

New Research From Psychological Science

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Read about the latest research published in *Psychological Science*:

[A Safe Haven: Investigating Social-Support Figures as Prepared Safety Stimuli](#)

Erica A. Hornstein, Michael S. Fanselow, and Naomi I. Eisenberger

Research has shown that fear learning occurs more readily with certain stimuli such as snakes and spiders, perhaps because these types of stimuli have historically threatened humans' survival. Although fear conditioning to these prepared fear stimuli has been examined, little research has studied their parallels — prepared safety stimuli (i.e., stimuli that have historically benefited survival). To determine whether social-support figures serve as prepared safety stimuli, researchers conducted a series of studies in which they paired mild shocks with pictures of participant-identified social-support figures, neutral figures, or familiar non-social-support figures. Social-support figures were less readily identified with shocks compared with other figures and inhibited fear responses to other cues, providing support for social-support figures as a category of prepared-safety stimuli.

[Strategically Stunning: The Professional Motivations Behind the Lipstick Effect](#)

Ekaterina Netchaeva and McKenzie Rees

The lipstick effect refers to the increased desire to use — and the increased use of — appearance-enhancing items by women during economic recessions. It is thought that women do this to help attract more financially stable partners. In this study, the researchers examined whether economic concern during times of recession induces the lipstick effect in both romantic and workplace contexts. In several studies, the researchers asked participants about their interest in products that would increase their professional and/or romantic attractiveness. They found that economic concern heightened women's desire to appear more desirable — and to use appearance-enhancing products — in both contexts; however, women with high economic concern were more interested in increasing their professional attractiveness than their romantic attractiveness. This study increases researchers' understanding of the way women obtain resources and cope with economic hardship.