

Sensations: Religion, Sex, Substance Use, Tattoos, and Religious Tattoos

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Thank you!

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Theory: Sensations, Emotions, and Concurrent Experiences

Religion

Sensations – ritual, art, music, spirituality, charisma, sacrifice, commitment.

Sex

Sensuality, attraction, commitment, endorphins.

Substance use

Relaxing inhibitions, heightened emotions, endorphins.

Tattoos

Commitment, pain, perseverance, adornment, sensuality and attraction.

Religious tattoos

Sensory connection to religion, emotions, spirit, sensuality, adornment.

General Tattoo Demographics

- Baby Boomers – 13%
- Gen-X – 36%
- Millennials – Slightly < 50%

Respondent Demographics

Total N = 3525

82% Aged 18-20

67 % Anglo

61% Female

- No tattoos: 2966 (84%)
- Tattooed: 559 (16%)
 - Secular tattooed: 418 (12%)
 - Religious tattooed: 141 (4%)

The percentage of tattooed respondents in our college samples under-represents the tattooed in their generational group.

Tattoo Research in General

Behavioral correlates

- 4+ for legal trouble and hard drug use.
- Tattooed are more sensual: Drinking, marijuana, sex.
- Tattoos and Religion = Ambiguous

Ideology & Identity

- Need for Uniqueness
- Well-being and Healing

Meaning

- Stories and Emotion
- Gender and Power

Religious Tattoo Research

- Miller, Donald E., Lori Jensen, and Richard W. Flory. 2000. “Marked for Jesus: Sacred Tattooing Among Evangelical GenXers,” in Generation X Religion, edited by Richard W. Flory and Donald E. Miller (Routledge), pp. 15-30.
- Kluger, Nicolas. (2012). Le Tatouage Religieux. (The Religious Tattoo). *Annales de Dermatologie et de Vénérologie* 139(11): 776-782.
- Koch, Jerome R., and Alden E. Roberts. (2012). The Protestant Ethic and the Religious Tattoo. *The Social Science Journal* 49(2): 210-213.
- Maloney, Patricia, and Jerome R. Koch. (Forthcoming). The College Student’s Religious Tattoo: Respect, Reverence, Remembrance. *Sociological Focus*.
- Dougherty, Kevin D., and Jerome R. Koch. 2019 “Religious Tattoos at One Christian University.” Under review by *Visual Studies*.

Distribution of Religious Tattoos in our Sample

- Public schools: 17% had 1+ tattoo.
- 63% of religious tattoos came from Public schools
- Average of 9 religious tattoos/school (n=6)

- Secular Private schools: 15% had 1+ tattoo
- 8% of religious tattoos came from Secular Private schools.
- Average of 3 religious tattoos/school (n=3)

- Religious Universities: 14% had 1+ tattoo
- 29% of religious tattoos came from Religious schools
- Average of 8 religious tattoos/school (n=3)

Some Comparisons:

