



Script: Tattoo Taboo

Having tattoos lower your chances of finding a job, and also makes people think that you are a drunk. Those two things: Probably related.

Anthony here from D-News and a study done by the University of Saint Andrew's in Scotland showed that employers across just about all industries have a negative view of tattoos. They used words like dirty, repugnant and abhorrent when describing how they thought how their clients or customers would perceived tattoos on their employees. Now I live in San Francisco, the most laid back, hippy-est city in the world, so my ideal is maybe a little off, but I still find it kind of surprising that tattoos are still that universally looked down on. So I thought I would look into the current perceptions of tattoos here in America. According to a 2010 Pew research poll about 23 percent of the US is tattooed. A 2008 Harrison Interactive poll shows that most of the people with tattoos said having them doesn't make them feel any different. But about 40 percent say that it makes them feel rebellious. 30 percent said it made them feel sexy. And 20 percent said it makes them feel attractive and strong. That's interesting. But what about the people without tattoos? What do they think about the people who are inked up? Well 30 percent of them think that somebody with a tattoo is more likely to do something deviant. A quarter of them think the tattooed population is less intelligent and less healthy overall. The health response seems to be a mix of the perceived lifestyle of people with body art and misconceptions about the actual cleanliness of the tattooing process.

And while we are thinking about that, you might want to know that since they've been tracking the spread of AIDS and HIV in the 1980s, the CDC hasn't seen one case that came from a tattoo studio. They found seven that came from visits to the dentist. Of the almost 14,000 cases of hepatitis diagnosed every year, 12 come from tattoo studios, 43 come from dentists so somehow getting a dumb tribal armband is safer than getting a cavity filled. Women, by the way, seem to get their reputations hurt the most by getting tattoos. In multiple studies where people of all ages were shown pictures of people with and without them, the tattooed women were perceived to be less intelligent, motivated, generous and honest. But more promiscuous, and more likely to drink heavily. The interesting thing is that tattoos don't seem to affect how physically attractive somebody is found. They're a completely external thing, but they only affect how we judge a person's internal characteristics. That's quickly changing though, at least here in the US, tattoo studios are one of the fastest growing retail industries here. Even the employers in the Saint Andrews study admitted that it was less about their prejudices and more about what they thought their customers would think. You know I've almost gotten a tattoo a couple of times and I'm sort of glad I didn't. Not because I don't like them, but because looking back on all of my ideas, they were all pretty stupid. I almost wound up with a Gizmo Duck once...