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Carla Anne Zimmerman

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AGE, GENDER, AND TATTOOS: TATTOO STIGMA AND  
HIRING DECISIONS

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A Thesis

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

in

Psychology:

General-Experimental

---

by

Carla Anne Zimmerman

December 2011

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HIRING DECISIONS

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by  
Carla Anne Zimmerman  
December 2011

Approved by:

  
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Donna M. Garcia, Chair, Psychology

11-29-11  
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## ABSTRACT

As the use of social networking sites increases, so does the use of such sites to screen potential job applicants. Although this practice may provide an employer with valuable information about the applicant, it also provides information about the applicant that is not available through a typical application that could be detrimental during the hiring process. While it is illegal to discriminate against a job applicant for their age or gender, screening a social networking site before hiring not only makes these factors salient, but may also provide information on more justifiable reasons for refusing to hire an applicant. Tattoos are one such potential reason - the stigma against tattoos leads to negative perceptions of a tattooed individual. This stigma is especially detrimental to women, potential due to the fact that tattoos are not stereotypically possessed by women. In addition, tattoos have grown in popularity, particularly among young people. Thus, tattoos on an older person may be viewed more negatively than on a younger person, as though the older person was attempting to pass as younger. The purpose of this study is to examine how the age, gender, and tattoo stigma affect perceptions of a job applicant. I propose, firstly, that tattooed applicants will receive more negative evaluations than non-tattooed applicants. Next, it is expected that women with tattoos will be subject to more negative evaluations than men with tattoos. In addition, I propose that older women will receive the most negative evaluations when they have a tattoo, particularly in comparison with the older men. Results showed that while

possession of a tattoo did not have a main effect on evaluations, there was a significant-Gender x Tattoo interaction on perceptions of the applicant's ability to manage and likelihood of being hired; in that tattooed male applicants were given more positive evaluations compared to tattooed female applicants, while there was no differences between non-tattooed applicants of either gender. In addition, I found a three way interaction between an applicant's age, gender, and if they had a tattoo, in that older women with a tattoo were less likely to be hired when they possessed a tattoo. These findings not only illustrate another way in which discrimination against a group may be justified by a controllable stigma, but also show the negative consequences of showing certain types of information on social networking sites.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Overview

Online social networking sites (SNS) are quickly becoming an ubiquitous part of society not only in the United States, but across the globe. However, the availability of a person's personal information - including age, gender, appearance, and marital status - causes concerns related to hiring practices in employment settings (McGrath & Fuller, 2009). Information available online, which may not be available through a paper resume or application, can influence hiring decisions and lead to discrimination. Uncontrollable stigmas, such as age and gender, become more salient when looking at a person's online profile. While it is not only illegal but also socially unacceptable to discriminate against job applicants because of their age or gender, the suppression of this bias may lead to discrimination when there are more "justifiable" reasons. One socially justifiable reason for discrimination would be the presence of a controllable stigma, such as a tattoo.

### Social Networking Sites and Hiring Practices

Social networking sites are an extremely popular way for people to communicate with one another and share information about themselves. Facebook alone has about 15 million users in the United States (*Statistics*).

Information about a particular person can be searched for using their name as well as email addresses and locations, which makes this a viable source of information for employers. A poll done by the National Association of Colleges and Employers found that 26.9% of employers have searched for job applicants on social networking sites (Managing Accounts Payable, 2006). Employers use social networking sites to evaluate candidates for their ability to communicate, likelihood to fit with the company itself, and evidence of drug or alcohol abuse or unprofessional behavior (McGrath & Fuller, 2009).

### Uncontrollable Stigmas

Uncontrollable stigmas are stigmas that are not perceived to be due to the stigmatized individual's choice (e.g., age, race, gender, and sometimes disabilities or illnesses). Uncontrollable stigmas are seen with more pity and desire to help than are those that may have been caused by actions of the individual (Weiner, Perry, & Magnusson, 1988). Many of these categories of uncontrollable stigma are protected by law. In the United States, the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of age, race, and sex, as well as disability (United States Federal Equal Opportunity Committee, 2009).

In addition to legal prohibition, it is also unacceptable to display prejudice against these uncontrollable stigmas for differing motivations. Firstly, one may have internal motivation to avoid displaying prejudice because of internalized

non-prejudiced beliefs (Plant & Devine, 1998). By not displaying prejudice, a person will avoid cognitive dissonance from acting in a manner opposing their egalitarian beliefs. However, even those who explicitly claim to be nondiscriminatory may show unconscious prejudices under the right circumstances. As described in the aversive racism model, discriminatory behavior is more likely to occur when the situation is ambiguous enough that the person's actions cannot be attributed to prejudice (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000). This "masking of discrimination" allows the person to avoid being seen negatively by others for displaying prejudice.

There are also external motivators to avoid appearing prejudiced, such as social contexts or standards held by peers (Plant & Devine, 1998). As with internal motivations, prejudice may still be displayed under certain circumstances. The justification-suppression process of discrimination holds that because directly displaying prejudice is socially unacceptable, the individual will suppress their attitudes; however, it will be displayed in situations where a justification can be made (Crandall, 2003). For example, any weakness shown by an otherwise strong job applicant would provide an acceptable reason to not hire a stigmatized individual. The same weakness, however, would not be equally weighted as a reason to not hire an equally qualified non-stigmatized individual. Consequently, given two people with the same strengths and weaknesses, the stigmatized individual would be less likely to be hired for the weakness than would a non-stigmatized individual. Research has supported this prediction. When

evaluating Black and White college applicants, participants viewed ambiguously qualified Black applicants less favorably than White applicants with the same credentials (Hodson, Dovidio, & Gaertner, 2002). The use of justification to mask discrimination is also seen when people select between male and female employees for important tasks, using stereotypical gender characteristics or their beliefs about the preferences of their superiors to justify discrimination against women (Trentham & Larwood, 1998).

### Gender Discrimination

Despite social and legal deterrents, gender discrimination is still a problem in the workplace. Men are rated as more hireable and more promotable than women with the same credentials (Marlowe et al., 2006). Women are also often relegated to lower positions. Buttner and McEnally (1996) found that even when given the same credentials, women were more likely to be hired for sales positions than accountant positions, whereas the opposite was seen with men. Similarly, Zebrowitz, Tenenbaum, and Goldstein (1991) found that women are more likely to be hired for subordinate positions rather than leadership positions. This pattern was again seen in Petit's (2007) research, which found that while there was not a significant difference between young, childless men and women for lower-level positions, the men were more likely to be hired for administrative work. Discrimination is not seen solely in administrative positions. When comparing positive response rates in advertised positions, women are

discriminated against not only for more prestigious positions, but also in jobs requiring manual labor (Riach & Rich, 1995). In addition to problems in hiring, women who enter leadership positions are subject to the "glass cliff" phenomenon - being placed in undesirable positions that may lead to the woman leaving the job (Haslam & Ryan, 2008). For example, women are rated as more suitable compared to men for a leadership position in a company when it is in economic decline rather than financially stable. Therefore, although women might be hired for higher level positions, these positions may not be as advantageous and hold a greater possibility for failure than do the ones that men tend to get hired for.

### Age Discrimination

Although certain stigmas, such as disability, ethnicity, gender, and age are protected from employment discrimination by law, the social unacceptability of discrimination is not equally distributed across the stigmas. Ageism is more justifiable in employment contexts than are the other stigmas because the elderly are commonly seen as incompetent, though there is no concrete evidence showing a decline of job performance with age (Cuddy & Fiske, 2004). This stereotype of decreased ability with age is, however, commonly held and can justify ageist hiring and employment practices. For example, older people have harder times getting callbacks when applying for jobs (Lahey, 2006) and receive fewer positive responses compared to younger people (Gringart & Helmes,

2001). This effect holds even when accounting for vocational training, positive job attendance, and the need for health insurance, which might make older workers more expensive. Older employees have to send out more applications to get an interview for a job, and attend more interviews to achieve employment (Lahey, 2006). When similar applicants in their mid-20s and late 30s apply for the same position, the younger applicants are chosen more often than are the older (Petit, 2007). Once hired, older workers who are in age discriminatory workplaces are more likely to leave their jobs than those who are in non-discriminatory workplaces (Johnson & Neumark, 2007). Those who leave the ageist job are also less likely to gain employment afterwards, and when they do, are paid lower wages than they were given at the previous job. In fact, after the ages 40-49, the rate of employment begins declining for both men and women (Slack & Jensen, 2008), which may indicate not only the departure of workers from ageist environments, but also their subsequent difficulty in obtaining new employment. Crandall's (2003) justification-suppression model of discrimination provides an explanation for the continuation of ageism in employment settings. Although it is illegal to discriminate against job applicants for their age, it is easy to "justify." The employee may be labeled as 'too experienced' or 'overqualified,' or the job deemed 'too fast-paced' and therefore given to a younger applicant (McMullin & Berger, 2006). Using these justifications rather than overtly stating prejudice against older workers allows human resource managers discriminate without appearing to do so.

One way that older employment-seekers can combat ageism is to engage in strategies that hide their age. It is common for older people, especially women, to attempt to conceal signs of aging (graying hair, skin texture changes, etc.) through the use of dyes, cosmetics, anti-aging products, and even plastic surgery. However, although it may appear that these practices are beneficial by preventing age-related discrimination, they can actually result in greater disliking for the applicant. People who attempt to appear part of a group that is not their own can experience social costs for being an 'impostor'. Indeed, Schoemann and Branscombe (2010) found that older men and women who attempted to appear younger were disliked by younger people more than those who do not attempt to appear younger. This effect occurs because of negative feelings towards one who is trying to pass as a member of an in-group (i.e. being young) to which they do not belong. The findings by Schoemann and Branscombe suggest that attempts by people to appear younger may actually increase rather than decrease the probability of negative outcomes.

