

Chapter 13

AGE, ABILITY, AND APPEARANCE

AGEISM

- ✘ **Ageism** – biased evaluations and judgments based on age
 - + Middle-aged (35-60), Young Old (60-75), Old-Old (75+)
- ✘ **Terror Management Theory (TMT)**- thoughts of mortality are threatening
 - + Mortality fears are reduced after 60

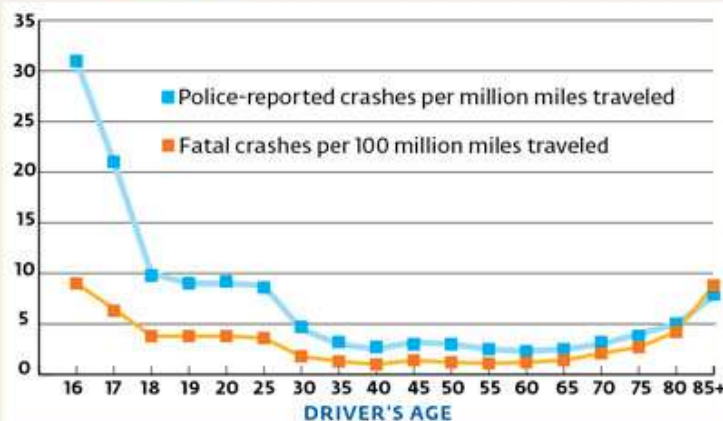


ADVANTAGES OF AGING

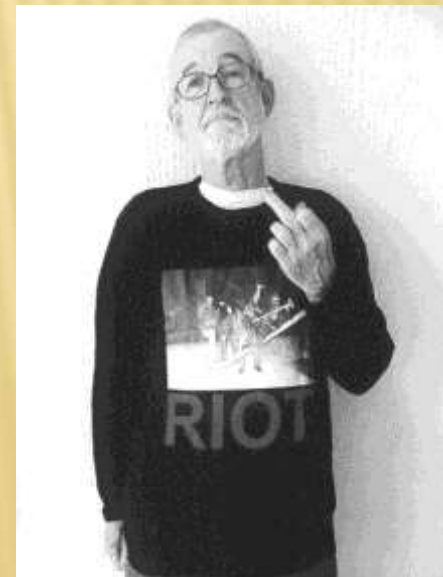
- ✘ Service and volunteering
- ✘ More positive emotions and less negative
- ✘ Less susceptible to colds and some illnesses
- ✘ Lower accident rates than teens
- ✘ Lower rates of mental illness, alcoholism, drug abuse
- ✘ Freedom to be erratic

Dangerous curves: Plotting the problem

The youngest and oldest drivers have much higher rates of highway crashes and deaths than any other age group, according to 2008 government mileage data, the latest available. Drivers ages 16 and 17 are involved in more crashes, and fatality rates rise steeply for those older than 65, with drivers older than 80 being most vulnerable.



Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and Insurance Institute for Highway Safety



STEREOTYPES OF OLDER ADULTS

- ✘ **Age-related Stereotypes** – intolerance, poor health, personality, inactive, sociable, dejected, less attractive
- ✘ **Stereotype Content Model** – older adults are seen as extremely warm, but less competent than most groups
- ✘ **Benevolent Ageism** – weak but wonderful effect



STEREOTYPES OF OLDER ADULTS

- ✘ **Subtypes** – lead to more changes in age-related beliefs
 - + **Forgetfulness** – attribute forgetting to external factors for young and internal for older adults
 - + Acceptance of stereotypes can impact memory, physical ability, and life expectancy

