

2012-06-25

Flirting With Erotic Capital: Erotic Capital and Labor Market Earnings among Women

Isabelle C. Beulaygue

University of Miami, ibeulaygue@miami.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/oa_theses

Recommended Citation

Beulaygue, Isabelle C., "Flirting With Erotic Capital: Erotic Capital and Labor Market Earnings among Women" (2012). *Open Access Theses*. 359.

https://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/oa_theses/359

This Open access is brought to you for free and open access by the Electronic Theses and Dissertations at Scholarly Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Open Access Theses by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Repository. For more information, please contact repository.library@miami.edu.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

FLIRTING WITH EROTIC CAPITAL:
EROTIC CAPITAL AND LABOR MARKET EARNINGS AMONG WOMEN

By

Isabelle-Christine Beulaygue

A THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty of
the University of Miami
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

Coral Gables, Florida

June 2012

© 2012
Isabelle-Christine Beulaygue
All Rights Reserved

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Master
of Arts

FLIRTING WITH EROTIC CAPITAL:
EROTIC CAPITAL AND LABOR MARKET EARNINGS AMONG WOMEN

Isabelle-Christine Beulaygue

Approved:

Michael T. French, Ph.D.
Professor of Health Economics

Dean of the Graduate School

Olena Antonaccio, Ph.D.
Professor of Sociology

Philip K. Robins, Ph.D.
Professor of Economics

BEULAYGUE, ISABELLE-CHRISTINE
Flirting with Erotic Capital:
Erotic Capital and Labor Market Earnings among Women

(M.A., Sociology)

(June 2012)

Abstract of a thesis at the University of Miami

Thesis supervised by Professor Michael T. French.
No. of pages in text. (94)

Extant research indicates a wage premium for attractive individuals and a wage penalty for homelier individuals. In addition, further research has showed that being well-groomed and having a pleasant personality was associated with a wage premium and partially mediated the effects of beauty alone. The purpose of this thesis is to extend this line of research and to examine the impact of erotic capital on annual earnings among young women. Erotic capital is the combination of six personal and inter-personal assets: beauty, sexual attractiveness, social skills, social presentation, liveliness, and sexuality. I constructed an index of erotic capital, incorporating all six of these characteristics and evaluated its impact on annual earnings using data from Wave IV of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). After running several OLS regression models and testing for robustness, results from this study indicated that there was a statistically significant erotic capital premium for young women. Women with higher levels of erotic capital earned on average 2.4% more annually than their counterparts with lower levels of erotic capital. This finding is a significant contribution to the social sciences and to economics, and is consistent with the theory of erotic capital. These results are an important contribution, as they indicate that factors other than facial beauty and cognitive traits do impact earnings, while reinforcing the significance of grooming and personality on earnings.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my late grandmother, Geneviève Beulaygue, who left this world too soon.

You left an immense void behind you, but I know you are still looking after us from above. Thank you for all your encouragements and your help throughout the years. I would not be here without you. May you rest in peace.

Although you are no longer among us, I know we will keep walking hand in hand.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I thank God for His grace, mercy, and compassion. Thank you for giving me the faith and the strength to go on every day and overcome the minor obstacles of daily life. I am also infinitely grateful for the emotional support of my parents and their unconditional love. May God bless and protect them.

I would like to thank Dr. Michael T. French for his precious guidance and help since the beginning of my graduate education. Thank you for helping me develop into a more discipline, organized, and analytical scholar. I have learned treasured lessons from you as a mentor and as a professor. Thank you for guiding me towards professional excellence and academic success.

I would also like to thank Dr. Olena Antonaccio and Dr. Philip K. Robins for their help and feedback along this process. Thank you for being such supportive and helpful members of my committee. I hope to keep collaborating with you on this project and other endeavors in the future.

I would also like to thank Ms. Lauren M. Kaplan for her helpful comments, feedback, and editorial assistance with the present thesis. Thank you, Lauren for your friendship and your guidance within this profession. You eased my transition into the field of Sociology and contributed to my better understanding of the sociological mind. I wish you the best in your professional career and know you will excel trans-continently.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. BACKGROUND.....	7
I. The theory of erotic capital.....	7
1. Beauty.....	9
2. Sexual attractiveness.....	10
3. Social skills.....	13
4. Liveliness.....	14
5. Social presentation.....	14
6. Sexuality.....	15
II. Empirical research.....	16
1. Beauty and the labor market.....	16
2. Body weight and earnings.....	20
3. Non-cognitive traits and earnings.....	22
4. Existing research on erotic capital.....	24
3. DATA AND VARIABLES.....	26
I. The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health.....	26
II. The erotic capital measures.....	27
III. Earning measure.....	32
4. METHODS.....	34
I. Internal consistency and exploratory factor structure.....	34
II. Empirical specification.....	35
1. Approach 1. Independent effects.....	35
2. Approach 2. Combined effects.....	37
III. Sensitivity tests.....	38
5. RESULTS.....	42
I. Results for the independent effects.....	42
1. Beauty.....	42
2. Sexual attractiveness.....	43
3. Social skills.....	44
4. Liveliness.....	44
5. Social presentation.....	45
6. Sexuality.....	46
II. Results for the combined effects.....	49
III. Results for the sensitivity tests.....	51

1.	Using a scale of social standing as an alternate D.V.....	51
2.	Combined effect of the erotic capital index with four components....	52
3.	Combined effect of the erotic capital index with BMI.....	54
4.	Combined effect with sexual satisfaction	56
5.	Independent effect of BMI on annual earnings.....	57
6.	Independent effect of sexual satisfaction on annual earnings.....	58
6.	DISCUSSION.....	60
I.	Key findings.....	60
II.	Strengths and limitations.....	62
1.	Identical weights assigned to each measure.....	62
2.	Units of erotic capital index.....	63
3.	Limits of liveliness measure.....	63
4.	Limits of sexuality measure.....	64
5.	Lack of occupational indicators.....	65
6.	Issue of endogeneity and simultaneity.....	66
7.	Lack of mediating mechanisms.....	66
III.	Research implications.....	67
1.	Intersection of capitals.....	67
2.	Erotic capital among men.....	67
3.	Ethnic, cultural, and international variation.....	67
4.	Investing in erotic capital.....	68
5.	Erotic capital and mating markets.....	69
IV.	Policy implications.....	70
1.	Protection against discrimination.....	70
7.	CONCLUSION.....	71
	WORKS CITED.....	91

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1	73
Figure 2	74

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1.....	75
Table 2.....	76
Table 3.....	77
Table 4.....	78
Table 5.....	79
Table 6.....	80
Table 7.....	81
Table 8.....	82
Table 9.....	83
Table 10.....	84
Table A.....	85
Table B	86
Table C	87
Table D.....	88
Table E.....	89
Table F.....	90

Chapter 1: Introduction

First Lady Michelle Obama has recently been chosen as the inspiration for actress Julia-Louis Dreyfus' style in the upcoming television show "Veep", which will feature the first imaginary American female vice president (nytimes.com 2012). Julia-Louis Dreyfus' style will emulate the First Lady's impeccable presentation of self and sense of fashion. Michelle Obama's manners, presentation of self, style, and grooming have been admired by many fashion commentators. In a recent New York Times article, Kate Betts, the former editor at Vogue and Harper's Bazaar and the author of "Everyday Icon: Michelle Obama and the Power of Style" (Betts 2011) commented that it did not surprise her in the least that Michelle Obama was chosen as inspiration for this role. She argued: "Michelle Obama is our first post-feminist first lady; she has academic credentials just as good as her husband's. We can imagine a first lady as a vice president now. We can imagine a female president." (nytimes.com 2012). Therefore, it is not surprising that Dr. Catherine Hakim cited Michelle Obama as an example of a woman with erotic capital in her 2010 article in Prospect Magazine (prospectmagazine.co.uk 2010). Erotic capital is the concept that is the central focus of this thesis. Erotic capital is a personal asset that complements economic, cultural, and social capital and that helps individuals to progress in the labor market and in mating markets (Hakim 2010).

Ms. Mara Carfagna was a former topless model and 1997 Miss Italy finalist (bbc.co.uk 2012). She has posed nude on several occasion, including on the cover of Maxim magazine. Besides her pretty looks, Ms. Carfagna is also an accomplished and intelligent woman. She holds a law degree from the University of Salerno. She is the

perfect example of a woman who employed her intellect and erotic capital in order to ascend the social ladder and gain public recognition.

Ms. Carfagna served under the former Italian Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi. Silvio Berlusconi has been the object of polemics and controversies over the last 20 years. His scandalous sex affairs, control over the media, economic conflicts of interest, and poor decision-making have been vigorously criticized (guardian.co.uk 2011). Mr. Berlusconi is also notorious for his numerous face-lifts and his appreciation of beauty in the workplace. In addition to Ms Carfagna's intellectual and professional capabilities, her attractiveness and sex appeal suggest that Ms. Carfagna's erotic capital played an important role in the development of her political career.

Labor Economists have long been interested in the question of beauty and the labor market. In 1994, Daniel S. Hamermesh and Jeff E. Biddle published a seminal study, "Beauty and the Labor Market", in which they found that "plain" people earn less than "average" people, who in turn earn less than "attractive" people. The authors concluded that a wage premium exists for attractive individuals and a wage penalty for homelier individuals. Their research demonstrates that both results are true and statistically significant for both men and women (Hamermesh and Biddle 1994).

Currently, the effect of physical attractiveness on earnings remains a central interest of labor economists. Recently, Robins and colleagues (2011) examined the additional effects of grooming and personality on beauty and the labor market. They found that being well-groomed and having a pleasant personality was associated with a wage premium and partially mediated the effects of beauty alone (Robins et al. 2011).

Nevertheless, little sociological theory has explored the connection between physical attractiveness and social success. Social theory has focused on social capital and its effects on status attainment and social mobility. Theorists have argued that cultural and social connections and relationships (i.e. who we know rather than what we know) play an important role in determining advancement in life (Bourdieu 1997, Coleman 1988, Putman 1995).

In order to bridge this theoretical gap, British sociologist Catherine Hakim has incorporated the role of looks and sexual attractiveness in achieving social success (Hakim 2010). Framing her theoretical paradigm mainly around women, her article, entitled “Erotic Capital”, generated intense media attention in the European and American media. An article in USA Today attacked Hakim’s theory: “*Hakim's premise is as absurdly rigid as the feminist theories she quotes.*” (usatoday.com 2010). Furthermore, a columnist in the British newspaper “The Guardian” claimed: “*Nevertheless, I envisage a blizzard of opprobrium enveloping Hakim, for she has set out here a thesis seemingly purpose-built to inflame the passions of a wide swathe of the opinionated*” (guardian.co.uk 2011).

Hakim argued that some women possess a unique personal asset in their lives that allows them to climb the social ladder and gain access to professional success and wealth (Hakim 2010). This asset is erotic capital, an outgrowth of sexual capital and attractiveness. According to Hakim (2011), being a beautiful and erotically appealing woman is equivalent to having a degree in its impact on financial, social, and overall life success. Her theoretical framework introduces the importance of erotic capital, its definition and components, and its relevance alongside economic capital, social capital,

and cultural capital. Erotic capital is the combination of six assets that help in social mobility, labor markets, as well as mating markets. Hakim (2010) contends that erotic capital has been increasingly present in the sexualized culture of modern Western society. According to this argument, due to erotic capital, women not only enter and remain in the labor market with more ease, but they also penetrate the mating and marriage markets faster. Hakim (2010) also claims that women who are talented at exploiting their erotic capital have the upper hand in the media, politics, advertising, sports, the arts, and in everyday social interaction.

In 2011, Dr. Hakim published a sequel to her article, the book “*Erotic Capital: The Power of Attraction in the Boardroom and the Bedroom*”, in which she delves deeper into the concept of erotic capital. Hakim asserts that women should not hesitate to invest in and employ this erotic capital, which supplements intelligence, specialist knowledge, and experience (Hakim 2011). Erotic capital is an intricate but primordial combination of beauty, sex appeal, skills of self-presentation, and social skills. Hakim defines erotic capital as: “a combination of aesthetic, visual, physical, and sexual attractiveness to other members of your society, and especially to members of the opposite sex, in all social contexts” (Hakim 2011:15) Therefore, erotic capital is a blend of physical and social attractiveness that makes for a more agreeable company as a friend, colleague, or spouse. When one is endowed with erotic capital and cultivates it, one becomes increasingly attractive to all members of society and particularly to the opposite sex. Similarly, like intelligence, erotic capital is valuable in all areas of life: from the boardroom all the way to the bedroom (Hakim 2011). Hakim made the case that erotic capital is equally as

important as wealth, education, and social networks. It has, however, been ignored by Bourdieu and social theorists.

Whilst past research has demonstrated a clear positive association between beauty and earnings (Hamermesh and Biddle 1994) and between non-cognitive traits and earnings (Robins et al. 2011), no published empirical studies have considered the relationship between erotic capital and earnings in women. Little is known about the potential effects of the combination of six factors, which constitute erotic capital: beauty, sexual attractiveness, social skills, liveliness, social presentation, and sexuality on earnings.

In this thesis, I empirically analyzed the impact of erotic capital on earnings among women. The central aim of this study was to determine whether erotic capital was associated with higher labor market earnings. In particular, I examined whether there was a wage premium associated with erotic capital, and how it compared to the independent effects of beauty, grooming, and personality on annual earnings. I examined this issue using data from Wave IV of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health).

In the first section of this thesis, I presented the theory of erotic capital and its six original components. In the second section of this thesis, I surveyed existing empirical research to illustrate the findings examining the effect of beauty on earnings in a variety of professional settings. I then reviewed the existing literature on non-cognitive traits and earnings. Finally, I reviewed the effects of body weight on earnings. In the subsequent sections of this thesis, I described the data and methods used for the present analysis and disseminated the obtained results. I next presented the results of sensitivity tests to

examine the robustness of my analysis. Finally, I discussed the potential research and policy implications of erotic capital, as well as the strengths and limitations of the present study

Chapter 2: Background

I. The theory of erotic capital

Hakim's theory of erotic capital depicts a more comprehensive picture than what the previous empirical studies have captured. The aforementioned studies have only focused on facial beauty, physical attractiveness, body weight, and non-cognitive traits.

Catherine Hakim (2010) argues that her theory of erotic capital must be incorporated into sociological theory and empirical research. She argues that erotic capital has been overlooked by sociology and the social sciences in general due to a patriarchal bias and that feminists have objected to an examination of erotic capital due to "moral" arguments. Erotic capital can affect social mobility, the labor market, mating, and other aspects of life (Hakim 2010). Examinations of erotic capital can be framed within a utilitarian and rational choice perspective. Indeed, one can use one's erotic capital to maximize one's utility in societal processes (Hechter and Kanawaza 1997).

According to the author's new book "Erotic Capital the Power of Attraction in the Boardroom and the Bedroom" (2011), her theory is an extension of previously existing theories on capital (Hakim 2011). Traditionally, a person's professional and social successes have been attributed to three types of capital: economic capital, human capital, and social capital. First, economic capital denotes money, or the financial assets that a person has at their disposal. Second, human capital represents the social benefits conferred by a quality education as well as work experience. Educational qualifications, degrees, training skills, and work experience are all cherished in the labor market and are assets necessary to produce income. In addition, human capital includes cultural

knowledge, refined taste, appreciation for fine arts, literature, and music (Bourdieu 1997). French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu makes the case that knowledge of new intellectual trends, reading books, appreciating paintings, listening to different types of music, understanding sculpture, and watching plays can help a person appear distinguished. Hence, according to Bourdieu's theory, all these qualities help to elevate individual distinction, cultural knowledge, social standing. Third, social capital represents the social value of friends, relatives, and business networks. In sum, social capital refers to whom one knows, as distinct from what one knows (Bourdieu 1992; Coleman 1988; Putman 1995). Hakim contends that erotic capital is the fourth personal asset needed by an individual to optimize earnings and social realization.

Robins and colleagues (2011) found that individuals who are physically and socially attractive had an upper hand that confers benefits in the labor market. This supports the idea that grooming and personality matter for labor market outcomes.

Erotic capital goes a step beyond personality and grooming. The concept of erotic capital incorporates beauty, sex appeal, liveliness, a talent for dressing well, social skills, and sexual competence. It is thus a combination of physical and social attractiveness (Hakim 2010). The premium for erotic capital in women is higher because of male's higher demand for sexual activities. In short, men's demand for sex is greater than the supply women are willing and able to produce. In basic economic terms, this means that there is a shortage of female erotic favors and as the law of demand indicates, when quantity decreases, prices go up. In terms of measurement, Hakim admits that there are difficulties measuring erotic capital, but that these obstacles are not greater than measurement issues for social capital or other sociological constructs (Hakim 2011).

Following is a description of the elements of erotic capital and their features. Each individual characteristic may be more or less prominent in different societies or cultures and at different points in time, as is the case with fertility.

1. Beauty

The first component of erotic capital is beauty. Webster and Driskell (1983) found that beauty contributes to social status. The authors argue that beauty is a valued prize and commodity and is therefore a luxury good. The positive consequences of beauty are listed in their work and include: increased persuasiveness, increased ability and competence, influence over others, increased happiness, and success in the workplace (Webster and Driskell 1983).

