table 1. in APPENDIX A for the full list of tracked and observed themes applicable to answering this study's research questions).

After I checked off on the spreadsheet if a video discussed any common themes for some categories, I then noted the specific response (if applicable). For example, when marking if someone identified getting a matching tattoo with another person, I noted their relationship with the other person (friend, parent, sibling, etc.). Once this data was

collected, I analyzed how the data relates to the broader social context and previous theory and discourse through a feminist media theory lens.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The women who upload these YouTube videos talk about their tattoos and directly show them to the camera. However, this content goes beyond just showing and describing their tattoos. The following analysis illustrates how these women's presentations support themes found in feminist media theory. These themes include how women empower themselves by using media to control their online image, expressing their individual choices and authority, shaping their identity, and managing mediated communication with their audience (Archer, 2019; Banet-Weiser, 2015; Gill, 2017). This content also supplements our understanding of how these individuals are reshaping their tattoo consumerism to uplift themselves.

The following sections describe how women use their tattoo tag videos to help defend themselves against hate and/or rude comments. Some videos explicitly provide disclaimers telling people not to watch their content if they already have a bias against tattoos. Another element of these defenses is how women describe having tattoos and allude to their femininity. These descriptions relate to how Banet-Weiser (2015) described that women could use media to achieve their version of femininity. Next, the lack of discourse around the financial side of getting tattoos emphasizes how these women choose not to focus on their tattoos as a series of expenses, but instead, they discuss them as a series of visuals that each have a background story.

Another aspect of these videos is explaining why someone is making the video. 27 of the 42 women disclosed how they make these videos because their followers asked

them to. I relate this to feminist media theory, which describes how women can use media to support their success through capital and social gains (Gill, 2017; Mulvey, 2019). Women in these videos also establish control through how they edit their videos, present their bodies, and choose what they want to disclose. These tattoo stories and/or motivations to get tattooed are often simple and aesthetically motivated but can also point towards deep meaning (like commemorating a deceased relative).

These women's descriptions of their tattoo consumption underscore how feminist media theory describes consumption as a means to express oneself and their autonomy which helps empower oneself (Banet-Weiser, 2015). I explore these facets through a feminist lens to understand how women can use these videos to defend themselves, express their agency, and redefine their tattoos as something(s) beyond mere commodities. These women describe how their tattoos illustrate their identity and aesthetic. These women uphold themselves against society's stereotypical attitudes that look down on and/or sexualize women with tattoos. Therefore, these videos allow women to empower and normalize themselves and their tattoos.

Defenses and Disclaimers

Even though Dickson, Dukes, Smith, and Strapko (2014) identified that tattoo acceptance is greater among young people, and most of these women are younger adults, they cannot control who watches and responds to their public content. Swami & Furnham's (2007) found that women receive more judgment and negativity for their tattoos than men. 14 out of 42 women discuss the potential negative feedback towards

their tattoos. These 14 women try and defend themselves from negative comments they expect to receive.

Eight people in these videos warned viewers not to watch the video if they were there to “hate watch” or bash their tattoos. These women experience or expect to experience criticism for their tattoos. These women also explicitly address potential and current negative feedback representing an understanding that these women have of how people with and/or women with tattoos get seen.

10 women identified specific criticisms that they already received about their tattoos. Some of these criticisms include critiques that people think a tattoo is “dumb,” “stupid,” “basic,” or “unoriginal.” Nine women identify an immediate family member expressing their dislike for their tattoos. These videos include sections like Average Rachel’s (2018) where she starts her video saying, “Everyone includes a disclaimer in their video. I don’t think I should ’cause obviously if you clicked on this video you like tattoos”. Once she finishes her introduction and says she will get started showing her tattoos, but then provides an actual disclaimer to denounce future criticism “It’s my body. I can do whatever I want; it’s your body; you can do whatever you want.” While this excerpt is not a direct address to tell people not to comment with negative motives on her video, it underscores a tone that commentary dismissing her actions/telling her how to live will not be welcome.

This social media environment and posting public videos on YouTube forces women to become more conscious of unsolicited opinions and criticisms of others. Lange (2007) previously looked at female bloggers and described how people unfamiliar with vlogging/video blogging find fault with the video genre because it centers around talking

about oneself. These defenses or disclaimers found in these videos could function as warnings for those people in addition to a method for trying to control the perception and response to their videos and body art. These disclaimers also indicate that these uploaders expect people to tell them what they should and should not be doing to their bodies.

While these videos do not make up the majority, they may hint at what people may think about or consider when uploading them. It also shows how women are taking advantage of being able to address such comments in the content they upload. This ties into how women can use media to empower themselves (Gill, 2017; Mulvey, 2019).

Many women in these videos expressed curiosity about other people's tattoos. This comment came about when talking about how they produced tattoo ideas or got inspired to get certain tattoos. However, mentioning curiosity sometimes occurred when discussing the motive to make the YouTube video. A representative quote comes from Taylor Parks (2017). She acknowledged her audience's curious nature when she says in her video's introduction, after the disclaimer dismissing potential negative comments, "if you are here just because you're curious about my tattoos and you've been wondering for a while or whatever or if you just want to get inspired or just watch me talk about my tattoos, then just go ahead and keep watching." For the most part, tattoos are stuck in the skin and not going anywhere unless someone wants to endure the painful, extensive, and expensive tattoo removal sessions. Six out of 42 women explicitly mention the fact that tattoos are permanent. It seems that the absence of these discussions steers the conversation away from common criticisms and focuses on appreciating one's body art. Gill (2017) and Banet-Weiser (2015) applied feminist theory to argue that women can use media to empower themselves and shape how they get viewed and identified.

When women in these videos talk about regret, I marked a theme of contradictory statements that appeared in these videos. Specifically, these statements were said regarding conversations about regret and addressing criticism. Some of the discourse around defending oneself from hate came when the uploader tied in some of the criticisms they hear from others (concerning how tattoos are there forever and “you are going to regret these” critiques).

