



City Research Online

City, University of London Institutional Repository

Citation: Cutolo, D. & Ferriani, S. (2024). Atypicality: Toward An Integrative Framework In Organizational And Market Settings. *Academy of Management Annals*, 18(1), pp. 157-209. doi: 10.5465/annals.2022.0005

This is the accepted version of the paper.

This version of the publication may differ from the final published version.

Permanent repository link: <https://openaccess.city.ac.uk/id/eprint/31740/>

Link to published version: <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2022.0005>

Copyright: City Research Online aims to make research outputs of City, University of London available to a wider audience. Copyright and Moral Rights remain with the author(s) and/or copyright holders. URLs from City Research Online may be freely distributed and linked to.

Reuse: Copies of full items can be used for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge. Provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way.

ATYPICALITY: TOWARD AN INTEGRATIVE FRAMEWORK IN ORGANIZATIONAL AND MARKET SETTINGS

Donato Cutolo*
Department of Entrepreneurship
IE University
donato.cutolo@ie.edu

&

Simone Ferriani
Department of Management
University of Bologna
&
Bayes Business School
City, University of London
simone.ferriani@unibo.it

Forthcoming in
Academy of Management Annals

*Corresponding author

Acknowledgments: The authors would like to thank Matthew Cronin and Bill McEvily for their thorough guidance and valuable comments throughout the review process. We are also grateful to David Stark, David Seidl, Giada DiStefano, and Marco Minervini, as well as participants in the Organizational Theory Winter Workshop and KTO Paper Development Workshop at SKEMA Business School and in the entrepreneurship and innovation seminar series at Bayes Business School for their feedback on previous versions of this paper. In addition, we thank the economic sociology research group at the MIT Sloan School of Management, where the first author was fortunate enough to spend a wonderful visiting period during the development of this manuscript. We gratefully acknowledge financial assistance from the Italian Ministry of Education, University, and Research through the PRIN funding scheme (grant no. 2022MCWT4Y) and the European Commission's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action (grant no. 101103930) financed by the Horizon Europe program. All errors remain the authors' responsibility. Correspondence concerning this article should be directed to Donato Cutolo.

Atypicality: Toward an Integrative Framework in Organizational and Market Settings

INTRODUCTION

Members of any conceptual category are not equal. Instead, categories exhibit what Eleanor Rosch (Rosch, 1973; 1975) called a graded structure, in which some members are seen as representative instances of a category, others as clearly not, and others representative to a greater or lesser degree (see also Hannan et al., 2007). In the highly influential Roschian view, instances that are considered prototypical of a given category are those that share many features with fellow category members, and, as such, they are most representative of the categories' central tendency. Conversely, members who deviate from this central tendency are atypical, or in other words, they are poorly representative of the category to which they belong (Rosch & Mervis, 1975). Because categorization decisions, that is, adjudications of what is and what is not an instance of some category, maintain social order by institutionalizing differences between the actors who enact them, social scientists have paid a considerable amount of attention to the costs and benefits of this deviation—situations in which an entity fits poorly what is expected of instances of a concept (Zuckerman, 1999; Hsu & Hannan, 2005; Smith, 2011; Durand & Paoletta, 2013; Goldberg et al., 2016). These studies demonstrate that atypicality, in its manifold organizational manifestations – e.g., career trajectories, market identities, strategic positioning, organizational forms, etc. - hold the potential for exceptional impact and innovation, but they also consistently find that categorical deviation more often elicits contempt than excitement (see Gouvard et al., 2023 for a recent treatment).

While the prototype theory pioneered by Eleanor Rosch and her colleagues in cognitive sciences (Rosch, 1973; 1975; 1978; Rosch and Mervis, 1975) provided an early template for investigating the extent to which the atypicality of a category member relates to its valuation by social actors, in recent decades, interest in the fundamental question of "what is representative" and "what difference this makes" has extended considerably to organizational and management research (Hannan, 2010). Scholarship in this vein spans multiple disciplines, including strategy, sociology, marketing, psychology, and innovation studies. Correspondingly, various perspectives have been adopted to investigate the role and impact of atypicality within, across, and around market and organizational settings. This includes work on the penalties faced by economic actors failing to align to some kind of category-based expectations (Hsu, 2006; Negro & Leung, 2013; Hannan et al., 2019; B. K. Kim & Jensen, 2011); accounts of the possible mechanisms explaining when those expectations are stringently enforced and when they are relaxed (Pontikes, 2008; Ruef & Patterson, 2009; Negro et al., 2010; Smith, 2011; Smith & Chae, 2017; Cutolo & Ferriani, 2023; Cudennec & Durand, 2023); theoretical analyses of the evaluative conditions under which the gains of atypical organizational identities outstrip those of conformity (Paoletta & Durand, 2013; Gouvard & Durand, 2022); quantitative accounts of tastes for atypicality in consumption choices (Pontikes, 2012; Kim & Lakshmanan, 2015; Goldberg et al., 2016; Reschke & Leung, 2022); biographical studies documenting the impact of atypical leaders' profiles on organizational outcomes (Alter, 2017); work examining the link between atypicality and novelty emergence in fields of cultural production (Uzzi et al., 2013; Askin & Mauskampf, 2017; Ferguson & Carnabuci, 2017); and so on. This literature has been essential to growing our understanding of how and why atypicality matters in many areas of organizational life. Still, it is vast and fragmented due to the scattering of findings across different research traditions.

