

Tattooed **TRAMPS**



VOLUME 1

"It is a definite turn off for me if I see a girl has a tattoo; it doesn't matter how small or well hidden it is or the quality of the artwork. Aesthetically, smooth, youthful skin is the height of beauty, while marks, scratches, wrinkles, and ink detract from it. I think, from the perspective of a man, a tattoo free body is synonymous with purity and goodness and compliments elegance and grace. Even if we don't want to be judgmental, suddenly seeing a tattoo on a girl can diminish the girl in our mind, detracting from those things that add to a girl's perceived virtue. I got to thinking about this issue when I recently saw a movie with the actress, Christina Grimmie, for the first time and thought how pretty and sweet she was until I saw her tattoo. I still thought she was attractive and good natured, but my mind kept going back to the tattoo. But I also don't like tattoos on guys either. It conjures up a mental image of a man as dangerous or uncivil. In the case of women, I would say she is taking a risk that narrows her options. I seriously doubt any guy is going to be less attracted to her because she doesn't have a tattoo, but there are a lot of guys who would find her less appealing if she did have one. So she would be limiting her scope to people who find tattoos more attractive or don't care either way."

- SOME DIPSHT

Tattooed TRAMPS

My name is Ólöf and I am the founder of Tattooed Tramps. I am a 4th year Communication Design student at Emily Carr University of Art and Design in Vancouver, B.C.

Tattoos are a large part of my life. A few years back someone told me my artwork would look good as tattoos and that I should consider pursuing that. I have tattoos and I am a woman. More than once people have asked me what my tattoos mean, why I have this one or that one. On my ankle I have a tattoo of a vagina, the drawing is from Tove Lo's album Lady Wood. I was later asked "What are your kids going to think about that?!" ... I could spend hours explaining why I am not having kids but that isn't the point here. Why the fuck do you care what my future never to be born children will think about a tattoo of a vagina on my ankle? If anything they will just be well educated and not ashamed of their body parts.

What I choose to do to or with my body shouldn't concern anyone but me. It is honestly a guilty pleasure of mine to tell people about this tattoo and see their reaction. It is a nice way to filter out people I don't want around me. Luckily I haven't had many problems with it.

My reason for taking on this project is that I am sick and tired of people trying to control and criticize my body and my choices involving my body. My goal is to shine a light on the perception of women in our society and the implication that what a woman chooses to do with or to her body is for someone else. I will achieve this by looking at the problem through the lens of tattoos.

To get you more involved, or aware of the problem space I want to offer a couple of examples. As women it often feels like our bodies are just a free for all, people can comment on them or disagree with them, as if a woman's body concerns anyone but herself.

Makeup - Don't wear too much makeup but also don't let anyone see your tired face or your acne. Wear it so it looks natural.

Pedicure is another thing. I remember seeing posts about people saying that long nails aren't attractive, but at the end of the day if the woman likes it you shouldn't care.

Women will also receive comments on their hair, their clothes, their sex life. None of which affect anyone but them.

Tattoos are the main focus of my project. Tattoos have a stigma around them, and through my research I discovered that women are judged more harshly. They are labelled promiscuous, dishonest, untrustworthy, someone you shouldn't date. People think you don't respect your body and as a result they don't either. There has always been this idea that if you have tattoos that you want someone to see them, which isn't the case. Just because I have a tattoo doesn't give you permission to touch me or ask me about it. Some of my tattoos are really personal and others not so much. I feel you get criticized if your tattoo has too much meaning and if it doesn't have a deep meaning people give you shit for that too.

I am tired of justifying my actions and choices revolving around my body. My body my choice. Get fucked.

*Best regards,
a Tattooed Tramp*



What was your best experience getting a tattoo?

The tattoos I got with my sister, stuck together forever even when far away 😊❤️



WHEN DID YOU FIRST BECOME INTERESTED IN TATTOOS?

“Probably the beginning of high school, grade 9th. I’m not sure what it was. But starting in grade 9 when I went into high school I just really liked the look of them and I liked the idea of being able to put whatever I want on my body. That was also when I realised I wanted to go into tattooing. It has been my goal to become a tattoo artist since grade 9.”

- Ally

“I don’t even know, 1st or 2nd year of Uni. I started following the Vancouver scene, because we have a good scene, and we have such a diverse community. I was super interested in how the artists curated their style and how they used the human body. I’m in illustration and I drew a lot of inspiration from that. I think it is cool how they make certain designs flattering for the shoulder or ankle or something.”

