Guéguen on Red

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

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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


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


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


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.

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Guéguen and Waitresses With Red Lipstick


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.

Guéguen and Women With Red Lipstick in a Bar


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.

Guéguen and Waitresses in Red


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.