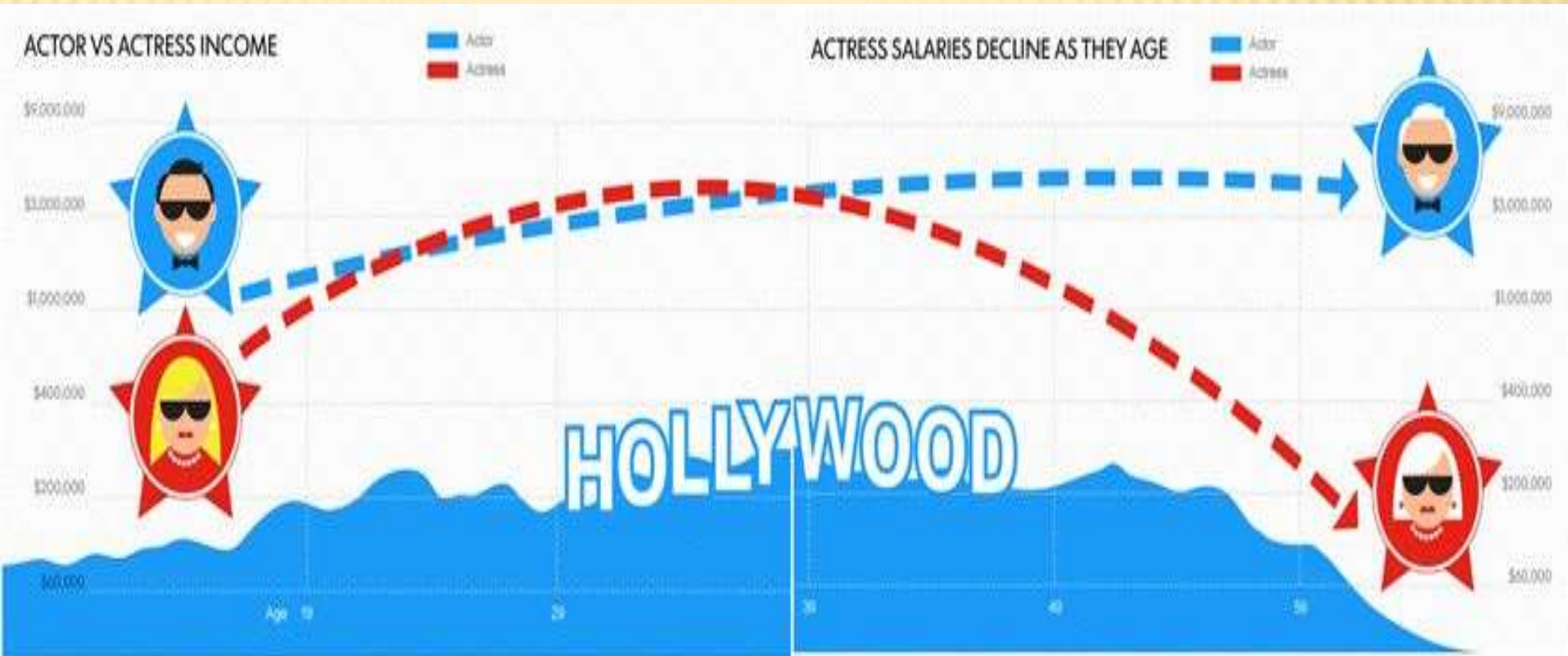


DOUBLE-STANDARD STEREOTYPES

- ✘ **Ageism Double-standard** – physical attractiveness and femininity declines seen greater for women
- ✘ Larger discrepancies between evaluations and treatment of young/old women compared to men

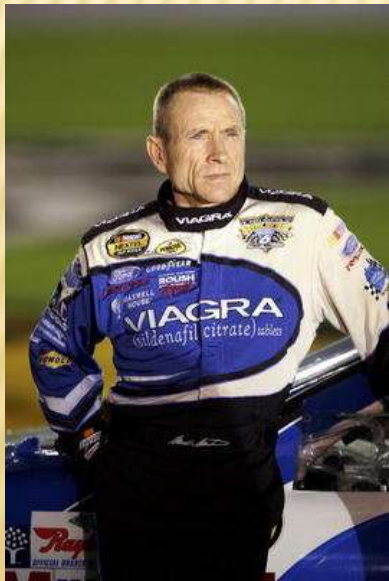


DOUBLE-STANDARD STEREOTYPES



MEDIA AND AGE-RELATED STEREOTYPES

- ✘ Older adults are underrepresented in the media
 - + Underrepresented in media targeting older adults
 - + Presented in somewhat positive roles in the media



