

Vanessa Aldana

Sociology 1010 Online

Dan Poole

Breaking the Norm

Define a Norm

A norm is defined as expected rules of social life.

Define/Describe the norm you are breaking

The Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormon Church), has a dress code. Men wear suits and are always well groomed like they are doing business. On the other hand, the women of the church wear their makeup and hair is very modest and natural. Also, the women usually wear a cardigans and skirts that usually hit their calves, so ultimately the women of the LDS church present themselves passively.

Describe your activity, what did you do?

I decided to attend my mother's church wearing a black shirt dress that is 3 inches above my knee, Smokey eye makeup, purple lipstick, and my hair is purple(my hair was not intentionally). Only a handful know me as my mother's daughter. I wanted to observe their reactions of the way I presented myself.

Describe the reaction of people who witnessed your behavior

A great number of people such as adults ignored me. People who knew me as my mother's daughter complimented me. I did receive a couple of glances from adults and elderly, but then

they would quickly glance away. I only received one look of disgust from a middle aged women, by looking up down at me and glaring at me. Also, small children would stare at me for a moment and then go back to what they were originally doing. Other than that, the minority of people would introduce themselves to me and completely ignore the way I'm dressed, the max of whom are viewed as leaders of the ward.

Why did they react this way?

I'm convinced they reacted this way above all for the reason that I was dressed differently. I assume the majority of people didn't know how to react to the changes in their social environment, so they carried on ignoring me as if I didn't exist. It might also be, I may have been viewed as intimidating. For the few, who did introduce themselves, I believe they reacted this way in belief, not to judge a book by its cover and that new people should feel welcomed to their church. It makes impeccable sense now, considering all the people who greeted me were figures who held authority in the ward. After all it is their job to encourage people to attend church regularly and make a good impression of the church.

Is this the reaction that you expected?

Overall no, I expected much more instantaneous reactions. The ward I attended has plenty of middle aged adults, elderly, and just a handful of children. As I initially expected, the majority of adult men and women did ignore me. I did expect much more mean looks and gossiping from adult women. I foresaw that elder women and elder men would be the most judgmental. I most of all expected children to be much more honest and maybe comment such as "Why is your hair that color?"

Why or why not?

I realize that I went in expecting very negative reactions because I held a very strong opinion of the Mormon Church, negative. I always pictured the Mormon Church as judgmental and just simply old fashioned. I suppose, I grew to believe this because you hear so much unfavorable stories of experiences from the Mormon Church via social media, news, and online. I additionally witness, that very few reports are rarely in good light regarding the Mormon Church, and as well as follows police enforcement and the Hispanic culture. If you truly conceive, the media rarely reports positively on the Mormon Church, the Hispanic culture, and police enforcement. Due to this it paints a negative persona of these communities. Although, there is things I still do not particular agree upon about the church, it may be that the concepts of the Mormon Church are simply just not norms for me.

If there is anything at all I obtained from this Social norm project is that there will always be those cynical stories, who will compose us to think differently about these communities, enforcers, and cultures. I need to remember that there will always be bad in every circle, but they don't make up the majority of the circle. I must continue not to judge a group as a whole, but rather just the few that happen to be a part of that group.