Hakim (2010) suggests that a contemporary emphasis on photogenic features indicates that women with large eyes, big mouths, and “sculptured” symmetrical faces are now prioritized. Results from a 2009 University of Toronto study found that symmetry is indeed the golden standard when it comes to women’s facial beauty. Researchers found that the distance between a woman's eyes and the distance between her eyes and her mouth are central in determining how beautiful she appears to others (Pallett et al. 2009). Findings from this study reveal that the vertical distance between the eyes and the mouth must represent approximately 36% of the total length of the face. In addition, the horizontal distance between each eye must be equal to 46% of the total width of the face (Pallett et al. 2009). Interestingly, this research concluded that these proportions correspond to the proportional dimensions of an average face.

A recent study conducted by beauty website feelunique.com (2012) surveyed over 9,000 individuals to vote for their favorite facial and chest features for a woman in order to

create the “ultimate” female. The features pointed out by Hakim are indeed representative of what people thought was facial attractiveness. The results of this online survey indicate that the “ideal woman” would possess the Duchess of Cambridge Kate Middleton’s brown, wavy locks, Keira Knightley’s high cheekbones, Megan Fox’s dark eyebrows, Gwyneth Paltrow’s chin, Kate Beckinsale’s small nose, Kelly Brooke’s ample bust, and Angelina Jolie’s famous plump lips (feelunique.com 2012). This female avatar’s face is very sculptured and symmetrical and can be observed below in Figure1 on page 69

2. Sexual attractiveness

Sexual attractiveness is the second constituting element of erotic capital. The concept is linked to beauty, but is also distinct from it. In fact, beauty is usually associated with facial attractiveness whereas sexual attractiveness refers more to the shape of the body. Hakim adds that sometimes personality, style, and femininity can also be part of sexual attractiveness. That which is often referred to as sex appeal is a good way of describing sexual attractiveness in everyday life.

In terms of sexual attractiveness, scientists have identified different ways of measuring how sexually appealing a woman’s body is. Breasts, buttocks, Body Mass Index (BMI), waist-hip ratio, and waist circumference are common ways of measuring sexual attractiveness.

Research indicates that men enjoy looking at women’s breasts before they look at women’s faces (dailytelegraph.com.au 2009). These results come from a study conducted by a team of researchers at the University of Wellington, New Zealand. Scientists tracked the eye movements of male participants who looked at front and back pictures of women. Findings from this study reveal that 80% of first looks focused on the breasts rather than

on the face. In addition, men had identified most components of the hourglass figure within 0.2 seconds (Dixson et al 2010).

Buttocks are also a measure of sexual attractiveness. Helen B. Fisher (1982), a biological anthropologist at Rutgers University, reports that rounded buttocks may have been a sign of sexual power and competence, especially to entice males for rear-entry intercourse. During these mating situations, females would compete against other females for sexual attention using their rounded buttocks (Fisher 1982).

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a key determinant of sexual attractiveness. BMI is a standard measure of height against weight, calculated as body weight (kilograms) divided by height (meters) squared. Healthy values range from 18 to 24, with values under 18 considered underweight and values over 25 considered overweight and over 30 obese (World Health Organization 2012). Studies have concluded that a value of 20.85 corresponds to the most attractive BMI values for females (dailymail.co.uk 2005). Tovee et al. (1998) used multiple linear regression analysis to evaluate the independent effects of BMI and waist-hip ratio. After asking 40 male undergraduate males to rate two-dimensional pictures of women pertaining to five different BMI categories, the authors found that BMI was the strongest determinant of attractiveness of women's bodies, more than waist-hip ratio. The authors found that the relationship between BMI and attractiveness was non-linear; small increments or decreases in BMI on both sides of the 18-19 category led to larger decreases in attractiveness ratings. BMI was the primary determinant of attractiveness, accounting for 70% of the variance in attractiveness, whereas waist-hip ratio accounted for only 2% (Tovee et al.1998). Other studies have found that waist-hip ratio provides a better assessment of physical attractiveness, because

it is a visual cue and not an abstract index measure. When seeing a woman, men do not visualize a BMI but look at the overall shape of the body. In fact, BMI can sometimes be misleading, as a woman with a heavier muscle mass and bone structure will have a higher BMI but will still look slender.

Singh et al. (1993) found that waist-hip ratio was a better predictor of attractiveness than BMI. Waist-hip ratio is a measure of body fat distribution. A waist-hip ratio nearing 0.7 was considered a standard of physical attractiveness by most men and women. A subsequent study by Singh et al. found that a higher waist-hip ratio suggests an hourglass body shape, while a lower waist-hip ratio denotes a more tubular kind of shape. Regardless of their BMI, men rated women with higher waist-hip ratios as most attractive. However, women rated women with more tubular bodies and lower BMIs as more attractive (Singh et al. 1994). These findings are relevant, as they illustrate a discrepancy between perceptions of female attractiveness across genders. Similarly, erotic capital might not be perceived and appreciated equally across genders.

Finally, sexual attractiveness has been evaluated using the measure of waist circumference. Singh and colleagues (2007) explore British literature from the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. They found that a narrow waist was a measure of health and beauty, associated with higher estrogen levels, increased fecundity, and decreased risk for major diseases. Rilling et al. (2009) showed participants three-dimensional rotating images of models. The models were created after recruiting 43 female volunteers from Emory University and anthropometric measures were taken on height, hip circumference, waist circumference, leg-stature ratio, second to fourth digit ratio, mid-arm circumference, pelvic width, shoulder width, sitting height, stature,

weight, and BMI. Rotating videos of the models were then rated on a 10-point scale by a convenience sample of 49 men and 56 women from Emory University. After regressing attractiveness ratings on all the anthropometric covariates, the authors found that waist circumference was a strong negative predictor of physical attractiveness: the higher the waist circumference, the lower the rating. A one-centimeter increase in waist circumference was associated with a 0.16 lower rating from the front and a 0.17 lower rating from the back.

3. Social skills

The third component of erotic capital is how one's personality appears to others in society. Hakim explains that this social component includes traits such as having an attractive personality, and acting with grace and charm (Hakim 2011). Individuals who display social skills in interaction and an agreeable way of dealing with the public have a greater ability to make people like them, enjoy their presence, and feel at ease and happy. Therefore, such individuals attract others to them in a wide array of social settings. This quality can even be relevant in intimate settings, as it can allow others to feel more physical desire for a person. In romantic and intimate relationships, flirtation skills are an extension of social skills. In the workplace, personality can have a positive impact on earnings by enhancing communication, interpersonal skills, initiative, and problem solving skills. The author argues that these can be socially learned, perhaps through observation and emulation, but are not a universal talent. As was previously mentioned in the background section of this paper, non-cognitive traits and personality have been linked to higher social outcomes and earnings (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Robins et al.

2011), reinforcing Hakim's thesis that social skills and personality do matter for labor market outcomes.

4. Liveliness

The fourth component of erotic capital is liveliness. Hakim defines it as a combination of physical fitness, social energy, and good humor (Hakim 2011). She makes the case that persons who are outgoing and lively are more socially likeable than those who are less active. Individuals who display a lot of life and energy, who have a lot of life in them, are viewed as having a more positive attitude towards life, and hence appear more attractive to others. This liveliness factor is illustrated by people who partake in activities such as exercising, dancing, going out, and socializing.

5. Social presentation

Social presentation is the fifth constituting element of erotic capital. Grooming, style of dress, wearing makeup, perfume, jewelry, a polished hairstyle, as well as the accessories that people carry to announce their social status, are all crucial parts of our presentation of self in every day life. Being well-groomed and presenting a polished appearance enhances other's views of one's professionalism. In their study of the effects of non-cognitive traits on earnings, Robins et al. conclude that there is a grooming premium for both women and men (Robins et al. 2011). Indeed, very well groomed and well-groomed men earn on average 4-5% more than their worse groomed counterparts. Similarly, there is a 3.4 % wage premium associated with being a very well or well-groomed woman. Nevertheless, only for women is the grooming wage premium statistically significant. Hakim sums up the relevance of social presentation in a rather

frank comparison: “*People who are skilled at social presentation and appropriate dress are more attractive than people who look like homeless tramps.*” (Hakim 2011:13).

6. *Sexuality*

The sexual revolution of the 1960s and the creation of the birth control pill granted women more control over their sexuality and their fertility. Men and women changed their views on the function of sex. Sex was no longer an activity whose main goal was procreation; it also became a pleasure-seeking activity. The sexual revolution was a milestone because of its emancipating role in women (Hakim 2011). Women no longer had to worry about becoming pregnant and rearing children; they could now study and work more freely. For men, this revolution was also groundbreaking, for it introduced the potential for recreational sex, in and out of wedlock, thus eliminating the risk for undesired pregnancy.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, the AIDS scare has led many countries to conduct surveys on sexual attitudes and practices. National and international sex surveys disclose no information on people’s sex appeal or sexual competence. However, a handful of sex surveys provide data on sex drive. Evidence from British and international sex surveys inform that overall, men have a higher sex drive than women. Findings from the British National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (1990) reveal that sex drive is quite normally distributed. Indeed, most men and women are moderately active, while a minority is either celibate or extremely sexually active (Johnson et al. 1994). Overall, men have a much higher sex drive than women. These findings are corroborated by findings from a qualitative French study, in which men express a much greater desire to engage in sexual activity frequently than women (Mossuz-Lavau 2002).

Sexuality itself is the sixth element of erotic capital. Hakim asserts that displaying sexual energy is part of presenting oneself as an overall active and attractive person. Sexuality includes aspects such as libido, desire, sexual competence, sexual energy, erotic imagination, and playfulness (Hakim 2011). According to the author, all the previous characteristics that make for a sexually satisfying partner are crucial to the study of erotic capital. The author claims that having a strong libido is not a guarantee for sexual performance or competence. However, persons with a heightened sense of libido and sexual desire are more likely to gain the necessary experience and have better sexual skills.¹

II. Empirical research

1. Beauty and the labor market

Previous economic research has concentrated on the effects of beauty on earnings (Hamermesh and Biddle 1994; French 2002; Robins et al. 2011). Findings from an array of economic studies concur: attractive people make more money than less attractive people, and these findings are robust across gender. In 1994, Daniel S. Hamermesh and Jeffrey E. Biddle conducted a study in which they used data from the 1970s to test the hypothesis that good-looking individuals have higher earnings than their worse-looking counterparts. The authors used the 1971 Quality of American Life survey (QAS), the

¹ A seventh and optional component of erotic capital is fertility. A handful of cultures have associated fertility to a woman's erotic capital. Indeed, in the West Indies women frequently have to show that they are fertile and bear a child before they can even get married (Hakim 2011). Hakim maintains that one of the reasons why homosexuality might be stigmatized in some cultures is because fertility cannot be shown, since homosexuals cannot produce offspring. Despite these advantages, the value added of fertility is of decreasing importance in the 21st century. In the modern western world, the size of families is decreasing and couples are having fewer children, and having them at a later age. Data from the 2010 Census indicate that the average number of people under 18 per household is equal to 0.94 (United States Census 2010). The fertility rate per woman in the United States has also decreased significantly. The CIA World Factbook states that in 2011, the expected number of children born per woman in her childbearing years was equal to 2.05 (CIA 2011), whereas in the 1950s it was equal to 3.8. Because of its declining importance in the western world, the fertility component of erotic capital will be excluded from the present study.

1977 Quality of Employment Survey (QES), and the 1981 Canadian Quality of Life Survey (QOL). The first American survey provided data on 2,164 respondents, the second American survey on 1,515 participants, and the Canadian survey presented data on 3,415 respondents. In all three surveys, interviewers ranked the respondents on a five-point scale, according to the following 5-point classification (Hamermesh and Biddle 1994):

1. Homely
2. Quite plain (below average for age and sex)
3. Average looks for age and sex
4. Good-looking (above average for age and sex)
5. Strikingly handsome or beautiful

Most participants were rated either good-looking or at least average looking. Indeed, 82% of women and 86% of men from the Quality of Employment Surveys fell in these two categories. In addition, more individuals were assessed as belonging in the top two categories as opposed to the bottom two categories with 34% of women rated as strikingly beautiful or good looking and only 15% as either homely or quite plain. With regards to men, 29% were ranked as either strikingly handsome or good-looking, while only 12% were viewed as homely or quite plain. After controlling for education, age, health, union membership, marital status, race/ethnicity, size of city, region, nativity, family background, size of company, and years with the company, the authors ran Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regressions of earnings on looks. Combining the two samples of Americans from the 1970s, they found that compared to average-looking women, the wage premium for above-average women was equal to 8%. Being below-

average triggered a wage penalty equal to 4% in women. For men, there was a wage premium for being above-average equal to 4% and a wage penalty for being below-average equal to 13% (Hamermesh and Biddle 1994). These results are important contributions to labor economics, because they demonstrate that beauty is a scarce good that responds to the laws of supply and demand, and that is able to raise people's standard of living.

In addition, results from a multivariate regression analysis on a large sample of Americans from the Current Population Survey indicate that there is a 10% marginal premium associated with each additional year of schooling (Hamermesh 2011). This effect is slightly larger than the impact of a woman's good looks (10% vs. 8%). Furthermore, this indicates that a man's good looks, compared to those of a homely man, are equivalent to at least one a half additional years of schooling (4% penalty + 13% premium = 17% vs. 15%).

In a subsequent study, Biddle and Hamermesh analyzed the effects of being attractive on the earnings of lawyers (1998). They used longitudinal data from the graduating classes of the same law school for the years 1971-1978 and 1981-1988. As a basis for this study, the law school provided photographs of students in each entering class. Individuals' looks were rated on a scale from 1 to 5, by four observers from both genders. A rating of 1 corresponded to the least attractive look, while a score of 5 corresponded to the most attractive look. Results from this study suggest that there is a beauty premium for lawyers and that it increases with age. For the 1971-1978 male graduates, above average looks were associated with at least a 10% premium on earnings, compared to a person ranked below average. Fifteen years after law school graduation,

the beauty premium increased to a value of 12%. In addition, the authors found that lawyers who practiced in private sector settings were overall better-looking than those in the public sector, which suggests employer discrimination. However, the results from this study were only statistically significant for men (Biddle and Hamermesh 1998).

Frieze et al. (1991) studied the effects of looks on a small sample of recent MBA graduates during the first ten years of their professional careers. Participants' looks were rated based on photographs that were taken while they were in business school. The authors conclude that more attractive men had higher starting salaries than their less attractive counterparts. In addition, they also saw their earnings grow faster over the first ten years of their career. As was observed in Biddle and Hamermesh's study of lawyers (1998), women's earnings were not associated with their physical attractiveness. However, beautiful women did experience a faster increase in their earnings than did men (Frieze et al. 1991).

A Finnish study analyzed the relationship between looks of candidates running for parliamentary elections and their electoral success. The authors investigated whether visual evaluation of political candidates was a predictor of electoral outcomes (Berggren et al. 2010). This study was based on four online surveys with more than 1,900 facial photographs of Finnish political candidates. These pictures were rated on the web by 10,011 respondents, both Finnish and foreign. Their main result was that beauty appears to be helpful. Indeed, findings from this study revealed that a one standard deviation in beauty was associated with a 20% increase in the number of votes for non-incumbent candidates. The association between looks and electoral success held for both men and women, and was maintained even after controlling for occupational and educational

variables. Moreover, the authors discovered that the correlation between beauty and electoral success was more robust than that of perceived competence or trustworthiness (Berggren et al. 2010).

2. Body weight and earnings

Economic theory suggests various mechanisms through which obesity might be negatively related to earnings. Becker (1971) argued that there exists a “cosmetic discrimination” effect, which acts as a wage depressant. This theory suggests that some employees will present a visual dislike for the appearance of overweight employees, generating a wage discrimination effect. The second theory of discrimination towards overweight individuals is known as the “statistical discrimination”, which asserts that a person’s obesity may be seen by employees as a latent proxy for factors such as lower intelligence, lower discipline, or motivational skills. As a result of these altered perceptions, employers may discriminate overweight employees because they believe they will not be as efficient or competent as their thinner colleagues (Aigner et al. 1977). The third theory of discrimination relates to human capital acquisition. McLean and colleagues (1980) posit that some employees will refuse to provide on-the-job training to overweight employees based on their looks. Overweight employees will therefore lag behind in terms of human capital acquisition and technical skills necessary to enhance job performance. The authors argue that such discrimination has a negative impact on wages. Conversely others have argued that there exists a reverse causality effect between obesity and wages, namely that lower wages could lead to being overweight (Cawley 2004). This could be explained by the consumption of less nutritious and more fattening foods by

employees with lower wages. Sobal and colleagues (1989) have argued that this reverse effect is especially prominent among women.

Several empirical studies have investigated the relationship between obesity and wages (Register and Williams 1990; Averett and Korneman 1996; Cawley 2004). Register and Williams (1990) studied the impact of obesity on earnings. After analyzing a sample of 18 to 25 year olds from the 1982 wave of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY), the authors report that there is discrimination against obese women. Being an obese woman was associated with a 16% wage penalty compared to women whose weights were considered in the normal range. This effect was not observed in men, however, as obese men had a 7% wage premium compared to their normal weight counterparts.

