Name of Student

Name of the institution

Subject

Date

There has been a long history of tattooing, but the original start of the act is difficult to trace. The word tattoo itself was not used until the 18th century when James Cook visited Polynesia, but there has been a long history of inking the body with various designs. A Greek word Stigma showed the same meaning as used in tattooing today and the word was then transferred to the Romans as well. There is a clear relationship between the word stigma and tattoo if we see the current meaning of the word in English. Greeks were not the first ones to use the tattoos however there may be different names given to this activity. In the social context, tattooing was disliked by the Greeks and they associated this activity to the barbarians who were rather uncivilized and never used it themselves. Another impact that was noted was that the Greeks saw the word stigmata as being originated by their rivals which forced them to give the name to criminals and slaves. The same association was then transferred to the Romans from Greeks and tattooing was used by the Romans as a state control technique. The mindset of involving the tattooing with the state control is that there is a certain level of pain involved in tattooing the bodies and these marks are forcefully applied to the human bodies. The same is true with the state control of affairs where the culprits are punished because of their acts. Applying the tattoos on these criminals will also mean that these people will be easily identified and their movement will thus be reduced or controlled. The placement of these tattoos was forbidden by the Roman emperor Constantine who suggested that these tattoos can be placed on the hands and calves of the criminals. The reason for this change is that the Emperor argued that face of the people was a representation of the beauty of the Creator so no one should be allowed to put marks on them. There have been three major types of the penal tattoos. The most common type is the name of crime that has been done by criminal on his body. The other variations were to put the name of emperor of the time when crime was undertaken and to put the name of punishment on the criminal’s bodies. This practice of tattooing the bodies of criminals had been transferred to the European countries and in the Western culture, tattooing practices were also associated with crime and punishment. In some other parts of the world, tattooing was seen as a mark with the colonized areas.

The word tattoo comes from the word ta tau which was used by James cook during the travel to the South Sea Islands in 1769. There was a quick conversion of this word in English as tattoo and it was spread across all the other countries and languages of Europe. The happenings during the civil war of the USA are considered the first reference for tattooing practices in the 18th century. In the US army, tattooing was an acceptable practice undertaken by their soldiers. In the civil war, people were very much confused about others as to whom they are supporting. In this scenario, tattooing helped them to identify other people. There were confederate and union men who were caught in the war and they were distinguished with the help of these tattoos. The inventor to this tattooing is Sam O’Reilly who called his device as a tattaugraph.

The elite class of various societies started using tattoos as a sign of fashion by the end of 19th century which used the electric machine to make tattoos, design sheets and trying the Japanese version of tattooing and designing. These options were less painful on the human bodies, offered more designs and the designs showed more details than previously possible. The upper class attention towards the tattooing practice can be seen as being driven by the historic perspective. This increase in the demand of tattoos was driven by two reasons. The visibility of bodies marked with tattoos encouraged others to use them on own bodies and there were a large number of social deviants who were getting tattoos on their bodies. There was not much involvement shown by the middle class in tattooing by the end of the 19th century. The working class and entertainers also took a considerable part in tattooing activities. A major increase in the tattooing activities was seen as there was an increase in circus activities. There was a little difference between the tattooing activities undertaken by these performers, they used them in a larger number on their bodies and there were slight differences in the design of these tattoos. The real problem was with the female performers in these circus and other shows who had to make their bodies visible so that their tattoos are more visible to the audience. In the 20th century, there were complaints by these performers that they were not getting much profits out of the performance of their bodies. By the year 1940, the charm of using tattoos by public performers finished and there were many people who saw tattoos as vulgarity.

The military also came to action against the people who used tattoos because the soldiers used vulgar images in tattooing, and there were also some health concerns related to the use of tattoos. A small number of cases were reported where diseases had been transferred to the human body through the tattoos used. There was no decrease in number of military persons despite warnings of health hazards caused by tattoos. These tattoos were used to group the soldiers but they were also seen as a negative social aspect when these soldiers returned to social lives.

The attitude towards the tattoos in case of soldiers was a part of America’s return to normality from the war. Tattoos were seen as a sign of the destruction that had been caused by the Second World War. In the post war era, tattoos were associated with the working class, gangs and drunk people. There was a different aspect of tattooing where the young people showed their rebellion by marking the tattoos on their bodies. Similarly, there were movies and advertisements that depicted characters with tattoos like Popeye.

In the decades of 1960’s and 1970’s, the fashion and craze of tattooing was reestablished. There have been ups and downs in adopting tattooing as a fashion but overall the trend has kept itself alive over the past 3 decades. A larger number of people are interested in getting tattoos today than there were in the past (A.Fisher). The increase in this trend is a sign of following of celebrities who are generally the first ones to adopt any fashion like tattoos.

Fashion and celebrities are promoters of consumption and with this consideration, it is linked to the things becoming obsolete. Fashion has been an important part of the market economy and certain goods have been specifically made to become trendy. The industrial society will create the consumers who do not calculate themselves. The fashion and death are both considered to have been developed from expiration. Similarly, in the consumer system, there is a clear sense of expiration and a need of bringing in new and powerful changes. In highly industrialized societies, fashion has developed as a sector that is prone to a constant change over the period of time. From the perspective of commercial aspects of fashion are much more complex and long lasting. In order to assure that fashion does not get dead, there is a need to recover the objects with pictures and other related reasons.

Covering our bodies is a decent way of exhibiting their image that we need to communicate to others. Fashion is meant to give some specific meanings to objects with which we cover and decorate our bodies. Tattoos are a part of fashion that is used to cover the visible and invisible parts of the body. These tattoos become an important part of the fashion when these are used by some music or film star. There can be various reasons of the tattoos usage. Firstly, these stars want to look different as compared to the general public. They try and put various tattoos on their bodies and then expect that the young generation will follow their footsteps as a fashion. The second factor is the desire of a celebrity to be seen differently by the general public as compared to their competitors. There will be very strange and very big tattoos on the bodies of celebrities just to look different to their competitors. There can be an advertising aspect to the activity of tattooing. Some companies may ask some celebrities to use their symbols on their bodies as tattoos. The last consideration regarding the tattoos with celebrities is that there may be some copy right issues raised by the designer of some tattoo. A celebrity is a very famous person followed by a large number of persons from the general public. It is very much possible that the followers want to put the same tattoo on their bodies as a celebrity has done. This may raise some copyright issue if the design has been created by them initially.

There are important implications of usage of tattoos by the celebrities. There has been a clear increase in the tattoo usage by the adult youth in the early 21st century. This means that this youth can be better targeted by companies using tattoos or by placing tattoos on the bodies of celebrities. There is also an increased trend of showing the tattoo parlor theme based shows on television. The organizations also show increased allowance with respect to tattoos usage in the work place. This also increases the responsibility of various companies on the ethical grounds. No person should be allowed to come to the work place with such a tattoo that is either discriminatory in any sense or is promoting the product of a competitor.

In my opinion, the use of tattoos has to be restricted to the celebrities only. This is because these celebrities have a lot of money and they genuinely need to differentiate themselves from their competitors. Secondly these celebrities also want to remain distinct from the general public which they do by applying tattoos on their bodies. There have also been some medical concerns regarding usage of the same equipment on more than one persons for making tattoos. There has been historic evidence that tattoos are seen as a symbol of vulgarity in many parts of the world so they should be restricted to a limited set of people in the society.

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