### Gendered Ageism

Age and gender interact to form "gendered ageism," where women suffer the most from ageist biases due to the combination of both negative ageist stereotypes and negative gender stereotypes. Older women face underemployment (that is, working less hours than desired) more than do older men (Slack & Jenson, 2008). Duncan and Loretto (2004) found that older women



were more likely to report age discrimination and report they experienced less access to promotions or wage increases than did men. In addition, the researchers also found that the age at which performance is perceived to decline was lower for women than for men. Although protection against age and gender discrimination is granted by law, it is possible that women who face other stigmas, such as being seen as an impostor (Schoemann & Branscombe, 2010) may still face discrimination. This discriminatory treatment might be especially pronounced if they also have "chosen" stigmas that are not protected by law.

### Controllable Stigmas

Stigmatized individuals who are seen as having brought the stigma upon themselves through behavioral means are viewed with more anger and less likability than are those whose stigmas are uncontrollable (Weiner, Perry, & Magnusson, 1988). These responses lead to lower desire to help stigmatized individuals, and could act as justification to discriminate people with uncontrollable stigmas, such as age or gender. Social networking sites provide an opportunity for the activation of discrimination, by providing information about controllable stigmas such as tattoos. A controllable stigma might give reason to discriminate against someone who also has an uncontrollable (and legally protected) stigma. Thus, something like a tattoo might lead to fewer job opportunities for a woman than for a man because he would not be subject to the same lowered evaluation.

## Tattoos

Research has shown that the presence of a tattoo on a person influences the perception of the person in various ways. Wohlrab, Fink, Kappeler, and Brewer (2009a) found that when compared tattooed and non-tattooed virtual humans, those with tattoos were rated higher in thrill seeking, as having more sexual partners, and as more susceptible to boredom. Other studies have shown that visible tattoos and piercings can have a negative effect on how a person is viewed in the workplace. Miller, McGlashan Nichols, and Eure (2009) found that people viewed possible work partners with facial tattoos or piercings as less acceptable for sales position work, or when the benefits of a job, such as tips or commissions, were to be shared between the two people. In addition, Swanger (2007) found in a survey of human resource managers and recruiters, 87 percent of them stated that their company would view a person with visible tattoos or piercings negatively. Perceptions by the consumer vary depending on the type of job a tattooed employee holds. Dean (2010) found that visible tattoos were deemed as inappropriate for those in white-collar positions, but appropriate for those in blue-collar service positions. Respondents rated tattooed workers in white-collar positions as untrustworthy or unsanitary looking.

Women in particular seem to be judged more negatively for having tattoos. Women with tattoos are seen as less healthy than those without, though tattoos

have the opposite effect for men (Wohlrab, Fink, Kappeler, & Brewer, 2009b). Resenhoeft, Villa, and Wiseman (2008) found that participants rating a photo of a woman with a tattoo rated the woman as less attractive, less intelligent, and less caring than did those rating the same photo without a tattoo. In addition, Swami and Furnham (2007) found that drawings of women with tattoos were rated as less attractive, more promiscuous, and as having higher alcohol consumption than those without. Wohlrab et al. (2009b) proposed that tattoos act as a quality signal for potential mates: for men, they signal health and masculinity, but for women, they actually decrease perceptions of health while not affecting ratings of femininity.

The recent prevalence of tattoos appears to be due to an increasing popularity among younger people. Nearly a quarter of Americans have at least one tattoo, with 36% of those aged 18-29 possessing a tattoo. However, only 15% of those aged 41-51 years old have a tattoo (Laumann & Derick, 2006). Whereas currently, the rates of tattoos among males and females are similar (Pew Research Center, 2007), tattoos have long been a stereotypically male phenomenon, with increased rates of tattooing among prisoners (Demello, 1993), gangs (Poljac & Burke, 2008), and military personnel (Laumann & Derick, 2006). One might expect then that a woman with a tattoo might experience employment discrimination, especially if she is older and seen as trying to appear younger by engaging in the practice of a younger generation.

## Goals and Predictions

The goal of my research will be to examine whether gender and age jointly affect hiring decisions involving job applicants whose social networking site shows they have a tattoo. With this objective in mind, I developed a research method that asks participants to imagine they are on a hiring committee looking to hire a new employee for a specific job. The participants will review the application of one applicant who responded to the job opening. The application will include a copy of the profile page of the applicant that supposedly was downloaded by the hiring committee chair from Facebook, a popular social networking website. The job materials will be the same across applicants. The picture, however, will vary in whether it depicts a young man, young woman, middle-aged man, or middle-aged woman. Half the time, the picture will reveal that the applicant has a large tattoo on his/her forearm and half the time there will be no tattoo present. After reviewing the application and the Facebook profile, participants will assess the applicant's positive traits and "hireability."

I propose first, that tattooed applicants will receive more negative ratings than those without, following previous research showing a stigma against those with tattoos. Next, I expect that older women will be judged more harshly for having a tattoo than will younger women or men of either age. This prediction is based on the impostor hypothesis, which holds that those who attempt to appear part of a group that is not their own will experience social costs for being an "impostor". Recall, Schoemann and Branscombe (2010) found that younger

people disliked older men and women who attempted to appear younger than those who did not attempt to appear younger. I expect that, similarly, a middle-aged woman with a tattoo may be seen as trying to appear younger and will be judged more harshly than will a similarly tattooed young woman, who is following an age-appropriate trend. The young and middle aged men are not expected to show such an effect, as tattoos have been acceptable for men for a much longer period of time. In addition, because attractive individuals are more likely to receive a positive hiring evaluation (Marlowe, Schneider, & Nelson, 1996), I propose that tattooed women will show a decrease in perceived "hireability" compared to tattooed men because tattoos are thought to make a woman less attractive but indicate health and virility in men (Wohlrab et al., 2009b).

## CHAPTER TWO

### PILOT STUDY

#### Introduction

To assess the procedure and materials, a pilot study was conducted at California State University, San Bernardino as an initial test of the materials and hypothesis. The study followed a 2(Gender of Applicant: male or female) x 2(Age of Applicant: twenties or forties) between-subjects design. The dependent variables studied were impressions of the applicant, hireability, and perceived positive traits.

#### Method

##### Participants

Participants consisted of 85 female students recruited via California State University, San Bernardino's SONA program for extra credit. Once participants signed up for the study on SONA, they were directed to SurveyGizmo, an online survey program. The median age of the participants was 22 years. The sample was 40% European-American/White, 38.8% Hispanic/Latino, 16.5% African-American/Black, and 1.2% each Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander and Other.

## Materials

The materials included an informed consent (see Appendix A) and instructions for the participant with a job description for the position to be filled (see Appendix B). This description was followed by the screenshot of a Facebook profile containing the photo of one of four applicants (see Appendix C) along with the resume of the applicant and a resume summary from the interviewer (see Appendix D). Following the stimulus materials was a survey that contained measures assessing the desirability of hiring the applicant, the manipulations checks, and demographic questions (see Appendix E). The study materials concluded with a debriefing statement (see Appendix F).

The study instructions informed participants that either Robert (male applicant condition) or Rebecca (female applicant condition) Smith had applied for a bank branch manager position at Wells Fargo. It indicated that the applicant had been interviewed, his/her resume reviewed, and an online search conducted to find the Facebook profile page shown. A copy of the page was added to the applicant's file along with a summary of the reference letters and interview performance. This file was then forwarded to the Human Resources department. The participant was instructed to review these materials and rate the applicant to make a final hiring decision.

The job description described what was looked for in a successful applicant, such as gaining and maintaining the customer base, increasing profits on target, supervising staff, analyzing reports, and working with professional

agencies. This information was followed with a description of the working hours and attire required as well as the skills desired in potential applicants, such as management experience, customer service ability, social skills, and abilities such as cooperation and problem solving.

The Facebook page included a picture of one of four models (young man, young woman, middle-aged man, or middle-aged woman) wearing a t-shirt in an advertisement found on Nordstroms.com. Using Adobe Photoshop, the pictures were manipulated to place the same tattoo on the forearms of each model and to change the background of each picture to be identical. The resume indicated the applicant met the requirements posed in the job description, and the resume summary reinforced this information along with some slightly negative feedback (i.e., "applicant was overconfident"). The first sections of the survey contained three measures assessing the desirability of hiring the candidate. The first measure assessed impressions of the applicant and consisted of 14 items, such as "This potential candidate seems to be responsible" ( $\alpha=.76$ ). The second measure contained four items measuring the "hireability" of the candidate, for example, "I would be willing to discuss future career plans with candidate" ( $\alpha=.71$ ). Next was an eight item measure of positive traits, such as "I think the candidate seems to have a good personality" ( $\alpha=.98$ ). Responses to all these measures were on 7-point scales with high scores meaning greater agreement with the statements presented. The impression measures were adapted from Kaiser and Miller (2001). Participants were then asked how professional or



unprofessional they felt tattoos were in the workplace and if they personally had any tattoos. This information was included as potential control variables.

Following these variables were the manipulation checks asking for the gender and age of the applicant that participants had reviewed as well as suspicion checks asking what they believed was the purpose of the study. The survey ended with demographics questions.

### Procedure

Participants were given a link to SurveyGizmo to complete the study. After reading the informed consent, they were directed to a page that provided the instructions for the study. Following this page, the participants viewed a description of the job position, the Facebook profile page containing a photograph of the person, the resume, and resume summary. This information was followed by the survey, which contained all the measures, manipulation checks, demographic questions, and suspicion checks. After participants completed the survey they were provided with a debriefing statement that explained the actual purpose of the study.