Seven out of 42 women explicitly attest that they have no regret about their tattoos. Meanwhile, five out of seven videos say they have no regrets but wish they could do things differently or make changes. 14 out of 42 women expressed regret by using the word “regret.” The reasons for regretting their tattoos include misspellings, the style of the tattoo, going to the wrong tattoo artist, simply not liking the tattoo, and poor tattooing practices. Seven videos mention how they wish they had planned their tattoos better because now they cannot move them or work around what is already on their bodies. This discourse appeared in conversations of anxiety concerning getting tattoos or addressing common criticisms. While some people described no longer like the look of their tattoo, no one described not liking a tattoo because of the lack of meaning they gave it. Madfis & Arford (2013) previously reported that people regret their tattoos because they did not give more symbolism or purpose. This may show us that these women are not bound to give a tattoo great meaning to justify its existence on their bodies. When people in these videos talk about regret, I marked a theme of contradictory statements that appeared in these videos. Specifically, these statements were said regarding conversations about regret and addressing criticism. Some of the discourse around defending oneself from

hate came when the uploader tied in some of the criticisms they hear from others (concerning how tattoos are there forever and “you are going to regret these” critiques).

Far less than half of the women mention regret or reveal regret about their tattoos could be related to previous research that says women have less tattoo regret than men (Dukes, 2016). At the same time, the lack of regret discourse could be a way for women to avoid that conversation to not connect any narrative about defiance or deviance with their tattoos and visual appearance. If this is the case, the lack of regret discourse supports the idea that women try to appear less deviant to the public (Liszewski et al., 2015). Avoiding this could also be a means of avoiding criticism from people. Not talking about one’s regrets could also be a means of trying to normalize tattoos rather than provide more reason for people to use this means to continue to stigmatize women toward tattoos.

I noted the number of times women mention coverups, laser tattoo removal, and getting their tattoos fixed or reworked. 11 out of 42 women express having tattoos covered with newer tattoos, laser tattoo removal, and/or getting their tattoos fixed or reworked. All of these people described not being happy with the appearance of the original piece or pieces in question. While other women, outside of these 11, mentioned not being happy with their appearances, they said they would not do anything to change it. This illustrates how some people feel not entirely content with the tattoo work they have gotten done to their skin. With the discussions of tattoo regret as a talking point in the videos, we can see this theme of not being happy with one’s tattoos as a point of potential criticism from others. The takeaway is that these women express how they are choosing further action to change what they are not happy with, regardless of what others

may say. At the same time, these women who remove, rework, and get tattoos fixed show how it can be a part of a tattoo collector's journey. They show how people change and develop, and women can express their authority to adapt to these changes to meet their needs and desires. Since people use tattoos to help reflect their identity and aesthetic preferences, these women express that it is acceptable to reflect these changes through their tattoo journey.

Femininity

Another element of these discussions about tattoo content and how it shows one's identity is the underlying discourse around having tattoos and holding onto one's femininity. However, these conversations are rarely explicit. Only two out of 42 women mention tattoos explicitly as having a masculine reputation or express a fear that getting a tattoo would make them appear more masculine (Snitchery, 2017; Orion Carloto, 2018). Snitchery (2017) mentions how "I was really nervous about getting this because chest panels are considered so like masculine." The lack of discourse in all the other videos may indicate that women feel they do not have to justify their femininity or how they define themselves as a woman.

One conversation that often appears is mentioning the age when they get their first tattoo. 23 out of 42 women mention the age at which they first got tattooed. Most women first got tattooed in their late teens and early 20s. Noting how many women mention the age they first got tattooed relates to previous studies examining how women with tattoos at different ages are perceived. These studies also considered what society deemed the appropriate age to get or have tattoos (if any) (Musambira et al., 2016;

Totten, Lipscomb, & Jones, 2009). Musambira et al. (2016) found that younger women with tattoos are seen as more promiscuous, while older women with tattoos get seen as more masculine. In a couple of the videos, the uploaders mention their current age, but this detail or talking point is not a common theme in these videos. When they did mention their current age, it was to compare with how different their tattoo preferences have become since their first tattoo. At the same time, the age at which one first gets tattooed represents when they chose to partake in body modification. This marks when they overcome the initial anxiety to getting tattooed. Talvi (2000) described how women getting tattooed choose to partake in an unladylike activity. Overall, mentioning the age at which one first got tattooed represents when these women chose to partake in what society historically deems unladylike behavior.

Yuen Thompson (2018) found that the society's history of suggesting women with tattoos appear more masculine than feminine increases the underlying anxiety women face when getting tattoos. Women have to consider how they appear to others, choose to express their femininity with tattoos, and/or break away from gender norms. Women in these videos are sharing how they try to continue to get tattooed while holding onto their feminine identity. This discussion has the potential to make people feel that not all tattoos are masculine-looking. These women suggest women can have tattoos and still express their varying levels of femininity. Banet-Weiser's (2015) feminist arguments emphasize how consumption (in this case, tattoos) can help map out one's identity and femininity. By showing their tattoos in these videos, these women can reinforce their feminine identity to themselves and others in contrast to the notion that tattoos are considered manly.

Meanwhile, 18 out of 42 women use the word “cute” to describe the reason behind getting a tattoo, and/or they use it when describing the appearance of the tattoo. Other similar words that show up to describe aesthetic motivations include “pretty,” “lovely,” and “girly.” Using these words to describe their tattoos detracts from notions of tattoos being masculine. Musambira, Raymond, & Hastings (2016) find that typically masculine tattoos contrast stereotypical notions of femininity. By describing the tattoos with words contrasting tattoos’ stereotypically masculine reputation, these women help distance themselves from a masculine image. In these videos, we also see a theme of women wanting to get smaller tattoos which relate to previous reports that women get smaller tattoos to contrast a masculine image associated with tattoos (Hawkes, Senn, & Thorn, 2004; Thompson, 2015; Kang & Jones, 2007). People describe small tattoos as an accessory in previous research analyzing tattoos (Hardin, 1999; Farley, Hoover & Rademeyer, 2019; McCreesh, 2017). Some women in these videos describe getting tattoos to complement their image rather than to have it overtake all of their skin and visual appearance. Ultimately, these women illustrate whom they are choosing to adorn their bodies with tattoos to uplift their version of femininity (whether this aligns more or less with society’s norms).