Because of this dispersion, organizational atypicality remains a relatively elusive concept, fraught with considerable ambiguity regarding its theoretical underpinnings and inconsistencies in the construct's meaning across scholarly communities embracing different perspectives. Indeed, due to their specific methodological and theoretical concerns, these perspectives have proceeded in relative isolation from one another, acting as prisms that magnified certain aspects and backgrounded others, thus preventing the cumulative development of theoretical knowledge and consistent measurement of atypicality across disparate studies. In other words, because organizational atypicality is a construct that spans diverse sub-disciplinary communities holding different meanings across them and with little sharing of common findings, a holistic understanding of its nature and importance as an antecedent and outcome of disparate organizational phenomena is still lacking.

In addition, scholars' preponderant interest has been in the study of atypicality's consequences. While this is understandable in light of the early emphasis of cognitive research on evaluative reactions to typicality, a theoretical conceptualization of atypicality origination has been virtually overlooked at any level of analysis. Thus, we know relatively little about how producers, products, or practices become atypical or why they are atypical in the first place. As a result of disproportionately focusing on organizational outcomes, much more is known on the receiving end of how and with what effects agents acting as audience members judge atypical producers and their offerings than about the conditions under which atypical social objects are likely to emerge, or how and when an atypical entity becomes typical or a typical one becomes atypical. In sum, the paucity of knowledge on atypicality origination leaves us with no cogent theoretical understanding of the processes that drive the manifestation of atypicality within and across organizational and market settings.

This is unfortunate because current social, economic, and technological trends appear to have intensified manifestations of atypicality in many contexts. Witness the increasing propensity toward eclectic career trajectories triggered by the changing nature of work (Barley et al., 2017; Kuhn & Maleki, 2017, Champion et al. 2020), the rise of hyper-crowded platforms marketplaces where competitive advantage is tightly intertwined with the ability to deviate from some kind of prevailing order (Taeuscher et al. 2021), or the urgent need for unconventional organizational responses and tools to cope with the new normal imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic (Foss, 2021). At the same time, many issues still prevent atypical actors and offerings from making inroads into organizational settings. For example, organizations still struggle to make signs of progress in pursuing the inclusion of atypical employees, e.g., neurodivergent people, to enhance work environments and outcomes (Austin & Pisano, 2017). Likewise, it is increasingly evident how algorithmic systems that operate in disparate domains such as music (e.g., Spotify), movies (e.g., Netflix), e-commerce (e.g., Amazon), traveling (e.g., Airbnb) reiterate—and worse, exacerbate—the tendency to privilege mainstream offers over atypical ones (Abdollahpouri et al., 2019), de facto frustrating the incentives for organizations to pursue alternative pathways.

For all these reasons, it is an ideal time for a systematic review that captures the vibrancy of work in this area, particularly as it relates to management and organizational scholarship. Critically, the field lacks an encompassing framework that synthesizes related yet dispersed literature and pinpoints areas of overlap as well as distinction regarding sources, consequences, and boundary conditions of atypicality within, across, and around organizations and market settings. To build such a framework, we conducted a comprehensive review of the literature on atypicality. In our review of 129 articles, we suggest three conceptual lenses through which atypicality has been approached: "cognitive", "normative", or "innovative" lens. Each lens hones in on different notions and facets of atypicality, respectively, a) atypicality conceived as deviation from category-defining reference points that influences evaluative dynamics within and across organizations, b) atypicality conceived as deviation from shared and accepted norms that describes how social order is constructed, preserved, and

challenged, and c) atypicality conceived as irregularity in routine patterns that spur competitive advantage and innovation.

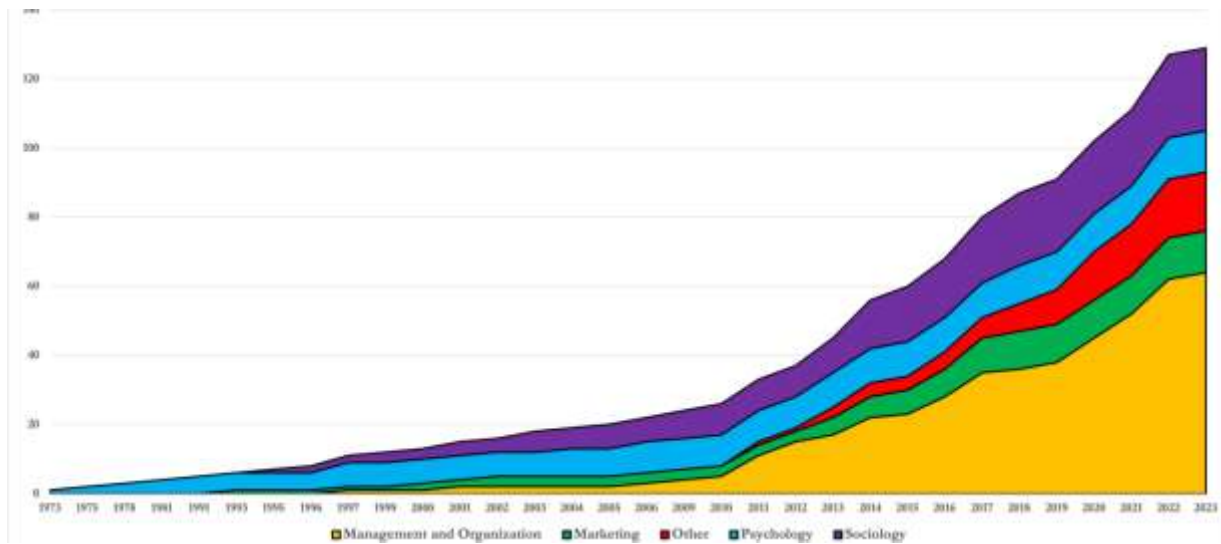
We erect an integrative framework around these three lenses that describes sources, consequences, and boundary conditions of organizational atypicality, aiming at (a) fostering the development of a common language toward a cumulative understanding of how and why atypicality matters to organizational life; (b) facilitating the appreciation of the atypicality literature for organizational and management scholars who are less familiar with the field; (c) helping bridge conversations within and across disciplines by highlighting areas of complementarity, as well as sites of contradiction. Extending from this framework, we develop a road map for future scholarship and define key areas where inquiry is needed.

