MARKS THAT LAST:

PACKAGE DESIGN TO COMBAT ANTICIPATED STIGMA
BY ZACHARY HENSLEY

Marks That Last: *Package Design to Combat Anticipated Stigma*
by Zachary Hensley
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Fine Arts in
Studio Art at Liberty University
2019

MARKS THAT LAST:

PACKAGE DESIGN TO COMBAT ANTICIPATED STIGMA

BY ZACHARY HENSLEY

Table of Contents

Abstract

The art of tattooing requires meticulous safety measures and certification, consistent precision, an intricate knowledge of the tools being utilized, color theory, design principles, and adaptability. Despite the rigorous artistic and technical requirements, tattooing is often regarded as a service instead of an art form. This thesis seeks to explore some contributing causes as well as some potential solution strategies to combat this problem.

This thesis argues that tattoo studios (and other applicable small businesses like salons) can combat social stigma by launching a product line to address a specific social issue. By donating a portion of proceeds from a specific product line to related charities and non-profits, a few goals can be accomplished: funding and awareness can be raised for the chosen social issue, people have an opportunity to become familiar with both the business and art form, and with each interaction there is a chance to shape perspective about stigmatized art and the chosen social issues.

The proposed deliverables for this thesis consist of a series of products designed to represent various mental disorders. Many of the smaller walk-in type of tattoos are symbols for raising awareness for mental disorders so this product line will allow a client to become further involved in combating the social issue. The series will include an original poem, a hand dyed scented candle, a hand foiled label, a hand foiled candle box, a hand foiled match-box, and an illustration for each mental disorder.

Research Problem

Erving Goffman defines stigma as "an individual who might have been received easily in ordinary social intercourse possesses a trait that can obtrude itself upon attention and turn those of us whom he meets away from him, breaking the claim that his other attributes have on us. He possesses a stigma, an undesired differentness from what we had anticipated".

Goffman continues by describing the response of the public towards an individual with stigma: "The attitudes we 'normals' have towards a person with a stigma, and the actions we take in regard to him, are well known, since these responses are what benevolent social action is designed to soften and ameliorate. By definition, of course, we believe the person with a stigma is not quite human. On this assumption we exercise varieties of discrimination, through which we effectively, if often unthinkingly, reduce his life chances. We construct a stigma-theory, an ideology to explain his inferiority and account for the danger he represents, sometimes rationalizing an animosity based on other differences, such as those of social class."

Any form of stigma has the potential to severely hinder the quality of life of the individual with stigma. For example, a person may be denied employment opportunity based on a stigma such as disability, race, religion, gender, age, tattoos, piercings, deformities, etc.

An estimated 21-29% of Americans have at least one tattoo and an estimated 15-20% have multiple tattoos. According to the US census, The United States has a current population of over 328 million. That means about 68,880,000-95,120,000 have at least one tattoo while 49,200,000-65,600,000 have multiple tattoos. Despite the fact that a quarter of US citizens have a tattoo, studies indicate that there is a stigma to having a tattoo.

Introduction

The art of tattooing requires meticulous safety measures and certification, consistent precision, an intricate knowledge of the tools being utilized, color theory, design principles, client interaction and versatility.

 Despite the rigorous artistic and technical requirements, tattooing is often regarded as a service instead of an art form.

This perception is rooted in stigma.

What is stigma?

Erving Goffman describes an individual with stigma as "an individual who might have been received easily in ordinary social intercourse, (but) possesses a trait that can obtrude itself upon attention and turn those of us whom he meets away from him, breaking the claim that his other attributes have on us... He possesses a stigma, an undesired differentness from what we had anticipated".

Research

There is debate over the first culture to practice tattooing, but many believe that the word "tattoo" comes from either the Tahitian "Tatau" or the Polynesian "Tatau" (both of which mean 'to tap'). The Tahitian variant, "Tatau", literally means 'to tap color'. The designs tattooed often represent social indicators such as title, status, or accomplishments. Similar to the Tahitians and Polynesians, the Greeks also had a word for a tattoo: stigma. "Stigma" is the Greek word for "dot, puncture, or mark" and was commonly manifested as a tattoo. The word originally referenced the signs that were burned, cut, branded, or marked into the bodies of individuals that were deemed socially inferior. These individuals typically included criminals, slaves, and other people that were to be avoided in public social settings (Goffman, Stigma, Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity 1-4). The individual markings and tattoos vary, for example slaves would possess a mark which signified who the slave owner was in case the slave escaped.

According to Lindsay Allason-Jones, Roman soldiers likely possessed hand tattoos and continues to discuss "Aetius, the 6th century Roman doctor, recording that tattoos were found on the hands of soldiers, even documented the Roman technique for tattooing, which included first washing the area to be tattooed with leek juice, known for its antiseptic properties. Aetius even went so far as to document the formula for the tattooing ink, which combined Egyptian pine wood (especially the bark), corroded bronze, gall and vitriol with more leek juice. The design was pricked into the skin with pointed needles 'until blood is drawn', and then the ink was rubbed on." (Renatus)

The earliest semblance of the modern tattoo machine was originally patented as an "automatic printer" by Thomas Edison and was created as an engraving machine as opposed to a tattoo machine. Samuel O'Riley later patented the first electric tattoo machine based off of Edison's design. Charlie Wagner (O'Riley's apprentice) then improved on O'Riley's design and created the dual-coil tattoo machine, which is still widely used today (Hudson pg9). Coil tattoo machines use an electromagnetic motor to move the needles back and forth. These machines are typically custom built and require extensive knowledge to maintain and service. Coil machines are widely popular and are easily the most used style of tattoo machine. Although the original tattoo machine was technically a rotary, largescale production of rotary machines began within the past decade due to increasing popularity and design innovations. Carson Hill invented the Pneumatic tattoo machine, which uses an air compressor to move the needle bar, in 2000.

While stigma may be easily recognizable within situational context, stigma is commonly regarded as an elusive social construct which tends to be difficult to define. Currently, stigma essentially refers to an individual or trait that should be avoided in social settings. According to Ervin Goffman, stigma may be defined as "the socially constructed relationship between a socially undesirable attribute and a stereotype". This may prove to be an unsatisfactory definition for some, so the examination of specific categories within stigma may be warranted. Ervin Goffman distinguished different categories of stigma based on unique traits. Examples of individuals with the potential to be directly affected by stigma can be found within Goffman's work on Stigma. Goffman held three broad categories of stigma (Goffman, Stigma, Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity 4): Abominations of the body/physical deformities, Blemishes of Character, and Tribal Stigma.

"Abominations of the Body" refer to any perceived aesthetic abnormality such as tattoos, piercings, implants, cosmetic surgery, physical deformity, mutilation, blemishes, or modifications. Stigma of the "Blemish of Character" variety is derived from a known record or anecdotal recounts regarding an individual. These accounts typically address mental health, imprisonment, addiction, homosexuality, unemployment, political alignment, or some other perceived social deviance. "Tribal Stigma" refers to race, nation, or religi-

on. This sect of stigma has the potential to affect everyone because everyone has a nation and race. Most people also subscribe to a certain religion, but even the people that don't are still very much prone to social stigma, sometimes even more so, in fact (Abbott and Mollen).

Stigma has the potential to affect anyone based on circumstances outside of their control. Goffman also provides explains the potential effects stigma can have on an individual. It is important to be mindful of the fact that everyone is subject to the consequences of stigma so that stigma can be addressed as a universal hazard. In all categories of stigma, the same sociological features are found: "an individual who might have been received easily in ordinary social intercourse possesses a trait that can obtrude itself upon attention and turn those of us whom he meets away from him, breaking the claim that his other attributes have on us. He possesses a stigma, an undesired differentness from what we had anticipated". Goffman continues by providing a typical response to an individual with stigma: "The attitudes we 'normals' have towards a person with a stigma, and the actions we take in regard to him, are well known, since these responses are what benevolent social action is designed to soften and ameliorate. By definition, of course, we believe the person with a stigma is not quite human.

On this assumption we exercise varieties of discrimination, through which we effectively, if often unthinkingly, reduce his life chances. We construct a stigma-theory, an ideology to explain his inferiority and account for the danger he represents, sometimes rationalizing an animosity based on other differences, such as those of social class" (Goffman, Stigma, Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity 5). These words from Goffman may be perceived as harsh or dramatic, but they serve to demonstrate an extreme, yet potential, response towards individuals with stigma.

In our current social and political climate, human rights and equal treatment are frequent topics of activism and discussion. This can be directly correlated to stigma surrounding certain people groups and individuals, invoking negative responses due to the stigma. By invoking unnecessary stigma towards these people groups and individuals, it lessens the ability to view each person as equally valuable in their own right.

"Tattooed people still face social stigma toward their visible tattoos as demonstrated by the level of hostile interactions they continue to experience" (Thompson 17). Tattooed people attract stares: some out of curiosity and interest, and some out of distaste. "Staring," Goffman reminds us, "is widely used as a means of negative sanction, socially controlling all kinds of improper public conduct."

(Thompson). "Besides stares, comments, and questions, tattooed people are often shocked to learn that strangers will come up and touch their tattoos unexpectedly. A stranger might see some ink sticking out from under a woman's shirt and may pull the shirt to expose the tattoo. This often happens without any warning given or permission asked. It can happen when the woman is standing in line at the store when she suddenly feels a hand on her back. Besides tattoos, pregnant bellies have been known to solicit touching from strangers and perhaps some hairstyles as well (mohawks, dreadlocks, or afros). Some participants also report strangers touching (facial) piercings. Study participants did not anticipate strangers touching their tattoos, and they do not understand the impulse, as tattoos don't "feel" like anything. If not interested in the feel of tattoos, strangers might be attempting to shift articles of clothing to get a better look at glimpsed tattoos. This physical invasion of space was a nearly universal experience." (Thompson). The person in the situation who makes the conscious decision to invade another's space in this manner may do so in part due to stigma. The stigma allows them to see another person as less than they see themselves, thus giving themselves permission to engage in behavior that they may otherwise deem inappropriate.

Ironically, the word 'stigma' is Greek for 'mark' and originally referred to a cut, brand, tattoo, or other mark that distinguished an individual as someone associated with deviant behavior. It was originally meant to be a physical mark which visibly represented an invisible characteristic. Tattoos, piercings, unnatural hair color, wardrobe, and other controllable stigma may help vindicate a negative perception about an individual because controllable stigmas represent a choice to be intentionally associated with negative connotations.

In contrast, individuals with an inherited stigma may find opportunities fueled by altruistic pity. For example, an employer or corporation may go out of their way to provide employment opportunities for a disabled person that doesn't meet the qualifications of the tasks they're being presented with in an effort to appear socially progressive. While this scenario has the potential to be a mutually beneficial scenario, individuals with an inherited stigma are also subject to instances of exclusion. An example of exclusion based on inherited stigma would be a physically handicapped individual being refused the opportunity to attempt specific physical activities such as sports. Yet another example of exclusion based on inherited stigma would be an individual with mental health issues being excluded from certain social settings such as a party, dinner, or other gathering.

Stigma can play a large role in the hindrance of developing culture and visual arts. Subjective perception has the potential to impede objective reality. For example, The art of tattooing requires meticulous safety measures and certification, consistent precision, an intricate knowledge of the tools being utilized, color theory, design principles, and adaptability.

Even though The National Endowment for the Arts lists tattoo artists under the category of fine artists: "Fine artists, art directors, and animators, SOC 27-1010. Includes art directors; craft artists; fine artists such as painters and sculptors; multimedia artists and animators; and related artists such as calligraphers and tattoo artists" and despite the rigorous artistic and technical requirements; tattooing is often regarded as a service instead of a fine art due to both residual and current social stigma.

