

Science on the Runway

April 01, 2011



The Proud Shopper Gets the Flashy Blazer

It's been known that happy shopping can be dangerous to your pocketbook – positive feelings can create a “rose-colored glasses effect” that makes products more desirable. But recent research suggests that this is even more complex: Proud customers tend to buy flashy things, like jewelry and clothes, while contented customers buy products that instill comfort, such as easy chairs and appliances. Before you



head out to get your new spring wardrobe, make sure your mood fits first.

Griskevicius, V. et al. (2010). Journal of Consumer Research. The Many Shades of Rose-Colored Glasses: How Positive Emotions Influence Desire for Consumer Products.

Power Posing

Ever wonder why models look so fierce on the runway? Maybe it's the poses! Striking a high-power pose causes neuroendocrine and behavioral changes such as elevations in testosterone, decreases in

cortisol, and increased feelings of power and tolerance for risk.

Huang L. et al. (2011). Powerful Postures Versus Powerful Roles: Which Is the Proximate Correlate of Thought and Behavior? Psychological Science, 22(1).



Hubris Never Looked so Hot

Can you tell what emotion this model is expressing? Pride! A study in *Psychological Science* found pride has a recognizable expression, which includes a small smile, a head tilt slightly back, visibly expanded posture, and arms raised above the head or hands on hips. It looks like pride's getting some personal spotlight on the positive emotions runway.

Tracy J.L. & Robins R.W. (2004). Show Your Pride: Evidence for a Discrete Emotion Expression. Psychological Science, 15(3).



Pick Yourself Up! It Wasn't As Bad As You Think

If a model trips on the runway, it's embarrassing but not as bad as you think. People tend to overestimate the intensity and duration of their emotional reactions to future events, especially negative ones. So keep on struttin'! If you fall, pick yourself up and smile for the camera.

Wilson, T. D. & Gilbert, D. T. (2005). Affective forecasting: Knowing what to want. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 14.



The Paparazzi Isn't After Everyone

We're not all celebrities, with our every move caught on camera for the world to see. We overestimate the extent to which our behavior and appearance are noticed (the spotlight effect), and overestimate the extent to which our internal states leak out and are detected by others, (the illusion of transparency). While it may be fun to pretend, the spotlight is not always on us.



Gilovich T. & Savitsky K. (1999). The Spotlight Effect and the Illusion of Transparency: Egocentric Assessments of How We Are Seen by Others. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 8(6).

The Black and White Guide to Good First Impressions

Got a first date coming up? Wear black and white to seem both naughty and nice. People automatically assume that bright objects are good while dark objects are bad. So if you want to look sweet, wear lighter and brighter colors, but if you want to let your date know you've got a dark side, put on something black.

Meier B.P. et al. (2004). Why Good Guys Wear White. Psychological Science, 15(2).



I Now Pronounce You Brand and Wife

We've all suffered for fashion at one point or another, but a recent study suggests that brand loyalty is more serious than we thought. Consumers can become so attached to their brands that being forced to go without their preferred designer can cause a form of separation anxiety. Consumers can become so enamored of a brand that they will invest time and money in acquiring its products in order to deepen their relationship with the brand.

C. Whan Park et al.(2010). Journal of Marketing. Brand Attachment and Brand Attitude Strength: Conceptual and Empirical Differentiation of Two Critical Brand Equity Drivers.

April Fools!

We hope you've enjoyed this special Fashion Supplement! While looking good is important, we'll stick to what we know and love best: Psychological Science!