I was surprised to find that while some of these women mentioned getting tattooed by female artists or their go-to artist is a woman, and no one mentioned only wanting to get tattoos by female artists for the sake of not being tattooed by male artists. I mention this for the sake of the industry being male-dominated and the symbolism one could find in seeing a man permanently mark a woman’s skin. Scholars have found that women get tattoos to control and own their bodies (Khair, 2022; MacCormack, 2006;

Stirn, 2007; Farley et al., 2019), while the debate for who owns your tattoo continues to go back and forth (Beasley, 2011; Sheikh, 2020; Hatic, 2012; Long, 2020). This could indicate that these women consider themselves the owner of their tattoos. It could also mean these women do not consider the gender of the artist as having a profound impact on how they choose to get tattooed. This lack of discourse or concern in these videos is not enough evidence to refute previous scholars' arguments that women use tattoos to take ownership of their bodies, but it leads me to question how these theories stand in relation to the tattoo ownership debate (especially if the tattoo artist is a man).

Expressing Control through Video Design

How these videos were structured and set up provides another way for us to understand the message these videos convey. Through these editing and design choices, we can see how women express their control over their online presence and control the image and conversation around their bodies. The video backgrounds varied from using a standard set, a bed's headboard, a blank wall, and a room. When four people used professional-looking staged backdrops, sets, and filming lights, the background showed things like makeup or gaming accessories to complement the individual's regular content. Everyone wore more casual clothing, such as tank tops and t-shirts. Often, the outfits were casual, so the individual in the video could ensure their tattoos could be seen on camera and not remain hidden under clothes. Beyond functions sake, the casual clothing corresponds with the plain backgrounds and rooms to support how videos create more influence from social principles, like communicating how a person would talk with a

friend on Facetime, rather than fancy, highly technical audiovisual aesthetics (Simonsen, 2012).

Women use these videos to support and help shape their digital presence, image, and aesthetic. Feminist media theory suggests that women can use social media to express themselves and use it to create their image (Banet-Wiser, 2017; Gill, 2017). By looking at the scene setup of these videos and the backgrounds, we can understand more how women are choosing to share information about their bodies through this media. It also represents another aspect of their control and shows how they choose for people to view them on the internet. Because of the familiar, every day and relatable video backgrounds, we see how these videos normalize women with tattoos. All of the videos show each woman sitting in front of the camera and talking directly to it rather than giving a voice-over. The audio recording from the sitting is what guides all these videos. These characteristics support how Lee & Watkins (2016) find this setup and presentation to appear more identifiable and authentic to the viewer.

In addition to the video's scene setup, most of these videos begin by directly addressing their viewers with a greeting. This welcoming helps establish their relationship with their viewer and builds a connection to uphold their parasocial relationship. In turn, this begins a conversation or presentation about their tattoos. Some of the common themes found in these videos' introductions are important because these are generally similar comments about what this video is, other information as an overview of their tattoos, and reasoning for making the video. When a motive for creating this video got mentioned, this often got explained in the introduction. 38 out of 42 women started the video by talking to the camera and explaining their intentions for the

video. This fact underscores how these women are choosing to present themselves, their narratives, body art, and conduct their videos. These women described their intentions as “going to talk about my tattoos in this video.” Some women in these videos would elaborate and express that they wanted to explain their tattoos’ meaning and talk about the pain. The other four videos started the video with pictures or videos directly of their tattoos and did not formally introduce the video. This also shows, especially for those that do not have a large subscriber count, that viewers want to hear women talk about their tattoos, learn about other women’s tattoos and tattoo meanings, etc. The similarities in these videos show us that fancy lighting, editing, or staging is not required for a tattoo tag video to garner significant views.

The parallels throughout these videos’ set-up allow women to focus their audience’s attention on what they have to say about their tattoos. Paulsen Mulvey (2019) talks about how the media industry glamorizes and puts women’s bodies against one another for capital gain. The women in these videos’ lack of fancy lighting, complex editing, or staging contradict how the media industry presents women. This ordinary, casual video set-up and lack of costuming/special effects shatter the demand for women to appear “perfect” in these videos. Instead, these women can control a discourse away from how their bodies look to guide the conversation toward expressing their choices. Gill’s (2007) applications of feminist theory highlight how individual successes allow a woman to express herself. These videos show micro examples where women express their power and control rather than conform to the filtered and risk failing to meet the stereotypical notions of how a woman should appear (Gill, 2007; 2017).

Curated Collection > A Collection of Price Tags

The women in these videos show their tattoos as a personally selected collection of art pieces that took time to accumulate. 22 out of 42 women started to go through their tattoos chronologically or at least began with the first tattoo they ever got. When presenting their tattoos in chronological order, the women often described the sequence of events with anecdotes or suggestions for how the person developed as they got more tattoos. Seven out of 42 women went through their tattoos in specific directions across their bodies. This was generally top to bottom/bottom to top or left to right/right to left. By asserting the order in which they present the tattoos on their bodies to the camera, the women in these videos also extend their control over their media and bodies. The order the women show their tattoos can underscore the meaning they attribute to their tattoo or consumption journey (Patterson & Schroeder, 2010). Suppose tattoos help shape a person's consumer identity (Patterson & Schroeder, 2010) or personal identity that gets newly adopted with each tattoo (Banet-Weiser, 2015). In that case, these presentations can indicate how each woman sees the path in which her identity forms.

Women mainly defined their motivations to get tattoos by the attraction to, the meaning of, and significance of the tattoo in these videos. There are a wide variety of reasons the women described wanting to get tattooed. Describing their motivations to get tattooed acts as a way for the viewer to get more understanding of the significance or lack thereof around tattoos. The continued process of going through each tattoo on your body breaks down any immediate perception or interpretation a viewer may have. All 42 women described some motivation or explained why they got tattooed. The motivations

for getting tattoos expressed in these videos can be broken down by expressing one's identity, commemorating a person, living thing, event, aesthetic motives, etc.

The vast majority of women did not mention the cost of their tattoos unless the tattoo was gotten for a Friday the 13th tattoo. A Friday the 13th tattoo event prices small tattoos at 13 or 30 dollars to help gain attention for the shop and quickly give out many tattoos. This low price reveals some context for an individual's motive to get a tattoo. These Friday the 13th tattoos were mentioned in four of the 42 women (two of these people got multiple Friday the 13th tattoos). Also, the Friday the 13th tattoos often featured the number "13", so the individual explained why this number is on their bodies which led them to reveal the special price. In addition, these tattoo specials relate to the concept of getting a tattoo to create a memory.