Tattoos and Sensations

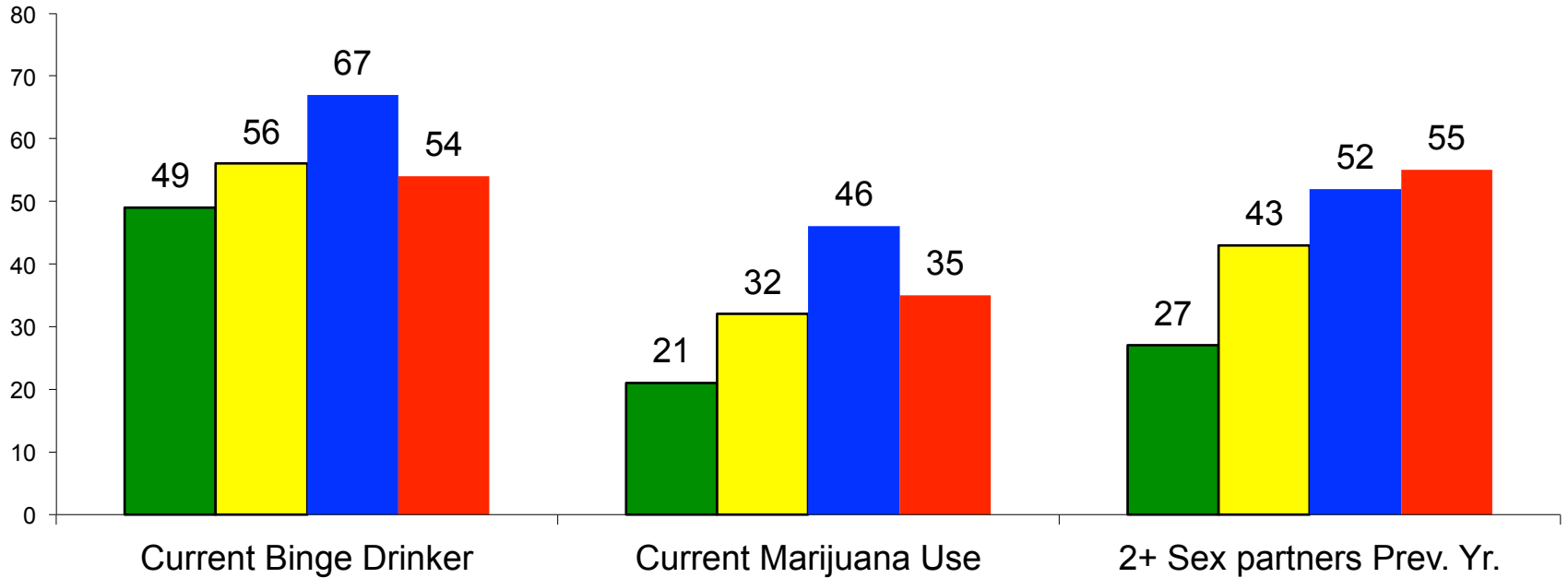
Those with tattoos are more likely than the non-tattooed respondents to be:

- Current Binge Drinkers
- Current Marijuana users
- Have multiple sex partners

These comparisons become somewhat more pronounced as the number of tattoos increases.

Figure 1

Tattoos and Sensory/Sensual Behavior



Comparative Percentages
 $p < .05$

■ No Tattoo

■ One Tattoo

■ 2-3 Tattoos

■ 4+ Tattoos

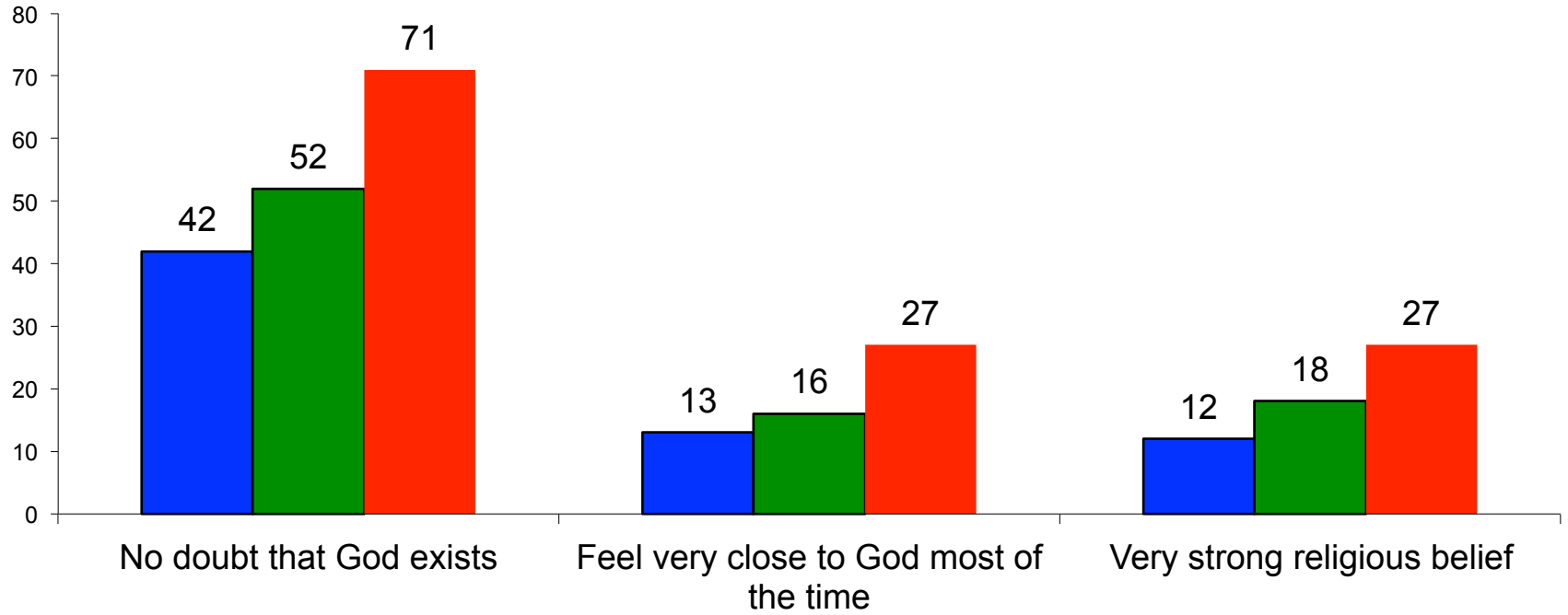
*Some Comparisons:
Religious Tattoos and Religion.*