'A Deviant Art: tattoo-related stigma in an era of commodification' refers to the tattoo industry as the fastest growing "service industry" in the United States while citing D Angus Vail who goes as far as to list collecting tattoos alongside drug abuse, thievery, and other examples of "deviance". In fact, Vail published an article called 'tattoos are like potato chips ... you can't have just one: the process of becoming and being a collector, Deviant Behavior'. Neither of these articles intended to portray tattoos in a negative manner, but these articles serve to demonstrate the heavy contrast between tattooing vs alternative fine arts which might be considered classical fine art mediums. Although painting can potentially be considered controversial depending on subject matter or genre, the act of painting or even the acquisition of a painting is hardly considered an act of defiance.

Individuals may incorrectly assume that because participants chose an aesthetic that may not be considered the "norm", they are inviting others to stare, touch, and give attention; this is certainly not the case. Broussard and Harton identify tattoos as a controllable stigma, one that someone chooses to bring upon themselves. Although a personal choice is made when one chooses to get a tattoo, this does not equate to accepting and encouraging negative public perception. In fact, a conscious choice may also be to participate in getting a tattoo to rise against said negative perceptions and stigma.

Stigma towards tattooed individuals is not limited to those that do not have tattoos, in fact, the stigma can be just as significant from the tattooed population themselves. Many tattooed individuals in the last few decades have created a "tattoo culture" that discourages certain styles, subject matter, and placement of tattoos. For example, those who have tattoos that are considered trendy have the potential to carry stigma from mainstream tattoo culture. Tattoo culture may critique the amount of tattoos that the individual has, as well as the quality of work. (Broussard and Harton, Journal of Social Psychology)

Employment opportunity/ bias is also a relevant factor to evaluate when considering the effects of stigma on social responses and the gravity of those responses in the lives of the stigma holder.

Robert M. Page references an unpublished PHD document 'Pardo, L.E., 'Stigma and social justice. The effects of physical disability vs moral turpitude' to demonstrate that people tend to respond more favorably towards physical stigma than individuals with moral stigma. People will tend to evaluate a blind man more favorably than an ex-convict. (Pardo termed this a justice effect.) People will tend to compensate a blind victim of an accident more generously than an ex-convict who has experienced an identical mishap. (Social responsibility effect.)25 (In order to test this particular hypothesis, Pardo asked his respondents to award damages (of between 1,000 and 3,000 dollars) to individuals (with the various stigmas mentioned above) who had suffered identical injuries (a hip fracture and bruising) as a result of being hit by a driverless bus which had faulty brakes. Pardo found that his subjects responded in the manner predicted with regard to both his first (the blind man was evaluated far more favorably than the ex-convict) and second (larger amounts of compensation were awarded to the blind plaintiff than to the ex-convict) hypotheses. (Page)

Page further addresses that stigma can change from one era to the next, i.e. how the negative connotations surrounding divorce have lessened over the years. Whereas this was once highly stigmatized based on the popular biblical teachings, there has been a steady decline in the severity of this view. Although this stigma may have lessened, it still remains in some capacity. This can be observed through the gradual decline of stigma towards tattoos themselves over the decades, even though it still exists in enough capacity to hinder it as an art form.

Stigma can not only affect perception towards an individual, it can affect perception towards collectives, activities, social constructs, businesses, and anything that can be associated with stigmatized individuals. For example: stigma has the capacity to hinder the progress of mental health from becoming a normalized topic of conversation. This can prevent those who have temperamental mental health issues from seeking the help they need. The stigma of the issue itself can prevent them from obtaining help, as well as the stigma surrounding the methods of seeking help (ex: counseling and therapy).

Alternatively, stigma is likely to prevent the art of tattooing from being considered a fine art medium. While considering potential career paths, stigma has the potential to deter artists from the field of tattooing even though tattooing can be profitable and quite lucrative. In addition to the residual stigma associated with tattooing, some tattooists perpetuate the social stigma through aggressive aesthetics, vulgar designs, poor marketing/advertisement choices, and incriminating associations. This thesis provides a response to this behavior by launching a product line to counter these unfortunate aesthetic decisions.

As long as public perception can be held on the art of tattooing, social stigma will cause people to hold tattooing within a subjective frame that may not necessarily coincide with the objective reality. Bearing this in mind, it is important to discern the objective truth regarding tattooing as an artform while simultaneously forsaking preconceived notions formed through anecdotal recounts. Like most subjects of stigma, the art of tattooing has evolved from the incriminating associations which may have previously been accepted as canon.

An individual with stigma may seek to respond to the stigmatized trait through a direct or indirect approach. An example of a direct response would be tattoo removal in the case of tattoo stigma. Another direct approach would be plastic surgery in the case of a blemish or cosmetic abnormality. This approach leaves the individual prone to desperation for a tangible solution which could easily lead to purchase and consumption of an endless supply of 'remedies" that don't actually resolve the issue while simultaneously draining the individual of time and fiscal resources. An indirect approach to counter sigma is to invest time into mastering the activity which is considered to be impossible or unlikely to perform by 'normals'. Examples of an indirect approach to counter stigma could include a lame person learning to swim, a blind person becoming a sculptor or writer, or a deaf individual playing an instrument.

Stigma cares about social identity and reacts according to perceived social identity. Branding and package design represent the social identity of a business. As a consumer examines a product, the consumer begins to formulate an opinion regarding how they perceive the company. Social Identity is hyper relevant, which is why tactful brand identity and aesthetics are crucial. In this instance, it is necessary to consider that the branding identity and aesthetics can be altered based on the target customer or clientele that business wishes to attract.

While some people may disagree, the objective reality is that tattooing is a traditional artform with cultural roots across the world and current cultural relevance. The National Endowment for the Arts lists Tattooing as an occupation within the field of Visual Arts alongside well received art forms such as painting, sculpting, and photography. Recent innovations within the field of tattooing have been consistently making the process of applying a tattoo a safer and more efficient practice. Innovations such as Saniderm or any second skin bandage have been widely known within the tattoo industry to drastically reduce the healing durations of a tattoo. Recent improvements on previous innovations continue to progress the medium of tattooing further into the realm of being perceived as a fine art medium: rotary tattoo machines have existed since the 1970's, but the recent pen style rotary tattoo machines make the process of tattooing much more natural to an artist with a familiarity with a brush or similar tool.

Tattooing has maintained relevance within pop culture for the past decade. Television: for the past decade, the art of tattooing has been featured in various television spotlights such as LA ink or Inkmaster. LA ink debuted in 2007 and Inkmas-

ter has over ten seasons and even had a spin off featuring several former contestants. The National Endowment for the Arts featured a documentary on tattoo artist Scott Campbell in 2016. Annual tattoo conventions and competitions are hosted internationally and can lead to networking among artists, new business associations, potential sponsorships, new equipment, or even a new tattoo. Potential sponsorships could include ink companies, machine builders, clothing companies, or tattoo equipment distributors. Various tattoo magazines exist such as Inkedmag or Skindeep and they consistently feature tattooed artwork on the cover and majority of the internal spreads. Annual tattoo conventions exist to give tattoo artists the opportunity to learn from some of the most renown artists in the industry. One of the more notable annual conferences is the Explorer Conference, but there are many more hosted around the world.

While securing its place in the pop culture realm, tattoos have also become more frequent to interact with on a daily basis. According to Broussard and Harton, "tattoos are fairly common in the United States, with an estimated 21-29% of Americans having at least one tattoo and around 15–20% having two or more tattoos ". Tattoos can be found on all classes of society including celebrities covering magazines, kindergarten teachers in public school to Bible professors in private universities, lawyers and doctors, law enforcement and military, architects and scientists. They are becoming more commonplace across varying social and economic statuses.

Koust also addresses the "ironic fad" of tattoos by equating the popularity of tattoos to a fashion trend. The irony of the so-called fad of tattooing is that while one can toss out a piece of clothing when it is no longer in style, tattoos hold a permanent place on the body (pg). Koust further hypothesizes that the permanence of the tattoo is a significant aspect of the appeal. Larsen, Patterson, and Markham (CITE) also address the self-expression that has made tattoos more popular. They state, "...we may contribute part of the recent expansion of tattoo consumption to their use in aiding self-expression, identity construction, differentiation, marking life events, and the celebration of rites of passage".

The practice of tattooing as an artform is not available to everyone. "Tattooing seems to be one of the few remaining skills that must be passed from a master to an apprentice." Steward pg 12. "Apprenticeship program" means an approved tattooing training program conducted by an approved apprenticeship sponsor."- DPOR. Acquiring an apprenticeship is the only way to begin the process of becoming a licensed tattoo artist. Most reputable tattoo studios require a portfolio demonstrating an artist's best work. Once a sponsor (holds a current Virginia tattoo license; provides documentation of legally practicing tattooing for at least five years; and provides documentation indicating that he is in good standing in all jurisdictions where the practice of tattooing is regulated.) agrees to train an apprentice, the apprentice is typically assigned responsibilities such as drawing or preparing a station for the tattoo process. Apprentice duties and tasks may also include reception or studio maintenance. In order to apply for an apprentice license, the apprentice must acquire and maintain current certification in the following: CPR, first aid, and bloodborne pathogens.

A major portion of the apprenticeship process involves practicing. Before an apprentice ever has the chance to hold a tattoo machine in their hands, they must practice on paper. If the apprentice intends to use coil style machines, it may be good practice to draw with a pencil inserted into a coil machine. The weight of the coil machine can be difficult to control, so the practice with the machine helps the hand adjust to drawing with the additional weight. Tattooing practice skin or fruit is not a perfect example of what it's like to tattoo skin. The practice exists to let the apprentice become familiar with the weight and vibration of the machine as some machines can be quite heavy. The vibration in conjunction with the weight of the machine makes precise linework with a tattoo machine much more difficult than precise linework with a pen and paper.

Tattooing practice skin for practice is about as useful as painting a napkin as practice for canvas painting. Bananas and grapefruits are commonly used by apprentices to tattoo linework and solid fill. Stencils can be applied to the surface of the fruit with most stencil applicators. Fruit doesn't have as much resilience as skin. Practice skin is a synthetic skin made specifically for tattooing. Some practice skins come in three dimensional forms such as hands, arms, or skulls. Synthetic skin is generally much more resistant to needle penetration than skin is. This means that significantly more time is needed to saturate synthetic skin than real skin, which means that an artist's hand speed and/or voltage would vary significantly between the two surfaces.

During the transitional stage the apprentice begins to tattoo friends and people who understand and fully acknowledge that the tattoo is being executed by a supervised apprentice as opposed to an experienced tattooist. While the apprenticeship is composed of much more than just meeting the minimum legal requirements, the minimum legal prerequisites are worth mentioning to further distinguish tattooing as a legitimate art form. The minimum legal requirement to acquire a tattoo license in the state of VA involves 1500 hours of being mentored as a licensed apprentice, 100 supervised practice tattoos, and legal sponsorship from mentor (only acquired upon approval from the mentor that the apprentice is ready to begin practicing on skin).

The VA apprenticeship curriculum includes topics such as microbiology, different types of immunization, disinfectant, sterilizer or sterilant, antiseptic, germicide, decontamination, and sanitation. The VA apprenticeship curriculum also covers safety precautions such as proper needle handling and disposal, how to avoid overexposure to chemicals. The use of material safety data sheets, thorough knowledge of blood spill procedures, access to equipment and instrument storage, first aid and CPR certification are additional requirements. The curriculum reiterates bloodborne pathogen standards multiple times to emphasize the importance. Professional standards covered in the curriculum include the history of tattooing, ethics of tattooing, recordkeeping and the components of ethical recordkeeping (client health history and consent forms).