Multiple people mentioned that because this video only talked about what tattoos they have and their meanings, the questions about pricing are for another video. Refraining from discussing tattoo costs can relate to Patterson and Schroeder's argument that tattoo collectors get tattoos to shape their identity. By talking about the price of the tattoo, these creators could detract from focusing on how these tattoos are a part of their culture, reveal how they want to look, and are used to shape their identity. Rather than focusing on how Mohlin (2021) describes how showing consumption can empower women through YouTube, talking about the price of their tattoos would invite people to criticize whether a tattoo was worth its cost. Avoiding this conversation allows the women to not invite criticism about how much they paid for something they enjoy having on their bodies and identify as being a part of them. Evading this dialogue also relates to previous findings that women talk about shared spending experiences to reflect an

expression of style on social media rather than focusing on the business/financial side of consumerism (Frankel et al., 2022).

While these videos did not mention the cost of their tattoos, they did mention the artists behind their pieces. 26 out of the 42 women mention at least one tattoo artist who has done at least one of the tattoos on their bodies. Often, this information is typed out on the screen and/or provided in the description box found below the video. This information ties into the debate of giving credit to artists for their work (Beasley, 2011; Sheikh, 2020; Hatic, 2012; Long, 2020) but also providing information for people who want to get a tattoo from this artist because they like the look of the tattoo. If this information helps the latter, this helps encourage people not to try to get other tattoo artists to copy others' work and give proper credit to the original creator. Beyond giving credit to the tattoo artist, including this information helps the uploaders emphasize that they consider their tattoos to be a piece of art rather than mere commodities. The significance of these women establishing their tattoos, the permanent additions they choose to use to modify their bodies, as collections of art rather than commodities is that it helps detract from the history of society seeing women's bodies as objects (Mulvey, 2019; Gill, 2017; Botz-Bornstein, 2012). Instead, these women show themselves as people with thoughts, opinions, and personal aesthetics.

Another way these women describe their tattoos as an ongoing curated collection is how they describe their future tattoo plans. 29 out of the 42 women convey that they have future tattoo plans. Seven of these videos briefly describe what they want in the future or mention the part(s) of their body they want to cover with tattoos next. The other 22 women only attest that they want to get or will be getting more or will get more in the

future. Noting this pattern of ending the video with future tattoo plans illustrates how these collections are ongoing or seen as a part of the person's growth. Also, this detail shows that people aspiring to continue to get tattooed still enjoy their tattoos. The dialogue in these videos supports the idea that these women will continue to shape their image and uniqueness through their tattoos. Rosalind Gill (2017) argued that women actively use tattoos to shape their identity. Mentioning future tattoo plans also emphasizes that these women will continue their tattoo consumption. Therefore, they will continue using tattoos to help shape their consumer identity. Also, mentioning plans emphasizes how they like getting tattooed, are eager to get more, and suggest they will not let others' opinions stop them. These women's plans express how they will continue to have agency over their lives and decide what gets done to their bodies in the future.

Mediating Conversation through YouTube

Ferchaud, Grzeslo, Orme, & LaGroue, (2018) described how audiences go to vlog-style content with an expectation for the vlogger to disclose authentic details about themselves. These tattoo tag videos are vlog-style content, so the audiences may learn personal information about the vlogger. Ferchaud et al. (2018) described how the more information a vlogger discloses, the closer the audience feels to them and the more they consider the vlogger to be similar to a friend, which highlights a parasocial relationship. Many women in these videos expressed curiosity about other people's tattoos. This detail came about when talking about how they produced tattoo ideas or got inspired to get certain tattoos.

Meanwhile, 27 of the 42 women explicitly mention making this video entirely or partly because their followers requested it on social media. We can interpret this as these women choosing to satisfy their follower's curiosity rather than make something entirely based on their wishes. However, these content creators chose to make this content, and these women control how their bodies get seen and described in the videos. They may be using their bodies to make money and collect social capital, but they control how it gets produced and published. On another level, this capital and social gain are what Gill (2017) and Mulvey (2019) defined as a way women can define their success. Because of the parasocial relationships that followers build with these content creators, they may see women as friends rather than objects.

The creators mentioned that these followers were from their subscribers on the creators' YouTube channels and/or Instagram accounts. This detail expresses the desire for followers or fans to want to know more about the strangers they follow on the internet. Women who already have followers support this relationship with these videos by disclosing more details about themselves and their tattoos. These women also show how they empower themselves by building their online brand and connecting to those who consume their content. These creators can provide more information about themselves to strengthen this parasocial relationship with their followers through these videos. Capitalizing on this relationship relates to how some of these women use media to empower their careers as an influencer and also empower themselves financially.

Because vlogging has become a career for many people like the women in these videos, scholars have investigated the authenticity of this content (Ashton & Patel, 2018; Talvitie-Lamberg, 2014; Chapple & Cownie, 2017). Ashton & Patel (2018) found

vloggers who make a living through their social media channels often have to cultivate a performance to get views. Viewers may perceive the vlogger as inauthentic or attention-seeking, even when the vlogger is just sitting in front of the camera (Ashton & Patel, 2018). Vloggers can create a more inauthentic video by staging their content or acting so they can record more content for social media (Ashton & Patel, 2018). These tattoo videos depend on the vlogger showing their body to the camera. Because the tattoos get permanently inked on their bodies, these women cannot lie about what the viewer sees, but they could fabricate a story behind a tattoo. Women refrain from telling all the details behind their motivations for each tattoo. I believe the idea that these women are sharing only as much information they feel comfortable. What they choose to express helps frame how they want to be seen and could reflect how they see themselves.

YouTube media content can help someone shape their identity and establish themselves as a part of a community (Sábada & Vidales, 2015; Archer, 2019). Only three of 42 women mentioned how they created this tattoo tag video to add to the tattoo tag library on YouTube. These three people express how they enjoy watching these videos, finding out about others' tattoos, or wanting to satisfy the curiosity of their viewers by going through their tattoos. Beyond these three videos, other women expressed the same enjoyment towards these videos. They did not claim that this entertainment drove them to upload their tattoo tag/tour.

These videos also often offer advice for those looking into getting tattoos and describe what to do when getting tattooed. Using their tattoos as a starting point, 14 out of 42 videos share advice or provide some sort of warning/point of concern for their viewers. This guidance comes from their experience with their tattoos. The most common

advice emphasizes not copying tattoos, researching the tattoo artists before you go to them, waiting until you are older to get tattooed, and not letting the fear of pain hold you back from getting tattooed. Other less talked about guidance includes eating before getting tattooed, communicating with your artist, and wearing comfortable clothes. This discourse supports that these women can have a mediated conversation through YouTube (Sábada & Vidales, 2015). By giving their audience guidance, they can give their potential audience directions for action (Archer, 2019; Sábada & Vidales, 2015).