Averett and Korneman (1996) extended the previous study using the 1988 wave of the NLSY and also found that obesity lowers earnings and generates labor market discrimination among women. The authors studied a sample of men and women aged 23 to 31. Obese women had a wage penalty approximately equal to 20%. The findings remained robust when the authors compared same-sex siblings to control for family background differences. Nevertheless, these differences were not statistically significant among men or African American women. Other social characteristics may play a more important role for African American women. In addition, standards of beauty may differ for African American women

Recently, investigators have argued that only models that treat BMI as endogenous should be considered for analysis and review (Cawley 2004). Endogeneity occurs in econometric models when the explanatory variable is correlated with the error

term, generating bias in the estimated regression coefficients (Wooldridge 2010). Endogeneity can arise due to omitted variable bias or simultaneity, among other factors. BMI appears to be endogenous because omitted variables could explain BMI. Indeed, genetic research has showed that most of the variance in BMI is explained by non-genetic factors such as the environment and individual lifestyle decisions (Comuzzie and Allison 1998). In addition, because lower wages may be associated with higher BMIs, the simultaneity criterion for of endogeneity is satisfied. Controlling for endogeneity using instrumental variables, Cawley (2004) finds that BMI does indeed have a negative impact on the wages of white females. A BMI difference of two standard deviations is associated with a 9% decrease in wages. This BMI wage premium corresponds to the effect of an additional 1.5 years of education or three years of work experience.

3. Non-cognitive traits and earnings

The relevance of social skills and personality on labor market earnings has been studied in the 1970s by Bowles and Gintis. Bowles and Gintis argued that the social status and the social class of a family were transmitted from generation to generation. They further claimed that most of the impact of education and schooling on labor market outcomes was not linked to cognitive traits and test scores alone. Supporting their argument, the authors found that the effect of schooling on labor market outcomes was due to the correlation between non-cognitive traits in the workplace and education (Bowles and Gintis 1976). Examples of non-cognitive traits cited by the authors included agreeableness, extroversion, work orientation, emotionality, and helpfulness. Employers and teachers seemed to reward the same non-cognitive traits both at school and in the

workplace. For lower class individuals, obedience was the most salient trait; while for middle and upper class individuals, creativity was rewarded the most.

Accordingly, Robins et al. (2011) have examined the additional influence of three non-cognitive traits on earnings, as distinct to beauty alone. Extending Hamermesh and Biddle's (1994) original model on beauty and earnings, they find that personality and grooming, in addition to beauty, have significant positive effects on earnings. The authors conclude that the personality attractiveness variable is associated with an hourly wage premium between 4% and 5% for women. However, the impact of an attractive personality on earnings is not statistically significant for men. Overall, the effects of non-cognitive traits slightly reduce the direct impact of beauty on earnings. Robins et al. (2011) contend that in the labor market, a person's attractive personality and grooming have the potential to augment their earnings by ameliorating the quality of interactions and communications with colleagues and superiors. The authors argue that a higher quality of interaction and better communication skills may improve productivity (Robins et al. 2011). A more friendly and upbeat attitude contributes to a more enjoyable working environment, which in turn increases the general productivity of the workplace. The importance of an attractive personality is especially salient in those professions with close contact and rapport with the public and customers (Robins et al. 2011). The findings from this study demonstrate that personality attractiveness in women is associated with a higher premium than beauty alone. In the specification including the three non-cognitive traits, being a physically attractive or very attractive woman is associated with a 3.6% wage premium, compared to an average-looking woman. Being a woman with an

attractive or very attractive personality is associated with a 4.0% wage premium, compared to a woman with an average personality.

4. Existing empirical research on erotic capital

There is a dearth of empirical research on the topic of erotic capital and its potential impact on earnings. However, in an unpublished manuscript, I investigated the effects of erotic capital on self-confidence and labor market outcomes. I utilized a LISREL model on a sample of 13,257 men and women from Wave IV of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health).

I hypothesized that there is a causal relationship between erotic capital, self-confidence, and labor market outcomes. Beauty, social attractiveness, and social presentation were the three observed variables that conceptualized erotic capital. The measure of sexuality was excluded from the latent construct of erotic capital, because it loaded very poorly. The second latent construct, self-confidence was modeled with five indicators: liveliness, optimism about the future, confidence in solving one's personal problems, self-rated intelligence, and self-rated beauty. The third latent construct, labor market outcomes, was constructed using two observed variables: a measure of perception of social success and the natural logarithm of annual earnings. The relationships between these three latent constructs was evaluated in a fully recursive causal model. The posited causal sequence whereby erotic capital affects self-confidence, and self-confidence in turn affects labor market outcomes was strongly supported in this analysis. Findings from this analysis also confirmed that erotic capital does have a direct impact on labor market outcomes and that these effects are stronger among women (Beulaygue, forthcoming). The findings from this study are summarized in Figure 2 on page 70.

The next sections of this paper will present the Add Health data, describe all the variables used in the analysis, describe the steps of the construction of the index of erotic capital, and will explain the different empirical specifications.

Chapter 3: Data and variables

I. The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health)

The data from this study come from Wave IV of the National longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). Add Health is a nationally representative survey of non- institutionalized individuals in the United States. The fourth in-home interview wave was conducted in 2007 and 2008, fourteen years after Wave I, which took place in 1994 and 1995. At the time of Wave IV, respondents were between the ages of 24 and 32. The sample analyzed in this study consists of 4,919 women who were not in school at the time of the Wave IV survey, were working at least 10 hours a week, and had valid employment and occupational data.

The Add Health data have many advantages for the present analysis. Add Health features interviewer evaluations of attractiveness as well as interviewer assessments of non-cognitive traits such as personality and grooming. Furthermore, Wave IV collects biometric data on variables such as height, weight, Body Mass Index (BMI), and waist circumference, which will be central to this analysis.

In spite of these advantages, the Add Health data have a few shortcomings. The sampled population at Wave IV is still very young, with a mean age of 29, and might not be well-situated in their professional careers. The women in this sample average approximately 3.2 years at their current employment and 9 years since their first job. Therefore, their earnings might not be reflective of their true earnings potential in the labor market.

II. The erotic capital measures

The concept of erotic capital represents the primary independent variable of this study. The concept of erotic capital is a composite measure of six traits: beauty, sexual attractiveness, social skills, liveliness, social presentation, and sexuality itself. In order to operationalize the concept of erotic capital, an index encapsulating these six elements was created. The present section will describe the construction of this index.

The index of erotic capital was constructed as representing the average of the standardized values of each component of erotic capital. Thus, measures of beauty, sexual attractiveness, social skills, liveliness, social presentation, and sexuality were standardized. The erotic capital index ranges from -1.849 to 6.117, with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 0.457. These values are summarized in Table 1 on page 75.

Equation 1 sums up the construction of this index:

$$E.C. = \frac{z(Be.) + z(Sex. Att.) + z(Soc. Sk.) + z(Live.) + z(Soc. Pres.) + z(Sex.)}{6} \quad [1]$$

Where:

E.C. = erotic capital

Be. = beauty

Sex. Att. =sexual attractiveness

Soc. Sk. = social skills

Live. = liveliness

Soc. Pres. = social presentation

Sex. = sexuality

Beauty, the first component of erotic capital is operationalized using the interviewer's assessment of the respondent's physical attractiveness. The assessment of the respondent's beauty is evaluated with the following question: "*How physically*

attractive is the respondent?” Interviewers rated participants’ physical attractiveness on a scale ranging from 1 to 5. A rating of 1 corresponds to a very unattractive woman, a rating of 2 to an unattractive woman, a rating of 3 to an about average woman, a rating of 4 to an attractive woman, and a rating of 5 to a very attractive woman. All other responses are coded as missing. Beauty rankings range from 1 to 5, with a mean of 3.516 and a standard deviation of 0.867. These summary statistics are presented in Table 1 on page 75.

Sexual attractiveness is operationalized using a biometric continuous measure of waist circumference. As was explained in the previous section, sexual attractiveness can be measured in a variety of different ways. Body weight, Body Mass Index (BMI), waist-hip ratio, or waist circumference are commonly utilized to operationalize this concept. For the purpose of the main analysis, the continuous measure of waist circumference was used. Smaller waist circumferences are usually associated with heightened levels of sexual attractiveness (Singh et al. 2007). Waist circumference was measured in centimeters, ranges from 50 cm to 198, with a mean value of 96.616 cm and a standard deviation of 18.247. This mean value of 96.616 is almost two standard deviations above the value of 60 cm (23.50 inches), which is usually expected of models and playboy bunnies (Webster 2008). A wider waist circumference measure is usually associated with a negative perception of sexual attractiveness. I recoded the variable to reflect this inverse relationship by taking its reciprocal and then standardizing the value, before including it in the index of erotic capital.

A measure of BMI will be used as a proxy for sexual attractiveness in the sensitivity tests section of this paper. Sample BMI values range from 14.4 to 97.7, with a

mean value of 29.076 and a standard deviation of 8.139. The lower bound and top bound of this range are considered extreme outliers, as defined by the World Health Organization (2012). Thus, the natural logarithm of BMI was taken in order to normalize the distribution. As with waist circumference, a larger BMI measure is frequently associated with a negative perception of sexual attractiveness. Therefore, I recoded the variable to reflect this inverse relationship by taking the reciprocal of BMI and then calculating the z-score of this variable, before including it in the index of erotic capital. The previous sample statistics are summarized in Table 1 on page 75.

The third constituting element of erotic capital, social skills, was operationalized by an interviewer's assessment of the respondent's personality. The assessment of the respondent's personality was evaluated with the following question: "*How attractive is the respondent's personality?*" Interviewers rated participants' personality on a scale ranging from 1 to 5. A rating of 1 corresponded to a very unattractive personality, a rating of 2 to an unattractive personality, a rating of 3 to an about average personality, a rating of 4 to an attractive personality, and a rating of 5 to a very attractive personality. All other responses were coded as missing. Social skills rankings range from 1 to 5, with a mean of 3.689 and a standard deviation of 0.895. The previous sample statistics are presented in Table 1 on page 75.

The fourth composing part of erotic capital, social presentation, was operationalized by an interviewer's assessment of the respondent's grooming. The assessment of the respondent's grooming was evaluated with the following question: "*How well groomed is the respondent?*" Interviewers rated participants' grooming on a scale ranging from 1 to 5. A rating of 1 corresponds to a very poorly groomed woman, a

rating of 2 to a poorly groomed woman, a rating of 3 to an about average groomed woman, a rating of 4 to a well groomed woman, and a rating of 5 to a very well groomed woman. All other responses were coded as missing. Values of social presentation range from 1 to 5, with a mean of 3.573 and a standard deviation of 0.761. The previous sample statistics are presented in Table 1 on page 75.

The concept of liveliness was operationalized using a measure of frequency of weekly physical exercise. Respondents were asked how many time they performed different types of physical exercise in the past week. The assessment of respondents' frequency of physical exercise was evaluated with the following questions

1. *“In the past seven days, how many times did you bicycle, skateboard, dance, hike, hunt or do yard work?”*
2. *“In the past seven days, how many times did you roller blade, roller skate, downhill ski, snow board, play racquet sports, or do aerobics?”*
3. *“In the past seven days, how many times did you participate in strenuous team sports such as football, soccer, basketball, lacrosse, rugby, field hockey, or ice hockey?”*
4. *“In the past seven days, how many times did you participate in individual sports such as running, wrestling, swimming, cross-country skiing, cycle racing, or martial arts?”*
5. *“In the past seven days, how many times did you participate in gymnastics, weight lifting, or strength training?”*
6. *“In the past seven days, how many times did you play golf, go fishing or bowling, or play softball or baseball?”*

7. *“In the past seven days, how many times did you walk for exercise?”*

The frequencies pertaining to the previous seven questions were added in order to obtain a total weekly exercise frequency. On average, women counted 6.565 activity events per week, with total weekly activity event frequency ranging from 0 to 104. These sample statistics can be viewed in Table 1 on page 75.

Sexuality, as defined by Hakim, refers to sexual competence, libido, erotic imagination, fantasies, and playfulness (Hakim 2010). This concept is very difficult to operationalize since the Add Health survey does not ask questions regarding such personal topics, and therefore an ideal measure of sexuality does not exist. However, for the purpose of the main analysis, I constructed a measure of sexuality reflecting a woman’s engagement in sexual activity. The measure of overall sexual activity is a dummy variable equal to 1 if a woman was using a female initiated birth control method, and 0 otherwise. Women using female-initiated birth control measures in this sample did so for non-medical reasons, and thus I inferred that they used these methods for contraceptive purposes. Therefore, these women were likely to be sexually active, since they wanted to avoid unwanted pregnancies. Female initiated birth control methods included in the present analysis are birth control pills, female condoms, the shot (Depo-Provera), diaphragms, intra-uterine devices (IUD), vaginal sponges, Nuvaring, Norplant, and the patch. Out of 6,161 women, 2,868 were using any form of woman-initiated birth control method, representing 46.55% of the sample. The dichotomous measure of woman initiated birth control methods has a mean of 0.096, a standard deviation of 0.295, and ranges from 0 to 1. These statistics are summarized in Table 1 on page 75.

Table 2 on page 76 presents the inter-item correlations between the standardized values of the aforementioned six components of erotic capital.

III. Earnings measure

The dependent variable for this study is the natural logarithm of a measure of before taxes annual earnings. Women in the labor force were asked the question: “*Now think about your personal earnings. In {2006/2007/2008}, how much income did you receive from personal earnings before taxes-that is wages or salaries, including tips, bonuses, and overtime pay, and income from self-employment?*” I retained strictly positive annual earnings from this sample and excluded all values equal to zero. These values were highly skewed, ranging from \$4,000 to \$999,995 per year, with a mean value of \$30,958 and a standard deviation of \$3,984. Therefore, the natural logarithm of annual earnings was taken to smooth out any existing outliers. The natural logarithm of annual earnings ranges from 1.386 to 13.81, with a mean of 10.064 and a standard deviation of 1.011. These sample statistics are summarized in Table 1 on page 75.

IV. Control variables

In order to isolate the impact of women’s erotic capital on earnings, I controlled for other factors that influence or could potentially impact earnings. I replicated the control variables utilized in Hamermesh and Biddle’s (1994) analysis. I controlled for the effects of socio-demographic variables such as race and ethnicity, age, and marital status. Furthermore, I controlled for different levels of educational attainment and self-rated health status. Age is measured in continuous years. White is the reference group for race and ethnicity. Black is equal to 1 if the individual is Black, American Indian is equal to 1 if the individual is American Indian, and Asian is equal to 1 if the individual is Asian. In

addition, I included a dichotomous measure of parental presence in the household equal to 1 if the father was present in the household or equal to 0 otherwise. I also incorporated a measure of father's education, equal to 1 if the father attended college and equal to 0 otherwise. Furthermore, I added a measure of whether English was spoken at home. This variable was equal to 1 if English was spoken at home and equal to 0 otherwise. I also controlled for self-reported health status using three dichotomous measures of excellent self-reported health, very good self-rated health, and good self-rated health. Excellent self-reported health was equal to 1 if health was reported as excellent and equal to 0 if self-reported health was fair or poor. Very good self-reported health was equal to 1 if self-reported health is very good and equal to 0 if self-reported health was fair or poor. Good self-reported health is equal to 1 if self-reported health was very good and equal to 0 if self-reported health is fair or poor. Finally, I controlled for years at the respondent's current job and, years since first employment, and weekly hours worked. These three variables are continuous measures. The entire set of control variables and their sample ranges, means, and standard deviations are displayed in Table 1 on page 7.

Chapter 4: Methods

I. Internal-Consistency and Exploratory Factor Analysis

In order to assess the reliability of my constructed index of erotic capital, I conducted an internal-consistency evaluation. With this approach, I examined the relationships among all the six items of erotic capital simultaneously, to determine the extent to which the items are homogenous. In other words, to what degree do beauty, sexual attractiveness, social skills, social presentation, liveliness, and sexuality; measure the same concept of erotic capital? The most frequent internal-consistency estimate used is the Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha measures the average of the correlations between all possible pairs of items. The Cronbach's alpha test yielded an alpha value of 0.59. Traditionally in the social sciences, a threshold of 0.70 for Cronbach's alpha has been the standard for acceptable reliability (Nunnally 1978). However, recent analysts have argued that a common threshold for sufficient values of alpha is 0.6 (Hair et al. 2006). The present result of 0.59 approximates 0.6. Findings from this test suggest that the six items of erotic capital do not have an optimal internal consistency, but have an acceptable level of internal consistency.

Furthermore, I analyzed the factor structure of the six components of erotic capital using the principal components technique using Stata 11 (2009). Factor analysis is a procedure intended to investigate the possibility that various items have one or a few factors in common that explain their inter-item correlations (Miller and Salkind 2002). Since there are six factors, the total variance in this analysis was equal to 6. The factor structure revealed that beauty accounted for 20.44% of the total variance of erotic capital,

sexual attractiveness accounted for 11.24%, social skills accounted for 9.44%, social presentation accounted for 8.35%, liveliness accounted for 6.58%, and sexuality accounted for 3.96% of the total variance. The variances extracted by the factors are called eigenvalues. The Kaiser criterion (1960) recommends retaining only those factors whose eigenvalues are greater than 1, i.e. those factors that explain more than 10% of the total variance. If the difference between the first two factors is equal or greater to 1, then a one-factor solution is justified. In the present analysis, two factors had eigenvalues greater than 1: beauty and sexual attractiveness. In this analysis, the difference between the greatest two factors was equal to 0.92, which is smaller than 1. This suggested that a two-factor solution would be recommended to examine erotic capital. Further analysis indicated the components of these two factors and their respective loadings on the factors. The first factor would include beauty, sexual attractiveness, social skills, and social presentation. The second factor would include liveliness and sexuality. Despite such results pointing at a two-factor solution, the difference between the two largest eigenvalues remains very close to 1 (0.92). Therefore, for the purpose of the main analysis of erotic capital, I will adopt a one-factor solution. In the sensitivity analysis, I will include a solution retaining only the first four components, to assess whether these four variables have better explanatory power than the original six components.