### Results

Data was first screened for failed manipulation checks. Forty-six participants were removed for selecting the incorrect age of applicant, for selecting that the applicant did not have a tattoo, and/or for choosing the

incorrect gender of the applicant. The remaining 39 participants were used for the data analysis.

There was no significant main effect for either age (young or middle age) or gender in ratings of impressions of applicant, hireability, or positive traits of applicant. In addition, there was no significant interaction between age of the applicant and gender for hireability or positive traits. However, there was a trend towards an interaction between age and gender for impressions of applicants,  $F(1, 35) = 2.34, p = .14, \eta^2 = .06$ . Older women were rated most favorably ( $M = 4.00, SD = 1.72$ ), whereas older men were rated the least favorably ( $M = 2.52, SD = 1.23$ ) compared to older women, young women ( $M = 3.19, SD = 1.69$ ) and young men ( $M = 3.43, SD = 1.56$ ).

## Discussion

The results of this pilot study reflect the limitations inherent in the study design and implementation. It has been shown that people of both genders favor those from their own gender group in employment contexts (Larwood & Blackmore, 1978), which explains why female participants rated women more highly for the job. In fact, the moderately large effect size suggests that this in-group favoritism may have driven the only significant effect seen in the pilot study. Therefore, in this context, the solely female student sample may not reflect the judgments of a broader population. The number of participants removed from the analyses for not noticing the applicant's tattoo implies that the student sample

used, along with the incentives, may have lead to thoughtless responses. In addition, the high amount of participants dropped due to incorrect answers as to the age of the participant suggests that the particular photographs and social networking profile used were not sufficient to test for an effect of age. People tended to not accurately identify the age of the middle-aged applicants. Furthermore, without a control group containing no tattoo, I am unable to determine what difference the presence of the tattoo has made. A second study was conducted to correct these limitations.

## CHAPTER THREE

### STUDY TWO

#### Introduction

To rectify for the lack of accurate age identification in Experiment 1, the social networking profile was updated to include age as well as other non-relevant information in order to add realism. In addition, the survey was placed online via Amazon's Mechanical Turk to obtain a more diverse sample of both gender and age, and to avoid the limitations of using a student sample. In order to better compare the effects of a visible tattoo, a no-tattoo condition was added to the experiment design:

#### Method

##### Design and Analysis

Study Two was composed of a 2 (Age of Applicant: young or middle aged) x 2 (Tattoo: yes or no) x 2 (Applicant gender: male or female) between-subjects design. New measures of perceptions of candidate, professional image, qualifications, and likelihood of hiring were used that were found to be highly reliable in two studies conducted by Van Campen, Zimmerman, & Garcia (2011). The research was conducted online via a link to SurveyGizmo. Data was analyzed using a 2 x 2 x 2 ANOVA.

## Participants

Participants consisted of 204 U.S. citizens recruited from the Amazon website Mechanical Turk, who were paid 50 cents for their participation. The sample included 68 men and 110 women, with a median age of 30.00 years ( $M = 34.69$ ) and a range of 61 years. The participants were primarily White (74.2%) with 8.4% of the sample being Black, 6.7% Asian, 5.6% Hispanic, 2.2% Native American, and 2.8% indicating Other for their ethnicity.

## Materials

Materials consisted of an updated informed consent (see Appendix G) that reflected the new sampling method and incentives used in this second study. The instructions to the participants as well as the job description from the pilot study were reused in this study. The Facebook profile was changed to include more information about the applicant's interests to improve realism. The resume and resume summary from the pilot study was used again for this study. However, new measures were used in the survey, replacing those used in the pilot.

The Facebook profile, in addition to including non-relevant information about the applicant's interests, included one of eight photographs. These photos varied on whether they portrayed a female or male applicant, a young or middle-aged applicant, and an applicant with or without a tattoo. In actuality, the photographs were all of the same young man, whose image was manipulated with Photoshop CS4 to half the time appear older, be female, and to have a tattoo on his/her forearm (see Appendix H).

The study itself was conducted online through SurveyGizmo, and consisted of three measures of the suitability of the applicant for hire (see Appendix H). The first measure, perceptions of the candidate, consisted of five items, for example, "How competent would you rate the candidate?" ( $\alpha = .84$ ). The second measure assessed the qualifications of the applicant and also contained five items, such as "How qualified do you feel the candidate is based on their educational background?" ( $\alpha = .81$ ). The third measure examined perceptions of the applicant's professional image ("To what extent do you believe the candidate will promote positive image in the workplace?" ( $\alpha = .88$ ). This was followed by a four-question measure of ability to manage others, for example "To what extent do you believe subordinate employees will respect the candidate's authority?" ( $\alpha = .88$ ) and a single item question on recommendation to hire: "How likely would you be to recommend hiring the candidate?". These items followed the same 7-point Likert scales used in the pilot study, with negatively keyed items reverse-scored so that high scores indicated more positive ratings.

These measures were followed with the same items that were used in the pilot study to assess perceived professionalism of tattoos in the workplace, identify whether participants had tattoos, assess effectiveness of the manipulations, check for suspicion, and determine the demographics of the sample. Four attention checks were also included during the survey in order to screen out participants who were not attentive to the material, such as "What position is the applicant applying for?".

### Procedure

The same procedures were followed as in the pilot study, with modifications to the survey design to allow random assignment to each of the eight conditions.

## Results

### Data Screening

A total of 331 participants completed this study. The data was first examined to determine if all participants met the basic requirements for participation. Twelve participants were removed for not being citizens of the United States, and one participant was removed for being under the age of 18 years. Next, 20 participants who had failed the attention checks were removed, as failure of the attention checks indicates a lack of attention paid to the study. Participants who failed two or more of the three manipulation checks were also removed from the data ( $N = 89$ ). Data was then screened for outliers in each of the dependent variables, which were then removed ( $N = 5$ ) for a total of 207 participants in the final data set.

### Measures

All four scales containing more than one item were found to be reliable after analysis, with all Cronbach's  $\alpha$ s  $> .81$ , as specified above. Principal Components Factor analysis with varimax rotation confirmed that each of the four multiple item scales measured a single factor. The zero-order correlations

among dependent variables are reported in Appendix I. All means and standard deviations for measures (by cell) are reported in Appendix J.

### Main Analyses

I first assessed all dependent measures using 2(Participant Gender: Male versus Female) x 2(Tattoo Present: Yes or No) x 2 (Applicant's Gender: Male or Female) x 2 (Applicant's Age: Young or Middle Aged) analyses of variance (ANOVA) to assess whether participant gender interacted with the other independent variables. These analyses produced two significant effects. First, on the measure of personal characteristics, female participants gave significantly higher scores overall ( $M = 30.76$ ,  $SD = .32$ ) compared to male participants ( $M = 29.38$ ,  $SD = .41$ ),  $F(1,199) = 7.02$ ,  $p = .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .04$ . Second, for the applicant's qualifications, there was a significant difference in mean ratings such that as seen in the personal characteristics measure, female participants gave higher ratings of an applicant's qualifications ( $M = 31.22$ ,  $SD = .29$ ) than did male participants ( $M = 29.65$ ,  $SD = .37$ ),  $F(1,199) = 11.19$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .06$ . Given the paucity of effects with the inclusion of participant gender, I collapsed across this variable in the main analyses.

The dependent measures were all subjected first to 2(Tattoo Present: Yes or No) x 2 (Applicant's Gender: Male or Female) x 2 (Applicant's Age: Young or Middle Aged) ANOVAs. Differing degrees of freedom across analyses reflects instances when participants failed to complete a measure. The significance level for all analyses was set at  $p < .05$ , two-tailed. Three-way interactions were



simplified by splitting the data into presence or absence of tattoo and conducting Gender by Age ANOVAs within these two groups of data. Simple effect analyses were conducted to examine planned comparisons within all two-way interactions. I first report comparisons between men and women within each of the Tattoo conditions then follow with comparisons between those with and without tattoos within each gender group.

Ability to manage. The ability to manage measure produced one significant main effect: a main effect of applicant gender,  $F(1, 199) = 4.82, p = .03, \eta^2 = .02$ . Female applicants overall were seen as having lower ability to manage ( $M = 20.95, SD = .44$ ) than were male applicants ( $M = 22.24, SD = .39$ ) though this main effect only explained a small proportion of the variance. There was neither a significant main effect for tattoo status,  $F(1, 199) = 1.41, p = .77$ , or age on the applicant's ability to manage,  $F(1, 199) = .69, p = .84$ .

The analyses also produced a Tattoo x Gender interaction,  $F(1, 199) = 8.24, p = .01, \eta^2 = .04$ . Comparing tattooed applicants by gender, male applicants had significantly higher ratings on their ability to manage ( $M = 23.00, SD = 3.25$ ) than did female applicants ( $M = 20.33, SD = 5.00$ ),  $F(1, 203) = 11.85, p = .001, \eta^2 = .06$ . No differences emerged when comparing non-tattooed male and female applicants,  $F(1, 203) = .09, p = .77$ . For male applicants, having a tattoo led to marginally more positive ratings of their management abilities compared to male applicants without a tattoo ( $M = 21.48, SD = .60$ ),  $F(1, 203) = 3.73, p = .06, \eta^2 = .02$ . There was also a marginally significant difference when comparing female

applicants with ( $M = 20.33$ ,  $SD = 5.00$ ) and without ( $M = 21.72$ ,  $SD = 4.40$ ) a tattoo,  $F(1, 203) = 2.68$ ,  $p = .10$ ,  $\eta^2 = .01$ , such that women with a tattoo tended to be perceived as having less ability to manage than did women without a tattoo.