Talking about the pain of a tattoo is another way to appease the viewer's curiosity. When getting tattooed, a person endures being stabbed thousands of times by a needle. Admitting pain admits to a human's vulnerable side and appeals to a more relatable online identity. 32 out of 42 videos mention pain. Whether this is the pain occurring during the healing process, pain getting the tattoo or anticipated pain, or even emotional pain, the consensus is clear that tattoos guarantee some sort of physical discomfort. While pain is subjective, the theme of popular tender spots, such as the stomach or the feet, comes up. This conversation helps emphasize that the pain from getting tattoos is manageable, as all of these videos show completed tattoos.

We also see how many women describe overcoming this physical discomfort of getting tattooed. These descriptions include conversations about anxiety about the potential pain and warning about pain. Six out of 42 women explicitly expressed being nervous about getting a tattoo. Beyond fearing regret towards a tattoo, mentioning one's anxiety came up regarding getting certain areas of the body tattooed that are said to be more painful for getting a tattoo. Providing this self-disclosure allows the women to reveal a vulnerable side to themselves. This self-disclosure can help them build and

strengthen their parasocial relationship with their audiences and make these women appear more personable and relatable (Ferchaud et al., 2018). At the same time, women talking about their psychological changes relates to themes found in feminist media (Gills, 2017). These women show that they overcame these anxieties and therefore present the can-do attitude and self-regulation of feminist media (Gills, 2017).

To conclude, these women use this media to share about their tattoo consumption, which has been suppressed in mainstream media, and like in Frankel et al.'s (2022) study, these women can talk about their stigmatized consumption through YouTube. These women's videos help build a connection with their followers (strengthening their social capital) and those who also are tattoo consumers. With this connection, these women help build a presence of women with tattoos and tattoo consumption in media.

Tattoo Narrative and Identity

The women in these videos describe the main reasons for getting a tattoo as liking the aesthetic, using it to commemorate or honor an individual or memory, and signifying how one identifies (whether this is their identity or association with a group). As these women share information about their tattoos, they empower themselves by expressing agency over their bodies and describing how they choose why they get tattooed. The meanings and motivations for their tattoos tie into their tattoo journey. Kosut (2000) describes how tattoos are a way to glean an individual's narrative and show one's history, as tattoos are a type of "embodied storytelling" (p. 79). Kosut's description ties into the brand or identity that feminist theorist Gill (2017) discusses because these stories help define and shape a person internally and externally.

In these videos, not all of the reasons for getting a tattoo were deeply meaningful, perhaps because research reports that the intensity of meaning women give their tattoos is growing less intense (Dann & Callaghan, 2019). 34 out of the 42 women describe liking how a tattoo looks to explain why they got it tattooed on their bodies. At some point in the videos, a tattoo was described or shown by simply saying what the visual image tattoo is (ex: “This is an anchor.”). This supports Tsang’s (2014) finding that people get tattoos for visual appeal and aim to reach certain beauty and fashion aesthetics.

Another way women express moving away from attributing significant meaning to their tattoos is by citing social media as the direct motivator to get tattooed. . 14 out of 42 women explicitly say that the inspiration for the tattoo came from seeing something similar on social media platforms like Instagram and Pinterest. While some women say they go to these platforms for tattoo inspiration, their stories indicate that they wanted to get the same tattoo after seeing the image. Contrary to projecting deep symbolism and significance onto a tattoo, these motivations are entirely based on visual appeal.

When talking about their tattoos, every person described at least one tattoo at face value. Whether or not these women attributed meaning to these tattoos is unknown. Women could also present the tattoo at face value because there is no meaning, and they do not feel they need to explain anything about it. If this is the case, it breaks down the previous notions Hardin (1999) described that women had to attribute great meaning to their tattoos.. The most common tattoos shown in these videos are flowers and plants, animals, and ornamental designs. 32 of the 42 women show that the person has at least one flower tattoo. The most common flower tattooed is the rose, and the style of the rose is often American traditional (defined by bold lines, basic shapes, and bright colors). The

women in these videos often describe these tattoos by saying they thought they were pretty, girly, and aesthetically pleasing. Atkinson (2003) argued that women get tattoos of flowers to uphold the typical ideal of femininity rather than dispute such norms.

However, the omission of women discussing tattoos as being particularly feminine does not provide evidence that women are getting tattoos to reach the norms of femininity.

26 out of 42 women discuss getting a tattoo to honor or signify a memory. These individuals describe what they deem significant, meaningful, or memorable enough to permanently commemorate their bodies and transform how they choose to visually communicate this information to the outside world. With this form of storytelling, women show how they take possession of the space on their bodies that feminist theorist Botz-Bornstein (2013) describe enables women to help create a social space.

32 out of 42 women expressed getting a tattoo to honor another individual. 30 out of these 32 women mention getting a tattoo in honor of a family member. Six of the creators showed tattoos or portraits of their pets. These women express how they wanted to commemorate these significant beings in their life, which shows who they hold dear to their hearts and worthy of representation permanently on their bodies. These women also reveal who they identify with by talking about these tattoos. These people are a part of their life's story and became part of these women's tattoo narratives.

The women in these videos word the meaning behind these tattoos as getting a tattoo "for" another person. Tsang (2014) found similar meanings behind why some people get tattoos. They also represent the theme of using the experience of getting a tattoo to connect with people (Tsang, 2014). Including these descriptions in so many of

these videos helps these women to vocalize their social environment and share who they choose to signify in their lives (Gill, 2017).

13 out of 42 women disclose getting a tattoo to commemorate persevering through a difficult time, such as trauma, mental illness, health problems, family issues, etc. These discussions support Tsang's (2014) previous finding that people get tattoos to address themselves and commemorate growth while acknowledging self-reflection. These connections also relate to previous research that describes a common motivation for people to get tattoos to help them represent or remind themselves to love themselves, to remember their strength, perseverance, independence, etc. (Tsang, 2014; Dresler, 2021; Khair, 2022).