The paper is organized as follows. We start by briefly describing our procedure for the systematic review of published research, characterizing the literature, and introducing our framework of three lenses on atypicality. Next, we provide a conceptual definition of atypicality that builds upon the commonalities across the three lenses. We then review the literature by giving each lens an overview and comparing the lenses to one another to highlight areas of overlap and divergence in conceptualization, focus, and instantiations of atypicality. This helps us systematize existing work and delineate an integrative framework for understanding atypicality. We conclude by discussing the implication of our review and framework and laying out an agenda for future research that uncovers critical knowledge gaps and provides directions for future research.

OVERVIEW OF ATYPICALITY LITERATURE

Our corpus is composed of 129 relevant empirical and theoretical articles and book chapters published between 1973 and 2023. (Appendices A and B at the end of the proposal detail our methods of article identification and coding structure). Of the 129 articles under consideration, 12 are published in psychology journals, 64 are published in management and organizations journals, 12 are published in marketing journals, 24 are in sociology journals, and 17 are published in interdisciplinary journals. In Figure 1, we present the temporal ordering of atypicality research across the various disciplines. The figure illustrates a significant time lag between the early contributions within the field of psychology, which can be traced to the early 70s, and the takeoff of atypicality research in other fields, which occurred nearly 20 years later in the early-mid-nineties. This trend reflects the historical development of the scholarly field of atypicality in the social sciences, with many foundational studies on the cognitive underpinning of categorization processes published by Rosch and her associates between the early 70s and early 80s (Rosch, 1973; 1975; 1978; Rosch and Mervis, 1975). The graph also illustrates an increasing trend and fragmentations across disciplines, with a particularly pronounced uptick in publication curves around the late 2000s. To wit, nearly 70% of the articles in our review have been published since 2011, suggesting that interest and insights regarding sources and consequences of atypicality within and across organizational contexts are rapidly cumulating. Yet, there has been little sustained consideration of this evolving landscape and its implications for the development of an integrative review on atypicality that could guide and deepen future managerial and organizational inquiries.

Figure 1. Cumulative Number of Articles on Atypicality over Time, by Field



To offer an immediate, “forest-level” appreciation of this literature, we combined the abstract and the title of all 129 articles and ran a topic modeling. Topic modeling has been conceptualized as a “rendering process,” which can be understood as a means to make theoretical insights and themes for theorizing emerge from data (Hannigan et al., 2019). We computed a variety of topic models, and we graphed the average coherence score of each model given different numbers of topics. We used this evidence as guidance to identify a plateau and study several models more closely from an interpretive perspective (DiMaggio et al., 2013; Hannigan et al., 2019), leading to a solution with 5 initial topics that balances trade-offs between topics variation, statistical validation, and ease of interpretation. Topic 1 investigates the impact of atypicality in product design, explicitly emphasizing the effects on consumer behavior and aesthetic considerations within a defined category. This stream of research delves into the effects of unconventional design choices on how consumers perceive and react to product features. Topic 2 examines the interconnections among market and industry dynamics and identity within and between unconventional organizations. The keywords such as identity, organization, status, strategy, and group indicate a sociologically oriented understanding of market and organizational dynamics. Topic 3 explores the intricate relationship between atypicality, categorization dynamics, audience evaluation, and organizational membership. The categorical dimension of evaluation holds paramount importance, and this topic encompasses a range of other elements that revolve around the evaluation process, such as audience perspective, the breadth of categorical positioning, and the significance of organizational membership. Topic 4 also intersects work and social theory, highlighting normative aspects related to atypicality in labor markets and work practices, in particular concerning the experiences and challenges encountered by atypical actors regarding the degree to which their occupation aligns with prototypical expectations on multiple dimensions. Topic 5 revolves around atypicality, combinations, and innovation dynamics, focusing specifically on research articles, ideas, patents, and projects. It delves into the exploration of unconventional combinations and innovative processes, exploring the dynamics of novelty and creative endeavors. By carefully examining the relative weight of each topic, topics 2, 3, and 5 emerge as particularly relevant, highlighting that scholarly interest in atypicality primarily revolves around evaluative, socio-cultural, and innovative dynamics. Furthermore, these diverse themes underscore the multidimensional nature of the study of atypicality, which has traversed various levels of analysis and emphasized different dimensions and focal points. Table 1 presents each topic's relative weight, representative keywords, and most representative articles extrapolated using information from the topic-document distribution matrix.

Table 1. Topics, weights, keywords and most representative article.