The DPOR provides a table of definitions to help understand elements of the apprenticeship process:

i. "Apprenticeship program" means an approved tattooing training program conducted by an approved apprenticeship sponsor.

ii. "Apprenticeship sponsor" means an individual approved to conduct tattooing apprenticeship training who meets the qualifications in 18VAC41-50-70.

iii. "Aseptic technique" means a hygienic practice that prevents and hinders the direct transfer of microorganisms, regardless of pathogenicity, from one person or place to another person or place.

iv. "Direct supervision" means that a Virginia licensed tattooer shall be present in the tattoo parlor at all times when services are being performed by an apprentice, that a Virginia licensed tattooing instructor shall be present in the tattooing school at all times when services are being performed by a student, or that a Virginia licensed permanent cosmetic tattooing instructor shall be present in the permanent cosmetic tattooing school at all times when services are being performed by a student.

v. "Renewal" means continuing the effectiveness of a license for another period of time.

vi. "Sterilization area" means a separate room or area separate from workstations with restricted client access in which tattooing instruments are cleaned, disinfected, and sterilized.

vii. "Tattooing instructor" means a person who has been certified by the board who meets the competency standards of the board as an instructor of tattooing.

One of the first procedures an apprentice must learn is how to prepare their mentor's station for a tattoo. Alongside other responsibilities the apprentice must learn to master client interaction as this is a vital part of being a successful tattoo artist. Maintaining professional appearance, notifying clients of schedule changes, and promoting services of the studio are all necessary lessons learned during the process of becoming a tattoo artist. Since tattooing involves disposable materials, restocking inventory is common practice. Tattooing involves specialty items that must be ordered such as ink, needles, tubes, disposable gloves, paper towels, and much more. Supplies vary from artist to artist as each will have different equipment preferences. Some artists choose to remain "loyal to the coil" (continuing to use traditional coil machines) as opposed to other artists that are happy to embrace new innovations within the tattoo industry such as pen-style machines. Most tattoo suppliers verify that the individual placing the order is a licensed tattoo artist which makes the acquisition of tattoo supplies more difficult for individuals tattooing illegally and also means that the artform itself is not available to everyone.

Learning does not stop after the apprenticeship is over. There are many techniques, styles, and genres to master. "Tattoo clients across the country expect artists to have at least rudimentary ability to create tribal, traditional Americana, Celtic, biomechanical, fine line and Japanese style works, and many seek rather extensive coverage, from "sleeves" and "backpieces" to full bodysuits" (Sanders and Vail).

 There are many styles and sub-genres of tattooing, but some of the more popular styles include:

American Traditional is one of the more common styles of tattooing. American Traditional This style features simple designs with thick lines. Colors tend to be earthy, but bold. Common subject matter includes predatory animals indigenous to North America, naval/nautical motifs, simplified flowers, daggers and other weapons, and much more. Primary color scheme is common in American traditional tattoos. The small variety of color utilized in this style is due to the fact that until the mid 1970's, there were only five colors of tattoo ink to choose from (red, blue, yellow, brown, and black).

The Japanese name for the traditional hand poked method is Tebori, and is still practiced by some artists today. Common Japanese Traditional subject matter includes koi, samurai, dragons, phoenix, Japanese mythology. Colors tend to be bright, and deeply saturated. Traditional Japanese style commonly features negative space within the composition to provide contrast. The tool used is very simple- one or two rows of needles attached to a long, straight stick. The artist taps the needles against the skin in a rhythmic motion, implanting the ink into the tissue. "Tattooing this way is much more difficult and slower going than with a machine, but is highly respected for its rich history"- Hudson pg 8. Since the tool used in Tebori tattoos requires both hands, the artist may have their apprentice stretch the skin of the client while the artist performs the tattoo. By the early 1980's full-body pieces commonly found in traditional Japanese motifs were popular and the number of artists capable of executing pieces at this scale were rapidly increasing (Sanders and Vail).

Neo- Traditional is similar to American traditional, but has a more contemporary aesthetic. The subject matter is typically pretty similar to that of American Traditional, but it is very common to see Neo Traditional pieces incorporate an element of whimsy or even surrealism into the composition. Colors tend to be more dynamic with more color depth and gradation. All varieties of color paletes, but rarely primary. Neo Traditional features a wide variety of line weights Thinner lines with more sophisticated details. Notable artists include William Volz, Yogi Barrett (who is notorious for mixing traditionalism with realism) New School incorporates Cartoon realism, exaggerated proportions, bright colors with deeply saturated lighting, all about innovation New School draws heavy influence from Pop Surrealism. Many of the New School figure work exhibits traits established by pop surrealists such as Mark Ryden and Mab Graves. Examples of notable new school artists include Jesse Smith, Tom Strom, Scotty Munster, and Kelly Doty.

Trash Polka is heavily inspired by the Dada movement and features high contrast black work with splashes of red incorporated into the composition. Trash Polka commonly features abstract designs and iconography.

Biomech (mech variant) and other "bio" styles reimagine what might be underneath the skin. The goal of biomech is to transform the body part into a three-dimensional rendering of what the client envisions. For example, Guy Aitchison creates stunning bio organic masterpieces that look like the client has intricate coral structures under the skin. Since all the shapes are natural, the artist can focus on designing based on the client's specific anatomy as opposed to applying a previous design to a client. There are many subgenres to biomech, and infinitely more yet to be explored.

Biomech begins with a texture, and develops an organic motif based on that texture. Biomech could just as easily be "coralmech" or "woodmech" depending on the desired aesthetic. Notable artists, along with Guy Aitchison, include Nick Baxter, Kurt Windish, Stepan Negur, and Adam France.

Watercolor style speaks for itself, but the goal of a watercolor tattoo is to emulate a watercolor painting. Color outlines are used along with smooth watery color transitions. This style uses little to no black, so these pieces typically fade at a faster pace than a tattoo with black. This style is relatively new and will likely die out due to the lack of longevity water color style provides.

As with other art mediums, the process of creating a tattoo begins within the designing the composition. While designing a tattoo, the artist should be considerate of the longevity of the design. Ink spreads under the skin approximately 1mm per seven years, so closed shapes can only be tattooed so small or they will eventually bleed into each other and become indiscernible. Extra care should be taken when designing a piece that incorporates text as the spreading of ink over time can render a meaningful tattoo illegible. A tattoo artist must be familiar with operating the selected equipment as there are hundreds of various needle configurations to choose from, but only one shot to successfully execute the tattoo.

Stigma can create an endless cycle of perpetuating itself. For example: Some social issues such as anxiety and depression affect millions of people. 40 million adults in the US are affected by anxiety, but only 35% of those individuals receive treatment. People do not seek help regarding mental health due to the negative connotations the individual assumes will be applied to them. The controversy regarding mental health exists due to ignorance, and the ignorance exists because of a lack of open communication. The cycle can be broken through either education or open discussion, but fear of negative association due to stigma prevents these discussions from ever taking place. Records demonstrate that people have been declining benefits that they are entitled to since the 1950's due to the stigma which would be adhered to the monetary aid (Page).

Multiple strategies exist to influence the perspective of a consumer. Marketing strategies such as branding and package design directly affect the perception a consumer forms regarding the identity of the correlating business. (Reimann, Zaichkowsky and Neuhaus). Jennifer Lamb proposes and supports that the Arts can be utilized to counter stigma and promote social integration (Lamb). In addition, studies confirm that visual metaphor can be utilized to portray concepts in situations that language alone may not. These strategies may be synchronized to provide a product line that visually portrays an open discussion regarding stigmatized social issues such as mental health or tattooing as an artform.
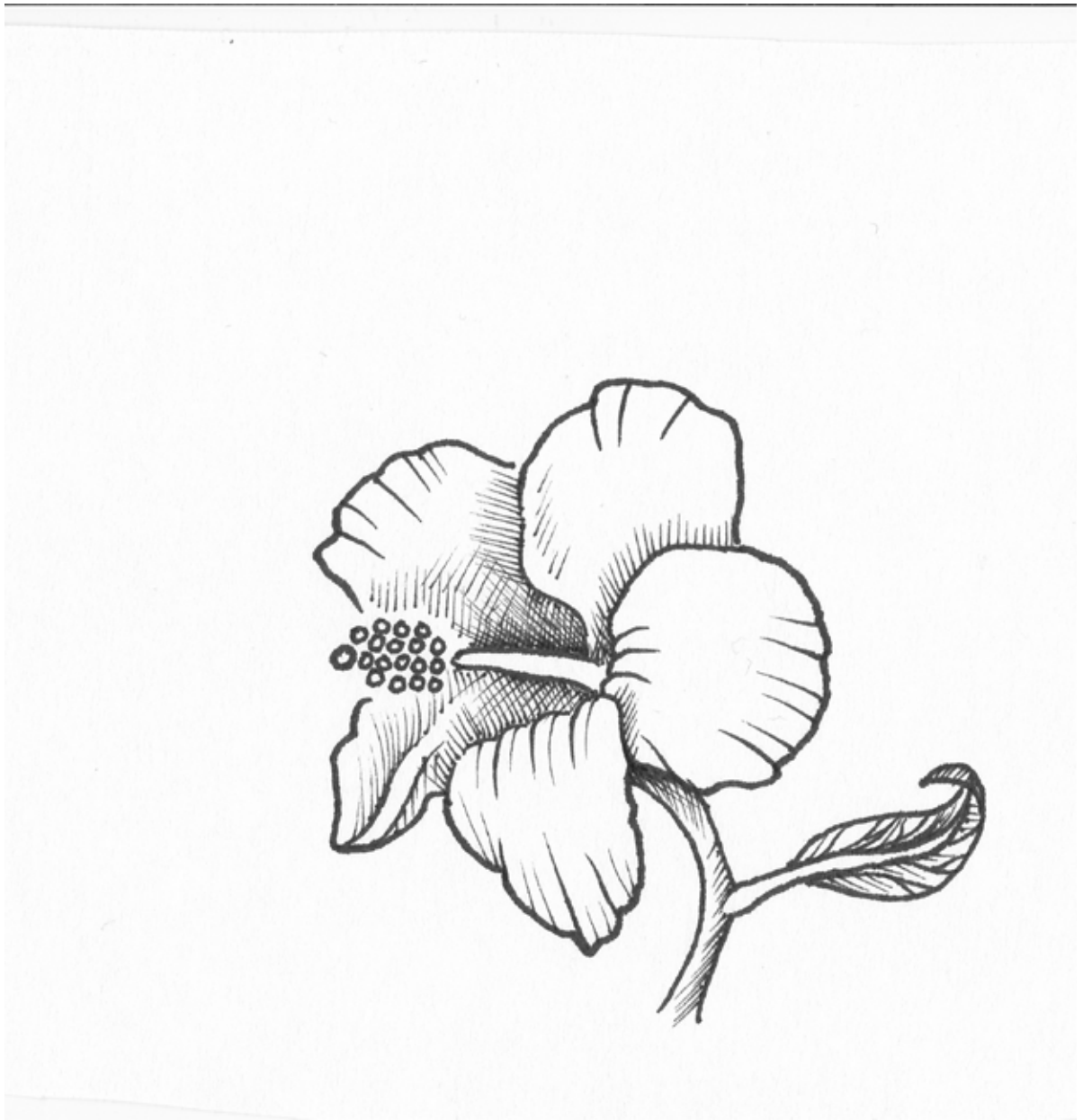
Visual Solution

ADDRESSING STIGMA

1. Understand Stigma

2. Influence Perception through Compound Metaphor

3. Develop Deliverables

Before a solution to stigma can be found, a healthy understanding of stigma is required. Stigma cares about social identity and reacts according to perceived social identity. Branding and package design represent the social identity of a business. As a consumer examines a product, the consumer begins to formulate an opinion regarding how they perceive the company. Social Identity is hyper relevant, which is why tactful brand identity and aesthetics are crucial. As long as public perception can be held on the art of tattooing, social stigma will cause people to hold tattooing within a subjective frame that may not necessarily coincide with the objective reality.