The memories described in these videos also included getting tattoos on vacation or remembering a trip to a destination. Getting a tattoo as a personal souvenir continues to be a common practice across the globe. The phrase "tattoo tourism" is used to describe this behavior (Cohen, 2013; Dresler, 2021). For some individuals, obtaining their tattoos during their travels creates greater depth to a "tattoo acquisition narrative" (Dresler, 2021). It further emphasizes an individualized experience and creates another type of connection with a tourist experience. 19 out of 42 women described the memories of getting tattoos during their travels. Additionally, some commented that when they look at their tattoo, they can think of that time. These stories go beyond tourist excursions and can be as simple as having an enjoyable night with friends or a group activity with the family.

These videos discuss how getting the same tattoo simultaneously as another person can also contribute to one's tattoo acquisition narratives. 15 out of 42 videos

reveal that the uploader has at least one intentional matching tattoo with at least one other person. As a group affair, the tattoos become a memory, and automatically they know another person with the same tattoo or even a tattoo. All of the women who talked about getting matching tattoos said they got matching tattoos with other women (including friends, sisters, and mothers). 14 women describe getting one or more of their matching tattoos with another woman. Botz-Bornstein (2013) describes how women with tattoos deal with more criticism from society and have a more difficult time getting their tattoos accepted by society. These women describe how when they get a tattoo with a person close to them, this could ease any concern about this criticism as they will know another person close to them may face this backlash. Also, this pair or group activity with other women can represent standing up with other women against the sexist, stereotypical, and unjustified opinions against women with tattoos. The women in these videos also seem to use these tattoos to identify their relationships and whom they associate with. Gill (2017) describes women using media to form their identities and branding. These women help establish their identities and branding when they disclose these connections with others and share their experiences with close people. In these videos, these women are disclosing that they are close enough with these people to get tattoos with them and that they enjoyed these experiences.

Patterson & Schroeder (2010) argue, through consumer culture theory, that people who get tattoos not only define themselves as a consumer but also collect tattoos to help develop their identity. 15 women explicitly express (“because I identify as...”) getting a tattoo to illustrate their identity with a particular group or lifestyle. Seven videos featured their tattoos associated with religion or spirituality. This includes crosses, rosaries,

images associated with Hinduism, witch imagery, etc. Five of these people had more than one tattoo dedicated to their religion. Beyond religion, I included those who expressed their tattoos to show they identify with an ethnic background. These types of tattoos that explicitly show one identifies as a part of a larger cultural group fall in line with previous studies for why people get tattooed (Csesznek, & Stamate, 2019; Armstrong, Owen, Roberts, & Koch, 2002; Hiramoto, 2015).

These women also describe getting tattoos to represent their membership in fandoms. Fandom is a subculture of people who share an adoration towards the same interest. 16 out of the 42 women identify wanting to get tattooed in honor of a fandom they are a part of. These tattoos include symbols or quotes from the fandom. 13 of the 16 women in these videos show at least one tattoo for bands or musicians. These tattoos include song lyrics or a band's logo.

Four of the 16 women show tattoos to honor their love for an anime or TV show. Three people present tattoos they got in honor of specific books. (Other videos display tattoos of books, but they are not specific and resemble images of books). The discussions and display of fandom tattoos in these videos support how people argue that they identify oneself with a group, convey a social commitment, mark status in a fandom, and speak to other people in the fandom (Barron, 2017). By showing these tattoos in their videos, these women can potentially reach other people in their same fandom and build connections. Tattoos can appear as quotes from a movie, song, show, popular image, or symbol from a fandom, etc. The tattoo intends to show one's adoration and commitment to the fandom. Talking about these tattoos in these videos also further defines how these individuals use this media to show how they choose to identify.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This thesis aims to understand how tattoo tag videos displaying tattoo consumption function through a feminist media theory perspective. This thesis asks, “What do women who make these videos say about their tattoos?” and “How do these videos seem to normalize women with tattoos?.” From this textual analysis, we see how women describe the content of their tattoos, their motivations, tattoo meanings, and their associated experiences. Based on this thesis, I attest that the content in these videos shows how women can express their control and power over the conversation about their bodies through these videos. I argue that the women in these videos describe more about their identity and personal narratives that defy society’s stereotypes to help normalize women with tattoos. These videos do not include a discourse that explicitly discusses empowerment. However, the content seems to empower them (whether it is building a connection with their followers, carving out their brand on the internet or as an influencer, controlling the narrative on their bodies, feeling like they are a part of a trend, etc.). These women present their tattoo consumption to reclaim their agency and control over their bodies. This narrative also helps establish to frame their digital image to society.

These women reveal how they often get tattoos because they like the aesthetic appeal rather than the profound significance of the tattoo. If the tattoo has an intended meaning, these women tend to describe the meaning, especially one with great significance, as the motive to get the tattoo. The women who make these videos help normalize women with tattoos by not presenting themselves in a sexualized manner. The

casual tone prevents a fetishized look and allows these women to talk about what they want to talk about concerning their tattoos.

Women can use these videos to talk about themselves and their tattoos as people rather than objects. By casually presenting themselves and their tattoos, like a conversation with the viewer, they help prevent their tattoos from being interpreted as sexualized objects. We see how these uploaded videos can help make a person appear more like an individual by providing their narrative and commentary towards their tattoo work rather than just letting the viewer project their own opinions and ideas onto their image. As we see more women with tattoos talking about their tattoos, it comes to reflect how the statistics express that more women get tattoos. Continuously having these conversations in their tattoo tags/tours makes the discourse more common and, therefore, more typical.

The fact that these women are talking about their tattoos, getting tattoos, and being tattooed emphasizes a contrast to the history of tattoos having a masculine image (Talvi, 2000). Musambira, Raymond, & Hastings (2016) report that older women with tattoos get seen as more masculine. Botz-Bornstein (2013) describes that because of stereotypes like these, women have a more difficult time getting accepted for tattoos, as tattoos defy previous gender norms. These videos evoke the power to justify their bodies and choices concerning tattoos through media, as McRobbie (2004) describes. Women showing the tattoos on their bodies in these videos relate to previous scholarly discourse that women getting tattoos helps rewrite a masculine experience. Rodgers (2017) argues that even though paying for tattoos continues to support the patriarchal-favoring,

capitalist society, showing off these purchases in these videos allows these women to attempt to shape how people see the tattoos on their bodies.