The analyses also revealed a significant Tattoo x Age interaction,  $F(1, 199) = 5.44$ ,  $p = .02$ ,  $\eta^2 = .03$ . Decomposing this interaction produced only one marginally significant effect. Young applicants with a tattoo ( $M = 22.29$ ,  $SD = 4.05$ ) did not differ on ability to manage from their age-group counterparts without a tattoo ( $M = 21.08$ ,  $SD = 4.49$ ),  $F(1, 203) = 2.39$ ,  $p = .10$ ,  $\eta^2 = .01$ . In addition, male applicants with a tattoo did not differ on ability to manage from male applicants without a tattoo,  $F(1, 203) = .89$ ,  $p = .35$ . For the middle-aged applicants, there was no significant difference between those with and without a tattoo,  $F(1, 203) = 1.36$ ,  $p = .25$ . The two-way Gender x Age and three-way Tattoo x Gender x Age interaction were non-significant,  $F(1, 199) = 1.63$ ,  $p = .20$  and  $F(1, 199) = 1.10$ ,  $p = .30$ , respectively.

Perceptions of professional image. There was a marginally significant main effect for possession of a tattoo,  $F(1, 199) = 3.20$ ,  $p = .08$ ,  $\eta^2 = .02$ . Tattooed applicants overall were given lower ratings on professional image ( $M = 23.86$ ,  $SD = .48$ ) than were non-tattooed applicants ( $M = 25.14$ ,  $SD = .48$ ). The perceptions of the applicant's professional image showed a significant main effect for the applicant's gender,  $F(1, 199) = 5.29$ ,  $p = .02$ ,  $\eta^2 = .03$ . As seen in the ability to manage results, female applicants received more negative evaluations of their professional image ( $M = 23.67$ ,  $SD = .53$ ) compared to the male applicants ( $M =$

25.32,  $SD = .48$ ). There were no other significant effects, all  $F_s < 1.99$  and  $p_s > .16$ .

These two main effects showed a significant Gender x Tattoo interaction,  $F(1,199)=7.70$ ,  $p=.01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .04$ . Comparing tattooed applicants by gender, male applicants had significantly higher ratings on their professional image ( $M = 25.69$ ,  $SD = 4.72$ ) than did female tattooed applicants ( $M = 22.31$ ,  $SD = 5.20$ ),  $F(1, 203) = 12.98$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .12$ . There were no significant differences found when comparing non-tattooed male and female applicants,  $F(1, 203) = .11$ ,  $p = .72$  or when comparing male applicants with and without a tattoo,  $F(1, 203) = .59$ ,  $p = .45$ . For female applicants, having a tattoo led to more negative ratings of their professional image compared to female applicants without a tattoo ( $M = 25.34$ ,  $SD = 5.12$ ),  $F(1, 203) = 8.61$ ,  $p = .004$ ,  $\eta^2 = .04$ .

Personal characteristics. There were no significant main effects for the applicant's tattoo status, gender, or age on ratings of the applicant's personal characteristics, all  $F_s < 1$ ,  $p_s > .38$ . There was, however, a significant Tattoo x Gender interaction on ratings of the applicant's personal characteristics,  $F(1,199)= 5.12$ ,  $p = .03$ ,  $\eta^2 = .03$ . There was only one marginally significant comparison. Male tattooed applicants had marginally more positive ratings of their personal characteristics ( $M = 30.79$ ,  $SD = .44$ ) compared to male applicants without a tattoo ( $M = 29.64$ ,  $SD = .51$ ),  $F(1,203) = 3.02$ ,  $p = .08$ ,  $\eta^2 = .02$ . There were no significant differences found when contrasting female applicants with and without a tattoo,  $F(1, 203) = 1.72$ ,  $p = .19$ , when comparing non-tattooed

male and female applicants,  $F(1, 203) = 2.21, p = .14$ , nor when comparing tattooed male applicants to tattooed female applicants,  $F(1, 203) = 2.42, p = .12$ .

No significant Tattoo x Age or Gender x Age interactions were seen,  $F(1, 199) = 1.09, p = .30$  and  $F(1, 199) = .29, p = .67$ , respectively.

Applicant qualifications. There were no significant effects on applicant qualifications for the applicant's tattoo status, gender, or age, nor were there any significant interactions between the three independent variables, all  $F$ s  $< 2.07, p$ s  $> .15$ .

Likelihood to hire. There was a marginally significant main effect for the applicant's gender on ratings of likelihood to hire,  $F(1, 199) = 2.93, p = .09, \eta^2 = .02$ . Female applicants received lower likelihood to hire ( $M = 5.63, SD = .12$ ) compared to male applicants ( $M = 5.90, SD = .11$ ). No significant main effect was found for the applicant's age or the presence of a tattoo, both  $F$ s  $< 1, p$ s  $> .05$ .

The main effect of gender was qualified by a significant interaction between the applicant's gender and possession of a tattoo,  $F(1, 199) = 8.16, p = .01, \eta^2 = .04$ . For tattooed applicants, men received more positive ratings ( $M = 6.06, SD = 1.00$ ) than did comparable women ( $M = 5.41, SD = 1.31$ ),  $F(1, 203) = 9.18, p = .003, \eta^2 = .04$ . There was no significant differences between non-tattooed applicants of either gender,  $F(1, 203) = .16, p = .69$ . The difference between tattooed and non-tattooed male applicants was also non-significant,  $F(1, 203) = 2.08, p = .15$ . Female applicants without a tattoo, however, received marginally

higher ratings of likelihood to hire ( $M = 5.84$ ,  $SD = 1.24$ ) compared to female applicants with a tattoo ( $M = 5.41$ ,  $SD = 1.31$ ),  $F(1, 203) = 3.31$ ,  $p = .07$ ,  $\eta^2 = .02$ .

The analyses also revealed an Age x Tattoo interaction,  $F(1, 199) = 5.44$ ,  $p = .02$ ,  $\eta^2 = .03$ . The tattooed young applicants received marginally higher likelihood to hire ( $M = 5.94$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ ) than did tattooed middle-aged applicants ( $M = 5.57$ ,  $SD = 1.39$ ),  $F(1, 203) = 2.90$ ,  $p = .09$ ,  $\eta^2 = .01$ . There was no significant difference between young applicants with or without a tattoo,  $F(1, 203) = 1.30$ ,  $p = .26$ , between middle-aged applicants with or without a tattoo,  $F(1, 203) = 2.06$ ,  $p = .15$ , or between young applicants without a tattoo and middle-aged applicants without a tattoo,  $F(1, 203) = .88$ ,  $p = .35$ .

As seen in Appendix K, both the two-way interactions were qualified by a significant three-way interaction between the applicant's age, gender, and possession of a tattoo,  $F(1, 199) = 5.13$ ,  $p = .03$ ,  $\eta^2 = .03$ . After splitting the data by presence versus absence of a tattoo, I ran two Gender x Age ANOVAs.

For non-tattooed applicants, there was no significant interaction between age (young or middle-aged) and gender,  $F(1, 87) = 1.17$ ,  $p = .33$ . For tattooed applicants, however, there was a marginally significant interaction between age and gender,  $F(1, 112) = 5.53$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .13$ . I then decomposed this interaction and examined the simple effects first within gender then within age.

Comparing within the tattoo condition, the young female applicant has significantly greater likelihood to hire ( $M = 5.74$ ,  $SD = 1.06$ ) than the middle-aged female applicant, ( $M = 4.9$ ,  $SD = 1.52$ ),  $F(1, 112) = 11.66$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .09$ . In

addition, the middle-aged male applicant also has significantly greater likelihood to hire ( $M = 6.00$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ ) than the middle-aged female applicant,  $F(1,112) = 6.83$ ,  $p = .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .06$ . There is no significant differences between the young and middle-aged male applicants,  $F(1,112) = .18$ ,  $p = .67$ , nor between the young applicants of either gender,  $F(1,112) = 1.82$ ,  $p = .18$ .

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of the current research was to analyze the interaction between age, gender, and possession of a tattoo, and how these factors influence perceptions of a job applicant whose Facebook profile is viewed during the hiring process. It was hypothesized that possession of a tattoo would lead to negative perceptions of the individual, regardless of age or gender. This hypothesis was not supported by the results - although the pattern of results did follow the predicted pattern a marginally significant effect was seen only for perceptions of professional image. It was also hypothesized that tattoo possession would affect men and women differently, and this prediction was supported. For measures of the applicant's professional image, ability to manage, personal characteristics, and the likelihood of hiring, women received more negative ratings when they had a tattoo compared to when they did not, whereas tattooed men actually received more positive ratings compared to men without a tattoo.

The predicted three-way interaction between age, gender, and tattoo status was also seen, but only for the likelihood to hire measure. Middle-aged women with a tattoo received the lowest evaluations of likelihood to hire compared to middle-aged women without a tattoo, young women with a tattoo, and middle-aged men with a tattoo. For non-tattooed applicants, no significant

differences in means were found among the four Age x Gender conditions. The lack of differences here suggests that, without a tattoo, there is no discrimination seen towards women or older applicants. Following the justification-suppression model (Crandall, 2003) and the aversive racism model (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2003), this is to be expected if sexist and ageist beliefs are being suppressed from expression when there is no unprotected or controllable stigma present (for example, a tattoo) to justify discrimination. However, for tattooed applicants, differences are seen among the four conditions. For the ability to manage, professional image, and likelihood to hire measures, the middle-aged woman received the lowest evaluations. Although this set of findings is only significant in the likelihood to hire, the means for the other two measures follows the same pattern. The lack of discrimination in the likelihood to hire a young woman with a tattoo indicates that the discrimination against the women with tattoos in the current study was largely driven by the woman's age; that is, the lowered likelihood to hire the woman was primarily due to more negative perceptions of the middle-aged, tattooed woman. Therefore, gender discrimination was not justified by the presence of a tattoo; rather, it was gendered ageism that was present, and this discrimination was justified by the presence of a controllable, unprotected stigma - the tattoo. The similarity in the means among all the conditions other than the tattooed middle-aged woman condition further supports this claim. The tattoo might not have justified discrimination across both groups because it was not seen as a stigma in the young woman. Tattoos are currently



popular among Western young adults; thus, it is normative for a young American woman to have a tattoo. A middle-aged woman is not likely to be seen as belonging within the group to which the trend applies. Rather, she is part of an age group where tattoos are uncommon in women (Laumann & Derick, 2006). This stigma can then provide justification to discriminate against a woman who both is middle-aged and has a tattoo.