Those with religious tattoos are the most religious of any sub-group – belief and practice.

The secular tattooed are the least religious.

Figure 2

Religious Salience by Tattoo Behavior



Comparative Percentages
 $p < .05$

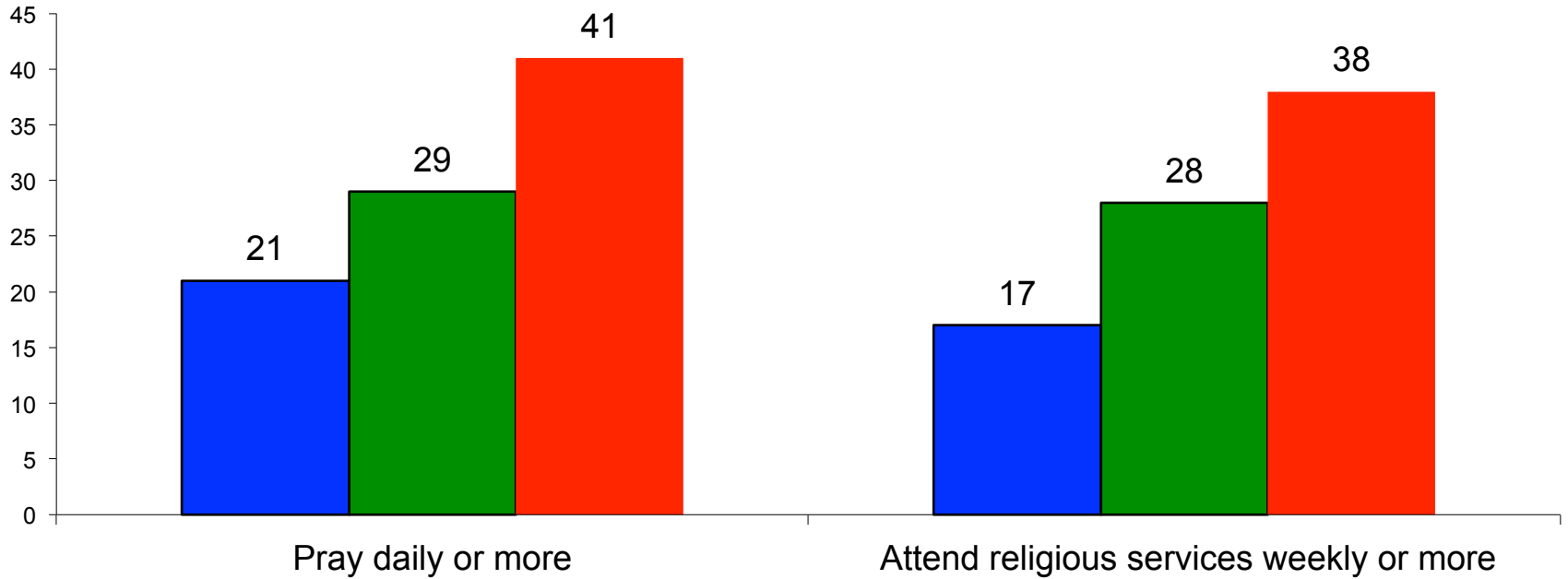
■ Secular Tattoo

■ No Tattoo

■ Religious Tattoo

Figure 3

Religious Behavior by Tattoo Type



Comparative Percentages
 $p < .05$

■ Secular Tattoo

