Extreme Versus Balanced Positions on Controversial Topics: the Role of Need to Stand Out

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We study the effect of individuals’ need to stand out and degree of topic controversy on people’s tendency to take more or less extreme positions. We show that for highly (lowly) controversial topics individuals with higher (lower) need to stand out take more extreme positions.

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Just Add Seeds: Do Healthy Additives Transform Indulgences Into Health Foods?
Aner Tal, Cornell University, USA
Brian Wansink, Cornell University, USA

Can the health halos of healthy additives affect health judgments of unhealthy foods? An exploratory study examines whether adding healthy additives to indulgent foods can make them appear healthier and less calorie. Seeds (Chia, Flax) appear particularly potent at improving health perceptions. Healthy additives may bias health perceptions, increasing consumption.

Mindless Eating vs. Mindless Serving:
Distraction Level Matters with Self-Serving, not with Pre-Plating
Aner Tal, Cornell University, USA
Brian Wansink, Cornell University, USA

We compare the influence of distraction level on food consumption when self-serving and pre-plating. Distraction level increases consumption when consumers serve themselves, not when receiving set portions. This is because mindless eating occurs even under low distraction, whereas serving may be more controlled and so more susceptible to distraction level.

Why or why not? The Influence of Absent Reasons on Accepting Offers
Tao Tao, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong
Robert S. Wyer, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Two experiments investigated the influences of available and absent reasons on decision-making. The results showed that when consumers do not have the ability to generate reasons, intriguing them to think about the reasons of not accepting an offer would ironically lead them to be more likely to accept it.

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Marketing Exclusion: When Loyalty Programs make Customers Feel Like “Outsiders”
Danna Tevet, Tel Aviv University, Israel
Shai Danziger, Tel Aviv University, Israel
Irit Nitzan, Tel Aviv University, Israel

We demonstrate that loyalty program’s preferential treatment to privileged customers causes unprivileged customers to feel meaningless and un-belonging. We term this “marketing exclusion”. We show that marketing exclusion decreases customer satisfaction, affects product choice, induces aggressive behavior and increases customer perceptions that the brand is less warm and more elitist.

I Love the Cozy Places: Prospect-Refuge Theory Explains Restaurant Spatial Preferences
Derek Theriault, John Molson School of Business, Concordia University
Gad Saad, John Molson School of Business, Concordia University

Why do consumers prefer certain restaurant layouts, table locations, or seat locations over others? We use Prospect-Refuge theory to show that, all else equal (e.g., food, décor), consumers prefer to maximize prospect (view of entrances) and refuge (adjacent walls), and this effect can be moderated by experiential valence (prior achievement/failure).