Once stigma is understood, it can be influenced. Compound metaphor can be used to Influence perception. Compound metaphor is comprised of both linguistic and visual metaphor. Linguistic metaphor is metaphor which utilizes language to draw a comparison. For this thesis, linguistic metaphor was manifested through original poetry. Visual metaphor is metaphor which utilizes imagery and symbolism to draw a comparison. All imagery incorporated in the deliverables were hand drawn and then vectorized. The imagery is meant to provide complementary context for the linguistic metaphors. Compound metaphor utilizes both linguistic and visual metaphor to amplify the capacity to communicate.

After the compound metaphors have been realized, a product to incorporate the compound metaphor must be developed. This thesis includes a line of hand-made soy wax candles. Each was hand poured, dyed, and scented with specialty candle fragrance oils. Package Design made sense as a platform for compound metaphor because the sculptural nature allows visual metaphor and linguistic metaphor to coexist on a functional piece of art. The observer interacts with the message as opposed to simply viewing or reading it.

The creation of the product and package design featured in this thesis is discussed in the following chapter. This is not meant to be a tutorial, but rather an example of addressing a social issue through compound metaphor implemented on package design. This model can be modified to accommodate a myriad of applications such as package design catered to helping adolescents better understand facets of divorce or family-related social issues.

Acknowledging Stigma

Stigma cares about social identity and reacts according to perceived social identity. Branding and package design represent the social identity of a business. As a consumer examines a product, the consumer begins to formulate an opinion regarding how they perceive the company. Social Identity is hyper relevant, which is why tactful brand identity and aesthetics are crucial. As long as public perception can be held on the art of tattooing, social stigma will cause people to hold tattooing within a subjective frame that may not necessarily coincide with the objective reality.

Metaphor

ADDRESSING STIGMA

1. Linguistic Metaphor

2. Visual Metaphor

3. Compound Metaphor

Linguistic metaphor uses language to draw a representative comparison. The original poetry within this project serves as the linguistic metaphor component.

Visual Metaphor uses images and visual symbolism to represent a comparison between an object and a concept. Visual metaphor can be used situationally to serve as a substitute for linguistic metaphor.

Compound metaphor uses both Linguistic and Visual Metaphor to communicate in ways that either is incapable of without the other.

Linguistic Metaphor

Sink my beak below the sand,
the birds are almost here;
Ostentatious, little things. I only
have two ears
Can't you see I'm "well enough"
so please leave me alone.
I have no nest. I have no roost:
the silence is my home.
Agitation all around, this simply
will not do;
Lose myself below the noise
until it passes through.

Visual Metaphor

Compound Metaphor

Order in its finest form,
one cannot be too groomed

Cleaning, fixing, plucking
feathers; manifesting gloom

Dissatisfied, the swan
reflects until it is removed.

Visual Process

1. Concept

2. Candles:
materials & technique

3. Package Design:
materials & technique

Following my investigative research, I began to create the
components of compound metaphor and the package de-
sign that would house the metaphor.

Dark and dreary, silent rain.
Ever-present hollow pain.
Pages filled with empty sounds-
Rhymes of ravens all around
Evermore the Corvus dreams,
Searching for some silver streams.
Set your heart inside a box-
Ironclad with heavy locks.
On the wings of copper crows,
Night relents her somber prose.
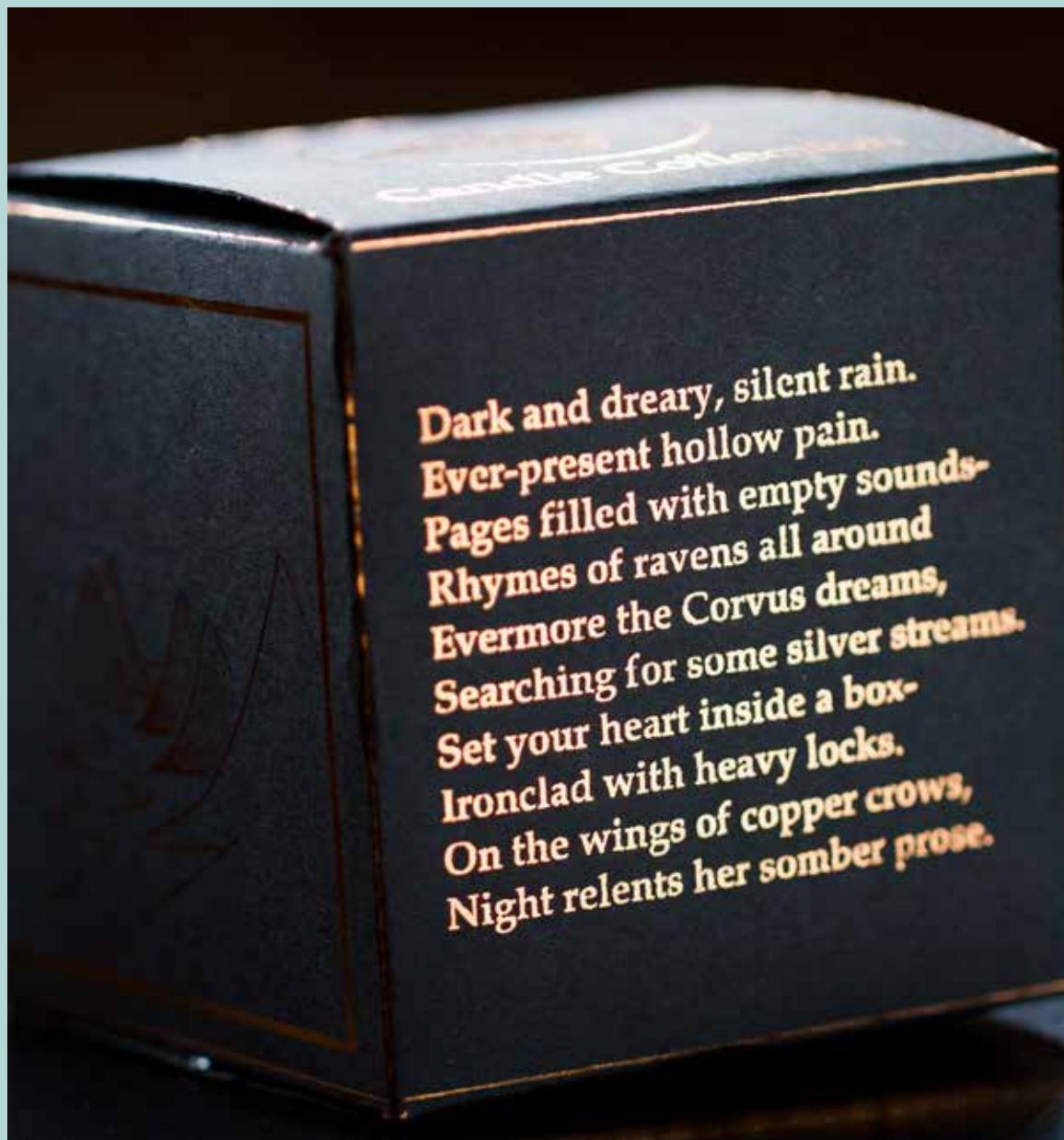
Concept:

Original Poetry was utilized to draw a comparison between ten birds and various mental disorders. Each poem is an acrostic that features the name of the respective disorder. For example, the first letter of every line for The Crow poem spells "depression". Corresponding is featured to provide context to the poetry. All poems are acrostics featuring the mental disorder being represented through that poem.

Original illustrations are featured as visual metaphors to elevate the linguistic metaphors. These illustrations were hand drawn and then vectorized using Adobe Illustrator, which is also a common practice when designing a tattoo. In addition to the contextual illustrations, a crest was illustrated for each bird.

Candles:

MATERIALS & TECHNIQUE

The candles were made by melting US grown soy wax. Wicks are required so the candle may burn, but there are many different sizes and styles of wicks so research is required to determine which wick is necessary. Typically, jar size and wax volume determine wick size and length. Additives may also be mixed into the wax while it's melted to add color or fragrance to the candle. The candles were made by melting US grown soy wax. When the wax reaches a specific temperature, additives such as dyes and fragrances may be added.

The wick is propped within the container designated to become a candle while the wax is being poured into the container. If the container is glass, it is important to add the wax after the glass has been warmed up. If the glass is too cold, the glass will shatter when the hot wax comes into contact with it.

Package Design

The die-lines were designed in Adobe Illustrator. While creating the die-lines, the dimensions of the producas6t was heavily considered. The die-lines were printed, tested, and revised many times. Once the die-lines were successful, the files were printed and foiled. When heat is applied to toner reactive foil laying on top of a laser printed image, the foil adheres to the toner on the printed design. After the packaging has been printed and foiled, it is carefully trimmed with a precision knife.

The cardstock for the boxes and labels is from French Paper Company, but any 100lb cardstock should suffice if it is large enough to house the die-line. Various toner reactive foil was used to foil the boxes and labels. A rotary cutter was used to cut cardstock down to 8.5x11" for the matchbook and label die-lines. A precision knife was used to cut the tabloid die-lines and trim all printed documents. A heat source such as a clothing iron or laminator was used to apply the toner reactive foil to the laser printed die-line. A straight edge was used to crease the folds of the boxes. Specialty adhesive was applied in certain areas to make the box functional and support the weight of a candle.

Dielines:

Die-lines are design templates for packaging. All of the die-lines were created from scratch based on the dimensions of the product. Die-lines were created in Adobe Illustrator for each label, matchbook, and candle box. Measurements must be precise or boxes will not fold properly. The matchbook required the most amount of revisions as the matchbook is comprised of two pieces that must fit together tightly.


Copper Crow

Candle Collection

Order in its finest form, one cannot be too groomed. Cleaning, fixing, plucking feathers-manifesting gloom. Dissatisfied, the swan reflects until it is removed.