■ No Tattoo

■ Religious Tattoo

Some Comparisons: Religious Tattoos and Sensations

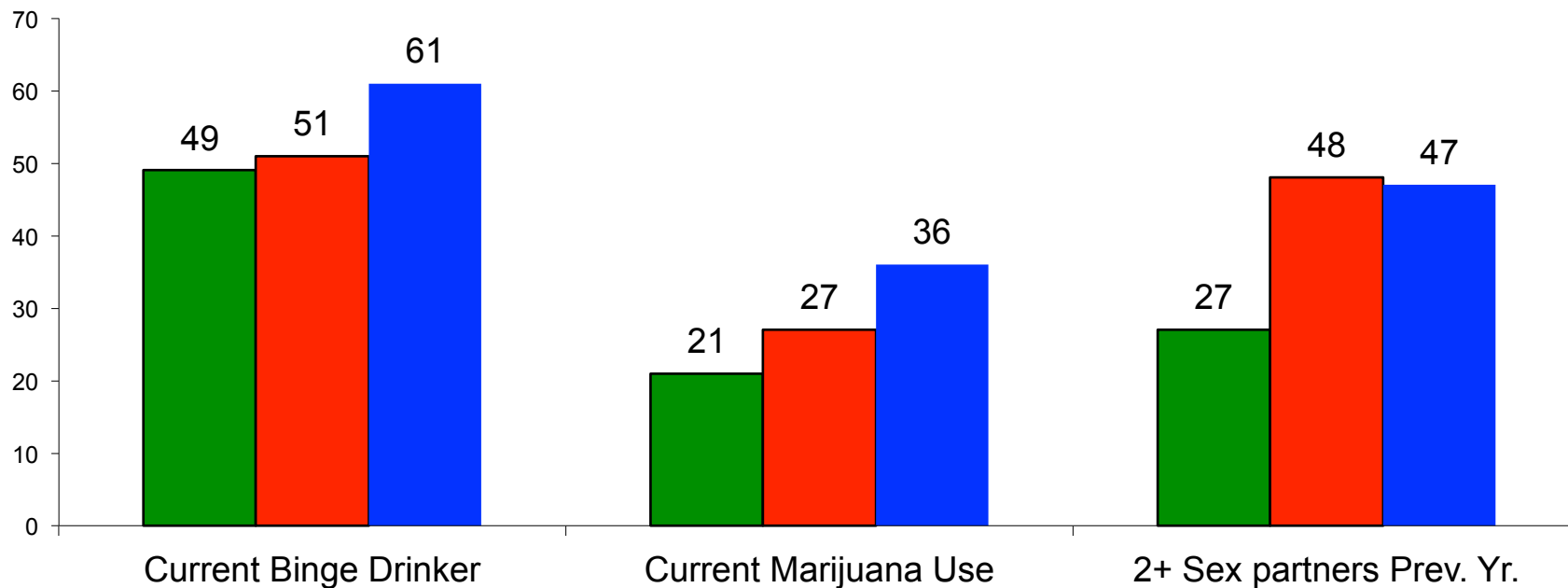
Those with religious tattoos are more like the non-tattooed regarding alcohol and marijuana use than they are like the secular tattooed.

Those with religious tattoos are more like the secular tattooed with regard to sex.

Both tattooed groups are markedly different than the non-tattooed.

