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Education, Evolution, and Power Through Ink: An Ethnographic Photo Essay on Tattooists in Normal, IL

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Poster Presentation P13

**EDUCATION, EVOLUTION, AND POWER THROUGH INK:
AN ETHNOGRAPHIC PHOTO ESSAY ON TATTOOISTS IN NORMAL, IL**

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This poster presentation aims to illustrate how methods of visual anthropology were employed to gain insight into the culture of tattooists working at Artkore Tattoo in Normal, Illinois. It demonstrates how the use of collaborative methods of participant observation, formal interviews, photography, and informal interaction were used to create text and images that accurately represent issues that concern the tattooists. The essay highlights the importance tattooists attribute to their continuous education that facilitates in the evolution of their work and skills. It discusses why some members of the tattoo community view themselves as “craftsmen” rather than “artists.” The presentation also approaches the subject of power among the tattooists and how this affects their relationship with their clients.