Another explanation for the findings for likelihood to hire (and the pattern of findings for ability to manage and professional image) is that a person who appear to be trying to pass as a member of group to which they do not belong are subject to more negative evaluations, as proposed by Schoemann and Branscombe (2010). Tattoos, as a youth trend, could signal an attempt to pass as being younger, especially by middle-aged women because acceptance of women with tattoos might be limited to those who are young enough to be seen as legitimately part of the new trend. Because tattoos are a stereotypically male phenomenon (Demello, 1993; Laumann & Derick, 2006; Poljac & Burke, 2008), middle-aged men are unlikely to be similarly be perceived as "passing." My findings that age only affected ratings of the female but not male applicant with a tattoo are consistent with the possibility that middle-aged women received lower likelihood of hiring ratings because they were seen as "imposters" trying to pass as being younger.

Ratings of the applicant's qualifications and personal characteristics did not differ due to the presence of a tattoo, age, or gender. As all eight conditions

used the same background materials for the applicant, it can be expected that ratings on these two measures would not differ between conditions. Past research on the shifting standards model shows that stereotypes and discrimination tend to be less evident in subjective ratings (e.g., ratings of qualifications) of individuals rather than in the distribution of objective outcomes (e.g., if the individual will be hired) (Biernat, 2003). This is potentially due to lower minimum standards for women compared to men. For example, when evaluating job candidates, people are willing to give equal (or even more) positive performance ratings of a woman relative to a man. They are, however, likely to give the same woman a lower recommendation to be hired and suggest a lower starting wage for her than her male counterpart, as the subjective rating of her performance is relative to other women, and not a between-gender comparison. The lack of gender differences in qualifications and personal characteristics could potentially suggest that while discrimination against women might be expected, because these two measures are subjective judgments that do not require cross-group comparison, discrimination is not seen.

Previous literature on tattoo stigma suggests that tattooed applicants should receive negative evaluations; however, this outcome was not found in this particular study. For example, recent studies have found that tattoos are perceived negatively by hiring managers (Swanger, 2007) and for those in higher-level positions (Dean, 2010). Although for the professional image measure a trend was seen in the direction of the previous research, this was not

the case for the other measures. The lack of an effect in this study could be explained by the nature of the sample, which consisted of untrained Internet workers rather than hiring managers or people in higher-level positions. Hiring managers may be more sensitive to stereotypes against tattooed workers and how these stereotypes may negatively impact perceptions of their company. Another difference between the current and past research could involve how the information was presented. For example, the Dean (2010) study involved participants rating hypothetical scenarios from text, rather than viewing images then judging the person. Perhaps when physically seeing the whole person, the presence of a tattoo can actually have less effect on people's judgments than when reading about its presence, which would put focus on only that physical aspect of the individual. Moreover, Dean (2010) argues that in order to negate the activation of negative tattoo stereotypes, tattooed employees should provide personal information as well as positive performance information. The inclusion of a resume, references, and personal interests in the Facebook profile in this study may have done just that, preventing activation of a negative tattoo stereotype.

This study contradicts previous studies showing hiring discrimination against women in general (Buttner & McEnally, 1996; Petit, 2007; Zebrowitz, Tenenbaum, & Goldstein, 1991). Although I found a main effect of gender for some measures, these findings were mostly due to the negative evaluation of the middle-aged woman with a tattoo. Not only was there not a general effect of

discrimination against all female applications, the same tattoo did not act as justification to discriminate against the younger woman. The lack of gender discrimination in my study is possibly due to the job position used. There has been some research showing that women are in fact not discriminated against for lower level management positions; rather, it is the more prestigious positions that they are now being discriminated against - the glass ceiling effect (Hoobler, Lemon, & Wayne, 2011).

In addition to negative reactions due to gendered ageism or the perceptions of passing, the outcomes for likelihood to hire and the similar pattern seen in ability to manage as well as professional image could also be explained by research concerning the effects of attractiveness and stereotypicality - how individuals fit the stereotypes of their group. The presence of a tattoo has been shown to decrease the attractiveness of women (Swami, 2007; Wohlrab et al., 2009b) but does not have a negative impact on men (Wohlrab, 2009b). More attractive candidates are preferred across genders; however, attractive men receive the most preference in hiring decisions. Whereas more experienced managers show less gender bias, unattractive women have a disadvantage in hiring suitability compared to attractive women as well as to either level of attractiveness in men (Marlowe, Schneider, & Nelson, 1996). The results might indicate that for younger women, a tattoo - even a large one - does not have a significant effect on attractiveness, but it will have an effect for middle-aged women. The four base photographs used in this study were all the same person,

with age and gender manipulated, so it can be presumed that the attractiveness for each condition was roughly equal. However, a limitation to this study is the exclusion of an initial attractiveness rating of the four base photographs before data collection.

One caveat to the limitation above is the fact that age also has an effect on attractiveness. Older faces are rated as less attractive than are younger faces (McLellan & McKelvie, 1993). There is a difference by gender: the decline in attractiveness is greater in older women than it is in older men (McLellan & McKelvie, 1993). It is possible that, no matter what, the older woman would be seen as less attractive than the older man and either of the younger applicants. Older women, then, are subject to multiple factors including decreased attractiveness due to the presence of a tattoo (Wohlrab et al., 2009b) and their age (McLellan & McKelvie, 1993). It could be expected that younger women will be subject to decreased attractiveness due to the presence of a tattoo; however, this was not reflected in the results. It is possible that the prevalence of tattoos among young adults may negate the effects on attractiveness for the younger woman, whereas this would not occur for the older woman.

Stereotypicality might also explain the finding in the current study showing discrimination against the older woman with a tattoo. Tyler and McCullough (2009) found that women whose resumes indicate non-stereotypical traits tend to be evaluated more negatively by men. Assertive males were most likely to be hired; whereas, assertive females are the least (Buttner & McEnally, 1996).

Moreover, it has been found that both men and women who do not conform to their gender norms are seen negatively, with lower evaluations and perceptions of lowered mental health compared to those who do conform (Costrich, Feinstein, Kidder, Marecek, & Pascale, 1975). Having non-stereotypical gender traits often results in negative evaluations across genders, which can reduce the appearance of suitability for a particular job. Tattoos are more common among stereotypically male groups (Demello, 1993; Laumann & Derick, 2006; Poljac & Burke, 2008), which makes tattooed women counter-stereotypical; in addition, tattoos more common among young adults (Laumann & Derick, 2006), making middle-aged people with tattoos also counter-stereotypical. Middle-aged tattooed women could then be perceived as rebelling against not one, but two stereotypes, causing more negative evaluations than those who are counter-stereotypical to only one category. The lack of negative effects seen for the tattooed young woman could be explained by the prevalence of tattoos among young people of both genders: it is no longer counter-stereotypical for a young woman to have a tattoo, therefore, no effect was seen.

In sum, the results of this study could be explained from a combination of effects due to age, gender, and presence of a tattoo. That is, the older woman with a tattoo could be subject to more negative evaluations due to decreased attractiveness and counter-stereotypicality because of both her age and the tattoo. These two possibilities would need to be explored more fully in future studies to determine specifically what effect attractiveness and counter-

stereotypicality play in discrimination against middle-aged women with tattoos. It is possible that the presence of a tattoo leads to decreased evaluations caused by a decrease in attractiveness as well as a perception of counter-stereotypicality.

There are several possible limitations to the interpretation of my results. This study would be better performed by using actual hiring managers rather than Internet workers for participants. Indeed, past research shows that those with hiring experience tend to be less biased in terms of both attractiveness (Marlowe, Schneider, & Nelson, 1996) and gender (Duehr & Bono, 2006) compared to student samples. Therefore, the expected outcomes of this study may not accurately reflect real-world hiring practices, as the less experienced sample likely showed more extreme biases than would have human resource personnel during an actual hiring process. This study is also limited by the self-selected nature of the participants - only participants with access to the Internet and a Mechanical Turk account could participate in this study. Because of this, my sample may also not indicate the extent to which age, gender, and tattoo stigma interact to affect the hiring judgments of those with lower socioeconomic status who would not possess a computer or Internet access. In addition, the large amount of participants who failed two or more manipulation checks reflects a limitation of the sample and/or procedures used. Downs et al. (2009) found that 38.94% of Mechanical Turk workers do not provide thoughtful, attentive answers while completing a task, and proposes a screening method to reduce the

percentage of inattentive workers. The presence of various manipulation and attention checks in this study may have simply screened out these inattentive workers.

The results of this study provide insights not only into how tattoos may differentially affect job applicants depending upon their gender and age, but also provides support for the justification model of discrimination in relation to controllable versus uncontrollable stigmas. A practical implication of this study is the influence a social networking page may have on hiring decisions. Whereas it is known that companies are increasingly screening job applicants using social networking sites, my research illustrates potentially negative consequences for the applicant. With this information, it would be wise to advise people, particularly older women, to be cautious of what is posted on their profiles – even if it is simply a picture of a new tattoo.