II. Empirical Specifications

1. Approach 1: independent effects

Before running the main model, I identified the effect of each individual component of erotic capital on earnings in women. The standardized value of each of the

six elements is regressed on the natural logarithm of annual earnings. In this first approach, I estimate the following six equations, corresponding to six log-linear models:

$$\text{Ln}(\text{earnings})_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 z(\text{beauty})_i + X\beta x + \mu_i \quad [2]$$

$$\text{Ln}(\text{earnings})_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 z(\text{sexual attractiveness})_i + X\beta x + \mu_i \quad [3]$$

$$\text{Ln}(\text{earnings})_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 z(\text{social skills})_i + X\beta x + \mu_i \quad [4]$$

$$\text{Ln}(\text{earnings})_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 z(\text{liveliness})_i + X\beta x + \mu_i \quad [5]$$

$$\text{Ln}(\text{earnings})_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 z(\text{social presentation})_i + X\beta x + \mu_i \quad [6]$$

$$\text{Ln}(\text{earnings})_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 z(\text{sexuality})_i + X\beta x + \mu_i \quad [7]$$

Where $\text{Ln}(\text{earnings})_i$ is the natural logarithm of individual i 's annual earnings, the primary dependent variable. The standardized values (z-scores) of the six components of erotic capital are represented by: $z(\text{beauty})$, $z(\text{sexual attractiveness})$, $z(\text{social skills})$, $z(\text{liveliness})$, $z(\text{social presentation})$, and $z(\text{sexuality})$. β_0 is the y-intercept of the regression line, corresponding to a constant value. β_1 is the regression coefficient to be estimated for each of the erotic capital variables. Because each of these models are of the log-linear form, β_1 will be interpreted as the approximate percentage change in earnings associated with a one standard deviation increase in each of the six erotic capital variables (Wooldridge 2009). X is the set of control variables that follow Hamermesh and Biddle's 1994 model, and μ is a random error term. Each of these six equations will be estimated using the statistical package Stata 11 (2009). The Beta command was also utilized in order to obtain standardized regression coefficients, so as to compare the relative strengths of the various predictors within the models.

The results and estimated coefficients for equation [2] are presented in Table 3 on page 77. The results and estimated coefficients corresponding to equation [3] are

presented in Table 4 on page 78. The results and estimated regression coefficients corresponding to equation [4] are presented in Table 5 on page 79. The results and estimated regression coefficients corresponding to equation [5] are presented in Table 6 on page 80. The results and estimated regression coefficients for equation [6] are presented in Table 7 on page 81. The results and estimated regression coefficients for equation [7] are presented in Table 8 on page 82. I also analyzed the independent effect of all six components of erotic capital in one regression model, corresponding to the following equation:

$$\ln(\text{earnings})_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 z(\text{beauty})_i + \beta_2 z(\text{sexual attractiveness})_i + \beta_3 z(\text{social skills})_i + \beta_4 z(\text{liveliness})_i + \beta_5 z(\text{social presentation})_i + \beta_6 z(\text{sexuality})_i + X\beta + \mu_i \quad [8]$$

The results corresponding to this equation are presented in Table 9 on page 83.

These results will be analyzed and described in detail in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

2. Approach 2: Combined effects

The main analysis presented in this thesis consists of estimating an earnings equation of the following model:

$$\ln(\text{earnings})_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Erotic Capital}_i + X\beta + \mu_i \quad [9]$$

Where $\ln(\text{earnings})_i$ is the natural logarithm of individual i 's annual earnings.

Erotic Capital is an index constructed adding the standardized values of the six components of erotic capital. The detailed steps of the construction of the index are outlined on page 25. The previous equation will be estimated utilizing Stata 11 (2009), and using the Beta command in order to obtain standardized regression coefficients, to be able to compare the relative strengths of the various predictors within the models.

β_0 is the y-intercept of the regression line, corresponding to a constant value. β_1 is the regression coefficient to be estimated for the constructed erotic capital index. Since this equation is of the log-linear form, β_1 will be interpreted as the approximate percentage change in earnings associated with a one standard deviation increase in the erotic capital index. X is the set of control variables that follow Hamermesh and Biddle's 1994 model, and μ is a random error term. The results and estimated regression coefficients for the full regression model in equation [9] are presented in Table 10 on page 84. These will be described and interpreted in detail in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

III. Sensitivity tests

In order to examine the robustness of the core findings, I conducted four sensitivity tests in addition to the main empirical analyses.

The first sensitivity analysis that I conducted consisted in replacing the dependent variable, the natural logarithm of annual earnings, by a categorical measure of self-perceived achieved social success within American society. This measure reflects where participants thought they stood in American society. Participants were asked the questions: *“Think of this ladder as representing where people stand in the United States. At the top of the ladder (step 10) are the people who have the most money and education, and the most respected jobs. At the bottom of the ladder (step 1) are the people who have the least money and education, and the least respected jobs or not job. Where would you place yourself on this ladder? Pick the number of step that shows where you think you stand at this time in your life, relative to other people in the United States.”* This 10-step ladder is a relevant measure of self-rated social success, with a mean of 5.050 and a

standard deviation of 1.685. These descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1 on page 75. The results for this sensitivity analysis are presented in Table A on page 85.

The second sensitivity test conducted consisted in using an alternate index of erotic capital, constructed with four components instead of the original six, as suggested by the factor analysis. The alternate index includes measures of beauty, sexual attractiveness, social skills, and social presentation. The results for this sensitivity analysis are presented in Table B on page 86.

The third sensitivity test consisted in replacing waist circumference as a measure of sexual attractiveness by BMI within the index of erotic capital. BMI is an indicator of weight with relation to height, which is commonly used internationally to classify underweight individuals, overweight individuals, and obese individuals. It is calculated by dividing the weight in kilograms by the height in meters squared (World Health Organization 2012). An individual is considered underweight if her BMI is inferior to 18.5. She is considered within the normal range if her BMI falls between 18.5 and 24.99. Overweight persons have BMIs ranging from 25 included to 30 included. Any BMI value greater than 30 classifies an individual as obese. Within the categories of thinness and obesity, there are subdivisions. These categories are labeled as severe thinness, moderate thinness, mild thinness; obesity class I, obesity class II, and obesity class II (World Health Organization 2012). As I previously mentioned in the theoretical background section of this paper, body mass index has been classified as one of the strongest determinants of a woman's physical and sexual attractiveness (Tovee et al. 1998). In the present sample, BMI ranges from a value of 14.400 to a value of 97.400, with a mean value of 29.078 and a standard deviation of 8.139 BMI points. These descriptive statistics

are presented in Table 1 on page 75. These figures allude that the average American woman in this sample is overweight, nearing obesity. Due to the two extreme values at the lower and upper range of the BMI distribution I took the natural logarithm of BMI in order to smooth out the distribution and minimize the effect of these extreme values. The results of the independent effects of this alternate index on annual earnings are presented in Table C on page 87.

The fourth sensitivity test consisted in replacing the measure of woman-initiated birth control methods by a measure of sexual satisfaction within the index of erotic capital. For the purpose of the sensitivity tests, I utilized a measure of sexual satisfaction. The survey asked individuals who were currently in a relationship or who had been in a relationship in the past 12 months whether they were satisfied with their sex life with their partner, or previous partner.

The question asked was:

“I (am/was) satisfied with our sex life.”

Response categories for this item were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 if the person strongly agrees to 5 if the person strongly disagrees. Because the response categories were reverse-coded, I recoded them in ascending order. A response of 1 reflects a person who strongly disagrees, whereas a response of 5 reflects a person who strongly agrees to the statement. Values in response to this item ranged from 1 to 5, with a mean of 4.024 and a standard deviation of 1.117. The results for this test are presented in Table D on page 88.

The fifth sensitivity test consisted in using a different measure to operationalize the independent impact of the concept of sexual attractiveness on earnings. In the main

analysis, I used the variable waist circumference. In the sensitivity tests, I used the natural logarithm of Body Mass Index (BMI). The results of the independent effect of BMI on annual earnings are presented in Table E on page 89.

The sixth and last sensitivity test consisted in using an alternate measure to examine the independent impact of the concept of sexuality on earnings. The main analysis uses a dichotomous variable reflecting use of woman-initiated birth control methods. For the purpose of the sensitivity tests, I utilized a measure of sexual satisfaction. The results corresponding to this sensitivity test are presented in Table F on page 90.

Chapter 5: Results

I. Results for the independent effects

1. Beauty

The first specification, in which the independent impact of the standardized variable beauty is regressed on the natural logarithm of annual earnings, yielded the following results. As predicted, beauty is a significant predictor of earnings. The estimated regression coefficient $\beta_1 z(\text{beauty})_1$ was equal to 0.033. Because this is a log-linear regression function, this coefficient signifies that a one standard deviation increase in beauty is associated with an approximate 3.3% increase in earnings. This coefficient is significant at the 1% level of significance (p-value < 0.01). The exact percentage change in earnings is obtained by taking the antilog of the coefficient and subtracting 1: $e^{0.033} - 1 = 0.034$. Thus, a one standard deviation increase in beauty is associated with an exact 3.4% increase in annual earnings.

Mean earnings in this sample were equal to \$30,957. A woman with average earnings would see her income increase from \$30,957 to \$32,010, if her beauty rating increased by one standard deviation. This positive association is consistent with the theoretical and rigorous empirical findings described earlier; showing that beauty will have a positive association with earnings among women.

Within this specification, the control variables age, high school degree, some college, some graduate school, advanced degree, excellent self-reported health, very good self-reported health, good self-reported health, years in current job, and weekly hours worked were all statistically significant at the 1% level of significance and had the anticipated signs and magnitudes. These results are presented in Table 3 on page 77.

2. *Sexual attractiveness*

When the standardized variable sexual attractiveness, operationalized measuring waist circumference in centimeters, was regressed on the natural logarithm of annual earnings, the following findings emerged. Consistent with my predictions, sexual attractiveness was a significant predictor of earnings. The estimated regression coefficient $\beta_1 z (\text{sexual attractiveness})_1$ was equal to -0.049. Since this is a log-linear regression function, this coefficient signifies that a one standard deviation increase in sexual attractiveness is associated with an approximate 4.9% decrease in earnings. This coefficient was significant at the 1% level of significance (p-value<0.01). The exact percentage change in earnings was obtained by taking the antilog of the coefficient and subtracting 1: $e^{0.049} - 1 = 0.050$. Thus, a one standard deviation increase in waist circumference is associated with a 5.0% decrease in earnings. The independent effect of waist circumference demonstrates a negative association between the size of a woman's waist and her earnings supporting my prediction that larger waist circumferences are considered a negative beauty trait among women.

Mean earnings in this sample were equal to \$30,957. A woman with average earnings would see her income decrease from \$30,957 to \$29,409, if her waist circumference increased by one standard deviation (18.247 cm or 7.18 inches).

The set of control variables age, high school degree, some college, some graduate school, advanced degree, excellent self-reported health, very good self-reported health, good self-reported health, years in current job and weekly hours worked were all statistically significant at the 1% level of significance and had the anticipated signs and magnitudes. These results are presented in Table 4 on page 78.

3. Social skills

The third specification, in which the independent impact of the standardized variable social skills is regressed on the natural logarithm of annual earnings, supports hypothesis that social skills will have a positive association with earnings. The estimated regression coefficient $\beta_1 z (\text{social skills})_1$ was equal to 0.047. Because this is a log-linear regression function, this coefficient means that a one-standard deviation increase in social skills is associated with an approximate 4.7% increase in earnings. This coefficient was statistically significant at the 1% level of significance (p-value<0.01). The exact percentage change in earnings was obtained by taking the antilog of the coefficient and subtracting 1: $e^{0.047}-1=0.048$. Thus, a one- standard deviation increase in beauty was associated with a 4.8% increase in earnings. A woman with average earnings would see her income increase from \$30,957 to \$32,442 if her level of social skills increased one standard deviation.

In this model, the control variables age, high school degree, some college, some graduate school, advanced degree, excellent self-reported health, very good self-reported health, good self-reported health, years in current job and weekly hours worked were all statistically significant at the 1% level of significance and had the anticipated signs and magnitudes. These results are presented in Table 5 on page 79.

4. Liveliness

The fourth specification, in which the independent impact of the standardized variable liveliness, an index of physical exercise and dancing, is regressed on the natural logarithm of annual earnings, yielded no statistically significant results for the coefficient of interest. Therefore, contrary to my expectations there was no statistically meaningful

relationship between physical exercise, dancing, and annual earnings in this model. In the preliminary analysis for this research, I tested various combinations of exercise and dancing, along with other variables such as optimism and happiness. None of these combinations yielded statistically significant results. These findings are consistent with the factor structure analysis conducted, which suggested that liveliness was not a part of the component of erotic capital. Potential explanations and reasons for this absence of findings will be discussed in the discussion section of this paper.

As was the case with the previous two models, the control variables age, high school degree, some college, some graduate school, advanced degree, excellent self-reported health, very good self-reported health, good self-reported health, and years in current job and weekly hours worked were all statistically significant at the 1% level of significance and had the anticipated signs and magnitudes. These results are presented in Table 6 on page 80.

5. Social presentation

The fifth model, where the independent impact of the standardized variable social presentation is regressed on the natural logarithm of annual earnings, supports my hypothesis that social presentation significantly increases earnings. The estimated regression coefficient $\beta_1 z (\text{social presentation})_1$ was equal to 0.084. Since this function is of the log-linear form, this coefficient means that a one-standard deviation increase in social presentation was associated with an approximate 8.4% increase in earnings. This coefficient is significant at the 1% level of significance (p-value<0.01). The exact percentage change in earnings was obtained by taking the antilog of the coefficient and subtracting 1: $e^{0.084}-1=0.088$. Therefore, a one- standard deviation increase in social

presentation was associated with an 8.8% increase in earnings. Women who were better groomed and presented their personal appearance better, experienced a significant increase in their earnings. For instance, a woman with average earnings would see her income increase from \$30,957 to \$33,681, if her social presentation rating went up one standard deviation. This coefficient mirrors the expected high magnitude and positive direction anticipated from previous literature findings on grooming (Robins et al. 2011).

The set of control variables age, high school degree, some college, some graduate school, advanced degree, excellent self-reported health, very good self-reported health, good self-reported health, years in current job and weekly hours worked were all statistically significant at the 1% level of significance and had the anticipated signs and magnitudes. These results are presented in Table 7 on page 81.

6. *Sexuality*

Consistent with my predictions, the last independent specification, where the independent impact of the standardized measure of sexuality, woman-initiated birth control methods, was regressed on the natural logarithm of annual earnings, yielded the following results. The estimated regression coefficient $\beta_1 z (sexuality)_i$ was equal to 0.028. Since this function is of the log-linear form, this coefficient means that a one standard deviation increase in sexuality was associated with an approximate 2.80% increase in earnings. This coefficient was significant at the 1% level of significance (p-value < 0.01). The exact percentage change in earnings was obtained by taking the antilog of the coefficient and subtracting 1: $e^{0.028} - 1 = 0.028$, and was identical to the approximate percentage change in earnings. Therefore, a one-standard deviation increase in sexuality was associated with a 2.8% increase in annual earnings. Women who are sexually active

and use woman-initiated methods of birth control for contraceptive purposes have higher earnings than those who are not sexually active. For instance, a woman with average earnings would see her income increase from \$30,957 to \$31,823, if she went from being sexually inactive to being sexually active and using women initiated birth control methods. As predicted, this coefficient has the expected positive effect on earnings associated with a sexually active lifestyle, consistent with Hakim's theory of erotic capital (2010).

The set of control variables age, high school degree, some college, some graduate school, advanced degree, excellent self-reported health, very good self-reported health, good self-reported health, years in current job, and weekly hours worked were all statistically significant at the 1% level of significance and had the anticipated signs and magnitudes. These results are presented in Table 8 on page 82

Including the six standardized measures of erotic capital in the same model yielded the following results. Sexual attractiveness, social skills, social presentation, and sexuality remained statistically significant predictors of annual earnings. Surprisingly, beauty was not a statistically significant predictor of earnings in this model. The estimated coefficient $\beta_1 z$ (*sexual attractiveness*)_{*i*} was equal to -0.033. Since this function is of the log-linear form, this coefficient means that a one standard deviation increase in waist circumference was associated with an approximate 3.30% decrease in annual earnings. This coefficient was significant at the 1% level of significance (p-value<0.01). The exact percentage change in earnings was obtained by taking the antilog of the coefficient and subtracting 1: $e^{-0.033}-1 = -0.034$. Therefore, a one-standard deviation increase in waist circumference was associated with a 3.4% decrease in annual earnings. .