- Chloe

“My obsession with tattoos began with binge watching documentaries on King Tut when I was 12 yo, which ultimately motivated me to earn a degree in Archaeology degree. I’ve never associated tattoos with gang related activities. To me, tattoos are a symbolism of personal identification, liberation and more importantly a sacred art form. The art of tattooing has been around for thousands of years, with archaeological evidence dated as early as 3000 years ago.”

- Jacqueline

INTERVIEW WITH BECCA SCHILE

When did you first become interested in tattoos?

Oh that's a tough question, um, I don't know I feel like early teen years. I think when you start exploring art, naturally it kind of turns into that. Especially with the internet now. I think I found myself doodling on my skin in class, always drawing on my hand with a pen and sometimes I would do it with a sharpie and when I came home my parents would just be furious. Little did they know, it's like a precursor for the real deal. That early body modification or like interest in art on skin.

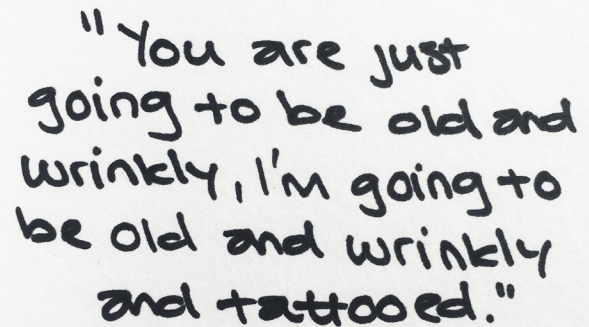
When did you get your first tattoo?

I got my first when I was 18, my parents made me wait. They are very anti-tattoo but luckily my mom was supportive. I was getting something small so she was supportive. When I started getting bigger tattoos they started being less supportive.

How was your experience getting that first tattoo?

Um .. I guess it was thrilling because I had waited so long for this moment then finally I was allowed to and then I was old enough to and all these barriers fell away. The experience itself wasn't so great because I chose a small tattoo and something relatively simple the [tattoo artist] wanted to give it to someone that was interning. So the person that was supposed to do my tattoo was like "actually here's [intern] they are going to be doing your tattoo today". I was like "what why?" but I didn't know any better and so they did.

Someone like that is practicing so it felt unfair that I didn't have the choice whether or not I was going to be the guinea pig. I realised



"You are just going to be old and wrinkly, I'm going to be old and wrinkly and tattooed."

afterwards that was not okay. I understand they have to learn but they should have been more mindful. I actually got a white ink puzzle piece tattoo on the back of my neck but because they didn't know what they were doing they used stencil which meant the ink from the stencil went under my skin and it wasn't a white ink tattoo. It was white but there were pieces of gray and blue in it. I have since gotten that covered up. Luckily it was small but still something important to me and I didn't go into it with the intention that I was going to fix it later on.

What is it about tattoos that you appreciate or enjoy most?

I think it's the idea of impermanence. Everyone thinks that they are permanent but your body is not permanent. So I like the idea that people can decorate themselves how they want to. You don't necessarily get to judge people, I mean people do judge people based on their clothing choices but it is like wearing different hats. I like looking at tattoos like a diary, my experiences and things that I value. Sometimes there are things we don't value which also adds to the journey. It is interesting in that way. They are all so individual. Its deemed appropriate to oxcorcise people in certain ways versus not in other ways. Like if someone had a horrific burn scar or something like that you wouldn't treat them the same way. They are not comparable by any means but it goes to point out how women are treated. Actually did you see downstairs, right now one of the works by the teacher is this piece of paper right by the cafeteria. [Name] was reading it to me last night and it was talking about how women's bodies are treated and how they have to dress, and how sometimes

you don't get the job because you don't have enough money to buy the right shoes or if your bra strap is showing. I just went to a job interview, a couple of different job interviews actually and it was like, well, do I wear something that shows that I have tattoos or are they expecting me to not show them.

My teacher brought up how people would touch her stomach while she was pregnant, similar to when someone grabs your arm to look at your tattoos. There seem to be no boundaries when it comes to women's bodies. People comment and judge freely.

Social norms where it's like don't ask me to turn around so you can look at my tattoo like that's super not okay. And it is true. Like why would you force me to justify my decisions consistently. It is none of your business. I have a really big back piece and people are constantly asking me to turn around and show it off. People have literally been like "give me a spin", like do you not realize how demeaning that is? That you are saying that to me. You are just treating me like an object. Which is not okay. It is weird that it took me a while to feel justified to feel this way. I should never be put into a position where this behaviour is something I should be okay with.