Further investigation is needed to determine more conclusively what role attractiveness plays in the display of stigma against tattooed job applicants. In addition, the role of stereotypicality can be investigated more thoroughly by examining the effects caused by the type of job one is applying for, or the rater's perceptions of gender stereotypes and tattoo stigma. To test how being viewed as an impostor may have had an effect, a direct measure of this could be added in future studies. In addition, as women may not endure as much discrimination in middle-management positions, using a higher-level position may show gender discrimination in the presence of a tattoo, as well as gendered ageism. Other



future directions could examine if and when tattoo stigma may negatively impact men (for example, contrasting a blue collar position with a highly professional one) or how the location and size of a tattoo may affect perceptions, based on its perceived masculinity or femininity. To conclude, more work is needed to understand how the visibility of tattoos on social networking sites might affect employment opportunities for middle-aged women, as well as other groups of people.

APPENDIX A  
INFORMED CONSENT

## Informed Consent

You are invited to participate in a study designed to investigate possible hiring techniques used by potential employers. This study is being conducted by students from Psych 434 as part of their course requirements under the supervision of Dr. Donna Garcia, Assistant Professor of Psychology, at California State University, San Bernardino. The Department of Psychology Institutional Review Board Sub-committee of California State University, San Bernardino, has approved this study and a copy of the official Psychology IRB stamp of approval should appear on this consent form.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this study is to investigate recent hiring practices by employers in which they look at potential employee's social network site profile pictures to make employment assessments.

**DESCRIPTION:** Participants will view a photograph and résumé of a potential employee, as well as a brief job description. Upon reviewing this information, they will then be asked to complete a survey containing questions regarding their opinions of the potential employee.

**PARTICIPATION:** Participation is voluntary; refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the participant is otherwise entitled. Participants may also discontinue participation at any time or refuse to answer any questions without penalty or loss of benefits.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality of any identifying information that is obtained in this study. Your name will not be associated in any way with the research findings. Records identifying the participant will be maintained in a password-protected computer. Your responses can only be accessed on this computer by the researchers listed above, who will not see your name when they access your information. Your responses will be purged from the computer seven years after publication of the research.

**DURATION:** Altogether, the research should take approximately 40 minutes.

**RISKS:** Risks are minimal. Any discomfort should be no greater than what you would experience in similar everyday experiences.

**BENEFITS:** Participation may not benefit you directly, but we believe that the information from this study will help us gain a better understanding of people's beliefs, values, and attitudes pertaining to the workplace.

**COMPENSATION:** You will be given 2 units of extra credit for your participation.

**CONTACT:** If you have any questions or concerns about this research, or wish to learn about the results, please contact the Study Supervisor, Dr. Donna Garcia, Assistant Professor of Psychology, California State University, San Bernardino. Email: [dmgarcia@csusb.edu](mailto:dmgarcia@csusb.edu)

**IRB APPROVAL NUMBER:** H10FA17

*By placing an X in the space below, I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and that I understand the nature and purpose of this study, and I freely*

...  
...  
**consent to participate. I also acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age.**

...

...

**APPENDIX B**  
**PARTICIPANT INSTRUCTIONS**

Candidate Robert/Rebecca Smith applied for a Bank Branch Manager position at Wells Fargo. After interviewing and reviewing Robert/Rebecca's résumé, and thanking her for applying for the position, the interviewer ensured the applicant that the hiring committee would be making a decision by the end of the week. Following the interview, the employer searched for Robert/Rebecca on various social networking websites. The employer found his/her profile on one site. After viewing the photo, the employer printed out the social network site picture, attached it to Robert/Rebecca's file, summarized the candidate's reference letters and interview performance, and forwarded the candidate's file to the Human Resource Hiring Committee.

***You, as a member of the hiring committee, are required to review the application and rate the applicant on various aspects to come to a final hiring decision. You are provided with the job description, the photo printed from the social networking site, as well as the applicant's résumé and a summary of her reference letters and interview performance.***

Advertisement for Position:

As a Bank Manager, the successful candidate will overlook the running of an entire branch or a number of small branches. The successful candidate will be responsible for bringing in customers and boosting the bank's profits. This role will involve setting targets and making sure that they are met, motivating and

developing staff, keeping the bank to a high standard, and dealing with customer complaints. As head of the bank, the successful candidate will create and analyze management information and reports, which are then given to branch staff and head office. The successful candidate will also work closely with local chambers of commerce, development agencies, and other professionals such as solicitor's accountants and real estate agents. In addition, in some branches there may be also a separate business manager who will answer to the successful candidate.

**Hours & Environment:**

Monday-Friday, will require some Saturday mornings

9:00am-5:00pm

Travel may be required

Driver's License Essential

Professional Business Attire

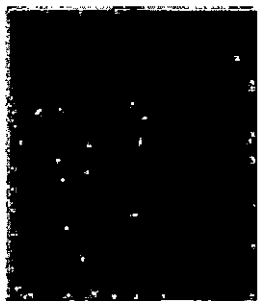
**Skills & Interests**

- 2+ years experience in Management, ideally within the financial sector
- Ability to lead and motivate staff and meet targets
- Marketing, sales, and computer technology qualifications
- General business knowledge of local economy
- Customer service, fact and confidentiality is required



- Ability to communicate effectively and build long-term working relationships
- Ability to negotiate, solve problems, and make effective decisions
- High levels of integrity and honesty
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Ability to adapt to change
- Strong articulate and language skills required

APPENDIX C  
STUDY 1 STIMULUS PHOTOS



Robert Smith [Add as Friend](#)

Wall Info

People who aren't friends with Robert see only some of his profile information. If you know Robert personally, send him a message or add him as a friend.

About Me

Basic info Sex Male

Send Robert a Message

Report/Block this Person

Share

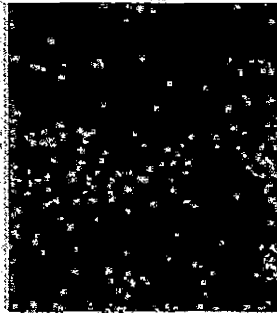
Create an Ad

You have removed this ad. Why didn't you like it? Undo

- Uninteresting
- Misleading
- Offensive
- Repetitive
- Other


You have removed this ad. Why didn't you like it? Undo

- Uninteresting
- Misleading
- Offensive
- Repetitive
- Other



Robert Smith [+1 Add as Friend](#)

[Wait](#) [Info](#)

 People who aren't friends with Robert see only some of his profile information. If you know Robert personally, send him a message or add him as a friend.

About Me

Basic Info    Sex:    Male

[Send Robert a Message](#)

[Report/Block this Person](#)

[Share](#)

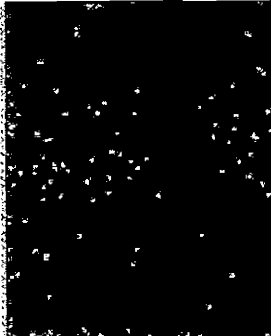
Create an Ad

You have removed this ad. Why didn't you like it? [Undo](#)

- Uninteresting
- Misleading
- Offensive
- Repetitive
- Other

You have removed this ad. Why didn't you like it? [Undo](#)

- Uninteresting
- Misleading
- Offensive
- Repetitive
- Other



Rebecca Smith [Add as Friend](#)

Wall Info

People who aren't friends with Rebecca see only some of her profile information. If you know Rebecca personally, send her a message or add her as a friend.

About Me

Work Info Sex: Female

Report/Block this Person

Share

Create an Ad

You have removed this ad. Why didn't you like it? Undo

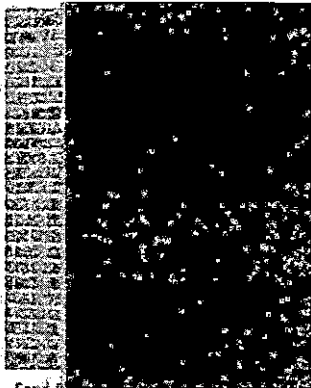
- Uninteresting
- Misleading
- Offensive
- Repetitive
- Other

You have removed this ad. Why didn't you like it? Undo

- Uninteresting
- Misleading
- Offensive
- Repetitive
- Other

You have removed this ad. Why didn't you like it? Undo

- Uninteresting



Rebecca Smith [Add as Friend](#)

Wall Info

People who aren't friends with Rebecca see only some of her profile information. If you know Rebecca personally, send her a message or add her as a friend.

About Me

Public Info Sex: Female

Send Message

Report/Block this Person

[Share](#)

Create an Ad

You have removed this ad. Why didn't you like it? Undo

- Uninteresting
- Misleading
- Offensive
- Repetitive
- Other

You have removed this ad. Why didn't you like it? Undo

- Uninteresting
- Misleading
- Offensive
- Repetitive
- Other

You have removed this ad. Why didn't you like it? Undo

-

APPENDIX D  
RESUME INFORMATION

**Rebecca/Robert Smith**

1503 [REDACTED] Street • San Bernardino, CA 92407 • (909) [REDACTED] •

[REDACTED]@gmail.com

**PROFILE**

Well-qualified and results-oriented Banking Professional with over 5 years of successful experience in positions of increasing responsibility and duties. Top-performer with track record of consistently meeting or exceeding sales goals and customer expectations. Skilled at educating customers on banking products and recommending best options that meet their short-term and long-term needs.

Team player with polished communication skills: verbal, written, interpersonal, presentations, and rapport building.

**CAREER PROGRESSION**

**Bank of America, Los Angeles, CA**

**2007-**

**Present**

*Assistant Banking Manager*

• High profile management position accountable for soliciting business accounts and developing strategic alliances with clientele.