Pomegranate Cider & Citrus Plum

⚠ WARNING:
Burn within sight.
Keep away from flammable objects.
Keep away from pets and children.
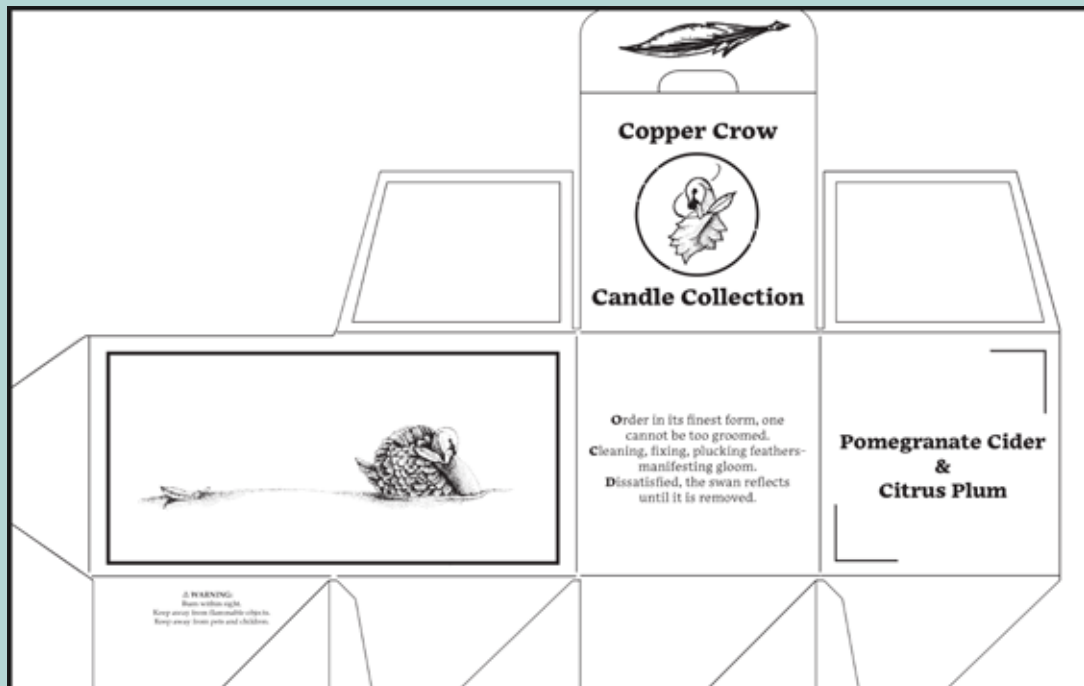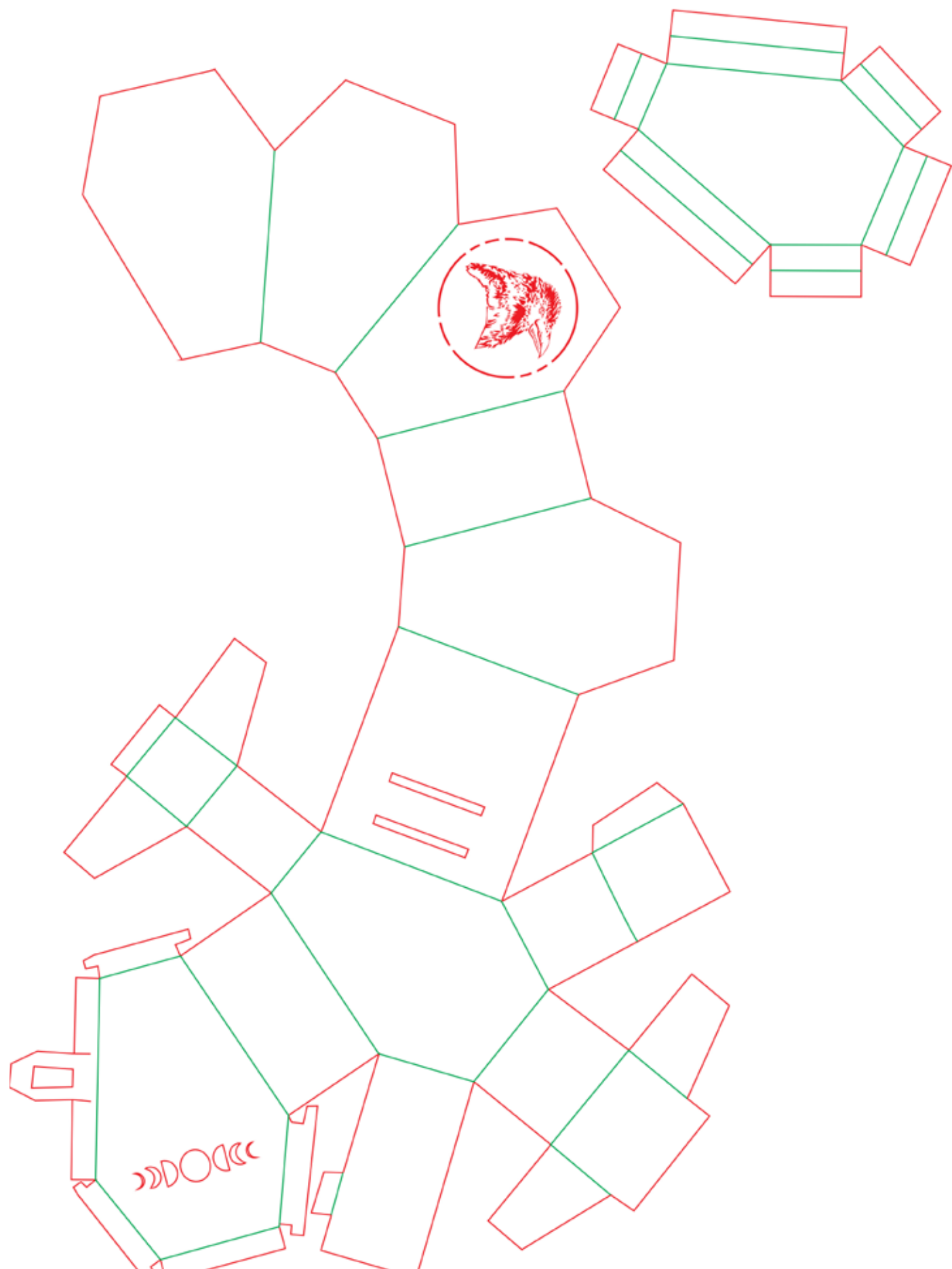
Sketches

Sketching was vital to the design process. Sketches were refined into line drawings so that the art could be vectorized using Adobe Illustrator. The vectorized images were used to illustrate the surfaces of the package designs and serve as visual metaphors. The illustratons compare various birds to mental disorders.
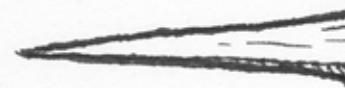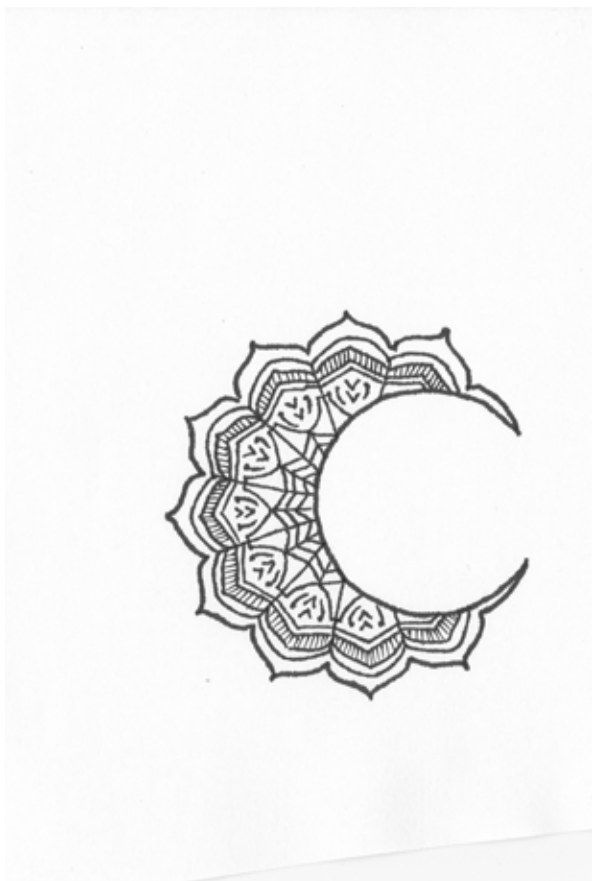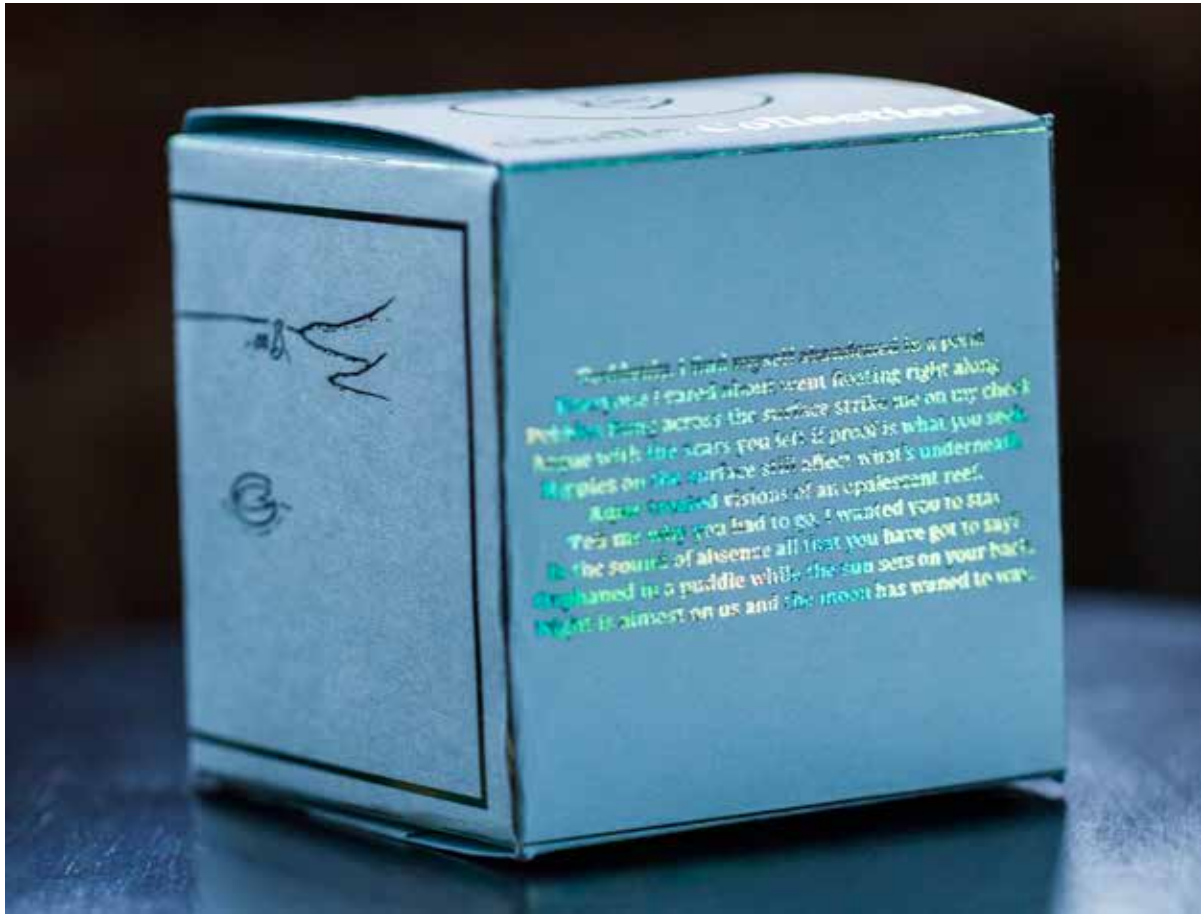
The Crow

DEPRESSION

Dark and dreary, silent rain.
Ever-present hollow pain.
Pages filled with empty sounds–
Rhymes of ravens all around
Evermore the Corvus dreams,
Searching for some silver streams.
Set your heart inside a box–
Ironclad with heavy locks.
On the wings of copper crows,
Night relents her somber prose.

