

OFFICIAL ABSTRACT and CERTIFICATION

Shattering the Illusion of the Self-Earned Tip: The Effect of a Restaurant Magician on Co-Workers' Tips

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Two natural field experiments examined the effects of a restaurant magician's performance and tips on servers' tips. Data indicated that servers got larger tips when the magician performed at their tables than when he did not, but that the magician's tips had no impact on servers' tips. The positive effect of the magician's performance on someone else's tips means that tipping is not fully rational or efficient. It also provides some credence to the idea that cooks, hostesses and other co-workers contribute to the tips servers receive and, therefore, deserve a share of those tips. The null effect of the magician's tip on servers' tips implies that tipping does not engage the self-perception, licensing, and resource budgeting processes that create interdependencies in consumer spending in other contexts. In addition, it suggests that managers can allow entertainers and other early encountered service providers to accept tips without concern about harming the tip incomes of servers or other later encountered service workers.

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