- Develop tactics to increase assets and profitability within a territory.
- Devise and implement innovative marketing principles and promotional sales events for commercial projects to further support financial growth.
- Build rapport with net-worth individuals and corporate clients with regard to investment opportunities, risk analysis, and monetary returns.
- Cross-sell banking services and products to clientele.
- Knowledgeable in staffing modules, and scheduling sales team/service team.
- Developed a strategic marketing campaign targeting accountants, attorneys, and medical professionals which has generated substantial referrals.
- Developed innovated sales strategies that increased teller referrals within the branch division.
- Created valuable community relationships

**Mission Federal Credit Union, San Diego, CA**

**2005-2007**

*Personal Senior Banker*

- Generated new business through presentation of bank products to customers and follow-up.
- Provided loan counseling to clients, reviewed overdrafts for branch and created investment portfolio.

- Prepared month-end reports for managers and helped identify and resolve any problems that occurred.
- Trained new employees and played key role during several banking conversions and operational help.

**California Union Bank, Escondido, CA**

**2003-2005**

*Bank Teller*

- Directed daily operations for retail bank, including branch sales, business development, and customer service and credit analysis.
- Ability to develop rapport with clients.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Cal State University San Bernardino • San Bernardino, CA

Bachelor of Science, Business Administration

The American Institute of Banking Courses

Accounting, History of Banking, Speech Presentations, Management-  
Employee Relations

**Languages**

**Computer Skills**

Fluent in English and Japanese

Microsoft Word, Lotus

Notes, PC Literate

Three letters of recommendation available upon request only.

### ***Résumé Summary***

- **Education** B.S. in Business Administration at CSUSB. Continuing Education at The American Institute of Banking.
- **Relative work experience** Has experience in management. Good customer relations. Speaks two languages. Experience in staff training and development. Knows banking products as well as services. Problem-solver.
- **Letters of Recommendation** Three letters of recommendation were given as requested.
- **Performance during interview** Dressed professional, seemed a little bit nervous, gave good eye contact, and seemed slightly arrogant and overconfident. Overall, interviewed well.

### **Letter of Recommendation Summary**

Letters of recommendation was from former employers who stated that applicant was well qualified and capable of becoming a Bank Branch Manager. Out of the three letters of recommendation, two letters were positive and one was questionable. The third letter of recommendation was more negative and gave the impression that the candidate was arrogant and overconfident. She/He was also rated as being outspoken especially when candidate felt s/he was right and customer wrong.

APPENDIX E  
STUDY 1 MEASURES

APPENDIX E  
STUDY 1 MEASURES

**Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements, using the scale shown.**

1. This potential candidate seems to be responsible.
2. This potential candidate is likely to have a positive attitude.
3. This potential candidate seems open to change.
4. This potential candidate seems resilient.
5. This potential candidate is likely to have the power of choice.
6. This potential candidate seems reliable.
7. This potential candidate seems imaginative.
8. This potential candidate is likely to be active and instrumental.
9. This potential candidate is likely to be effective in his/her work.
10. This potential candidate seems to be a good communicator.
11. This potential candidate seems indifferent.
12. This potential candidate is likely to be non-assertive.
13. This potential candidate seems professional.
14. This potential candidate is likely to be overly accommodating.
15. I would be willing to hire this candidate.
16. I would be willing to discuss future career plans with candidate.
17. I would be willing to discuss personal concerns with candidate.
18. I would be willing to send recommendations of hiring this candidate.

**Please select the number that best reflects your opinion based on instinctive reaction.**

19. I think the candidate seems to have a good personality.

20. I think the candidate seems like he/she would be easy to get along with.

21. I think the candidate seems considerate.

22. I think the candidate seems friendly.

23. I think the candidate seems likely to succeed.

24. I think the candidate seems intelligent.

25. I think the candidate would be good to have as a co-worker.

26. I respect the potential candidate

27. To what extent do you feel that tattoos are professional in the workforce?

28. To what extent do you feel that tattoos are unprofessional in the workforce?

29. What is the gender of the potential candidate you viewed?

30. How old was the potential candidate you viewed?

31. Did this potential candidate have a tattoo?

32. Do you have any thoughts as to what this study was about?

33. At what point did these thoughts occur?

**Note:** Items were developed by undergraduate research assistants

...the ... of ...  
...the ... of ...  
...the ... of ...

**APPENDIX F**  
**STUDY 2 DEBRIEFING**

...the ... of ...  
...the ... of ...



## **Study of Gender and Tattoos Debriefing Statement**

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. The study you have just completed was designed to investigate recent hiring practices by employers in which they look at potential employee's social network site profile pictures to make employment assessments. We are sorry, but we did not tell you the full purpose of our study. The study was specifically designed to investigate whether middle-aged women with tattoos are treated harsher than middle-aged men or young men with tattoos. In this study, the gender of the potential employee was manipulated. Participants in the male gender condition were asked to judge whether Robert Smith should be hired for the Branch Manager position. Participants in the female gender condition were asked to judge whether Rebecca Smith should be hired for the Branch Manager position.

This study also manipulated age. Participants in the "middle-aged" condition were asked the suitability of middle-aged man or woman for the Branch Manager position. Participants in the "young" condition were asked to judge the suitability of a young man or woman for the Branch Manager position.

We believe that because tattoos have historically been acceptable for men and are now a popular trend among younger age groups, middle-aged women with tattoos are likely seen negatively relative to comparison others. We predict that a middle-aged woman with a tattoo will be treated harsher than a tattooed middle-aged man or younger woman. We expect that there will be little, if any,

difference in the ratings of a tattooed middle-aged man compared to a tattooed young man.

Thank you for your participation and for not discussing the details of the experiment with other students. If you would like to obtain a copy of the group results of this study (at the end of the fall quarter, 2010), or if you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Dr. Donna M. Garcia at [dmgarcia@csusb.edu](mailto:dmgarcia@csusb.edu). The results of this study will be available after December 1, 2010.

APPENDIX G  
STUDY 2 STIMULUS PHOTOS

APPENDIX G  
STUDY 2 STIMULUS PHOTOS



Info

Share Profile

Report/Block This Person

### Robert Smith

Add as Friend

Send Message

Works at Bank of America Studied Business Administration at California State University, San Bernardino Born on June 1, 1961

#### Education and Work

##### Employers



Bank of America  
Los Angeles, California

##### College



California State University, San Bernardino  
Business Administration

#### You and Robert

- James Patterson
- House

#### Sponsored

Create an Ad

#### Arts and Entertainment

##### Music



Daughtry Lifehouse Train Maroon 5

##### Books



67

Handwritten notes



Info

Share Profile  
Report/Block This Person

### Robert Smith

Add as Friend

Send Message

Works at Bank of America Studied Business Administration at California State University, San Bernardino Born on June 1, 1961

#### Education and Work

##### Employers



Bank of America  
Los Angeles, California

##### College



California State University, San Bernardino  
Business Administration

#### You and Robert

- James Patterson
- House

Sponsored

Create an Ad

#### Arts and Entertainment

##### Music



Daughtry



Lifehouse



Train



Maroon 5

##### Books





Info


Share Profile  
Report/Block This Person


### Robert Smith [Add as Friend](#)

[Send Message](#)



Works at Bank of America Studied Business Administration at California State University, San Bernardino Born on June 1, 1986

#### Education and Work

**Employers**  
 Bank of America  
Los Angeles, California

**College**  
 California State University, San Bernardino  
Business Administration

#### You and Robert


-  James Patterson
-  House



Sponsored

Create an Ad

#### Arts and Entertainment

**Music**



Daughtry Lifehouse Train Maroon 5

**Books**








Info

Share Profile  
Report/Block This Person

### Robert Smith

Add as Friend

Send Message

Works at Bank of America Studied Business Administration at California State University, San Bernardino Born on June 1, 1986

#### Education and Work

##### Employers



Bank of America  
Los Angeles, California

##### College



California State University, San Bernardino  
Business Administration

#### You and Robert

- James Patterson
- House

#### Sponsored

Create an Ad

#### Arts and Entertainment

##### Music



Daughtry Lifehouse Train Maroon 5

##### Books



70



Info

Share Profile  
Report/Block This Person

### Roberta Smith

Add as Friend

Send Message

Works at Bank of America Studied Business Administration at California State University, San Bernardino Born on June 1, 1985

#### Education and Work

Employers



Bank of America  
Los Angeles, California

College



California State University, San Bernardino  
Business Administration

#### You and Roberta

James Patterson

House

Sponsored

Create an Ad

#### Arts and Entertainment

Music



Daughtry



Lifehouse



T'ain

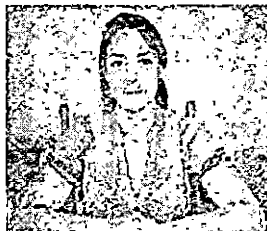


Maroon 5

Books







info

Share Profile  
Report/Block This Person

### Roberta Smith

Add as Friend

Send Message

Works at Bank of America Studied Business Administration at California State University, San Bernardino Born on June 1, 1961

#### Education and Work

##### Employers



Bank of America  
Los Angeles, California

##### College



California State University, San Bernardino  
Business Administration

#### You and Roberta

James Patterson

House

Sponsored

Create an Ad

#### Arts and Entertainment

##### Music



Daughtry



Lifehouse

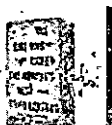


Train



Maroon 5

##### Books





Info

Share Profile  
Report/Block This Person

### Roberta Smith [Add as Friend](#)

[Send Message](#)

Works at Bank of America Studied Business Administration at California State University, San Bernardino Born on June 1, 1986

#### Education and Work

##### Employers



Bank of America  
Los Angeles, California

##### College



California State University, San Bernardino  
Business Administration

#### You and Roberta

- James Patterson
- House

#### Sponsored

[Create an Ad](#)

#### Arts and Entertainment

##### Music



Daughtry



Lifehouse



Train

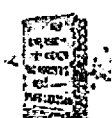


Maroon 5

##### Books



TOM CLANCY



facebook

Search

Roberta Smith

Works at Bank of America · Studied Business Administration at California State University, San Bernardino · Born on June 1, 1961

Education and Work

Employers

- Bank of America, Los Angeles, California

College

- California State University, San Bernardino Business Administration

Arts and Entertainment

Music

- Caughy
- Lifhouse
- Train
- Maroon 5

Books

- TOM CLANCY

You said Roberta

- James Paterson
- House

Sponsored

Create an ad

Send Message

Add as Friend

Info

Share Profile

Report/Block This Person

Note. "Roberta Smith" is a photo-manipulation of the same model, Thomas Lagrange, used in the "Robert Smith" photos

APPENDIX H  
STUDY 2 MEASURES

Based on the information given, please rate the candidate on a scale from 1 to 7 by circling the number that best corresponds with your opinion.