The estimated coefficient $\beta_1 z$ (*social skills*)_i was equal to 0.032. Since this function is of the log-linear form, this coefficient means that a one standard deviation increase in waist circumference was associated with an approximate 3.20% decrease in annual earnings. This coefficient was significant at the 5% level of significance (p-value<0.05). The exact percentage change in earnings was obtained by taking the antilog of the coefficient and subtracting 1: $e^{0.032}-1= 0.033$. Therefore, a one-standard deviation increase in social skills was associated with a 3.3% increase in annual earnings.

The estimated coefficient $\beta_1 z$ (*social presentation*)_i was equal to 0.074. Since this function is of the log-linear form, this coefficient means that a one standard deviation increase in waist circumference was associated with an approximate 7.40% decrease in annual earnings. This coefficient was significant at the 1% level of significance (p-value<0.01). The exact percentage change in earnings was obtained by taking the antilog of the coefficient and subtracting 1: $e^{0.074}-1= 0.077$. Therefore, a one-standard deviation increase in social skills was associated with a 7.7% increase in annual earnings.

The estimated coefficient $\beta_1 z$ (*sexuality*)_i was equal to 0.024. Since this function is of the log-linear form, this coefficient means that a one standard deviation increase in waist circumference was associated with an approximate 2.40% decrease in annual earnings. This coefficient was significant at the 1% level of significance (p-value<0.01). The exact percentage change in earnings was obtained by taking the antilog of the coefficient and subtracting 1: $e^{0.024}-1= 0.024$. Therefore, a one-standard deviation increase in social skills was associated with a 2.4% increase in annual earnings.

II. Results for the combined effects

The primary full regression model in which the constructed index of erotic capital is regressed on the natural logarithm of annual earnings yielded the following results. The estimated regression coefficient β_1 (*erotic capital*)₁ was equal to 0.024. Because this is a log-linear regression function, this coefficient indicates that a one-unit increase in the index of erotic capital was associated with an approximate 2.4% increase in earnings. This coefficient was statistically significant at the 1% level of significance (p-value < 0.01). The exact percentage change in earnings was obtained by taking the antilog of the coefficient and subtracting 1: $e^{0.024} - 1 = 0.024$. Thus, a one-unit increase in erotic capital was associated with a 2.4% increase in annual earnings. Therefore, the combined effect of the six variables constituting the index erotic capital has a clear positive impact on earnings. These results suggest that women with higher levels of erotic capital have higher annual earnings than their counterparts with lower levels of erotic capital. In this sample, a woman with earnings at the mean of the distribution would earn \$30,957. A woman with average earnings would see her income increase from \$30,957 to \$31,699, if her score of erotic capital increased by one unit. Although this effect might seem small, it is not negligible. This positive finding of the impact of erotic capital on earnings is consistent with Hakim's contention that women with higher levels of erotic capital are more likely than their counterparts to have higher incomes and with the central proposition of this thesis.

Due to different units of measurement standardization of the erotic capital measures was utilized in order to compare the relative effects of each predictor I calculated the standardized values of each regression coefficient using the Beta command

of Stata 11. These standardized regression coefficients allowed to compare the relative strengths of the various predictors within the models. The estimated standardized coefficient was equal to 0.088. This coefficient means that a one-standard deviation increase in the erotic capital index was associated with an approximate 8.8% increase in annual earnings. The exact percentage change in earnings was obtained by taking the antilog of the coefficient and subtracting 1: $e^{0.088}-1=0.091$. Thus, a one standard deviation increase in erotic capital was associated with a 9.1% increase in earnings. Therefore, a woman with average earnings would see her annual earnings increase from \$30,957 to \$33,774 if her erotic capital increased by one standard deviation.

Within this specification, the control variables age, high school degree, some college, some graduate school, advanced degree, excellent self-reported health, very good self-reported health, good self-reported health, years in current job, and weekly hours worked were all statistically significant at the 1% level of significance and had the anticipated signs and magnitudes. These results are presented in Table 8 on page 82.

The results from this section indicate that social presentation, sexual attractiveness, and social skills have the highest impact on annual earnings. Conversely, liveliness and sexuality have a lower influence on annual earnings. Finally, these findings also indicate that the combined erotic capital coefficient is smaller than the independent respective coefficients of social presentation, sexual attractiveness, and social skills.

III. Results for the sensitivity tests

1. Using a scale of social standing as an alternate dependent variable

In this sensitivity test, I used an alternate dependent variable to capture the concept of social success. Unlike annual earnings, this measure was not a monetary indicator of absolute income, but a relative indicator of self-rated social standing within American society. Respondents were asked to assess where they thought they stood, on a 10-step ladder reflecting education, respected jobs, and financial wealth.

The estimated regression coefficient $\beta_1 z (\text{erotic capital})_I$ was equal to 0.035. The sign of this coefficient had the expected direction and magnitude. It was however greater than the estimated coefficient of erotic capital on annual earnings ($\beta_1 z (\text{erotic capital})_I = 0.024$), yet only statistically significant at the 10% level of significance. These results suggested that financial wealth alone does not optimally operationalize social standing.

There did not seem to be a correspondence of results between the effects of erotic capital on perceived social standing and actual annual income, as both coefficients differed in magnitude. Therefore, this lack of correspondence of results was an indicator of lack of convergent validity, for the results do not converge towards the same meaning, the meaning that is conveyed by the underlying concept of social success (Singleton and Straits 2010). This suggested that the social ladder variable was a more inclusive and comprehensive measure of social success than annual earnings alone.

The set of control variables age, high school degree, some college, some graduate school, advanced degree, excellent self-reported health, very good self-reported health, good self-reported health, years in current job, and weekly hours worked were all

statistically significant at the 1% level of significance and had the anticipated signs and magnitudes. These results are presented in Table A on page 79.

2. *Combined effect of the erotic capital index with four components instead of six*

Because the factor analysis conducted earlier revealed a two-factor solution, I decided to test a solution retaining only the first four components to evaluate whether these four variables had better explanatory power than the original six components.

The four components selected by the factor analysis are beauty, sexual attractiveness, social skills, and social presentation. Liveliness and sexuality were left out of this analysis, because they did not load on the first factor. Therefore, I constructed an alternate index of erotic capital. Equation 8 below summarizes the construction of this new index:

$$E.C.alt. = \frac{z(Be.) + z(Sex. Att) + z(Soc. Sk.) + (Soc. Pres.)}{4} \quad [8]$$

Where:

E.C. = erotic capital alternative

Be. = beauty

Sex. Att. = sexual attractiveness

Soc. Sk. = social skills

Soc. Pres.= social presentation

The estimated regression coefficient β_1 (*erotic capital alternative*)₁ was equal to 0.027. Since this is a log-linear regression function, this coefficient indicated that a one-unit increase in the index of erotic capital was associated with an approximate 2.7% increase in earnings. This coefficient was statistically significant at the 1% level of significance (p-value<0.01). The exact percentage change in earnings was obtained by

calculating the antilog of the coefficient and subtracting 1: $e^{0.027}-1=0.027$. Thus, a one-unit increase in erotic capital was associated with a 2.7% increase in earnings.

Therefore, the combined effect of the four variables constituting this alternate index of erotic capital also had a statistically significant impact on earnings. These findings suggested that women with higher combined levels of beauty, sexual attractiveness, social presentation, and social skills had higher annual earnings than their counterparts with lower levels of these four combined variables. A woman with earnings at the mean of the distribution earned \$30,957. A woman with mean earnings would see her income increase from \$30,957 to \$31,792, if her score of erotic capital were to increase by one unit.

Because the units of the erotic capital index are undefined, I calculated the standardized values of each coefficient. I used the Beta command of Stata 11 to obtain standardized regression coefficients. These standardized regression coefficients allow to compare the relative strengths of the various predictors within the models. For the present alternate index of erotic capital, the estimated standardized coefficient was equal to 0.075. This coefficient means that a one-standard deviation increase in the erotic capital index was associated with an approximate 7.5% increase in annual earnings.

To obtain the exact change in annual earnings associated with a one-standard deviation increase in the erotic capital index, I took the antilog of the coefficient and subtracted 1: $e^{0.075}-1=0.078$. Thus, a one standard deviation increase in beauty was associated with a 7.8% increase in annual earnings. A woman with average annual earnings would experience an increase in annual earnings from \$30,957 to \$33,371.

This effect of the unstandardized coefficient is greater than the one observed in the main analysis using the six original components of erotic capital. The original coefficient of erotic capital in the main model was equal to 2.4%, whereas this one was equal to 2.6%. There was a 0.2 percentage point difference (2.6%-2.4%) between these two coefficients, indicating a 7.69% difference between the two coefficients $[(2.6-2.4)/2.4*100]$. However, the effect of the standardized coefficient on annual earnings was smaller in this model than the effect of the standardized coefficient in the main model. The original standardized coefficient of erotic capital in the main model was equal to 9.1%, whereas the standardized coefficient in the present reduced model is equal to 7.8%. These findings reveal that despite the results of the factor analysis, the original measure of erotic capital used in the main analysis had a greater effect on annual earnings.

In this model, the control variables age, high school degree, some college, some graduate school, advanced degree, excellent self-reported health, very good self-reported health, good self-reported health, years in current job, and weekly hours worked were all statistically significant at the 1% level of significance and have the anticipated signs and magnitudes. These results are presented in Table B on page 80.

3. Combined effect with BMI instead of waist circumference

The second sensitivity test included a measure of BMI instead of waist circumference as a proxy for sexual attractiveness in the constructed index of erotic capital. The new index was regressed on the natural logarithm of annual earnings. I thus constructed a second index of erotic capital. Because there is a negative association between BMI, beauty, and earnings among women (Cawley 2004), I recoded BMI so it would be coded in the same ascending order as the other variables within the index. I

took the reciprocal of the variable BMI and then standardized the obtained value.

Regressing the erotic capital index on the natural logarithm of annual earnings yielded the following results. The estimated regression coefficient β_1 (*erotic capital with BMI*)₁ was equal to 0.026. Because this was a log-linear regression function, this coefficient was interpreted as the approximate percentage change in earnings resulting from a one-unit change in the erotic capital index.

Therefore, a one-unit increase in the index of erotic capital was associated with an approximate 2.6% increase in annual earnings. This coefficient was statistically significant at the 1% level of significance (p-value<0.01). The exact percentage change in earnings was obtained by taking the anti-log of the coefficient and subtracting 1: $e^{0.026}-1=0.026$. Thus, a one-unit increase in erotic capital was associated with an exact 2.6% increase in earnings. Therefore, the combined effect of the six variables constituting the index of erotic capital with BMI as a proxy for sexual attractiveness had a clear positive impact on earnings. However, including BMI in the index instead of waist circumference diminishes the impact of erotic capital on annual earnings by 0.7 percentage points (3.3-2.6) or 26.92% [(3.3-2.6)/2.6*100]. These results imply that using waist circumference to operationalize sexual attractiveness in the constructed erotic capital index augments the effects of erotic capital on annual earnings.

A possible explanation for this could be that BMI is difficult to assess visually and could be misleading to the sight. A woman can have a slightly elevated BMI and still look thin and sexually attractive, due to a heavier muscle mass. However, waist circumference provides direct visual cues to sexual attractiveness and to the shape of the

body. Thus, waist circumference may be a more accurate indicator of sexual attractiveness.

In this model, the control variables age, high school degree, some college, some graduate school, advanced degree, excellent self-reported health, very good self-reported health, good self-reported health, years in current job, and weekly hours worked were all statistically significant at the 1% level of significance and had the anticipated signs and magnitudes. These results are presented in Table C on page 81.

4. Combined effect with sexual satisfaction instead of woman-initiated birth control dummy

In this sensitivity test, I tested an alternate measure of sexuality within the index. In the core model, sexuality was operationalized using a dummy variable measuring whether women engaged in woman-initiated birth control methods. In this analysis, I replaced this variable in the index with a measure of couple sexual satisfaction. The estimated regression coefficient β_1 (*erotic capital*)₁ was equal to 0.024. Because this is a log-linear regression function, this coefficient indicates that a one-unit increase in the index of erotic capital was associated with an approximate 2.4% increase in earnings. This coefficient was statistically significant at the 1% level of significance (p-value < 0.01). The exact percentage change in earnings was obtained by taking the antilog of the coefficient and subtracting 1: $e^{0.024} - 1 = 0.024$. Thus, a one-unit increase in erotic capital was associated with a 2.4% increase in annual earnings. In this sample, a woman with earnings at the mean of the distribution would earn \$30,957. A woman with average earnings would see her income increase from \$30,957 to \$31,699, if her score of erotic

capital increased by one unit. These results are identical to the results reported in the core analysis, with the woman-initiated birth control dummy conceptualizing sexuality in the index, suggesting that the impact of sexuality does not matter much with regards to the effect of the erotic capital index on annual earnings. These results are presented in Table D on page 82.

5. Independent effect of BMI on annual earnings

In order to test the robustness of the measure of waist circumference as an indicator of sexual attractiveness, I decided to examine the effects of BMI on annual earnings. The first sensitivity test looked at the independent effect of BMI on annual earnings, and the second test examined the effect of replacing waist circumference by BMI in the index of erotic capital on earnings. Because BMI was highly skewed in the sample, with upper bound outliers, I took the natural logarithm of BMI. Regressing the natural logarithm of BMI on the natural logarithm of annual earnings yielded the following results. The estimated regression coefficient $\beta_1 (\ln BMI)_1$ was equal to -0.12. Because this is a log-log regression function, this coefficient represents the elasticity of annual earnings with respect to BMI, i.e. the ratio of the percentage change in annual earnings with respect to the percentage change in BMI. Therefore, $\beta_1 (\ln BMI)_1$ can be interpreted as the percentage change in annual earnings resulting from a one percent increase in BMI, holding all the control variables constant. Based on the regression results, a one percent increase in BMI was associated with a 0.12% decrease in annual earnings. In other words, a 10 percent increase in BMI was associated with a 1.2 percent decrease in annual earnings. This coefficient was statistically significant at the 5% level of significance (p-value<0.05). The income repercussions of increased BMI for a woman

with a mean annual income of \$30,957 are telling. Suppose she had a BMI equal to 23, a value comprised within the normal healthy range. If her BMI increased by 10 percent, her new BMI would be equal to $23 * 1.10 = 25.3$. This new BMI score would bump her into the slightly overweight category. A woman with average earnings would see her income decrease from \$30,957 to \$30,337, if her BMI increased by 10%. This negative finding of the impact of BMI on earnings parallels the results from previous studies higher levels of erotic capital are more likely than their counterparts to have higher incomes (Cawley 2004). Within this specification, the control variables age, high school degree, some college, some graduate school, advanced degree, excellent self-reported health, very good self-reported health, good self-reported health, years in current job, and weekly hours worked were all statistically significant at the 1% level of significance and had the anticipated signs and magnitudes. These results are presented in Table E on page 83.

6. Independent effect of sexual satisfaction on annual earnings

In this sensitivity test, I used an alternate measure to capture the concept of sexuality, sexual satisfaction, and regressed this predictor independently on the natural logarithm of annual earnings. The measure of sexuality reflects sexual satisfaction with a current or recent romantic partner. Respondents were asked to assess to whether they were satisfied with their sex life with their current or recent partner. Because this item was reverse coded, I recoded it so that the response categories would range from 1 to 5. A response category of 1 reflected an individual who strongly disagreed with the statement of being sexually satisfied, while a response category of 5 reflected an individual who strongly agreed with the statement of being sexually satisfied.

The estimated regression coefficient $\beta_1 z (\text{sexuality})_1$ is equal to -0.003. The sign of this coefficient was not in the anticipated direction; as I had hypothesized that an active sexuality would be positively associated with annual earnings. In addition, this coefficient was not statistically significant, even at the 10% level of significance. These results suggest that this indicator of sexual satisfaction may not be an optimal measure to operationalize sexuality as it is defined in Hakim's theory.

A potential explanation might be that this indicator captures both the respondent's and her partner's sexual performance and therefore does not just mirror the respondent's sexuality. Indeed, a woman could look and feel sexually attractive, have a strong libido and erotic imagination, and yet be with a partner who does not satisfy her sexually.

The set of control variables age, high school degree, some college, some graduate school, advanced degree, excellent self-reported health, very good self-reported health, good self-reported health, years in current job, and weekly hours worked were all statistically significant at the 1% level of significance and had the anticipated signs and magnitudes. These results are presented in Table F on page 84.

Chapter 6: Discussion

Although there exists an abundant body of literature documenting the effects of beauty, body weight, and non-cognitive traits on earnings, to my knowledge this is the first empirical study assessing the impact of erotic capital on earnings among women. Using data from Wave IV of the National Longitudinal Survey of Adolescent Health (Add Health), a nationally representative sample, of youngsters aged 24 to 32; I estimated the influence of erotic capital on annual earnings among young women. I also tested the effects of alternate indices for erotic capital as well as a substitute dependent variable, a scale of social standing.

I. Key Findings

The central results from this study revealed that there was indeed a tangible erotic capital earnings premium among women. The combined effects of beauty, sexual attractiveness, social skills, social presentation, liveliness, and sexuality had a significant impact on annual earnings. Women with higher levels of erotic capital earn on average 2.4% more annually than their counterparts with lower levels of erotic capital. This finding is a significant contribution to the social sciences and to economics and is consistent with Hakim's theoretical framework and predictions. These results are also important, as they indicate that factors other than facial beauty and cognitive traits do impact earnings. Moreover, these results reinforce the importance of grooming and personality on earnings.