The Duckling

SEPARATION ANXIETY

Suddenly, I find myself abandoned in a pond
Everyone I cared about went floating right along
Pebbles flung across the surface strike me on my cheek
Argue with the scars you left if proof is what you seek
Ripples on the surface still affect what's underneath
Aqua-treated visions of an opalescent reef
Tell me why you had to go, I wanted you to stay
Is the sound of absence all that you have got to say?
Orphaned in a puddle while the sun sets on your back
Night is almost on us and the moon has waned to wax

The Heron

BIPOLAR

Buried in the Heron's skin
Ink creates a clever twin
Piercing arrows as we fly
Over walls both you and I
Lullabies and angry drums
Against itself the bird becomes
Reflect the total of the sum
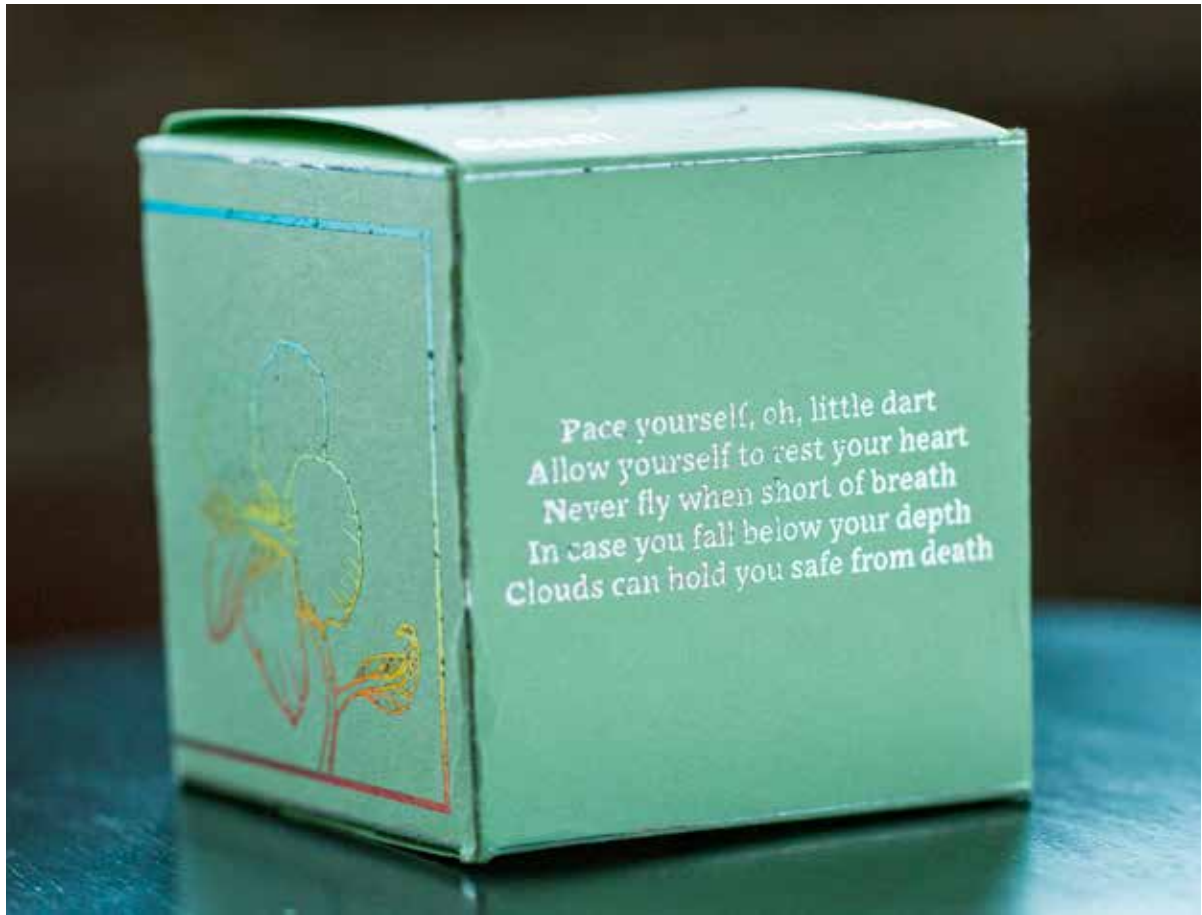
The Hummingbird

PANIC DISORDER

Pace yourself, oh, little dart
Allow yourself to rest your heart
Never fly when short of breath
In case you fall below your depth
Clouds can hold you safe from death

The Magpie

MUTISM

"Magpies are supposed to sing", that's what I've always heard
"Use your voice, you have no choice- a magpie is a bird "
"The sky without a feathered tune seems savagely absurd"
I prefer to think of it as nesting on my words
Songbirds, sparrows, jays, and crows can chatter in their herds
Music rests within my head, of this I am assured

The Ostrich

SOCIAL ANXIETY

Sink my beak below the sand, the birds are almost here
Ostentatious, little things. I only have two ears
Can't you see I'm "well enough" so please leave me alone
I have no nest. I have no roost. The silence is my home.
Agitation all around, this simply will not do
Lose myself below the noise until it passes through

The Owl

PHOBIA

Phantoms lingering in the night
Hide your feathers. Bury your fright
Owl is fearful of silver moon
But what's the difference, night and noon?
In a slumber or wide awake
Afraid until the daylight breaks
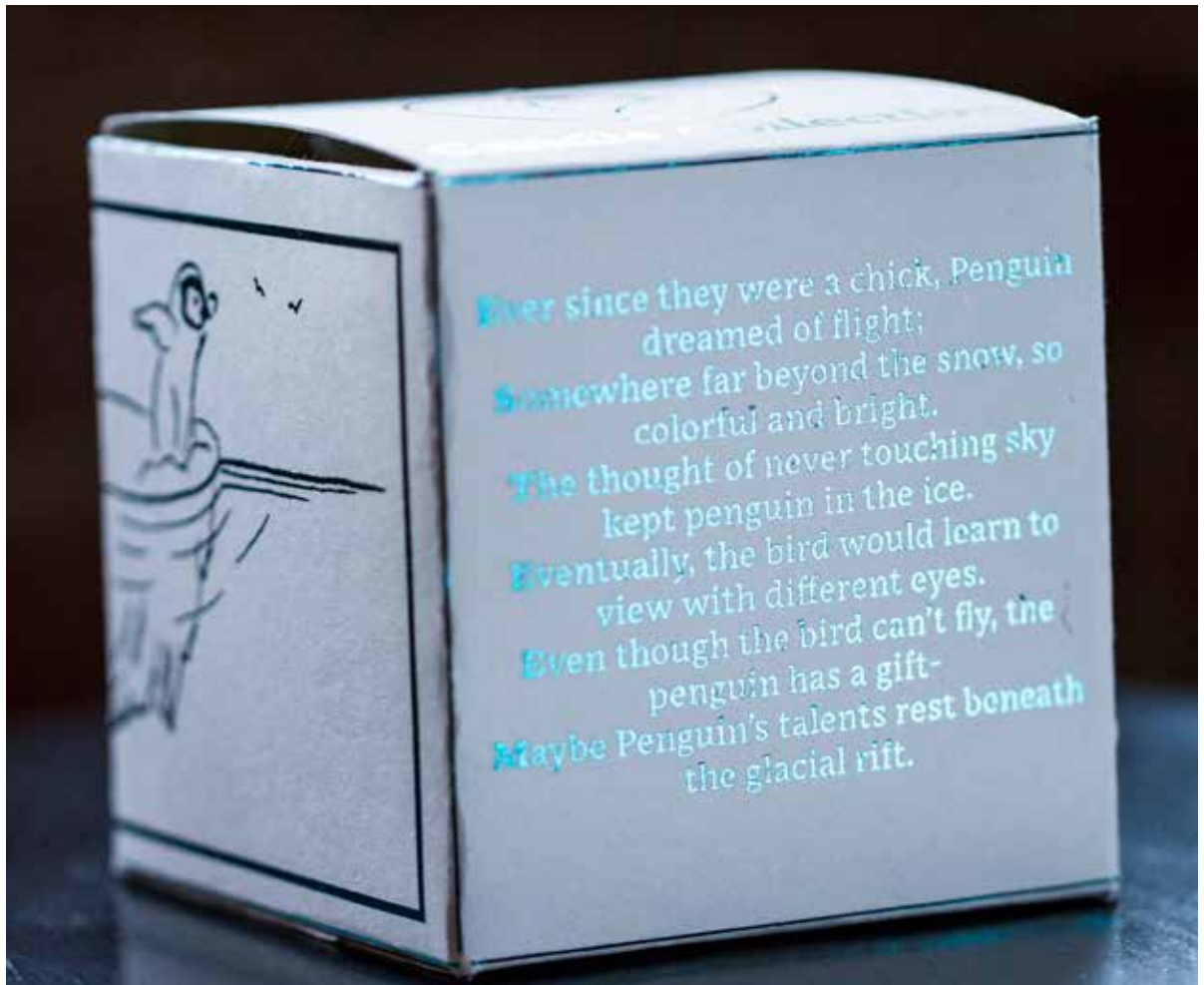
The Penguin

ESTEEM ISSUES

Ever since they were a chick, Penguin dreamed of flight
Somewhere far beyond the snow, so colorful and bright
The thought of never touching sky kept penguin in the ice
Eventually, the bird would learn to view with different eyes
Even though the bird can't fly, the penguin has a gift
Maybe Penguin's talents rest beneath the glacial rift
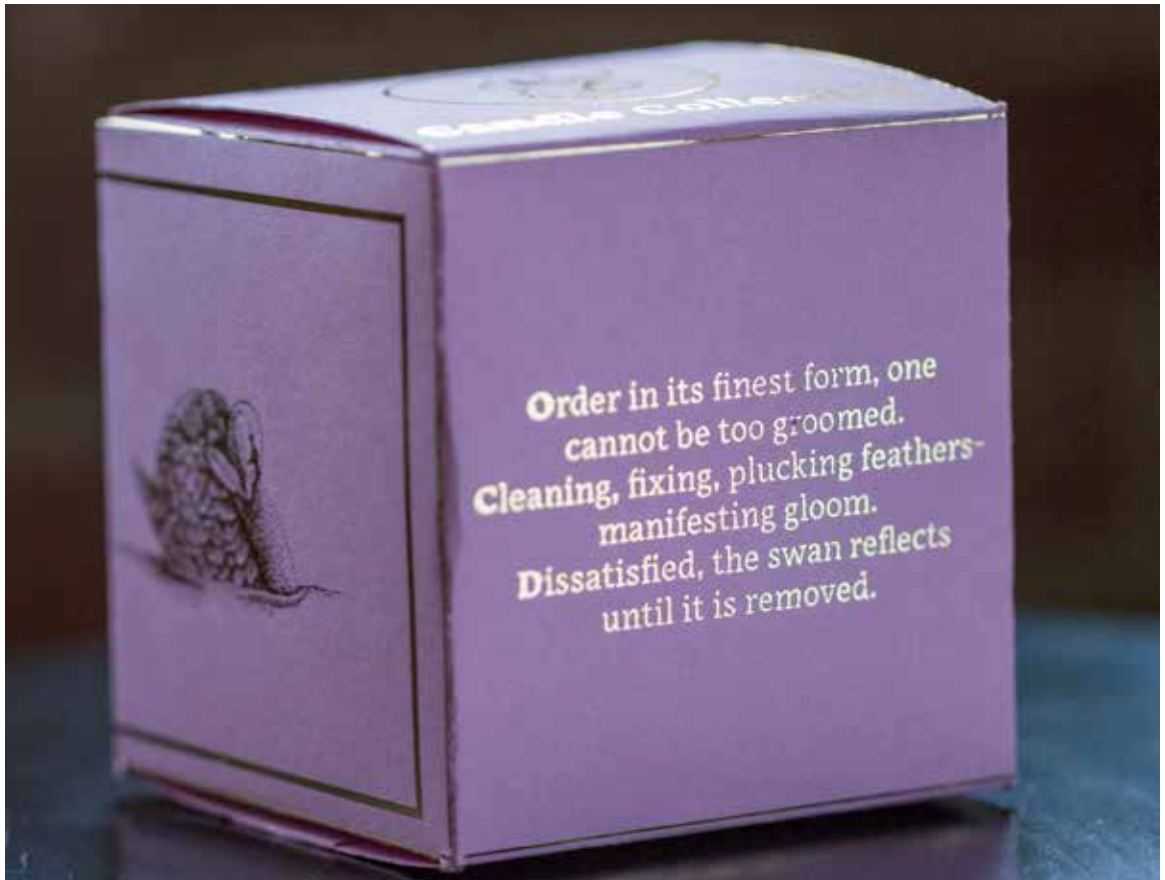
The Swan