AGE-BASED DISCRIMINATION

- ✘ Age Discrimination Employment Act (ADEA) – has had little impact on discrimination
 - + Resume' and interview studies show biased treatment of older adults
 - + Inaccurate beliefs that older works are less physically capable, prone to illness, less productive



AGE-BASED DISCRIMINATION

Older Workers and Age Discrimination

The Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), signed into law in 1967, forbids discrimination in the workplace against anyone 40 or older. A recent survey shows that many workers still believe there are signs of age discrimination on the job today.

1 in 5 workers in the
U.S. is
age 55
or older

The infographic features a light-colored map of the United States on the left. To the right of the map are five silhouettes of people in professional attire. The first silhouette on the left is red, while the other four are teal. The text '1 in 5 workers in the U.S. is age 55 or older' is overlaid on the map and silhouettes.

64% of workers say they have seen or experienced age discrimination in the workplace.

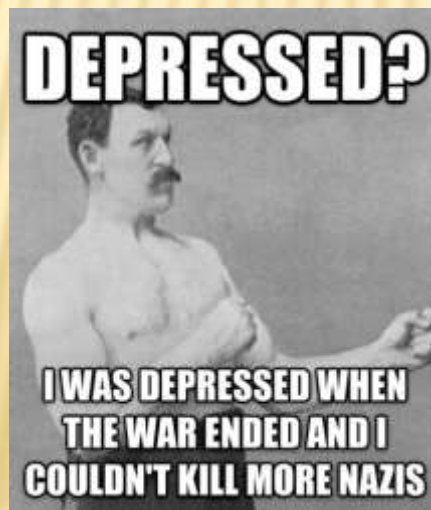
58% of adults believe age discrimination begins among workers in their 50s.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Staying Ahead of the Curve 2013: AARP Multicultural Work and Career Study Perceptions of Age Discrimination in the Workplace — Ages 45-74

AGE-BASED DISCRIMINATION

- ✘ **Elderspeak** – stereotypes lead to patronizing and demeaning speech
 - + Perceived as demeaning and disrespectful
- ✘ **Health Care** – stereotypes lead to worse care by health care providers
 - + Psychologists and Social workers show less biased treatment



ABILITY

- ✘ **Ableism** – prejudice towards persons with disabilities (PWDs)
- ✘ **Disability** – any impairment that limits one or more major life activities
 - + Older adults, women, adolescent boys report higher rates
- ✘ Discrimination occurs more for controllable, unappealing, dangerous, more severe, and less concealable stigmas
 - + Coping with stigma and bias is often worse than the disability



PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

- ✘ **Attitudes** - more positive attitudes toward associating with PWDs compared to dating/marrying
 - + PWDs report delays in romantic attention, negative work and school experiences
 - + PWDs face workplace discrimination and patronization