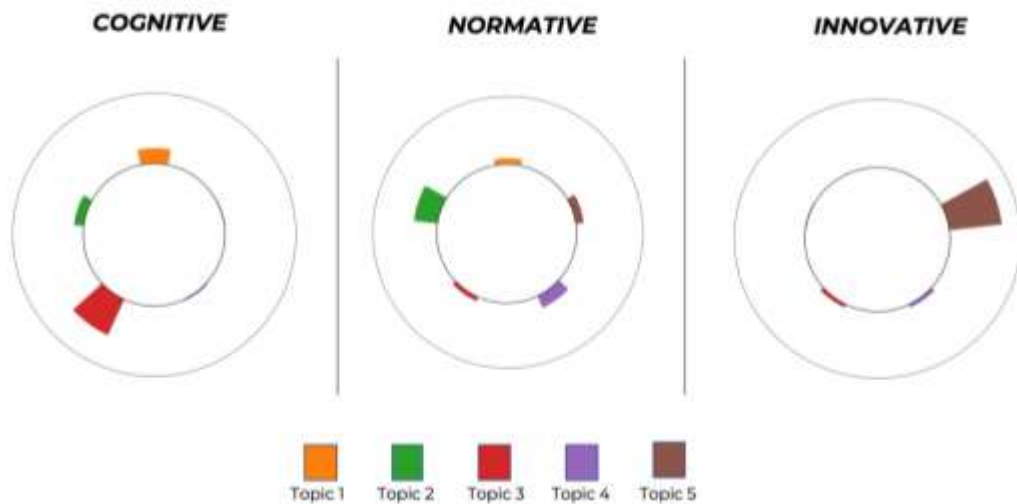
Topics	Weight	Keywords	Most representative articles
1	0.147	product, design, consumer, atypical, effect, innovation, study, research, aesthetic, result	<p>Kim, T. J., & Petitjean, M. (2021). Atypical package design and product category prestige. <i>Journal of Product Innovation Management</i>, 38(3), 379-397.</p> <p>Noseworthy, T. J., Murray, K. B., & Di Muro, F. (2018). When two wrongs make a right: Using conjunctive enablers to enhance evaluations for extremely incongruent new products. <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i>, 44(6), 1379-1396.</p> <p>Schnurr, B. (2017). The impact of atypical product design on consumer product and brand perception. <i>Journal of Brand Management</i>, 24(6), 609-621.</p> <p>Goodstein, R. C. (1993). Category-based applications and extensions in advertising: Motivating more extensive ad processing. <i>Journal of consumer research</i>, 20(1), 87-99.</p> <p>Kunda, Z., & Oleson, K. C. (1997). When exceptions prove the rule: how extremity of deviance determines the impact of deviant examples on stereotypes. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 72(5), 965.</p>
2	0.212	identity, market, industry, organizational, unconventional, strategy, status, organization, study, group	<p>Rao, H., Monin, P., & Durand, R. (2003). Institutional change in Toque Ville: Nouvelle cuisine as an identity movement in French gastronomy. <i>American journal of sociology</i>, 108(4), 795-843.</p> <p>Jordan, R., Fitzsimmons, T. W., & Callan, V. J. (2022). Positively Deviant: New Evidence for the Beneficial Capital of Maverickism to Organizations. <i>Group & Organization Management</i>, 10596011221102297.</p> <p>Durand, R., & Jourdan, J. (2012). Jules or Jim: Alternative conformity to minority logics. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i>, 55(6), 1295-1315.</p> <p>Litov, L. P., Moreton, P., & Zenger, T. R. (2012). Corporate strategy, analyst coverage, and the uniqueness paradox. <i>Management Science</i>, 58(10), 1797-1815.</p> <p>Smith, E. B., & Chae, H. (2016). "We do what we must, and call it by the best names": Can deliberate names offset the consequences of organizational atypicality?. <i>Strategic Management Journal</i>, 37(6), 1021-1033.</p>
3	0.360	category, audience, market, span, organization, member, evaluation, product, cultural, study	<p>Pontikes, E. G. (2012). Two sides of the same coin: How ambiguous classification affects multiple audiences' evaluations. <i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i>, 57(1), 81-118.</p> <p>Rosch, E., & Mervis, C. B. (1975). Family resemblances: Studies in the internal structure of categories. <i>Cognitive psychology</i>, 7(4), 573-605.</p> <p>Hsu, G., Hannan, M. and Koçak, Ö. (2009) "Multiple category memberships in markets: An integrative theory and two empirical tests." <i>American Sociological Review</i> 74 (1), 150-169.</p>