Figure 4

Religious and Secular Tattoos and Sensory Behavior



Comparative Percentages
 $p < .05$

■ No Tattoo

■ Religious Tattoo

■ Secular Tattoo

Some Comparisons:

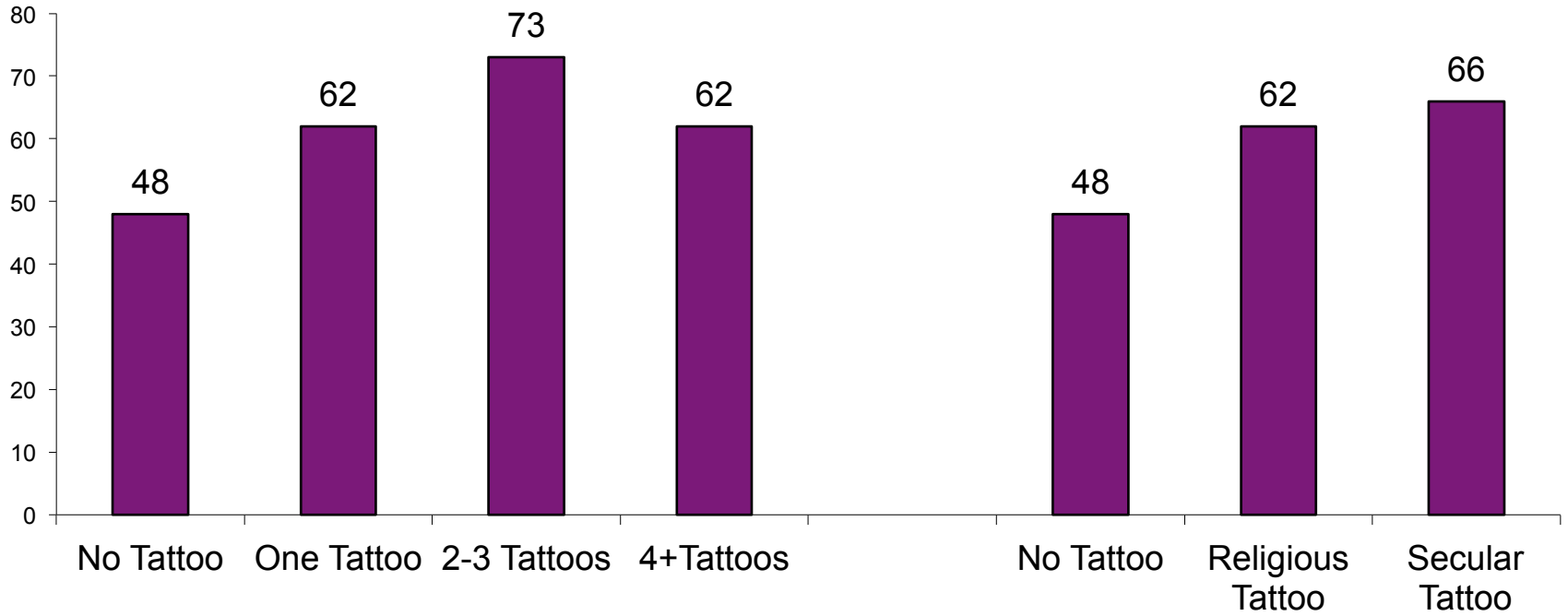
Tattoos and Sensation Seeking

Sensation-Seeking increases (generally) with increasing number of tattoos

Both tattooed groups are markedly different than the non-tattooed, and much stronger sensation-seekers.

Figure 5

Tattoos and Sensation Seeking



"I seek new and exciting experiences and sensations even if they are a little unconventional."

Agree or Strongly Agree -- Comparative Percentages
 $p < .05$

■ Sensation Seeking

Take-Away

- Religious “sensation” is highest among those with religious tattoos. Salience, behavior, adornment.
- Those with secular tattoos are the most “sensual” with regard to sex and substance use.
- Those with religious tattoos seem to be the most religiously “sensory” and nearly as “sensual” as those with secular tattoos.