OCD

Order in its finest form, one cannot be too groomed
Cleaning, fixing, plucking feathers- manifesting gloom
Dissatisfied, the swan reflects until it is removed
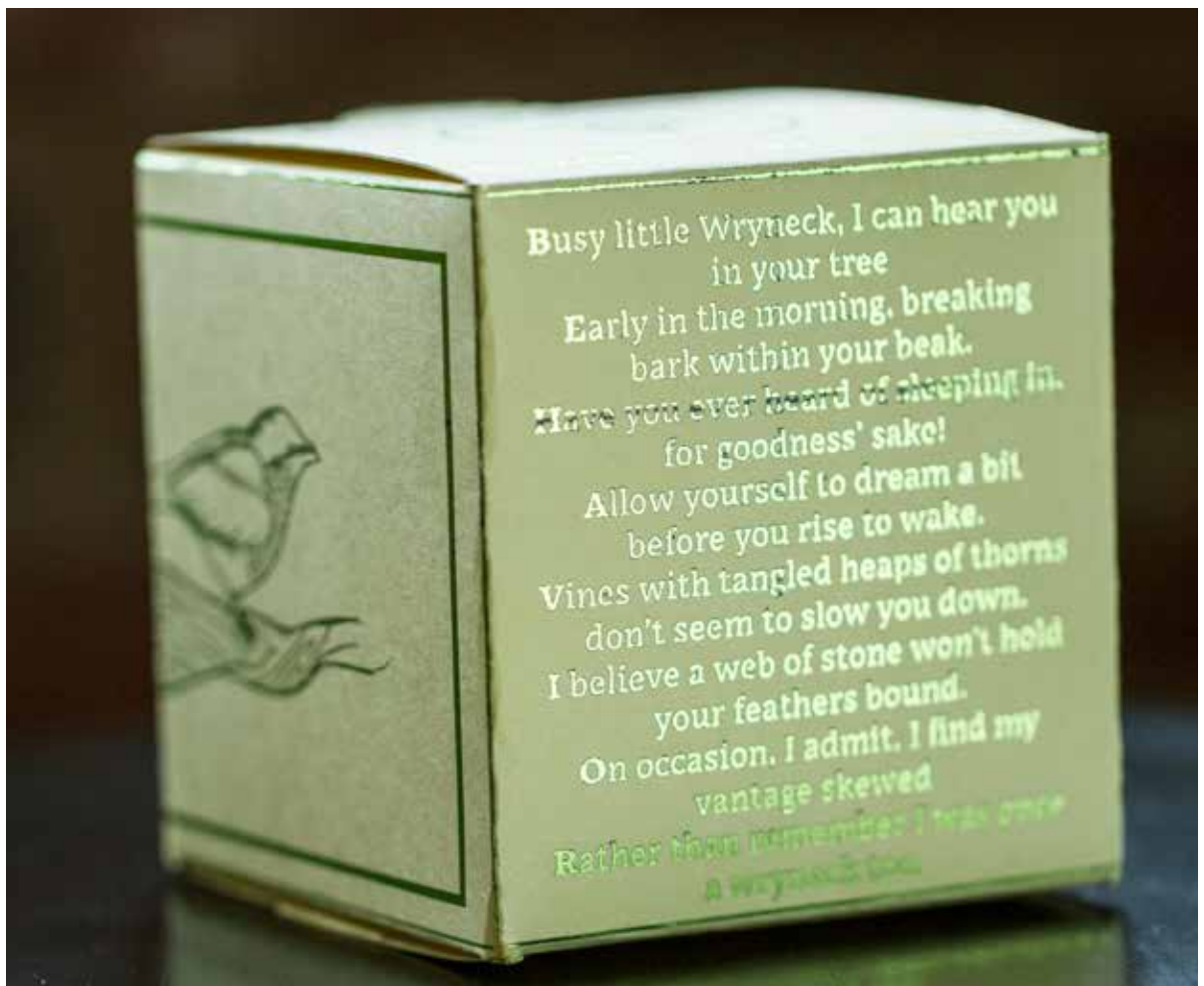
The Wryneck

BEHAVIOR ISSUES

Busy little Wryneck, I can hear you in your tree
Early in the morning, breaking bark within your beak
Have you ever heard of sleeping in? for goodness' sake!
Allow yourself to dream a bit before you rise to wake.
Vines with tangled heaps of thorns don't seem to slow you down
I believe a web of stone won't hold your feathers bound.
On occasion, I admit, I find my vantage skewed
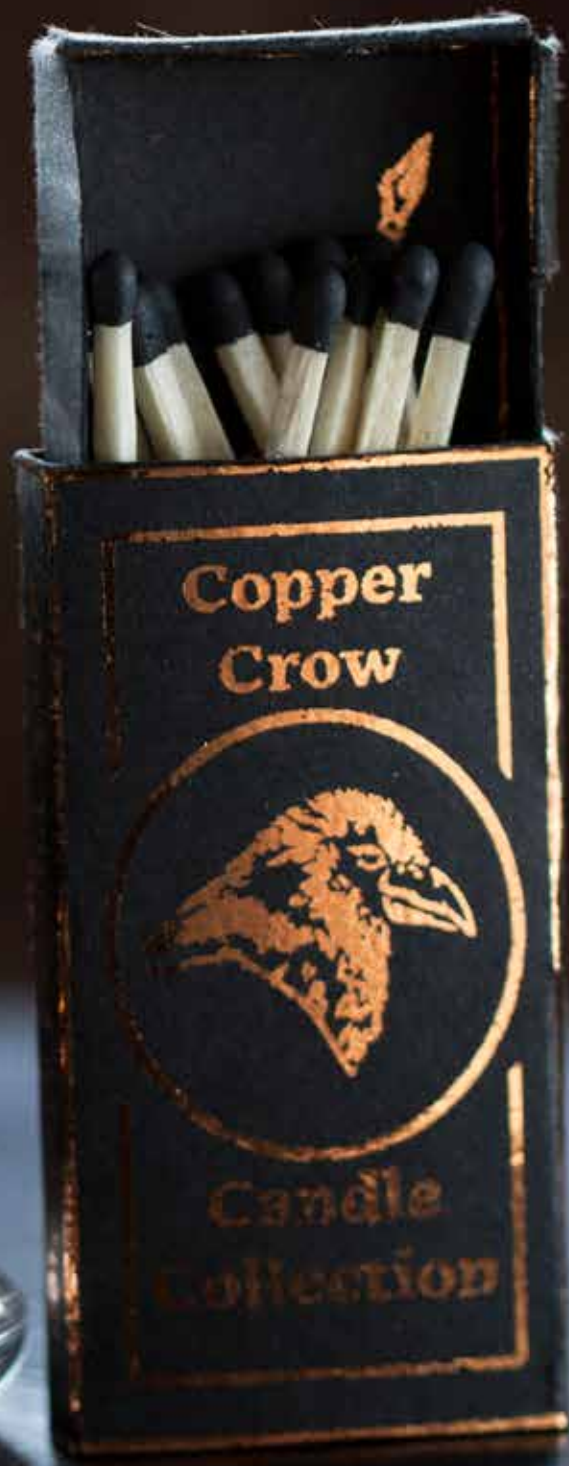Rather than remember I was once a wryneck too
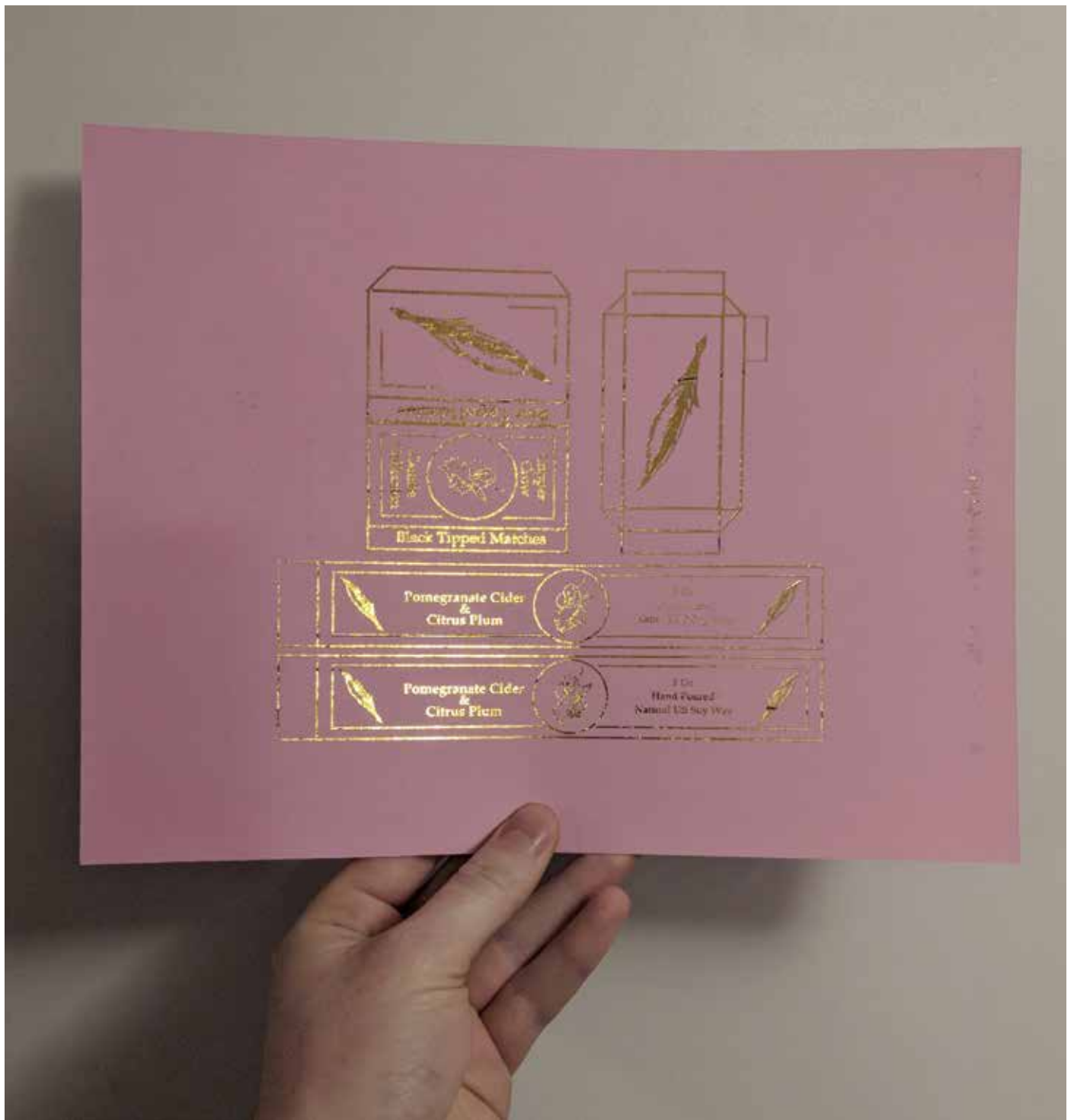
Printing & Foiling