			<p>Reschke, B. P., & Leung, M. D. (2022). Variety is the Spice of Life: Heterogeneity in Evaluator Engagement and the Valuation of Atypicality. In <i>The Generation, Recognition and Legitimation of Novelty</i> (Vol. 77, pp. 163-186). Emerald Publishing Limited.</p> <p>Pontikes, E. G., & Hannan, M. T. (2014). An ecology of social categories. <i>Sociological science.</i>, 1, 311-343.</p>
4	0.128	<p>experience, resource, gender, work, process, atypical, theory, legitimacy, applicant, occupation</p>	<p>Kannan-Narasimhan, R. (2014). Organizational ingenuity in nascent innovations: Gaining resources and legitimacy through unconventional actions. <i>Organization Studies</i>, 35(4), 483-509.</p> <p>Garud, R., Dunbar, R. L., & Bartel, C. A. (2011). Dealing with unusual experiences: A narrative perspective on organizational learning. <i>Organization science</i>, 22(3), 587-601.</p> <p>Lovelace, J. B., Bundy, J., Pollock, T. G., & Hambrick, D. C. (2022). The push and pull of attaining CEO celebrity: A media routines perspective. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i>, 65(4), 1169-1191.</p> <p>Yu, W. H., & Kuo, J. C. L. (2021). Gender-Atypical Occupations and Instability of Intimate Unions: Examining the Relationship and Mechanisms. <i>Socius</i>, 7, 23780231211000177.</p> <p>Caza, B. B., Main, K., & Stuart-Edwards, A. (2022). Jack of All Trades, Master of None? Exploring Factors That Influence Responses to White-Collar Professionals with Multiple Jobs. <i>Academy of Management Discoveries</i>, 8(4), 585-607.</p>
5	0.221	<p>innovation, combination, research, idea, atypical, article, paper, novelty, work, knowledge</p>	<p>Toubia, O., & Netzer, O. (2017). Idea generation, creativity, and prototypicality. <i>Marketing science</i>, 36(1), 1-20.</p> <p>Kan, Y., Yu, Y., Jiang, Y., & Tan, Y. (2022). Afraid of Niche, Tired of Mass: Atypical Idea Combination on Crowdfunding Platform. <i>Tired of Mass: Atypical Idea Combination on Crowdfunding Platform (August 3, 2022)</i>.</p> <p>Wagner, C. S., Cai, X., & Mukherjee, S. (2020). China's scholarship shows atypical referencing patterns. <i>Scientometrics</i>, 124(3), 2457-2468.</p> <p>Schilling, M. A., & Green, E. (2011). Recombinant search and breakthrough idea generation: An analysis of high impact papers in the social sciences. <i>Research Policy</i>, 40(10), 1321-1331.</p> <p>Mukherjee, S., Uzzi, B., Jones, B., & Stringer, M. (2016). A new method for identifying recombinations of existing knowledge associated with high-impact innovation. <i>Journal of Product Innovation Management</i>, 33(2), 224-236.</p>

Combining an analysis of the distribution of the topics across the various abstracts with a more inductive approach, we suggest three primary conceptual lenses through which atypicality has been understood in the context of organizational and management scholarship – cognitive, normative, and innovative. By “lens,” we mean a cluster of theoretical foundations that offers a distinct conceptualization, focus, and representation of atypicality.

The distinctive scope of each lens is immediately apparent by observing the most salient topics for each lens (Figure 2), with topic 3 taking the lion’s share of the *cognitive* lens. This lens’ emphasis on evaluations is also evident in the significant presence of topic 1. The second lens, the *normative* one, stands out from the others for a particularly pronounced slanting towards the social underpinning of atypicality within the context of employment and organizational dynamic due to the dominance of topic 2 and the relevance of topic 4. Finally, the *innovative* lens underscores quite neatly the relevance of innovation and recombinant forces, as captured by the centrality of topic 5.

Figure 2. Topic Distribution by Lens



Although we endeavored to categorize studies into the lens with the closest theoretical fit, our categorization of studies is not meant to be mutually exclusive. In this regard, two important clarifications are in order. First, we are not claiming any hierarchy or sequence among these three conceptualizations. While some scholars might suggest that a specific lens is foundational and that other lenses follow from it, we make no such claim. Second, although each lens provides distinct insights and opportunities, we are not suggesting that the facets of atypicality they highlight are separate least so that they are mutually exclusive -i.e., a given study is not the domain of one lens at the complete exclusion of another. On the contrary, we see the three lenses as porous focusing tools, and our classification is a reflection of a document-topic distribution returned by the topic modeling combined with our relative sensitivity and reading of the literature. Importantly, we argue that the insights developed within each of the three lenses have much to offer to each other, and in this review, we expect to identify important commonalities and differences to address the current fragmentation

of the literature. In this respect, because each conceptual lens, just like a different schema, “magnifies, highlights, reveals, as well as it blurs or neglect” (Allison, 1971, p. v), adopting a multi-lens perspective is crucial to prevent isolated silos of knowledge, much like the proverbial “Blind men and the elephant” story, in which six blind men touch different parts of the elephant and cannot come to an agreement of what they are dealing with.

In the attempt to advance new insight by bridging different research communities within and across disciplines, in the next section, we propose a parsimonious definition of organizational atypicality that builds upon the commonalities across different lenses while leaving room for the specificities of each lens, recognizing that different perspectives can contribute unique insights and understanding of organizational atypicality.

ATYPICALITY: A UNIFYING DEFINITION ACROSS THREE LENSES

We define organizational atypicality as a *deviation from contextualized expectations of representativeness*. Representativeness is a relation between a class M and some instance or event X associated with that class (Kahneman & Tversky, 1972). The notion of atypicality is defined as the gap between what we expect to be representative of M and what we actually observe in a given context. These expectations can vary depending on the lens through which we observe atypicality. Scholars in the cognitive lens tend to discuss how the existence of categories shapes the expectations of observers and informs considerations of what is considered typical (hence representative) or atypical (Rosch & Mervis, 1975; Hannan, 2007). As the normative lens suggests, also social norms and codes can provide a framework for understanding what is considered normal or representative of a given context (Rao et al., 2003; Durand & Jourdan, 2012), shifting the spotlight on the role of social and cultural factors in shaping our expectations and understanding of typicality and atypicality. Finally, studies in the innovative lens view expectations from a more probabilistic perspective, suggesting that individuals develop a belief state of what is representative in a given context on the bases of statistical considerations and probability functions that describe previous patterns of features/events/behaviors (Uzzi et al., 2013; Schilling & Green, 2011).