Yeah, it took me a while to feel okay to be mad about these things. For example when you get mad about degrading jokes towards women and you call someone out about it they brush it off as a joke and say I have to calm down. When in reality it isn't really a joke.

Yeah it's also that cop out. I think the problem is also that people don't know how to be wrong. They can't just be like "oh I'm sorry I didn't realise that this was inappropriate".

Similar question to the one earlier, but what do tattoos mean or do for you?

I guess it is kind of a similar answer. Just my way of decorating myself with art that I like. Or something that has meaning to me. They don't always have to be super sentimental but something that I think looks cool. And if 20 years from now I don't think it's cool anymore well at one point in my life I felt this way. I could easily keep a diary and it would be a lot less expensive but I'm somewhat eccentric in that way. Maybe it is also, not a power move, but sometimes it works the opposite way, sometimes you become less approachable. With certain social markers. It becomes easier to weed out the people that are going to treat you differently.

Absolutely, it is a great filter.

It also makes me think of that double standard where most people that have them don't care if other people don't. While it's always the people that don't [have tattoos] that strongly oppose or are extremely judgemental. I think it is important to highlight that extra, being a woman in the equation and how you are treated.

Tattoos are a way to exercise my right to my body.

I definitely feel that way about it.

What is a usual response to your tattoos?

"Wow I didn't expect that from you" or "wow you seem like such a nice girl why do you have all those tattoos". I have gotten that one quite a few times. Just like over sexualisation of my body which

makes me incredibly uncomfortable. People use it as a way to start a conversation with you or its "oh you are going to like that in 20 years" ... like yeah I'm going to look like a badass in 20 years. You are just going to be old and wrinkly, I'm going to be old and wrinkly and tattooed.

I really don't get that "20 years from now" argument.

Yeah I don't either. But yeah the response is not really great. I think the hardest part is the family. They don't like tattoos and it is something that I'm actually super passionate about. I really consider [tattoos] a true artform and it is something I am potentially considering as a career choice and it sucks that I also have to factor in what my parents will think. What clothing will I have to wear when I'm around my family? How am I going to have to change, not who I am but still covering up a part of who I am.

They aren't thrilled about me getting tattoos. It is just such a over reaction considering all the horrible things that happen. To spend your energy on that seems so futile. I find tattoos to be somewhat cathartic, like this experience that is ritualistic. I really enjoy the experience. Someone is taking the time to put in thought and effort into something you want and it is a mutual experience. You are showcasing their craft forever. It is kind of a big deal.

Is there a specific comment that has really stuck with you [about your tattoos]?

I can't really think of anything super specific, just the ones where people see it and are like "oh, you seem like such a nice girl". I'm like, you think I'm nice and polite because I'm a decent human being. It is

putting up strange labels and what you are saying to me right now is that my tattoos make me less of a good person. It is so weird.

I'm really happy you are trying to get the perspective across that you have the right to exist as a person and especially a woman in spaces, and not made to feel like you should apologize for your body and your choices, because they are valid. You are able to have autonomy over your existence. It isn't rocket science.

It is exhausting that we are still having these conversations. It is so important because you need to shift the narrative. If you want change you need to have these conversations where somebody may not have been okay with the fact that they are wrong and be like "I understand that you didn't know better". This is the conversation people have been having but we can do better. So figure it out.

“People have literally been like “give me a spin”, like do you not realize how demeaning that is? That you are saying that to me. You are just treating me like an object. Which is not okay. It is weird that it took me a while to feel justified to feel this way. I should never be put into a position where this behaviour is something I should be okay with.”

"When I got my first
tattoo my dad, who
I'd talked to about
how meaningful that
particular tattoo was to
me, gently stroked my skin
and went "they've ruined
you, you're marked like
a pig" when I showed
it to him."

What is the best compliment you received on your tattoos?

My gf saw my snail tattoo when we met and says it was a sign to her that we were meant to be

This makes me feel so happy 🧡🧡


What is the best compliment you received on your tattoos?

I recently had someone tell me my leg tattoos look hard as fuck hahaha... goal achieved

Hell yeah 💪

What do tattoos mean to you?

Us a kind of time stamp, the imagery is not necessarily as important as the time in my life

Agree! 

What do tattoos mean to you?

It's my body and I want to decorate it in my story and art!



For more Tattooed Tramps content go to
tattooedtramps@instagram

You can submit your story about your experience
as a tattooed woman, answer questions and view
more awesome tattoo photos!

I'm always happy to meet up for a chat,
you can message us on instagram or email
tattooedtramps@gmail.com.

Photoshoots will be planned every six months,
if you are interested in participating send us a
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