In addition to the combined effect of erotic capital, this study has also revealed that the independent constituting elements of erotic capital do influence earnings.

Corroborating the extant literature on beauty and earnings, I have found that facial beauty is positively associated with earnings. A one-standard deviation increase in beauty is associated with a 3.4% increase in annual earnings. This independent effect was greater than the combined effect of erotic capital on annual earnings.

In particular, I have demonstrated that among women, waist circumference is a reliable measure of sexual attractiveness and has a sizeable influence on erotic capital as well as earnings. A one-standard deviation increase in waist circumference is associated with a 5% decrease in annual earnings. This finding confirms Hakim's hypothesis that the shape of the body matters in predicting sexual attractiveness and erotic capital among women. Most studies in the literature have used an overall measure of body weight to predict earnings (Cawley 2004). Because BMI points are difficult to interpret and because it is difficult to visually assess a woman's BMI, I argue that waist circumference is a better measure of sexual attractiveness for women. To my knowledge, this is the first study using waist circumference only, as opposed to waist-hip ratio and/or BMI, to predict annual earnings. This independent effect was greater than the combined effect of erotic capital on annual earnings

Consistent with previous research on non-cognitive traits (Bowles and Ginis 1976; Robins et al. 2011), I found that social skills and social presentation had a significant influence on earnings among women. Women exhibiting better social presentation (measured by grooming) earned 8.4% more annually than women whose social presentation score was one standard deviation below them. Similarly, women displaying superior social skills and personality earned approximately 4.8% more than women

whose social skills were one standard deviation inferior. The independent effect of sexual attractiveness was greater than the combined effect of erotic capital on annual earnings.

Furthermore, this study revealed that women who take woman-initiated birth control methods for contraceptive reasons earn 2.8% more annually than women who do not take any woman-initiated birth control at all. Because these women were voluntarily taking measures to avoid unwanted pregnancy, this suggests that they had an active sex life. Despite the significance of this result, this measure of sexuality is by no means flawless. I will further explain its shortcomings in the limitations section of this analysis.

Finally, this study found no independent statistically significant association between the variable liveliness and annual earnings. Reasons for this absence of findings will be further explored in the following section of this paper.

II. Strengths and limitations

Despite being the first empirical study to assess the impact of erotic capital on earnings of women, this study must be interpreted within the context of the following limitations.

1. Identical weights assigned to each measure

The theory of erotic capital, as presented by Hakim in various articles and in her book does not assign relative strengths to each of the components of erotic capital. In constructing an index of erotic capital and including its six constituting elements, it is thus up to the researcher to determine the importance of each measure relative to the others. For the sake of simplicity, I assumed that each of the six measures carried the same weight. However, it may be that the order in which the author describes the six elements is a descending or ascending order of importance. If such were the case, then beauty

would carry more weight in the index than sexual attractiveness, social skills more than social presentation, and so forth. Therefore, various indices of erotic capital can be constructed, which could alter the impact of erotic capital on annual earnings found in this research. Additional research is needed to evaluate the reliability and validity of the different indices.

2. Units of erotic capital index

Another limitation of the present study lies in the difficulty to interpret the units of the erotic capital index. Because the index is the average of six standardized measures that did not have the same units originally, it was challenging to assign a meaningful unit to the index. Hakim provides little guidance on how to measure erotic capital and how to interpret its units. Therefore, I decided to interpret changes in erotic capital in terms of standard deviations from the mean, by standardizing the estimated regression coefficient for erotic capital. More attention must be given to resolve this measurement issue in further studies.

3. Limits of the liveliness measure

According to Hakim, liveliness is a measure of active lifestyle and joyful personality. The measure used in this study is a scale of weekly physical activity that includes various sports as well as more social activities like dancing. The effect of this measure on annual earnings of women yielded no statistically significant results. In the preliminary analysis for this study, I tested other combinations of variables such as weekly exercise and optimism, weekly exercise and a measure of being the “life of the party”. None of these operationalizations were satisfactory. In fact, their effect was inversely related to annual earnings and even less statistically significant than the

measure I used. It might be that the data available in Wave IV of the Add Health survey does not include questions that operationalize this concept optimally. The absence of any meaningful relationship might indicate that the results from the factor analysis conducted earlier were justified in suggesting that liveliness did not load well on the main factor.

4. Limits of the sexuality measure

Due to data restrictions, questions regarding sexual competence, erotic imagination, sexual fantasies, and libido among women were not available. Therefore, to operationalize sexuality I used an index of woman-initiated birth control methods that were taken for non-medical purposes. I made the assumption that if a woman engages in these birth control practices, there is great chance that she has an active sexual life, active enough that she needs to protect herself against undesired pregnancy. This is, however, a substantial assumption that must be interpreted with caution. This study suggests that women who engage in these birth control methods have higher annual earnings than their counterparts who do not. It is likely that be that the positive effect of woman-initiated birth control methods on annual earnings is due to other explanations. In fact, women in the workforce who want to develop their careers, be promoted, in order to earn more, usually do not desire to have children for a while. Women who engage in woman-initiated birth control methods may also come from more affluent backgrounds and have the resources to afford birth control methods. Consequently, they are likely to engage in woman-initiated birth control methods in order to avoid unwanted pregnancy and focus on their careers. Therefore, the present measure of sexuality is by no means ideal, yet somewhat conceptualizes the idea of an active sexual lifestyle.

5. Lack of occupational indicators

Due to data restrictions, I could not conduct an analysis of the potential impact of the type of occupational professions on erotic capital. The present analysis has shed light on the impact of erotic capital across professions, without controlling for occupational field and inter-field variation. It is possible that the effect of beauty on earnings is dependent on occupational field. Indeed, there are professions where being beautiful is the considered the norm, such as modeling or acting. In these occupational fields, the marginal effect of an additional point on a beauty scale is likely be larger than in other professional areas where beauty might not be as salient to occupational success and normative integration in the occupational culture of a given profession. Indeed, certain occupational fields may actually have standards of unattractiveness, which could have detrimental effects on earnings for women with enhanced levels of erotic capital. Professional occupations are linked with particular social elements. For instance, the fields of academia, medicine, engineering, and science place a premium on intellectual rigor and scientific endeavors. Thus, in these professions, beauty and physical attractiveness may be perceived as a menacing expression of deviance. Presenting characteristics of erotic capital in these fields may be viewed as placing unnecessary importance on “shallow” features of identity in the workplace. Is there indeed a penalty for erotic capital in specific professions? In a personal correspondence with Dr. Hakim, I was informed that she had resigned from her esteemed position at the London School of Economics, because of severe cattiness and criticism by colleagues regarding her theoretical postulations on erotic capital. If academic work on erotic capital is subject to such denigration, then one can only wonder how women with heightened erotic capital

are to be treated in such settings. Additional research is needed to explore the link between erotic capital and labor market outcomes in various professional fields.

6. Issue of endogeneity and simultaneity

Preliminary analyses for this study (not included in the present research) have showed that annual earnings have a statistically significant positive effect on the index of erotic capital. This suggests that there could be an issue of reverse causality and of simultaneity with regards to erotic capital and earnings. Therefore, erotic capital may be considered an endogenous variable. Further research needs to be conducted on the reverse causality link between erotic capital and earnings, the endogenous nature of erotic capital, and its statistical implications. If erotic capital is indeed an endogenous variable, a statistical approach may be necessary, like an instrumental variable approach for example.

7. Lack of mediating variables or mechanisms

This research has revealed that there is a statistically significant positive association between erotic capital and annual earnings. However, this thesis did not shed light on possible mediating mechanisms that might play a role in this relationship. My previous Structural Equations Modeling study demonstrated that erotic capital had a direct effect on labor market outcomes, as well as an indirect effect through the mediation of the causal antecedent self-confidence. Further research is needed to identify additional mediating mechanisms and to evaluate the importance of such mediators in the relationship between erotic capital and labor market outcomes.

III. Research Implications

1. Intersection of capitals

As presented in the introduction of the present thesis, Hakim posits that erotic capital is the fourth element that complements social, human, and economic capital in daily life. The importance of each of these social resources has long been studied and documented by sociologists such as Bourdieu (1997), Coleman (1988), and Putnam (1995). Further empirical research in sociology must address how these three forms of capital intersect with erotic capital and their relative significance for success.

2. Erotic capital among men

The scope of the present research has focused on the effects of erotic capital among women. I found that women with higher levels of erotic capital are likely to have higher annual earnings than their counterparts with lower levels of erotic capital. Are the effects of erotic capital on earnings also significant among men? If so, how do they compare to women's?

Hakim (2011) contends that erotic capital tends to be a female characteristic because of differential sexual demand between men and women, also referred to as the male sex deficit. However, she indicates that women do not have the sole domination of erotic capital, but that the effects among men are less clear. Future research is needed to assess whether the impact of erotic capital on men is significant, how one would measure it, and how would compare to that of women.

3. Ethnic, cultural, and international variation

This research has focused on a sample of young adult women in the United States. Although I controlled for four different ethnic backgrounds (Hispanic, Black, American

Indian, and Asian), the present research does not present inter-ethnic differences in erotic capital. Because different cultures and ethnicities may value and reward erotic capital differently, further investigations are needed to assess the impact of erotic capital on Hispanic women, Black women, American Indian women, and Asian women. In addition, international research would be useful to compare how valuations of erotic capital differ across countries. Different countries exhibit distinct attitudes towards sexuality, seductiveness, and beauty. In fact, in developing nations like Colombia and Brazil the use of plastic surgery has increased tremendously. In an article in Prospect Magazine, Hakim writes: “In Brazil, investing in cosmetic surgery is seen as a sensible way of getting ahead in a culture where looks and sensuality count.” (Hakim 2010).

4. Investing in erotic capital

Researchers have investigated the effects of investing in different types of capital. For example, Prusack and Cohen (2001) described how organizations can invest in social capital in the workplace to enhance productivity. They argued that firms which value social capital and create a sense of purpose and humanity for their employees function better than firms where employees are treated merely as workers. Investment in strategic communication, workshops, and inspirational leadership are a few ways to augment social capital and ties at work (Prusack and Cohen 2001).

Similarly, it is possible to invest in erotic capital. Investing in erotic capital can be achieved by investing in any one of the six components. Investment in cosmetics, hair services, and makeup could enhance beauty and social presentation. Investing in a gym membership or hiring the services of a nutritionist are possible ways to invest in sexual attractiveness. Having plastic surgery could also be viewed as a means of investing in

attractiveness. By reading general public self-help literature such as “Emotional Intelligence” (Goleman 2005) or “Social Intelligence” (Goleman 2007) or by attending different workshops on personality development, a woman could invest in her social skills. Examples of investment in sexuality could include providing services helpful for women to maintain their sexual well-being outside of the workplace (childcare so more time with partners, work-life balance) Women could also take initiatives to embrace their sexuality and to become more comfortable in their sexual selves. Men also play a role in such initiatives as their reactions to a women’s sexuality could have the unintended consequence of actually restricting women’s success. Both men and women have sexual identities but men’s sexuality has traditionally been more socially acceptable than that of women. Therefore, women could be defined in negative ways due to their sexuality or even sexually harassed in the workplace if erotic capital is not viewed by men as an empowering and legitimate aspect of women’s identities.

Research on investment in erotic capital would be informative to assess the returns on such investments and how they can impact erotic capital, annual earnings, or other outcomes such as marriage.

5. Erotic capital and mating markets

Besides personal professional benefits and success as well as higher earnings, Hakim (2010) also contends that erotic capital positively affects other social outcomes such as marriage and mating. Women with enhanced levels of erotic capital have higher chances of finding a socially desirable mate and of getting married. More research is needed in this area to establish whether this contention holds. In a social context where online dating is becoming mainstream, it would be noteworthy to research how erotic

capital is marketed by dating websites account holders, and which specific aspects of erotic capital are emphasized the most.

Furthermore, an accomplished professional career can be negatively associated with successful mate selection and marriage outcomes. Indeed, single women may have more available time to focus on their careers and professional development. Single women also tend to be more financially and emotionally independent, which could potentially affect their likelihood of having a successful marriage, at the expense of their career.

IV. Policy Implications

1. Protecting against discrimination

Hamermesh (2011) argued that persons with lower rankings on the beauty scale are likely to be discriminated against in the workplace. This discrimination is quantitatively similar and qualitatively similar to the discrimination faced by minorities in general. It is possible that women with less erotic capital are discriminated against. In the United States, legislations exist that protect women's rights and earnings in the work place, such as the Equal Pay Act (EPA) of 1963. Further laws such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protected against discrimination based on race, color, religion, or national origin in the work place. Affirmative action was also cited as a potential solution for discrimination against the ugly. Whether women with less erotic capital are discriminated against in the workplace remains a question that demands further investigation. If discrimination exists, then future research is needed to evaluate the possible legislative solutions that can be enforce

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that enhanced levels of erotic capital are associated with higher earnings among women. However, the concept of erotic capital must be understood and assessed with prudence; or else it may be the foundation for negative interpretations and harmful repercussions.

For example, women who have very elevated levels of erotic capital may be subject to increased sexual harassment in professional environments. In addition, the misinterpretation of the sexual component of erotic capital can be hazardous. By assuming that women's sexuality is a part of erotic capital just as important as the other components, societies run the risk of over-stating the role of female sexuality merely as a "tool" and not as a private part of life necessary for procreation, emotional, and physical happiness. Low female libido has already been medicalized and the search for female Viagra has started.

In her article in prospect magazine, Hakim stated: "In Brazil, investing in cosmetic surgery is seen as a sensible way of getting ahead in a culture where looks and sensuality count." (Hakim 2010) While it may enhance self-confidence and help some women progress professionally, plastic surgery is by no means the cure for female oppression in the Global South, as it is a double-edged sword. It can emancipate women, but also repress them. For instance, Colombia's drug-trafficking mafia is associated with a widespread culture of plastic surgery and fake breasts. The book by Colombian journalist Gustavo Bolivar "Sin Tetas no Hay Paraiso", which was later turned into a television series (Without breasts, there is no paradise), raised controversy in Colombia as it tells a story omnipresent in Colombian society. It depicts the life of a poor young

prostitute who gets breast implants to seduce a rich drug-lord in the hopes of climbing the social ladder. The implants help to seduce him and she becomes one of his mistresses. However, in the process, she becomes submitted and enslaved to this man and the criminal world that surrounds him. Therefore, one should use caution when citing cosmetic surgery as a tool for social ascension, as it can be both enabling and constraining.

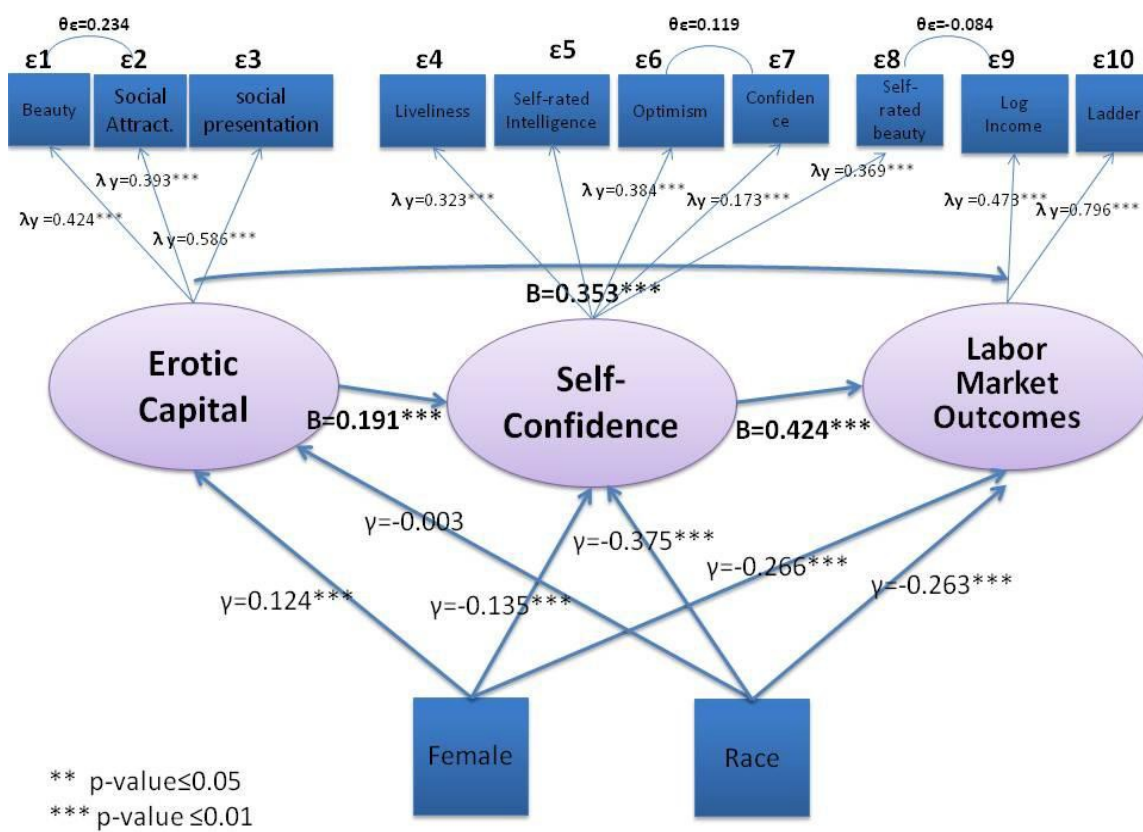
Erotic capital is a fantastic asset for women to cultivate alongside education, social, and cultural capitals. The intentions behind how women use their erotic capital are also very paramount to the understanding of the theory. Erotic capital may be used with treacherous, amoral, and unethical designs. The theory of erotic capital does not encourage women to proscribe to such behaviors. It simply describes and explains an existing instrument that women have at their disposal for higher earnings and social success. My thesis has showed that this relationship is a reality. However women employ their erotic capital is their choice. All in all, if developed within the framework of moral and ethical considerations, erotic capital can enhance women's lives and opportunities. Erotic capital is a socially enabling vehicle for women, in complement with a strong intellectual and educational foundation. To conclude, I shall cite the Telegraph: *“Hakim is absolutely right; more than that – her book should be read out to young girls as part of the national curriculum. Because it states something important that mothers have been frightened to tell daughters for fear of undermining their intelligence: that you can be a feminist, you can be strong and independent and clever, and you can wear a nice frock and high heels while you do this.”*