We also draw attention to the fact that atypicality is not a fixed or absolute attribute of an object, but rather a relational and contextualized notion. Studies in the cognitive lens highlight that individuals make evaluations of atypicality through relative judgments, comparing each object under consideration against a set of others (Bowers, 2015). Similarly, the normative lens always defines atypicality with reference to some conventional, culturally grounded standard (Durand & Jourdan, 2012), and the innovative lens suggest that the emergence of atypicality can be grasped by taking a dynamic perspective that considers how similar objects evolve over time (Gouvard et al., 2023). Therefore, the atypicality of an object can only be relative to a specific domain or to other objects belonging to its reference group, which implies that atypicality is always contextualized and, therefore, can change over time and place (Ubish & Wang, 2022). Take, for instance, Jonathan Swift's "Gulliver's Travels". In the book, Gulliver visits several different imaginary realms, each with its own unique characteristics, norms, and customs. When he finds himself in the land of Lilliput, he is extremely atypical due to his towering stature in comparison to all the other inhabitants of the island. Conversely, when Gulliver is shipwrecked on Brobdingnag, Gulliver is atypical in the opposite way, as his stature is considerably smaller than that of the inhabitants. This contextual, relational, and dynamic dimension of atypicality also points to another important element of commonality emerging across the three lenses, which is that the violation of these expectations is tantamount to occupying a peripheral position within the reference group/context considered (Goldberg et al., 2016; Cattani et al., 2014; Popierlaz & McPherson, 1995; Jones et al., 2016; Khaire et al., 2016; Parket et al., 2019). When atypical objects do persist, they often occupy peripheral niches (Kleinbaum, 2012).

We now turn to the three lenses on atypicality, beginning with the cognitive lens, then the normative lens, and finally, the innovative one. For each lens, we distil a conceptualization, clarify the focus, discuss how atypicality is usually instantiated, and identify contiguous concepts. Table 2 below offers a summary view of this systematizing effort.

Table 2. Atypicality's Defining Features by Lens

Lens	Conceptualization	Focus	Instantiation	Contiguous concept
<i>Cognitive</i>	Deviation from categorical expectations	Social evaluation	Distance from central features	Categorical spanning
<i>Normative</i>	Deviation from normative/cultural expectations	Norm violation	Distance from dominant norms	Deviance
<i>Innovative</i>	Deviation from statistical expectations	Combinatory processes	Distance from normality	Novelty

3.1. Cognitive lens

Conceptualization

The *cognitive* lens conceptualizes atypicality through the perspective of category membership, suggesting that organizations are atypical when they are dissimilar to a category's prototype. Historically, this lens sets its roots in cognitive psychology, particularly in prototype theory pioneered by Eleanor Rosch and her colleagues (Rosch, 1978; Rosch & Mervis, 1975), and it focuses on the lack of resemblance of an entity to the prototypical member of a category. Briefly, categories are cognitive infrastructures that organize the social world by grouping entities with respect to the features and the attributes they hold in common (Durand & Khaire, 2017). Any category - movie genres, artistic movements, or product categories - is thus an "agreed-upon system of classification" (Goldberg et al., 2016, p. 4) that defines the boundaries of a features space (Askin & Mauskopf, 2017) structured around a prototypical exemplar, the central and most representative member of the category¹ (Mervis & Rosch, 1981). Typicality thus defines the extent to which an object captures the regularities of and well represents a categorical space (Rosch, 1973, 1978; Popielarz & McPherson, 1995; Hannan et al., 2007, 2019), while atypicality indicates a departure from the subset of central features that define the prototype of this space (Mervis & Rosch, 1981; E. Smith, 2011; E. Smith & Chae, 2017). Importantly, atypical instantiations of a given entity are recognized and accepted members of a categorical domain²

¹ Although we acknowledge the existence of contrasting views on how individuals form prototypes - see, for example, Solso and McCarthy (1981) on the difference between central tendency and attribute-frequency - and alternative and more dynamic perspectives on categories and categorization - e.g. the exemplar view, where a category is represented by previously encountered instances of that category, the schema view, where a set of attributes describes the central tendency of a category, the goal-based, where categories are created ad hoc to support the aim of achieving a specific goal, or the ideal view, where a category is represented by the combination of ideal features (Medin & Schaffer, 1978; Barsalou, 1985; Murphy, 2002; Voorspoels et al., 2011; Kennedy & Fiss, 2013; Paolella & Durand, 2016; Hannan et al., 2007), for the scope of this review we rely on the classical prototypical perspective as foundational to the conceptual understanding of atypicality. Indeed, the arguments we develop about atypicality can apply just as well to a variety of perspectives on categories.

² A critical consideration concerns the relationship between atypicality and membership within a category. Rosch's findings convinced a substantial numbers of scholars that not only typical members of a category are considered more representative than others, but also that typicality defines the degrees to which an object belongs to a category (Zadeh, 1965). The novel idea that atypicality entails partiality in category membership gained considerable traction and was adopted in many studies as the basis of our understanding of atypicality in social settings (Hannan et al., 2007; Hsu et al., 2009; Hannan, 2010). However, over the years scholars also noticed that this perspective perpetuated a potentially confusing representation of the relationship between typicality and membership (Kamp & Partee, 1995; Hampton, 2007; Hannan et al., 2019). Indeed, these are not orthogonal dimensions: despite the fact that atypical entities

(Popielarz & McPherson, 1995; Hannan et al., 2019), albeit peripheral to it (Kennedy, 2008; Pentland et al., 2011; Popielarz & McPherson, 1995; Rosch, 1973). In Murphy's (2002) words, "[atypical objects] are known to be members, but that are unusual in some way" (p. 22).

