CLOTHING AS A THREAT
AESTHETICS-BASED DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE

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FOCUS OF THE RESEARCH
DISCRIMINATION OF THE 60TH SUBCULTURE (INGROUP) BY THE DOMINANT SOCIAL NORM (OUTGROUP) BASED SOLELY ON CLOTHING STYLE CHOICES IN THE WORKPLACE

METHOD, RESULTS & DISCUSSION
INTERVIEWS & QUESTIONNAIRES / USING THEORIES OF SOCIAL IDENTITY, SELF-CATEGORIZATION, SELF-DETERMINATION, CONFORMITY, WE FOUND THAT

**INGROUP**
- Actively seeks to differentiate itself from the outgroup (1998), even in cases of discrimination (e.g. Campbell & Reagon, 2008)
- In non-subculture workplaces (banks / post offices / courtrooms--- vs tattoo parlors / art galleries---) managers make negative remarks about clothing style choices (1993)
- Professional competence is assessed based on clothing style choices as perceived by ingroup in non-subculture workplaces (1993)
- Negative remarks and aesthetic-based professional assessment are correlated in neo-taylorian organizations with high degree of hierarchical control (r = 0.68, p < 0.01) (Balogh, 2004)

**OUTGROUP**
- Prejudices about the subculture are shaped by two major factors:
  - Source of information about the subculture (media, friends & acquaintances, family)
  - Quality of interpersonal contact with the subculture (e.g. casual, confrontational---)
- A source of information determines the positive/negative valence of information and shapes the perceived social level independently of the clothing style choices
- Quality of interpersonal contact is correlated with positive/negative perception of clothing style choices (r = 0.7, p < 0.01)
- Both factors shape the outgroup perception of the ingroup professional competencies

CONCLUSIONS
A MODEL FOR AESTHETICS-BASED WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION OF A SUBCULTURE (INGROUP) BY THE DOMINANT SOCIAL NORM (OUTGROUP) BASED SOLELY ON CLOTHING STYLE CHOICES

- Aesthetics-based discrimination may begin with limited knowledge of the subculture
- Limited knowledge is a major contributing factor of outgroup perception of opposed values and low social level of the ingroup
- Negative contact reinforces discrimination and contributes to negative perception of clothing style choices
- Aesthetics-based discrimination is due to the outgroup understanding of clothing style choices as a label of undesirable subculture rather than about clothing itself

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