

## Kelley White

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### The Stereotypes

If you're a pickup truck cowboy  
you'll wind a tattoo barbed wire fence  
around your bicep or ink a pair of spurs on your calf

If you're a mustang cowgirl  
you'll sport a six-shooter on each hip bone  
and hide a Sheriff's star (where's your posse?)  
in your cleavage

If you're into Anime you might have gotten Gungam  
on your breast or a Naruto headband on your forehead  
but now every major anime studio (except Gainax)  
has warned fans body-art is no longer permissible.  
(They don't like the gangster element)

If you're a biker you might get '1 percenter'  
spelled out in green or red ink  
( 'cause the other AMA, the American Motorcycle Association  
says 99% of bikers are law abiding citizens  
or AFFA (Angel Forever Forever Angel) in red or green ink  
(harder to laser off) around your navel)

Skinheads like numbers, the shaved skull and:  
18 (AH/Adolf Hitler) 88 (Heil Hitler/HH)  
311 (=3 x K=KKK)  
23 (W=well, take a wild guess, it's a color not quite in the rainbow)  
23/16 = white power

In prison you may get the three dots  
little tiny hints in the web of your thumb  
and forefinger of one, prison; two, hospital; 3, cemetery  
and that spider web around your elbow means you're caught in the gang life

And honey, when I think of you, I figure you've got  
a barcode on the back of your neck

## **The Tattoo Contest at the 92<sup>nd</sup> Annual Laconia Bike Week & Gypsy Motor Tour**

They take the stage together, the women  
tanned, blonde, elegant, in high heels and string  
bikinis; most bare delicate tracings  
of vines, hummingbirds, fairies; the winner

rolls the edge of her bra down baring two  
golden bullets on the right breast, a black  
six-shooter on the left. Tears drip below  
her taut belly, a sword runs down her back.

The men have lined up, a kick-line of lard.  
Pale bellies droop over denim waistbands,  
their muscles slack, beside the women's hard  
bodies. Fat biceps and man breasts, they stand

proud. On the winning chest an eagle sags  
above Old Glory and a Confederate flag.

## Revenant

You're back. I type your husband's name, that proud  
riverman, the ferry captain, searching  
for his bastard son, my great grandfather—  
and there's your face, face that Jackie avowed  
looked like me, though there's no blood connection:  
you only raised the boy, mere stepmother.  
I'd admired the curls. Aunt Jackie claimed  
you were sixteen then, with your hint of smile  
like Mona Lisa's. I brought you with me  
to another state, but then I married  
and you frightened my children for a while;  
I gave you to a thrift store, thought your frame  
might earn a little cash. Someone found you,  
your name on the back, matched you to his tomb.

Pediatrician **Kelley White** has worked in inner city Philadelphia and rural New Hampshire. Her poems have appeared in *Exquisite Corpse*, *Rattle* and *JAMA*. Her recent books are *Toxic Environment* (Boston Poet Press) and *Two Birds In Flame* (Beech River Books.) She received a 2008 Pennsylvania Council on the Arts grant.