Focus

Building upon the assumptions about the prototypical nature of categorical cognition and evaluation (Hannan et al., 2019), the substantive focus of studies in the cognitive lens is to understand the role of atypicality in shaping social evaluation. Specifically, this lens highlights how atypicality affects both the evaluation process (Boulogne & Durand, 2021) and its outcomes (Gouvard & Durand, 2022). Scholars using this lens are concerned with the positioning of a given entity within existing categorical boundaries (product or industry categories), with typical organizational entities, generally, valued more positively than atypical ones (Gouvard & Durand, 2022). The evaluative liabilities of atypicality are perhaps best summarized in research on the "*categorical imperative*" (Zuckerman, 1999), which has illustrated that objects violating categorical properties tend to be ignored or sharply penalized compared to typical – or categorically pure- objects. This penalization takes multiple forms, such as inferior economic performance, weak ratings, limited attention, decreased market appeal (Hsu, 2006; Negro & Leung, 2013; Hannan et al., 2019; B. K. Kim & Jensen, 2011) and may even affect the viability, meaning, and ultimately the survival of whole categories when atypicality becomes pervasive (Hannan et al., 2007; Negro et al., 2010). Scholarship in the cognitive lens suggests that individuals' general preference for prototypical codes and features is intrinsic to the evaluation process itself (Rosch, 1973; Rosch & Mervis, 1975; Mervis & Rosch, 1981; Palmer et al., 2013; Reber et al., 2004), and this predilection has been demonstrated for a diverse set of evaluative situations including actors (Zuckerman et al., 2003), organizations (Pontikes, 2012), films (Hsu, 2006), aesthetic features (Palmer et al., 2013), books (Peters & Stokmans, 1997) and wines (Negro et al., 2011) among others.

Illustrations and instantiations

The cognitive lens explores atypicality across multiple levels of analysis, reflecting the variety of levels at which categorization processes occur (Vergne & Wry, 2014). As suggested above, studies in this lens tend to infer distances of objects from prototypes by observing their positioning within the categorical space. This is because the defining features of an object are often difficult to quantify, leading scholars to leverage the observable label space describing the categorical system - under the assumption that categories convey important information about the underlying features of producers or products (Pontikes & Hannan, 2014). Conceptually, the approach capitalizes on the intuitive idea that objects belonging to only one category are more typical of that category than objects that traverse multiple categories (Goldberg et al., 2016). A platypus is an exemplar representation of this lens. Its puzzling array of features – an iconic duck bill, it lays eggs like a reptile, and it nurses its young on milk like a mammal- makes it a very atypical member of its animal class. In fact, it is so atypical that when the first specimens arrived in England from Australia, the scientists examining them suspected a hoax (Hall, 1999). At the firm level, examples of atypicality so conceived include companies claiming multiple market labels (Pontikes, 2012), or operating in diverse, unrelated industry categories or market segments (Zuckerman, 1999; Cudennec & Durand, 2022; Phillips et al., 2013), startups combining previously unconnected or rarely associated categories (McDonald & Allen, 2021), restaurants serving a concoction of cuisines (Johnson & Kovács, 2014; Kovács & Hannan, 2010, 2015), or wineries spanning different styles (Negro et al., 2010; Negro & Leung, 2013). At the individual level instead,

are not representative members of a category they do remain members, i.e., they are not outsiders. Indeed, a relatively atypical bird as the pelican, is yet an unequivocal member of the set of birds. That's because categories have defining features, and this is what determines categorical membership (Hannan et al., 2019).

examples include social actors who compile previous working experiences from disparate job categories (Leung, 2013; Zuckerman et al., 2003; Kacperczyk & Younkin, 2017), musicians combining multiple genres that do not co-occur regularly (Silver et al., 2022) or crafters selling their products in multiple and unrelated market categories (Cutolo & Ferriani, 2023). Finally, scholars have also investigated atypicality-related issues at the product-level, for instance, studying the atypicality of movies that span genres (Hsu, 2006; Goldberg et al., 2016; Zhao et al., 2013), songs and albums combining unusually paired styles (Younkin & Kashkooli, 2020; Formilan & Boari, 2021), videogames that include elements from multiple, dissimilar categories (Vossen & Ihl, 2020), or patents that blend categories which are not commonly seen together in other patents (Lo & Kennedy, 2014).

In other cases, instead, scholars incorporate a features-based approach to assess deviation from prototypical categorical features. Feature and label spaces are the two orthogonal planes that define how categorization operates: the feature space locates objects in the conceptual space by their feature values, while the label space locates objects according to the symbolic labels attached to categories (Pontikes & Hannan, 2014). This more nuanced approach to atypicality reflects three main issues associated with a purely categorical understanding of atypicality, namely that a) the specific features associated with labels can (and do) change over time, b) the two planes may or may not align with one other (Pontikes & Hannan, 2014), and c) audiences, in certain contexts, are likely to use an “amalgamation of features rather than (or in addition to) labels to position, select, and evaluate products” (Askin & Mauskopf, 2017, p. 6). Examples are organizations whose products, features, or strategic choices exhibit salient attributes rarely adopted by category peers (Gouvard et al., 2023; Smith, 2011, Smith & Chae, 2017; Kim & Jensesn, 2014, Mitsuhashi & Alcantara, 2021; Paoletta & Durand, 2016), organizations borrowing elements from other categories (Rao et al., 2005; Chae, 2022), songs combining musical features differently from others in the same genre (Askin & Mauskopf, 2017), and products whose features are incongruent with those found in other products within the same category (e.g., packaging (Scarpi et al., 2019, Garaus & Halkias, 2020; van Ooijen et al., 2016), design, (Schnurr, 2017; Kim & Petitjean, 2021; Bu et al., 2022; Landwehr et al., 2013; Mugge & Dahl, 2013), narrative content (Garud et al., 2011; Tauscher et al., 2022).