Perceptions of the Candidate

1. How dependable would you rate the candidate?
2. How competent would you rate the candidate?
3. Based on the information provided, how hardworking do you believe the candidate to be?
4. How trustworthy would you rate the candidate?
5. How likely do you feel that the candidate will be a team player?

Qualifications

1. How qualified do you feel the candidate is based on his work history?
2. How qualified do you feel the candidate is based on his educational background?
3. How qualified do you feel the candidate is based on his references?
4. How qualified do you feel the candidate is based on his skills?
5. Overall, to what extent do you believe the candidate is qualified for the specified position?

Professional Image

1. To what extent do you believe the candidate will promote **positive** image in the workplace?

2. To what extent do you believe the candidate will promote a **positive** image in public when representing the employer?
3. To what extent do you believe the candidate will appear professional to customers?
4. To what extent do you believe the candidate will promote a **negative** image in the workplace?
5. To what extent do you believe the candidate will promote a **negative** image in public while representing the employer?

#### Ability to Manage Others

1. To what extent do you believe subordinate employees will accept direction from the candidate?
2. To what extent do you believe subordinate employees will respect the candidate's authority?
3. To what extent do you feel the candidate will be approachable?
4. To what extent do you believe the candidate will be easy to work with?

#### Recommendation to Hire

1. How likely would you be to recommend hiring the candidate?

*Note:* Measures adapted from Van Campen, Zimmerman, and García (2011).

...

...

...

## APPENDIX I STUDY 2 MEANS

...

*Study 2: Mean Responses for Outcome Measures*

	Young		Middle-Aged	
	Male Applicant	Female Applicant	Male Applicant	Female Applicant
<b>No Tattoo Condition</b>				
Ability to Manage	20.79 (4.78)	21.32 (4.30)	22.17 (2.81)	22.44 (4.60)
Professional Image	24.50 (5.59)	25.43 (4.89)	25.44 (4.64)	25.19 (5.66)
Personal Characteristics	29.63 (2.72)	30.68 (3.52)	29.65 (4.12)	30.81 (3.62)
Qualifications	30.25 (3.00)	30.89 (3.48)	30.13 (3.39)	31.88 (2.75)
Likelihood to Hire	5.79 (1.14)	5.61 (1.23)	5.70 (0.97)	6.25 (1.18)
<b>Tattoo Condition</b>				
Ability to Manage	23.06 (3.45) <sup>a</sup>	21.45 (4.52) <sup>a</sup>	22.94 (3.08) <sup>a</sup>	18.04 (5.33) <sup>b</sup>
Professional Image	26.06 (4.82) <sup>a</sup>	23.32 (5.38) <sup>a</sup>	25.29 (4.65) <sup>a</sup>	20.75 (4.60) <sup>b</sup>
Personal Characteristics	31.03 (3.88) <sup>a</sup>	30.36 (2.69) <sup>a</sup>	30.55 (2.73) <sup>a</sup>	28.90 (3.55) <sup>a</sup>
Qualifications	30.03 (3.70) <sup>a</sup>	30.74 (3.19) <sup>a</sup>	30.90 (2.79) <sup>a</sup>	30.10 (2.65) <sup>a</sup>
Likelihood to Hire	6.12 (0.88) <sup>a</sup>	5.74 (1.06) <sup>a</sup>	6.00 (1.12) <sup>a</sup>	4.90 (1.52) <sup>b</sup>

Notes: Means in the same row with different subscripts differ at  $p < .07$  (two-tailed); Cell sizes range from  $N = 16$  (middle aged women without tattoos) to  $N = 34$  (young men with tattoos)



APPENDIX J  
ZERO ORDER CORRELATIONS

---

Measure	Personal Characteristics	Qualifications	Professional Image	Ability to Manage	Salary
Personal Characteristics	1.00				
Qualifications	.75**	1.00			
Professional Image	.54**	.51**	1.00		
Ability to Manage	.54**	.46**	.68**	1.00	
Salary	.15*	.10	.17*	.10	1.00
Likelihood to Hire	.57**	.57**	.73**	.74**	0.11

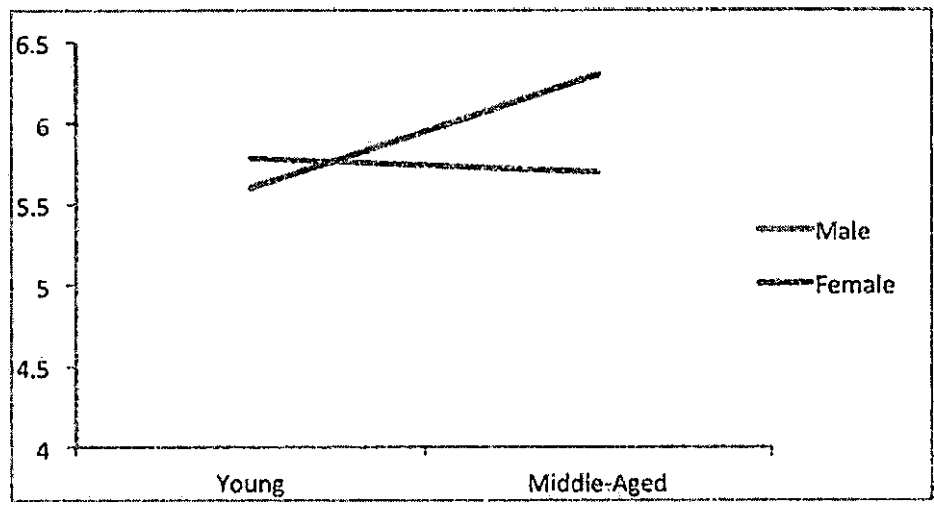
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\*\*p < .01

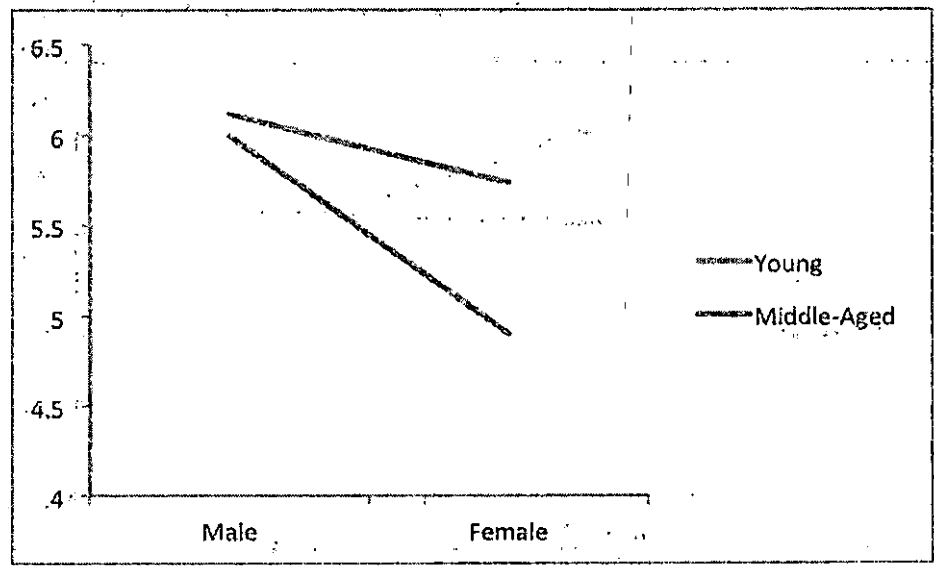
\*p < .05

APPENDIX K  
STUDY 2 RESULTS

### No Tattoo Condition – Mean Likelihood to Hire



### Tattoo Condition – Mean Likelihood to Hire



APPENDIX L  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

**Human Subjects Review Board  
Department of Psychology  
California State University,  
San Bernardino**

**PI:** Garcia, Donna & Zimmerman, Carla  
**From:** Donna Garcia  
**Project Title:** Tattoos and Gender and Age  
**Project ID:** H-10FA-17  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 15, 2011

---

**Disposition: Expedited Review**

Your IRB proposal is approved. This approval is valid until 11/15/2011.

**Good luck with your research!**



Donna M. Garcia, Chair  
Psychology IRB Sub-Committee

APPENDIX M  
MODEL RELEASE FORM

**MODEL RELEASE**

In exchange for consideration received, I hereby give permission to photographer Carla Zimmerman to use my name and photographic likeness in all forms and media for use in her research projects. I also give permission for my photographic likeness to be distorted or modified as needed for the projects.

Print Name: Thomas Lebrun

Signature: 

Date: 11/20/11



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