COMMUNICATION AND CONTACT

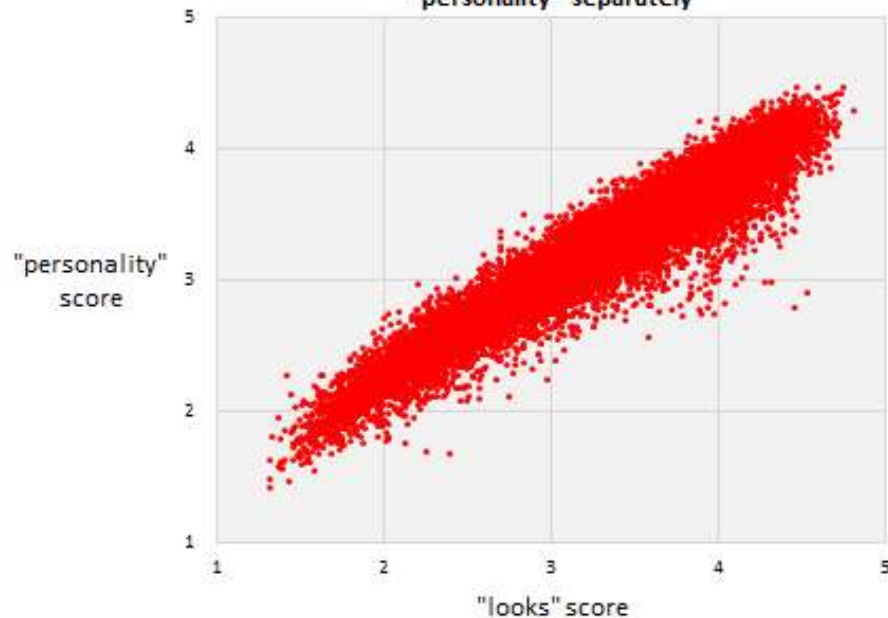
- ✘ **Contact** - Limited experience leads to anxious and uncertain interactions
- ✘ Improved communication strategies facilitates interactions



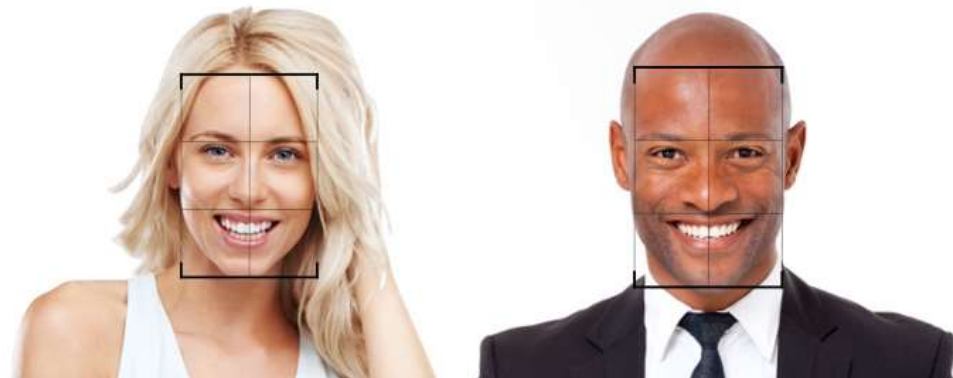
APPEARANCE

- ✘ **Lookism** – attractiveness stereotype
- ✘ **Attractiveness** - smooth, young, symmetrical faces with average features

OkCupid ratings back when we let people score "looks" and "personality" separately



For both men and women, a face that's one and a half times as long as it is wide with symmetrical features is typically regarded as attractive.



APPEARANCE

- ✘ **Height bias** – taller and average people are evaluated more favorably than shorter individuals
 - + Women may find avg. height more attractive than taller or shorter
 - + Height can affect hiring, earnings, self-esteem



Rock star Mick Jagger and fashion stylist L'Wren Scott



Jazz singer Jamie Cullum and model Sophie Dahl

APPEARANCE - WEIGHT

- ✘ **Weight Bias** – stigmatizing overweight is legal and socially accepted – “highest levels of job discrimination”
 - + **Stereotypes** – unattractive, lazy, unhappy, powerless
 - + Experience workplace, interpersonal, health, and consumer discrimination
 - + Less bias with long-term social relationship
- ✘ **Weight Double-standard** – women typically experience more prejudice



APPEARANCE - WEIGHT

- ✘ Anti-Fat Attitudes are influenced by fear, dislike, and willpower beliefs
 - + People are unashamed to hold Anti-Fat Attitudes
 - + Victims at risk for depression, low S.E., eating disorders, and increased obesity
 - + Females less likely to attend college and receive less parental support and aid

