

# GUÉGUEN ON RED

## *Some of Guéguen's Attempts to Observe the Effects of Women Wearing Red*

by Alice Shirell Kaswell, *Improbable Research staff*

Nicolas Guéguen researches the effects of women who wear red on men. He does research on other subjects too, many of them focusing on the effect of women's appearance, while hitchhiking or waitressing, on men's behavior. Guéguen is based at Université de Bretagne-Sud, France. Here are a few of Guéguen's women-wearing-red studies.

### **Guéguen and Red Clothed Women**

"Color and Women Attractiveness: When Red Clothed Women Are Perceived to Have More Intense Sexual Intent," Nicolas Guéguen, *The Journal of Social Psychology*, vol. 152, no. 3, 2012, pp. 261-265. Guéguen explains:

Research has shown that with some nonhuman primates, red is associated with greater sexual attractiveness of females, and recent studies found that a woman with red clothes increases attraction behavior in men. However, the mechanism that explains such behavior was not studied. In this experiment, we hypothesized that men overestimated women's sexual intent when wearing red clothing. Participants evaluated attractiveness and the sexual intent of a woman presented in a photograph wearing a red, a blue, a green or a white tee-shirt. It was found that men evaluated higher sexual intent in the red clothing condition. It was also found that perception of the woman's sexual intent was not moderated by attractiveness rating.

### **Guéguen and Male Drivers and Red-Clad Female Hitchhikers**

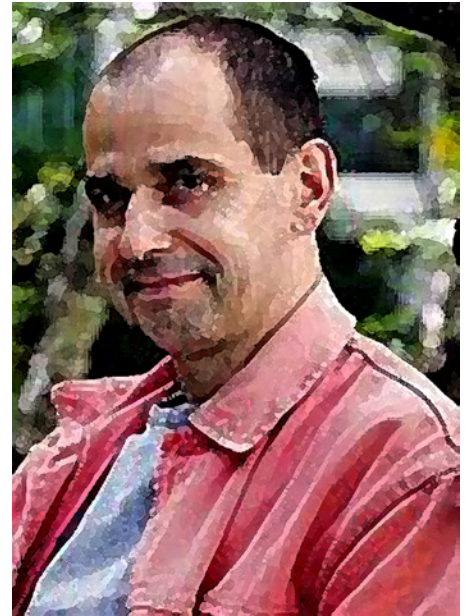
"Color and Women Hitchhikers' Attractiveness: Gentlemen Drivers Prefer Red," Nicolas Guéguen, *Color Research and Application*, vol. 37, no. 1, 2012, pp. 76-78. Guéguen explains:

Five female confederates in their early 20s posed as hitchhikers wearing T-shirts of different colors (black, white, red, blue, green, or yellow). It was found that the women wearing red solicited a higher response in the number of male drivers who stopped to offer a ride. No color effect was found when considering the behavior of female drivers.

### **Guéguen and Women in Red in Internet Personal Ads**

"Color and Cyber-Attractiveness: Red Enhances Men's Attraction to Women's Internet Personal Ads," Nicolas Guéguen and Céline Jacob, *Color Research and Application*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2013, pp. 309-312. Guéguen explains:

Women with Internet personal ads registered on a web meeting site displayed photographs with their upper clothes colored in red, black, white, yellow, blue, and green. The dependent variable was the number of contacts received from men. It was found that women's ads with red received significantly more contacts.



*Nicolas Guéguen. Drawing by Nan Swift, Improbable Research staff.*

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# GUÉGUEN ON RED [CONTINUED]

## Guéguen and Waitresses With Red Lipstick

“Lipstick and Tipping Behavior: When Red Lipstick Enhance Waitresses Tips,” Nicolas Guéguen and Céline Jacob, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, vol. 31, no. 4, 2012, pp. 1333-1335. Guéguen explains:

Female waitresses with and without lipstick were instructed to act in the same way than usual with their patrons. Results showed that lipstick, and particularly red lipstick, was associated with greater male patrons (but not female patrons) tipping behavior. The increase of attractiveness and femininity of waitresses wearing lipstick and red lips was used to explain the results.

### Lipstick and tipping behavior: When red lipstick enhance waitresses tips

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#### ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:  
Makeup  
Lipstick  
Red  
Attractiveness

#### ABSTRACT

Previous research has demonstrated that makeup increases perceived women's attractiveness and femininity for men. However, the effect of lipstick had never been tested. An experiment was carried out in restaurant in order to verify if waitresses' lips makeup is associated with an increase in patrons' tipping behavior. Female waitresses with and without lipstick were instructed to act in the same way than usual with their patrons. Results showed that lipstick, and particularly red

**Table 1**  
Percentage of tippers and monetary value of tips received (in €) according to experimental conditions and customer gender.

Measure	Lipstick condition			
	Red	Pink	Brown	No lipstick
<b>Number of tippers</b>				
Male customers	50.6% (41/81)	39.7% (31/78)	34.5% (29/84)	30.3% (23/76)
Female customers	31.0% (9/29)	32.4% (11/34)	25.9% (8/31)	26.5% (9/34)
<b>Amount of tip</b>				
Male customers	1.53 (0.54) <sup>a</sup>	1.23 (0.43)	1.21 (0.44)	1.04 (0.40)
Female customers	1.17 (0.43)	1.04 (0.42)	1.00 (0.46)	0.94 (0.30)

<sup>a</sup> Mean; standard deviation in brackets.

Detail from the study “Lipstick and Tipping Behavior: When Red Lipstick Enhance Waitresses Tips.”

## Guéguen and Women With Red Lipstick in a Bar

“Does Red Lipstick Really Attract Men? An Evaluation in a Bar,” Nicolas Guéguen, *International Journal of Psychological Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2012, p. 206.

Guéguen explains:

Female confederates wearing red, pink, brown and no lipstick were seated in bars on Wednesday and Saturday nights in a popular spot on the West Atlantic coast of France. Each experimental session lasted one hour. The number of men's solicitations and the lead time of the first solicitation were used as dependent variables. Results showed that the red lipstick condition was associated with a higher number of male solicitations and a shorter lead time between the arrival of the confederates in the bar and the first courtship solicitation of a male.

Table 1. Time elapsed before the first male contact (in minutes) and number of men making contact across conditions

Measure	Lipstick condition							
	Red		Pink		Brown		No lipstick	
	N = 36		N = 36		N = 36		N = 36	
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Number of men making contact by period	2.03	0.70	1.72	0.70	1.55	0.69	1.39	0.69
Time elapsed before the first male contact	19.78	9.37	23.35	11.91	24.83	14.81	27.03	13.18

Note: N= 36 refers to 36 periods of observation

Detail from the study “Does Red Lipstick Really Attract Men? An Evaluation in a Bar.”

## Guéguen and Waitresses in Red

“Clothing Color and Tipping: Gentlemen Patrons Give More Tips to Waitresses With Red Clothes,” Nicolas Guéguen and Céline Jacob, *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, vol. 38, no. 2, 2014, pp. 275-280.

Eleven waitresses in five restaurants were instructed to wear the same tee shirt with different colors (black, white, red, blue, green, or yellow). The effect of color on tipping according to patron's gender was measured. It was found that waitresses wearing red received more tips but only with male patrons.