Figure 1. “Perfect” woman; how the ultimate female celebrity would look like



(feelunique.com 2012)

Figure 2. Estimated LISREL model of erotic capital and labor market outcomes



(Beulaygue forthcoming)

Table 1. Sample Statistics (N = 4,917)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Earnings				
Annual earnings	\$30,958	\$3,9843	4	\$999,995
Natural logarithm of annual earnings	10.064	1.011	1.386	13.81
Erotic capital				
Beauty	3.516	0.868	1	5
Sexual attractiveness ¹	96.616	18.247	50	198
Social skills	3.689	0.8957	1	5
Social presentation	3.573	0.761	1	5
Liveliness ²	6.565	6.261	0	104
Sexuality ³	0.096	0.295	0	1
Erotic capital index ⁴	0.000	0.457	-1.849	6.117
Control variables				
Hispanic	0.166	0.372	0	1
Black	0.154	0.361	0	1
American Indian	0.031	0.172	0	1
Asian	0.086	0.280	0	1
English spoken at home	0.881	0.324	0	1
Age	29.000	1.728	25	34
Currently married	0.282	0.450	0	1
High school degree	0.123	0.328	0	1
Some college	0.455	0.498	0	1
College degree	0.215	0.411	0	1
Some graduate school	0.047	0.211	0	1
Advanced degree	0.109	0.312	0	1
Excellent self-reported health	0.181	0.385	0	1
Very good self-reported health	0.390	0.488	0	1
Good self-reported health	0.335	0.472	0	1
Years since first regular job	8.991	3.118	0	25
Years in current job	3.212	2.834	0	17
Weekly hours worked	39.369	9.965	10	140
Had resident father at Wave I	0.989	0.102	0	1
Resident father at Wave I attended college	0.171	0.376	0	1
Additional variables				
Body Mass Index (BMI)	29.078	8.139	14.400	97.400
Natural logarithm of BMI	3.335	0.258	2.667	4.579
Sexual satisfaction ⁵	4.024	1.117	0	5
Scale of social standing (ladder) ⁶	5.050	1.685	1	10

Notes:

The sample includes all women who are working, and earning strictly positive annual earnings.

¹ Sexual attractiveness is operationalized by a measure of waist circumference in centimeters. Higher values represent lower sexual attractiveness.

² Liveliness is operationalized by a measure of total weekly physical activity events.

³ Sexuality is a dichotomous measure of woman-initiated birth control methods taken for non-medical reasons, including: birth control pills, female condoms, the shot (Depo-Provera), diaphragms, intra-uterine devices (IUD), vaginal sponges, Nuvaring, Norplant, and the patch.

⁴ The erotic capital index is the average of the six standardized values of the components of erotic capital.

⁵ Sexual satisfaction is a measure of couple sexual satisfaction, with a current partner or the last partner.

⁶ The scale of social standing is a measure of self-reported socio-economic status. Respondents were asked where they believed they stood on a 10-step ladder that included education, jobs, and wealth.

Table 2. Correlations for the measures included in the erotic capital index (N=4,917)

		Sexual attractiveness ₁	Social skills	Social presentation	Liveliness ²	Sexuality ³
Beauty	1.000					
Sexual attractiveness	0.238 ***	1.000				
Social skills	0.579 ***	0.086 ***	1.000			
Social presentation	0.401 ***	0.245 ***	0.336 ***	1.000		
Liveliness	0.047 ***	0.098 ***	0.044 ***	0.058 ***	1.000	
Sexuality	0.074 ***	0.155 ***	0.048 ***	0.118 ***	0.067 ***	1.000

Notes:

These correlations correspond to the inter-item correlations between the standardized values of each component of the erotic capital index.

¹ *Sexual attractiveness is operationalized by a measure of waist circumference in centimeters. Higher values represent lower sexual attractiveness.*

² *Liveliness is operationalized by a measure of total weekly physical activity events.*

³ *Sexuality is a dichotomous measure of woman-initiated birth control methods taken for non-medical reasons, including: birth control pills, female condoms, the shot (Depo-Provera), diaphragms, intra-uterine devices (IUD), vaginal sponges, Nuvaring, Norplant, and the patch.*

*** Statistically significant correlations, p-value<0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant correlations, p-value<0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant correlations, p-value<0.10, two-tailed test

Table 3. Independent effect of beauty on the natural logarithm of annual earnings (N = 4,917)

	Coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient
<i>Erotic capital</i>			
Beauty ¹	0.033 ***	0.013	0.032
<i>Control variables</i>			
Hispanic	0.036	0.043	0.013
Black	-0.029	0.368	-0.010
American Indian	0.119	0.074	0.020
Asian	0.012	0.050	0.003
English spoken at home	0.064	0.050	0.020
Age	0.025 ***	0.009	0.043
Currently married	0.017	0.023	0.008
High school degree	0.380 ***	0.071	0.119
Some college	0.592 ***	0.063	0.289
College degree	1.018 ***	0.069	0.417
Some graduate school	0.983 ***	0.086	0.209
Advanced degree	1.180 ***	0.075	0.370
Excellent self-reported health	0.289 ***	0.055	0.109
Very good self-reported health	0.258 ***	0.050	0.123
Good self-reported health	0.213 ***	0.049	0.098
Years since first regular job	0.003	0.006	0.009
Years in current job	0.054 ***	0.005	0.149
Weekly hours worked	0.025 ***	0.001	0.243
Had resident father at Wave I	-0.135	0.035	-0.020
Resident father at Wave I attended college	-0.054	0.035	-0.020

Notes:

$R^2 = 0.214$

¹ The variable beauty has been standardized.

*** Statistically significant effects, p-value < 0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant effects, p-value < 0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant effects, p-value < 0.10, two-tailed test

Table 4. Independent effect of sexual attractiveness on the natural logarithm of annual earnings (N = 4,917)

	Coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient
<i>Erotic capital</i>			
Sexual attractiveness ¹	-0.049 ***	0.014	-0.048
<i>Control variables</i>			
Hispanic	0.038	0.043	0.014
Black	-0.028	0.037	-0.010
American Indian	0.003	0.074	0.019
Asian	0.009	0.050	0.002
English spoken at home	0.062	0.049	0.019
Age	0.026 ***	0.009	0.045
Currently married	0.015	0.029	0.007
High school degree	0.384 ***	0.071	0.120
Some college	0.595 ***	0.063	0.290
College degree	1.011 ***	0.069	0.414
Some graduate school	0.975 ***	0.086	0.207
Advanced degree	1.170 ***	0.075	0.097
Excellent self-reported health	0.256 ***	0.056	0.097
Very good self-reported health	0.231 ***	0.05	0.111
Good self-reported health	0.200 ***	0.491	0.093
Years since first regular job	0.003	0.006	0.008
Years in current job	0.055 ***	0.005	0.150
Weekly hours worked	0.025 ***	0.001	0.243
Had resident father at Wave I	-0.131	0.173	0.243
Resident father at Wave I attended college	-0.055	0.035	-0.010

Notes:

$R^2 = 0.215$

¹The variable sexual attractiveness has been standardized. Sexual attractiveness is operationalized by a measure of waist circumference in centimeters. Higher values represent lower sexual attractiveness.

*** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.10, two-tailed test

Table 5. Independent effect of social skills on the natural logarithm of annual earnings (N = 4,917)

	Coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient
<i>Erotic capital</i>			
Social skills ¹	0.047 ***	0.131	0.046
<i>Control variables</i>			
Hispanic	0.037	0.043	0.013
Black	-0.029	0.037	-0.010
American Indian	0.009	0.074	0.020
Asian	0.012	0.050	0.003
English spoken at home	0.067	0.050	0.021
Age	0.025 ***	0.009	0.042
Currently married	0.015	0.029	0.006
High school degree	0.377 ***	0.071	0.118
Some college	0.586	0.063	0.285
College degree	1.008 ***	0.069	0.412
Some graduate school	0.972 ***	0.086	0.207
Advanced degree	1.172 ***	0.075	0.367
Excellent self-reported health	0.294 ***	0.054	0.111
Very good self-reported health	0.261 ***	0.049	0.125
Good self-reported health	0.213 ***	0.049	0.099
Years since first regular job	0.003	0.006	0.009
Years in current job	0.054 ***	0.005	0.150
Weekly hours worked	0.0249 ***	0.001	0.242
Had resident father at Wave I	-0.130	0.172	-0.010
Resident father at Wave I attended college	-0.053	0.035	-0.020

Notes:

$R^2 = 0.219$

¹The variable social skills has been standardized.

*** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.10, two-tailed test

Table 6. Independent effect of social presentation on the natural logarithm of annual earnings (N= 4,917)

	Coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient
<i>Erotic capital</i>			
Social presentation ¹	0.084 ***	0.013	0.082
<i>Control variables</i>			
Hispanic	0.030	0.043	0.011
Black	-0.026	0.037	-0.009
American Indian	0.122	0.074	0.021
Asian	0.005	0.049	0.001
English spoken at home	0.593	0.498	0.019
Age	0.026 ***	0.009	0.044
Currently married	0.014	0.029	0.006
High school degree	0.376 ***	0.071	0.118
Some college	0.575 ***	0.063	0.280
College degree	0.984 ***	0.069	0.403
Some graduate school	0.942 ***	0.086	0.201
Advanced degree	1.140 ***	0.075	0.357
Excellent self-reported health	0.267 ***	0.054	0.101
Very good self-reported health	0.238 ***	0.049	0.114
Good self-reported health	0.205 ***	0.049	0.094
Years since first regular job	0.003	0.006	0.010
Years in current job	0.053 ***	0.005	0.145
Weekly hours worked	0.025 ***	0.001	0.243
Had resident father at Wave I	-0.120	0.486	-0.009
Resident father at Wave I attended college	-	0.125	-0.020
0.053			

Notes:

$R^2 = 0.220$

¹The variable social presentation has been standardized.

*** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.10, two-tailed test

Table 7. Independent effect of liveliness on the natural logarithm of annual earnings (N=4,917)

	Coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient
<i>Erotic capital</i>			
Liveliness ¹	0.015	0.014	0.014
<i>Control variables</i>			
Hispanic	0.038	0.043	0.014
Black	-0.029	0.037	-0.010
American Indian	0.115	0.074	0.020
Asian	0.009	0.50	0.003
English spoken at home	0.064	0.050	0.020
Age	0.026 ***	0.009	0.044
Currently married	0.015	0.029	0.007
High school degree	0.381 ***	0.071	0.120
Some college	0.598 ***	0.063	0.291
College degree	1.024 ***	0.069	0.420
Some graduate school	0.987 ***	0.086	0.210
Advanced degree	1.189 ***	0.075	0.372
Excellent self-reported health	0.302 ***	0.054	0.114
Very good self-reported health	0.267 ***	0.049	0.128
Good self-reported health	0.218 ***	0.049	0.101
Years since first regular job	0.002	0.006	0.008
Years in current job	0.054 ***	0.005	0.150
Weekly hours worked	0.025 ***	0.001	0.241
Had resident father at Wave I	-0.135	0.173	-0.010
Resident father at Wave I attended college	-0.530	0.0348	-0.020

Notes:

¹Liveliness is operationalized by a measure of total weekly physical activity events. The variable liveliness has been standardized.

$R^2 = 0.213$

*** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.10, two-tailed test

Table 8. Independent effect of sexuality on the natural logarithm of annual earnings (N= 4,917)

	Coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient
<i>Erotic capital</i>			
Sexuality ¹	0.028 ***	0.008	0.047
<i>Control variables</i>			
Hispanic	0.030	0.043	0.011
Black	-0.030	0.037	-0.011
American Indian	0.121	0.074	0.021
Asian	0.009	0.049	0.002
English spoken at home	0.057	0.050	0.018
Age	0.028 ***	0.009	0.048
Currently married	0.016	0.029	0.007
High school degree	0.379 ***	0.071	0.118
Some college	0.583 ***	0.063	0.284
College degree	0.998 ***	0.069	0.408
Some graduate school	0.956 ***	0.086	0.203
Advanced degree	1.155 ***	0.076	0.362
Excellent self-reported health	0.258 ***	0.056	0.110
Very good self-reported health	0.263 ***	0.049	0.126
Good self-reported health	0.215 ***	0.049	0.099
Years since first regular job	0.003 ***	0.006	0.009
Years in current job	0.054	0.005	0.149
Weekly hours worked	0.025 ***	0.001	0.243
Had resident father at Wave I	-0.134	0.172	-0.010
Resident father at Wave I attended college	-0.054	0.035	-0.020

Notes:

¹ Sexuality is a dichotomous measure of woman-initiated birth control methods taken for non-medical reasons, including: birth control pills, female condoms, the shot (Depo-Provera), diaphragms, intra-uterine devices (IUD), vaginal sponges, Nuvaring, Norplant, and the patch.

The variable sexuality has been standardized.

$R^2 = 0.216$

*** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.10, two-tailed test

Table 9. Effects of the six components of erotic capital on the natural logarithm of earnings (N= 4,917)

	Coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient
<i>Erotic capital measures¹</i>			
Beauty	-0.020	0.017	-0.020
Sexual attractiveness	- 0.033 ***	0.013	0.026
Social skills	0.032 **	0.016	0.032
Social presentation	0.074 ***	0.015	0.072
Liveliness	0.010	0.014	0.009
Sexuality	0.024 ***	0.008	0.009
<i>Control variables</i>			
Hispanic	0.027	0.043	0.010
Black	-0.027	0.037	-0.010
American Indian	0.122	0.074	0.021
Asian	0.003	0.049	0.000
English spoken at home	0.055	0.050	0.017
Age	0.029 ***	0.009	0.050
Currently married	0.014	0.029	0.006
High school degree	0.374 ***	0.071	0.117
Some college	0.566	0.063	0.271
College degree	0.947 ***	0.069	0.387
Some graduate school	0.901 ***	0.087	0.192
Advanced degree	1.095 ***	0.076	0.343
Excellent self-reported health	0.234 ***	0.056	0.089
Very good self-reported health	0.245 ***	0.049	0.104
Good self-reported health	0.217 ***	0.005	0.009
Years since first regular job	0.003	0.006	0.012
Years in current job	0.053 ***	0.005	0.145
Weekly hours worked	0.025 ***	0.035	0.242
Had resident father at Wave I	-0.119	0.172	-0.009
Resident father at Wave I attended college	-0.054	0.035	-0.020

Notes:

$R^2 = 0.223$

¹ The erotic capital measures in this table are the standardized values of the variables beauty, sexual attractiveness, social skills, social presentation, liveliness, and sexuality.

*** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.10, two-tailed test

Table 10. Combined effect of erotic capital on the natural logarithm of annual earnings (N= 4,917)

	Coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient
<i>Erotic capital</i>			
Erotic capital index ¹	0.024 ***	0.005	0.088
<i>Control variables</i>			
Hispanic	0.027	0.043	0.010
Black	-0.030	0.037	-0.011
American Indian	0.125	0.074	0.021
Asian	0.007	0.049	0.002
English spoken at home	0.055	0.050	0.017
Age	0.029 ***	0.009	0.049
Currently married	0.018	0.029	0.008
High school degree	0.376 ***	0.071	0.117
Some college	0.566 ***	0.063	0.276
College degree	0.970 ***	0.069	0.397
Some graduate school	0.926 ***	0.086	0.197
Advanced degree	1.121 ***	0.076	0.351
Excellent self-reported health	0.267 ***	0.055	0.101
Very good self-reported health	0.245 ***	0.049	0.117
Good self-reported health	0.207 ***	0.048	0.096
Years since first regular job	0.004	0.006	0.012
Years in current job	0.053 ***	0.005	0.146
Weekly hours worked	0.025 ***	0.035	0.243
Had resident father at Wave I	-0.123	0.172	-0.020
Resident father at Wave I attended college	-0.053	0.172	-0.009

Notes:

$R^2 = 0.161$

¹ The erotic capital index is the average of the six standardized values of the components of erotic capital. Because higher sexual attractiveness values (measured by waist circumference in centimeters) are associated with lower erotic capital, I took the reciprocal of BMI and standardized the obtained value, so that all the components of the index would move in the same direction.

*** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.10, two-tailed test

Table A. Combined effect of erotic capital on the scale of social standing (N= 4,917)

	Coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient
<i>Erotic capital measure</i>			
Erotic capital index ¹	0.034 ***	0.006	0.076
<i>Control variables</i>			
Hispanic	0.040	0.070	0.009
Black	0.044	0.060	0.010
American Indian	0.148	0.121	0.016
Asian	-0.039	0.081	-0.007
English spoken at home	-0.030	0.082	0.003
Age	0.072 ***	0.015	0.075
Currently married	-0.044	0.047	-0.001
High school degree	0.422 ***	0.117	0.081
Some college	0.580 ***	0.104	0.174
College degree	1.191 ***	0.113	0.300
Some graduate school	1.457 ***	0.142	0.191
Advanced degree	1.832 ***	0.124	0.352
Excellent self-reported health	0.919 ***	0.091	0.213
Very good self-reported health	0.509 ***	0.081	0.150
Good self-reported health	0.212 ***	0.080	0.060
Years since first regular job	-0.027 ***	0.009	-0.051
Years in current job	0.028 ***	0.008	0.048
Weekly hours worked	0.012 ***	0.002	0.074
Had resident father at Wave I	0.069	0.282	0.003
Resident father at Wave I attended college	-0.062	0.057	0.014

Notes:

In the present model, the dependent variable is a scale of social standing. The scale of social standing is a measure of self-reported socio-economic status. Respondents were asked where they believed they stood on a 10-step ladder that included education, jobs, and wealth.

¹*The erotic capital index is the average of the six standardized values of the components of erotic capital. Because higher sexual attractiveness values (measured by waist circumference in centimeters) are associated with lower erotic capital, I took the reciprocal of BMI and standardized the obtained value, so that all the components of the index would move in the same direction.*

$R^2 = 0.203$

*** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.10, two-tailed test

**Table B. Combined effect of erotic capital on the natural logarithm of earnings
Based on results from factor analysis (N = 4,917)**

	Coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient
<i>Erotic capital</i>			
Erotic capital index ¹	0.028 ***	0.005	0.075
<i>Control variables</i>			
Hispanic	0.028	0.043	0.010
Black	0.030	0.037	-0.011
American Indian	0.122 *	0.074	0.003
Asian	0.007	0.049	0.017
English spoken at home	0.055	0.050	0.044
Age	0.026 ***	0.009	0.007
Currently married	0.017	0.029	0.007
High school degree	0.381 ***	0.071	0.119
Some college	0.577 ***	0.063	0.281
College degree	0.988 ***	0.069	0.404
Some graduate school	0.953 ***	0.086	0.202
Advanced degree	1.115 ***	0.075	0.359
Excellent self-reported health	0.250 ***	0.055	0.095
Very good self-reported health	0.229 ***	0.049	0.110
Good self-reported health	0.201 ***	0.049	0.093
Years since first regular job	0.004	0.006	0.011
Years in current job	0.054 ***	0.005	0.149
Weekly hours worked	0.026 ***	0.001	0.245
Had resident father at Wave I	-0.126	0.172	-0.009
Resident father at Wave I attended college	-0.052	0.035	-0.020

Notes:

¹ The erotic capital index in this model is the average of four standardized values of the components of erotic capital, as suggested by the exploratory factor analysis. The present index includes beauty, sexual attractiveness, social skills, and social presentation.

$R^2 = 0.219$

*** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.10, two-tailed test

Table C. Combined effect of erotic capital on the natural logarithm of earnings Index with BMI instead of waist circumference to measure sexual attractiveness (N = 4,917)

	Coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient
<i>Erotic capital</i>			
Erotic capital index ¹	0.231***	0.055	0.084
<i>Control variables</i>			
Hispanic	0.036	0.043	0.004
Black	-0.024	0.037	-0.010
American Indian	0.113	0.074	0.021
Asian	0.011	0.050	0.003
English spoken at home	0.062	0.010	0.020
Age	0.027 ***	0.009	0.045
Currently married	0.014	0.029	0.007
High school degree	0.381 ***	0.071	0.118
Some college	0.595 ***	0.063	0.290
College degree	1.016 ***	0.069	0.415
Some graduate school	0.983 ***	0.086	0.209
Advanced degree	1.180 ***	0.075	0.369
Excellent self-reported health	0.271 ***	0.056	0.103
Very good self-reported health	0.264 ***	0.050	0.117
Good self-reported health	0.208 ***	0.049	0.096
Years since first regular job	0.004	0.006	0.007
Years in current job	0.055 ***	0.005	0.151
Weekly hours worked	0.023 ***	0.001	0.242
Had resident father at Wave I	-0.132	0.173	-0.010
Resident father at Wave I attended college	-0.053	0.0348	-0.020

Notes:

$$R^2 = 0.214$$

¹ The erotic capital index is the average of the six standardized values of the components of erotic capital, including BMI instead of waist circumference in this model. Because higher BMI values are associated with lower erotic capital, I took the reciprocal of BMI and standardized the obtained value, so that all the components of the index would move in the same direction.

*** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.10, two-tailed test

Table D. Combined effect of erotic capital on the natural logarithm of earnings Index using sexual satisfaction instead of woman-initiated birth control methods (N = 4,917)

	Coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient
<i>Erotic capital</i>			
Erotic capital index ¹	0.024 ***	0.051	0.064
<i>Control variables</i>			
Hispanic	0.029	0.043	0.011
Black	-0.037	0.037	-0.013
American Indian	0.124	0.074	0.021
Asian	0.016	0.050	0.004
English spoken at home	0.062	0.010	0.020
Age	0.027 ***	0.049	0.039
Currently married	0.014	0.029	0.006
High school degree	0.392 ***	0.071	0.123
Some college	0.587 ***	0.063	0.287
College degree	1.016 ***	0.069	0.417
Some graduate school	0.969 ***	0.086	0.206
Advanced degree	1.184 ***	0.075	0.373
Excellent self-reported health	0.244 ***	0.050	0.103
Very good self-reported health	0.264 ***	0.050	0.117
Good self-reported health	0.210 ***	0.049	0.097
Years since first regular job	0.006	0.006	0.018
Years in current job	0.053 ***	0.005	0.147
Weekly hours worked	0.025 ***	0.001	0.241
Had resident father at Wave I	-0.122	0.172	-0.011
Resident father at Wave I attended college	-0.053	0.0348	-0.020

Notes:

$R^2 = 0.214$

¹ The erotic capital index is the average of the six standardized values of the components of erotic capital, including a measure of couple sexual satisfaction to operationalize sexuality in the present model.

***Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.10, two-tailed test

Table E. Independent effect of BMI on the natural logarithm of annual earnings (N = 4,917)

	Coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient
<i>Erotic capital</i>			
Natural logarithm of Body Mass Index (BMI) ¹	-0.12 **	0.055	-0.029
<i>Control variables</i>			
Hispanic	0.037	0.043	0.014
Black	-0.028	0.037	-0.010
American Indian	0.116	0.074	0.020
Asian	0.010	0.050	0.003
English spoken at home	0.063	0.010	0.020
Age	0.026 ***	0.009	0.045
Currently married	0.015	0.029	0.007
High school degree	0.382 ***	0.071	0.119
Some college	0.597 ***	0.063	0.290
College degree	1.017 ***	0.069	0.416
Some graduate school	0.983 ***	0.086	0.209
Advanced degree	1.179 ***	0.075	0.369
Excellent self-reported health	0.272 ***	0.056	0.103
Very good self-reported health	0.244 ***	0.050	0.117
Good self-reported health	0.207 ***	0.049	0.096
Years since first regular job	0.003	0.006	0.008
Years in current job	0.054 ***	0.005	0.150
Weekly hours worked	0.025 ***	0.001	0.243
Had resident father at Wave I	-0.136	0.173	-0.010
Resident father at Wave I attended college	-0.054	0.0348	-0.020

Notes:

$R^2 = 0.214$

¹BMI was logged in order to minimize the impact of outliers. Higher BMI values represent lower sexual attractiveness.

*** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.10, two-tailed test

Table F. Independent effect of sexual satisfaction on the natural logarithm of earnings (N= 4,917)

	Coefficient	Standard error	Standardized coefficient
<i>Erotic capital</i>			
Sexual satisfaction ¹	-0.006	0.012	-0.006
<i>Control variables</i>			
Hispanic	0.046	0.067	0.011
Black	-0.041	0.037	-0.015
American Indian	0.121	0.074	0.021
Asian	-0.001	0.048	-0.000
English spoken at home	0.044	0.042	0.014
Age	0.022 **	0.009	0.037
Currently married	0.017	0.029	0.007
High school degree	0.395 ***	0.072	0.123
Some college	0.607 ***	0.063	0.296
College degree	1.041 ***	0.069	0.427
Some graduate school	0.996 ***	0.086	0.212
Advanced degree	1.218 ***	0.075	0.382
Excellent self-reported health	0.300 ***	0.055	0.114
Very good self-reported health	0.260 ***	0.049	0.124
Good self-reported health	0.214 ***	0.491	0.099
Years since first regular job	0.005	0.006	0.016
Years in current job	0.054 ***	0.005	0.149
Weekly hours worked	0.024 ***	0.001	0.238
Had resident father at Wave I	-0.135	0.173	-0.010
Resident father at Wave I attended college	-0.051	0.035	-0.019

Notes:

¹*Sexual satisfaction is a measure of couple sexual satisfaction, with a current partner or the last partner*

$R^2 = 0.211$

*** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.01, two-tailed test

** Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.05, two-tailed test

* Statistically significant effects, p-value<0.10, two-tailed test

Works Cited

- Aigner Dennis J., and Glenn G. Cain. 1977. Statistical Theories of Discrimination in Labor Markets. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*. 30: 175-187.
- Averett, Susan, and Sanders Korenman. 1996. The Economic Reality of the Beauty Myth. *Journal of Human Resources*. 31 (2): 304-330.
- Becker, Gary S. 1971. *The Economics of Discrimination*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Beulaygue, Isabelle C. 2011. Erotic Capital : a Structural Equation Modeling Analysis. Unpublished manuscript.
- Betts, Kate. 2011. *Everyday Icon: Michelle Obama and the Power of Style*. New York City: Clarkson Potter.
- Biddle, Jeffrey E., and Daniel S. Hamermesh 1998. "Beauty, Productivity, and Discrimination: Lawyers' Looks and Lucre." *Journal of Labor Economics*. 16: 172-201.
- Bolivar Moreno, Gustavo. 2007. *Sin Tetras No Hay Paraíso*. Bogotá: Oveja Negra.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1997. *The Forms of Capital*. In Hasley, A. H., Brown, P. and Wells, A.S. *Education: Culture, Economy, and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis. 1976. *Schooling in Capitalist America: Education Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*. New York: Basic Books Inc.
- Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis. 2002. The Inheritance of Inequality. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. 16 (3): 3-30.
- Cawley, John. 2004. The Impact of Obesity of Wages. *The Journal of Human Resources*. 47(2) 451-474.
- CIA World Factbook. www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html
Last accessed online on 4/21/2012.
- Cohen, Don and Laurence Prusach. 2001. *How Social Capital Makes Organizations Work*. Cambridge: Harvard Business Review.
- Coleman, James. S. 1988. Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital. *The American Journal of Sociology*. 94: 95-120.

- Comuzzie, Anthony G., and David B. Allison. 1998. The Search for Human Obesity Genes. *Science*. 280 (5368). 1374-1377.
- Dixson, Barnaby J.; Grimshaw, Gina M.; Linklater, Wayne L. and Alan F. Dixson. 2010. *Human Nature*. 21:355-370.
- Fisher, Helen E. 1982. *The Sex Contract: the Evolution of Human Behavior*. London: Granada.
- Frieze, Irene; Olson, Josephine and June Russell. 1991. Attractiveness and Income for Men and Women in Management. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*. 21(4): 1039-57.
- Goleman, Daniel. 2005. *Emotional Intelligence*. New York City: Bantam.
- Goleman, Daniel. 2007. *Social Intelligence*. New York City: Bantam.
- Johnson , Anne; Wellings, Kaye., Field, Julia; and Jane Wadsworth. 1994. *Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Just Show me the Money, Honey
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/celebritynews/8717980/Just-show-me-the-money-honey.html>. Last accessed on 4/23/2012.
- Hair, Joseph F.; Ronald L. Tatham; Rolph E. Anderson, and Bill Black. 2006. *Multivariate Data Analysis*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Hakim, Catherine. 2010. Erotic Capital. *European Sociological Review* 26(5): 499-518.
- Hakim, Catherine Hakim. 2010. Have you got erotic capital?
<http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/2010/03/have-you-got-erotic-capital/> last accessed online on 4/20/2012.
- Hakim, Catherine. 2011. *Erotic Capital: the Power of Attraction in the Boardroom and the Bedroom*. New York: Basic Books Inc.
- Hamermesh, Daniel S. and Biddle, Jeffrey. E. 1994. Beauty and the Labor Market. *American Economic Review*. 84 :1174–1194.
- Hamermesh, Daniel S. 2011. *Beauty Pays: Why Attractive People Are More Successful*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Honey Money: The Power of Erotic Capital by Catherine Hakim-Review.
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2011/aug/19/honey-money-catherine-hakim-review>. Last accessed on 4/27/2012.

- Italy's Women Still Wait for Change under Mario Monti.
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-17289707>. Last accessed on 3/23/2012.
- Kaiser, H. F. 1960. The Application of Electronic Computers to Factor Analysis.
Educational and Psychological Measurement. 20: 141-151.
- McLean, Robert A., and Marilyn Moon. 1980. Health, Obesity, and Earnings. *American Journal of Public Health*. 70(9): 1006-1009.
- Miller, Delbert C. and Neil J. Salkind. 2002. *Handbook of Research Design & Social Measurement*. California: Sage Publications.
- Mossuz- Lavau, Janine. 2002. *La Vie Sexuelle en France*. Paris: Éditions La Martinière.
- Niclas Berggren, Hendrik Jordahl, and Panu Poutvara. 2010. The Looks of a Winner: Beauty and Electoral Success. *Journal of Public Economics*. 94: 8-15.
- Nunnally, Jum C. 1978. *Psychometric Theory*. New York. McGraw Hill.
- Outfitting the Veep. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/26/fashion/what-should-a-female-vice-president-wear.html?pagewanted=all>. Last accessed on 4/27/2012
- Pallett, Pamela; Link, Stephen; and Kang Lee. New Golden Ratios for Facial Beauty. *Vision Research*. In press.
- Putnam, Robert D. 1995. Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital. *Journal of Democracy*. 6: 64-78.
- Register Charles A., and Donald R. Williams. 1990. Wage Effects of Obesity among Young Workers. *Social Science Quarterly*. 71: 130-141.
- Rilling, James K., Kaufman, Torrey L. Smith, E.O., Patel, Rajan, and Carol M. Worthman. 2009. Abdominal Depth and Waist Circumference as Influential Determinants of Human Female Attractiveness. *Evolution and Human Behavior*. 30: 21-31.
- Robins, Philip K; Homer Jenny F. and Michael T. French. 2011. Beauty and the Labor Market: Accounting for the Additional Effects of Personality and Grooming. *Labour*. 25(2): 128-151.
- Sobal, Jeffrey, and Albert J. Stunkard. 1989. Socioeconomic Status and Obesity: A Review of the Literature. *Psychological Bulletin*. 105(2): 260-275.
- Score the Perfect Figure. 2005. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-353625/Score-perfect-figure.html>. Last accessed on 4/21/2012.
- Singh, Devendra. 1993. Adaptive Significance of Female Physical Attractiveness: Role of Waist-to-Hip Ratio. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 65: 293-307.

- Singh, Devendra. 1994. Ideal Female Body Shape: the Role of Body Weight and Waist-to-Hip Ratio. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*. 16: 283-288.
- Singh, Devendra, Renn Peter, and Adrian Singh. 2007. Did the Perils of Abdominal Obesity Affect Depiction of Feminine Beauty in the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Century British Literature? Exploring the Health and Beauty Link. *The Royal Society*. 274(1611): 891-894.
- Singleton, Royce A. and Bruce C. Straits. 2009. *Approaches to Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- StataCorp. 2009. Stata Statistical Software: Release 11. College Station, TX: StataCorp LP.
- Tovée, Martin J., Reinhardt, S., Emery Joanne L. and Piers L. Cornelissen. 1998. Optimal BMI and Maximum Sexual Attractiveness. *The Lancet*. 352: 548.
- U.S. Census Bureau. America's families and Living Arrangements: 2010, Average Number of People per Family Household. <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam/cps2010.html>. Last accessed online on 4/21/2012.
- Webster, Gregory D. 2008. Playboy Playmates, the Dow Jones, Consumer Sentiment, 9/11, and the Doomsday Clock: a Critical Examination of the environmental Security Hypothesis. *Journal of Social, Evolutionary, and Cultural Psychology*. 2:23-41.
- Webster, Murray and James E. Driskell. 1983. Beauty as Status. *American Journal of Sociology*. 89: 140-165.
- Who's Your Ultimate celebrity? <http://img.feelunique.com/beautytalk/news/whos-your-ultimate-celebrity-the-results-are-in>. Last accessed on 4/22/2012.
- Wooldridge, Jeffrey M. 2009. *Introductory Econometrics: A Modern Approach*. Independence: SouthWestern Cengage Learning.