The findings in this thesis help contribute to the larger body of work that studies female tattoo consumers as a whole. These videos show how women turn to tattoos to map their identity and image and connect with others. Overall, these creators express getting tattoos to add art to their bodies or “for the aesthetic.” In addition to this trending video “tag,” these common phrases, similar attitudes, and presentations normalize rather than sexualize women with tattoos. We learn more about women as people as they control the direction and conversation, and topics in these videos. The causal relationship through the camera and conversational discussion emphasizes a friendly relationship with the viewer and the structure of this type of video. These videos relate to previous understandings of how more tattoo discourse under “normal” settings ingrained the body art as a part of a culture.

The women who create these videos help add a new component to the visual culture of tattoos. These videos’ creators contradict how previously, individuals with tattoos would be displayed in freak shows and circuses or seen as taboo. Some people still get tattoos to help create visual branding, but the vast majority, represented by the women in these videos, get tattoos for various other reasons. The video format stems away from having or even showing one’s tattoos as a part of what Fenske (2007) describes as a performance. These YouTube videos help break away from how tattoos once had “the performative capacity to disrupt and destabilize social norms” (Fenske, 2007).

In these videos, women control the conversation about their bodies and the tattoos they own. By also talking about other things in the video rather than their tattoos or whatever content comes directly under the title, the uploader emphasizes that they are a person beyond just their tattoos. The nature of these videos allows the individual to avoid people misunderstanding or to misperceive their tattoos, like how Petersson (2014) found that people do this when viewing the tattoos on other people without any explanation. They have more content to offer, whether this is social handles to other platforms, references to subscribing to their YouTube channels, or anecdotes that provide details on their life and history. Through this, they create more narrative about themselves that revolves around their person rather than just their tattoos. Regardless of whether the uploader says they only want to show their tattoos, all of the videos' authors provide some background information. Whether this is indicated by expressing their likes/dislikes, experiences, and storytelling, all of the videos' authors shared more than just describing the look of their tattoos.

Limitations

I originally had a list of 46 videos to examine. However, since I began this project, some people privatized their videos, so I could no longer observe and collect information to add to my data collection. I only looked at YouTube videos, so this study does not explore how this type of content looks compared to other platforms. Future research should look at a larger sample of videos and searches for videos with other keywords.

Future Considerations

I could not find any studies that previously examined the act of getting matching tattoos with another person (beyond gang and affiliation tattoos). Future research should conduct more in-depth examinations into the ever-developing colloquial surrounding tattoos. This could also be related to the rise in short-form content on TikTok and Instagram. Because of this, potential examinations could examine how women display their tattoos on these platforms. Further research should also examine how these YouTube, Instagram, or TikTok videos continue to change over time. Is there a significant change in how women show their bodies' art? Also, because some videos include disclaimers about potential hate, an audience analysis could help understand who watches these videos. In the future, researchers can explore Atkinson's (2003) argument that women getting tattoos of things conventionally associated with femininity upholds the previous traditional notions of what it means to be feminine.

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF VIDEOS

Table 1.			Number of Views (At time of recording July 15, 2021)	Date of Publication	Duration (minutes)
URL	Title	Uploader			
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEAke9jedWg&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=23	My Tattoo Collection // Brittany Xavier	Brittany Xavier	216,851	9/13/2018	14:14
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GyZbchgtu8k&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=19	ALL 23 OF MY TATTOOS Tattoo Tag	Average Rachel	100,205	11/10/2018	24:32
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFzKg5p7O1k&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=5&t=76s	MY TATTOOS AND WHAT THEY MEAN & answering your tattoo questions Asher Mary-Lou	Asher Mary-Lou	108,810	4/26/2020	16:11
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0B2Im5t_yKM&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=13	I gotta tattoo at 13 🤖 TATTOO TAG 🖋️🖋️	Carly Sarah	269,538	11/20/2018	18:57
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OgN47-A0VhA	The Ink on my Skin and their Meanings	Audrey Rivet	191,046	8/19/2020	8:20

Table 1.					
URL	Title	Uploader	Number of Views (At time of recording July 15, 2021)	Date of Publication	Duration (minutes)
	TATTOO TOUR				
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBkluz7ME94	MY TATTOOS & PIERCINGS Chloe Hayward	Chloe Hayward	174,954	2/5/2020	16:55

Table 1. (continued)					
URL	Title	Uploader	Number of Views (At time of recording July 15, 2021)	Date of Publication	Duration (minutes)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbVFiXzgyYs	The Tattoo Tag/ Tattoo Q&A	Selina Christoforou	279,211	8/8/2016	11:22
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Exjv4zD7H2k&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=24	ALL MY TATTOOS & PIERCINGS Mistakes, Regrets, Unimaginable Pain :) :)	Snitchery	1,001,181	11/27/2017	7:31
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jBdPUwnMG-M	MY TATTOOS ☆	Sophie Floyd	535,613	1/27/2019	11:21

Table 1. (continued)					
URL	Title	Uploader	Number of Views (At time of recording July 15, 2021)	Date of Publication	Duration (minutes)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWAVeQnFNhY&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=33	What My Tattoos Mean (a lil emotional)	Taylor Dean Vlogs	384,496	7/31/2018	15:58
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KRxPka60lDs&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=50&t=2ss	My Tattoos Taylor Parks	Taylor Parks	580,133	4/17/2017	17:38
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdu13cAyeIs&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=26	My Traditional Tattoo Collection! Tattoo + Piercing Tour	Wildfern	128,759	7/31/2019	14:10
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrF7C7dPGas	Tattoo tour 2020	Baicp	150,361	1/6/2020	14:54
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBZrTDzYZ0&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=40	Dark YET Beautiful meaning behind my Tattoos..	Daisy Marquez	428,474	2/19/2019	19:23
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nliXsgvtiGA&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=49	[ASMR] My Tattoos & Their Meanings	Diamond ASMR	375,267	2/25/2019	17:51
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWkjGRiBs5Q&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=20	TATTOO TAG & The One I Regret Evelina Forsell	Evelina Forsell	100,154	9/5/2019	10:43