Copper Crow
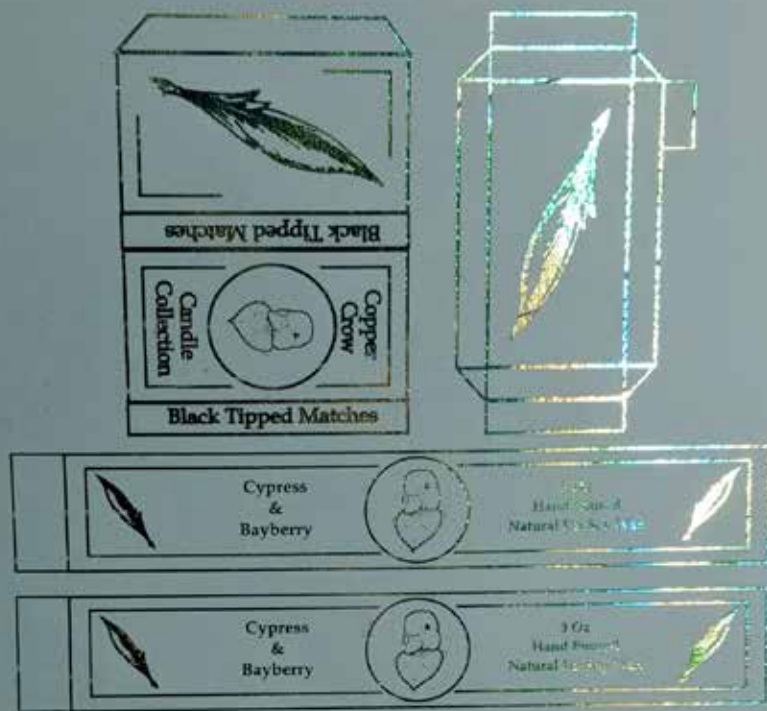
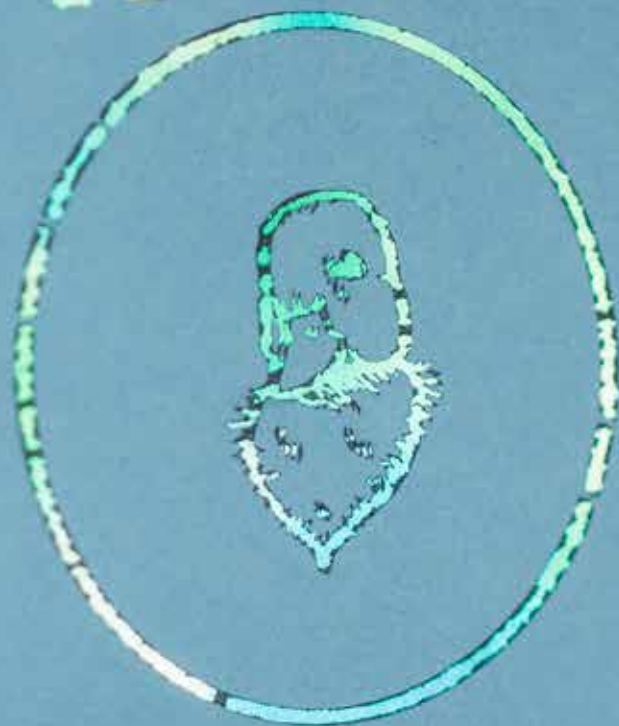Candle Collection

Copper
Crow

Candle
Collection

Copper Crow

Candle Collection

press
&
...berry

Na...

Copper
Crow

Candle
Collection

Hazelnut
&
Tahitian Vanilla

Hazelnut
&
Tahitian Vanilla

Copper
Crow

Candle
Collection

Black Tipped Mat...

Copper Crow

Candle Collection

Currant,
amon,
&
...wood

Copper
Crow

Candle
Collection

Copper Crow

Candle Collection

Patchouli & Amber Musk

Black Tipped Matches

Copper Crow

Candle Collection

te Birch,
anium,
&
e Spruce

Nat

Copper
Crow

Candle
Collection

Pomegranate Cider
&
Citrus Plum

Copper
Crow

Candle
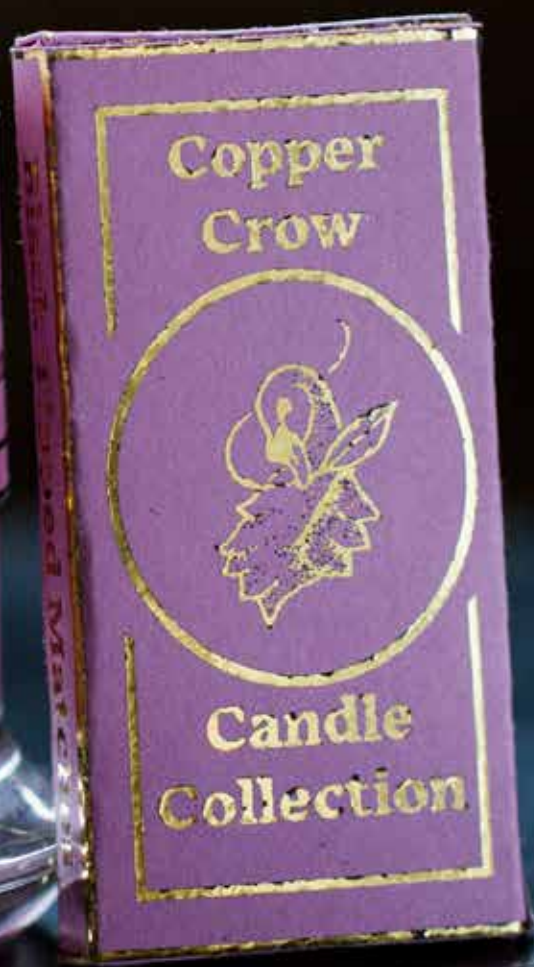Collection

Copper
Crow

Candle
Collection

mine
&
ysuckl

Conclusion

VALIDITY OF TATTOOING AS A VISUAL ART MEDIUM

Tattooing as an artform holds a great amount of validity and relevance as a platform for fine art. The National Endowment for the Arts lists Tattooing as an occupation within the field of Visual Arts alongside well received art forms such as painting, sculpting, and photography. Acquiring an apprenticeship is the only way to begin the process of becoming a licensed tattoo artist. The only way to receive an apprenticeship worth having is to demonstrate artistic skill Most reputable tattoo studios require a portfolio demonstrating an artist's best work.

There are many techniques, styles, and genres to master. "Tattoo clients across the country expect artists to have at least rudimentary ability to create tribal, traditional Americana, Celtic, biomechanical, fine line and Japanese style works, and many seek rather extensive coverage, from "sleeves" and "backpieces" to full bodysuits" (Sanders and Vail).

About a quarter of American citizens have at least one tattoo. An estimated 21-29% of Americans have at least one tattoo and an estimated 15-20% have multiple tattoos. According to the US census, The United States has a current population of over 328 million. That means about 68,880,000-95,120,000 have at least one tattoo while 49,200,000-65,600,000 have multiple tattoos.

Tattooing is commonly perceived as an act of defiance. Other artforms such as painting and sculpting can be perceived as deviant behavior depending on the subject matter and genre, but the act of sculpting or painting is hardly considered an act of defiance.

Tattooing requires an incredible amount of technical skill and precision. Moving a motorized needle grouping may seem easy but maintaining proper needle depth can be quite a challenge especially as skin depth changes from surface to surface. Successful tattooing requires custom designs. Typically. successful tattoo designs implement design principles such as eye flow, repetition, contrast, and line. Color Theory is another crucial element of design that separates successful tattoo artists from the less fortunate tattoo artists.

Similar to graphic designers, many tattoo artists begin the Design Process with a tablet such as an iPad, Wacom, or surface. Popular design software includes the Adobe suite (especially Photoshop) and Procreate. Client Interaction & Commission work is vital to a tattoo artist because tattoo artists can't practice the art of tattooing without a client. Synthetic tattooable skin exists, but it is hardly comparable to tattooing real skin. Safety precautions and certifications include first aid, CPR, bloodborne pathogens, and tattoo license.

There are case studies cited in my research which demonstrate the perception of tattooing as a service industry, but to further validate this perception, I have inquired with various artists of multiple calibers from amateur to professional.

I have a few surveys designed to further educate the perspective regarding tattoos as an art-form and am currently waiting on IRB approval for the surveys. I plan to continue researching methods of communicating through package design utilizing compound metaphor. I also plan to create a website to feature and sell the candle collection I created for my thesis deliverables. A portion of the proceeds for each candle sale will be contributed to various mental health organizations.

Bibliography

1.   Abbott, Dena M., and Debra Mollen. "Atheism as a Concealable Stigmatized Identity: Outness, Anticipated Stigma, and Well-Being." The Counseling Psychologist, vol. 46, no. 6, 2018, pp. 685–707., doi:10.1177/0011000018792669.

2.   "Alternate Sources of Tattoos and Tattoo Inks." Forensic Analysis of Tattoos and Tattoo Inks, 2015, pp. 131–146., doi:10.1201/b18938-9.

3.   Bradshaw, John L., and Judy A. Bradshaw. "Reading Mirror-reversed Text: Sinistrals Really Are Inferior." Brain and Language 33.1 (1988): 189-92. Web.

4.   Broussard, Kristin A, and Helen C Harton. "Tattoo or Taboo? Tattoo Stigma and Negative Attitudes toward Tattooed Individuals." The Journal of Social Psychology, vol. 158, no. 5, 2017, pp. 521–540., doi:10.1080/00224545.2017.1373622.

5.   Case, Caroline. Imagining Animals: Art, Psychotherapy and Primitive States of Mind. Hove: Routledge, 2005. Print.

6.   Chassagnol, Anne. "Embodied Stories: Tattoos, Self-Identity, and Children's Literature." 2018.

7.   "Facts & Statistics." Anxiety and Depression Association of America, ADAA, adaa.org/about-adaa/press-room/facts-statistics.

8.   Furnham, Adrian, and Margaret Avison. "Personality and Preference for Surreal Paintings." Personality and Individual Differences 23.6 (1997): 923-35. Web.

9.   Gilbert, Steve. "Tattoo History; a Source Book. ." 2001.

10.   Kosut, Mary. "An Ironic Fad: The Commodification and Consumption of Tattoos." The Journal of Popular Culture, vol. 39, no. 6, 2006, pp. 1035–1048., doi:10.1111/j.1540-5931.2006.00333.x.

11.   Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. Metaphors We Live by. Chicago: U of Chicago, 2011. Print.

12.   Lakoff, George. "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor." Metaphor and Thought (n.d.): 202-51. Web.

13.   Lamb, Jennifer. "Creating Change." Journal of Holistic Nursing, vol. 27, no. 1, 2009, pp. 57–65., doi:10.1177/0898010108323011.

14.   Larsen, Gretchen, et al. "A Deviant Art: Tattoo-Related Stigma in an Era of Commodification." Psychology & Marketing, vol. 31, no. 8, 2014, pp. 670–681., doi:10.1002/mar.20727.

15.   Layton, Monique. "Bad Boys and Tough Tattoos: A Social History of the Tattoo with Gangs, Sailors, and Street-Corner Punks, 1950–1965, Steward Samuel M., New York: Haworth Press, 1990, 204 Pp." Canadian Journal of Law and Society, vol. 8, no. 02, 1993, pp. 233–234., doi:10.1017/s0829320100003288.

16.   Page, Robert M. Stigma. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984.

17.   Reimann, Martin, et al. "Aesthetic Package Design: A Behavioral, Neural, and Psychological Investigation." Journal of Consumer Psychology, vol. 20, no. 4, 2010, pp. 431–441., doi:10.1016/j.jcps.2010.06.009.

18.   Thompson, Beverly Yuen. "Tattoos Are Not for Touching." Covered in Ink, 2015, pp. 151–176., doi:10.18574/nyu/9780814760000.003.0007.

19.   Vail, D. Angus. "Tattoos Are like Potato Chips … You Can't Have Just One: the Process of Becoming and Being a Collector." Deviant Behavior, vol. 20, no. 3, 1999, pp. 253–273., doi:10.1080/016396299266498.

20.   Warlick, M. E. Max Ernst and Alchemy: A Magician in Search of Myth. Austin: U of Texas, 2001. Print.

Dark Currant
Absinthe
&
Black Raspberry
Vanilla