Table 1. (continued)					
URL	Title	Uploader	Number of Views (At time of recording July 15, 2021)	Date of Publication	Duration (minutes)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hp79fiAanOg&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=10	TATTOO TAG: Meanings/Stories/Pain HeyThereImShannon	HeyThereImShannon	446,478	7/2/2016	12:09
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pMg85DoQc&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=44	My Tattoos inthefrow	inthefrow	736,144	5/13/2015	10:51
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jQuXLdYIZM	TATTOO TAG / JAMIE GENEVIEVE	Jamie Genevieve	877,916	11/28/2016	12:22
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EpE9z0FTKzY&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=17	TATTOO COLLECTION 2020	jaxanell	126,270	12/30/2020	9:51
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DTxmsLnPtU&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=47	my tattoos & their meanings	Keelin Moncrieff	114,988	6/14/2020	11:08
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=au1OzDLeeBc&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=45	SHOWING MY TATTOOS	Kenza Zouiten Subosic	272,869	2/26/2017	11:22
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrR2BVEJoIY&list=PLZbJQCylv3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=35	LL MY TATTOOS & PIERCINGS  + Meanings	Kiera Rose	295,015	11/16/2016	14:17

Table 1. (continued)					
URL	Title	Uploader	Number of Views (At time of recording July 15, 2021)	Date of Publication	Duration (minutes)
	and Pain Ratings				
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGWcU9RoUns	SNOOKI'S TATTOO TAG	Nicole Polizzi	182,977	8/2/2018	7:31
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuIWacJJaI&list=PLZbJQCy1v3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=28	STORIES BEHIND MY TATTOOS SACHEU	Sacheu	442,381	4/8/2019	6:52
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNBc6EMyFj0&list=PLZbJQCy1v3VcyX85Kyj9WdPC2XtY0FwPI&index=34	WHAT MY TATTOOS MEAN SALICE ROSE	Salice Rose	1,738,903	6/15/2017	15:03
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1NUcW8E2iFM	TATTOO TAG (updated) * NEW TATTOOS!	Tasha Leelyn	103,424	4/11/2018	10:01
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2Wb3LA56ik	WHAT ALL MY TATTOOS MEAN Tattoo Tag	Yuleema imaginee	452,139	9/6/2017	15:58

APPENDIX B

Table 2. THEMES AND OBSERVED CATEGORIES WITHIN THESE VIDEOS

What information was provided in the introduction?
Did they provide anecdotes of getting tattoos?
Did they describe that a tattoo helped create a memory?
Content of the tattoos
Notable or Commonly used phrases (no regrets, I just thought it looked good, this has no meaning, etc.)
Do they express that this identity shows or represents how the person identifies themselves
Do they explain what order they are presenting their tattoos? If so, what is the order (chronological, by body part, working downwards/upwards, etc.)
Do they say that they got this tattoo because they saw it on a social media platform like Pinterest?
Do they express plans for future tattoos or admonish the idea of getting more tattoos?
Do they talk about the reason or meaning that compelled them to get a certain tattoo? What were the identified motivations?
Aesthetic motivations?

Do their tattoos have a significant meaning to them?
What are the meanings behind their tattoos?
Did they get a matching tattoo? If so, with who?
Is this video their most Popular video on their YouTube channel?,
Do they express a positive attitude (smiling, using phrases like “I love tattoos and these videos”),
Do they express any negativity (“I hate this tattoo” or “I hate the artist who gave me this tattoo”),
Did they mention any feeling of anxiety, or did they share that they were nervous about getting tattooed
Do they provide a disclaimer for the video? (i.e., If you do not like tattoos, do not watch.)
Do they clearly say how many tattoos they have? If yes, how many?
Do they mention the age they were when they got their first tattoo? If so, what age
Did they explain their motivation or reason behind making this video?
Do they offer their viewers advice about getting tattoos?

Do they use a form of the word “addicting” to describe getting tattoos or describe getting tattoos as a behavior that once they start they cannot stop getting more?
Do they mention the pain of getting their tattoos?
Do they explicitly state tattoo regrets?
Do their tattoos reveal they are a part of a fandom?
States “no regrets”
Did they also show their piercings/other body modifications?
Did they mention others’ criticism of their tattoos or tattoos in general?
Do they mention tattoo permanence?
Do they mention their tattoo artist(s)?
Cover up tattoo? Laser tattoo removal?
Stick n pokes and/or Self tattoo

APPENDIX C

SCREENSHOTS FROM VIDEOS

1. SNOOKI'S TATTOO TAG (1:09)



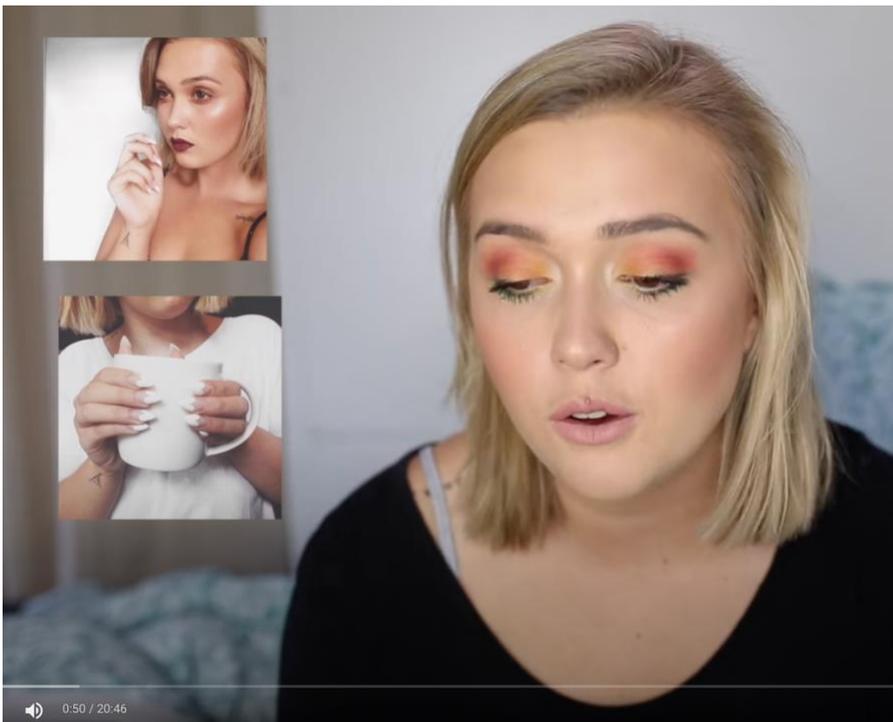
2. AVERAGE RACHEL (4:14) Shows a flash tattoo from a Friday the 13th Special.



3. Katie Snooks (2:45) shows video of a tattoo on her foot



4. Coley (:50) shows photos on screen of tattoos



5. Snitchery (11:21) points to tattoo in video