Contiguous Concept: Category Spanning

The cognitive lens highlights that, in the context of categorical literature, acts of category spanning are nearly always considered expressions of atypicality, as actors, organizations or products that traverse multiple categories are unlikely to align to the prototypical features of each (Hsu, 2006; Hsu et al., 2009; Kovács & Hannan, 2010). This stream of work usually follows a discrete approach to account for typicality (Kovács & Hannan, 2015, p. 259), assuming that an object’s atypicality generally increases with the number of categorical labels it bears. However, a closer examination of this assumption suggests that category-spanning only leads to atypicality under certain conditions. Consider, for instance, the case of an offering that spans two categories. When the conceptual distance between the categories is low, their prototypes tend to be closer and display more similar features (Pontikes & Hannan, 2014). In this case, the mere spanning of categories may well reflect a rather typical positioning within both categorical spaces, as many prototypical features are shared between the two categories and the offering can well represent them both.

In sum, informed primarily by Rosch's pioneering work on the cognitive underpinning of categorization processes, the *cognitive* lens conceptualizes atypicality as a deviation from central and representative features of a categorical space. The main focus of this lens is on how (a)typicality of objects within a (product or market) category influences audience expectations, thereby affecting social judgments and social interactions.

3.2. Normative lens

Conceptualization

While the cognitive lens primarily focuses on perceptual and cognitive mechanisms in determining atypical categorical instances, the *normative* lens highlights the central role of social structures in understanding atypicality. Atypicality is here understood as a deviation from prevailing cultural and social norms. A social norm refers to a standard whose function is to summarize the appropriate behavior or orientations of a reference group (Warren, 2003) by outlining what is representative, hence expected, within a given social context. Conceptually, the departing point of the *normative* lens is, therefore an explicit association between the notion of representativeness and that of social norm. A norm reflects a shared understanding of the way things should be done in a particular social context, establishing conventions that normatively affect representativeness judgments³.

Historically, the lineage of this lens can be traced to early sociological traditions, particularly the work of theorists like Foucault and Merton, concerned with the emergence, development, and control of atypical behaviors within social systems. Merton's influence is especially reflected in this lens' concern for the way in which norm-defying behaviors may emerge within a social structure as well as the attention devoted to structural conditions leading to the delegitimizing of prevailing social norms, what Merton referred to as a state of "relative normlessness" (1968, p.215). The Foucaultian lineage is especially apparent in this lens' strong focus on societal normative pressures toward conformity, what Foucault (1979) called the "normalizing society," referring to the homogenizing forces exerted by modern institutions that use the statistical abstraction of "normal" as their core organizing principle. Foucault emphasized that normalization serves a "double function" by creating a classification system that immediately rewards or penalizes those it classifies. In this classification system, "the penalty of the norm" functions, paradoxically, by defining a class of subjects as the same and then using normative criteria to establish individual differences. As a result, differences become "value-laden, a shortcoming rather than a viable alternative" (Espeland & Sauder, 2007, p.73), and pressure builds to conform as closely as possible to the norm. Accordingly, several studies clustered within this lens emphasize the prescriptive nature of the expectations generated by norms, identifying representativeness as something that is ideal or desirable in a given situation (Lynch et al., 2000).

Focus

Not surprisingly, many though not all studies in the normative lens, tend to discuss how the diffusion of atypicality may cause a breakdown in a normally functioning organizational, cultural, or social system (Durand & Thornton, 2018). Atypicality is seen as an anomaly in social order and as such, it is vulnerable to the risk of facing a hostile reception, marginalization or, even worst, suppression. Studies in this vein thus focus on atypicality's stratifying implications, especially those stemming from the systematic rejection of atypicality in the name of the general value of normality, although this point is not as central as the previous one. A compelling illustration of atypicality's potential stratifying effects in the context of organizational recruitment is offered by Leung and Koopman (2018), who show how employers reproduce gender segregation by deciding not to hire when there is a large proportion of gender-atypical applicants in the pool of applicants. Yet, unlike the cognitive lens, which tends to focus on the initial and immediate (usually negative) evaluative reaction elicited by atypical objects, a substantial number of studies adopting a normative lens are concerned with how atypicality may nevertheless gain acceptance in time, although this journey may be slow and tortuous.

³ This normative connotation can be ascribed to the historical origins of the term normal in medicine, pathology in particular, where it implicitly determines social judgments about the acceptability of certain kinds of biological variation (Canguilhem, 2000).

In this respect, the normative lens has proved particularly adept at documenting how different instantiations of atypicality can lead to the strategic enactment of norm-undermining, and eventually, norm-changing behaviors. The underlying assumption is that any perception of what is considered the norm is bound to change with time, and just as old practices disappear, new ones can emerge and diffuse that break the mold of prevailing views (Rao et al., 2005; Negro et al., 2011; Rao et al., 2003). The French chefs pursuing Nouvelle Cuisine techniques were initially ostracized, but as the practice became widespread, the penalty vanished. Another evocative illustration of this dynamic is Igor Stravinsky's ballet, *The Rite of Spring*. When it premiered in Paris in 1913, its unusual blending of traditional folklore and modernism, the strong rejection of the ordered harmonies and comfort of contemporary compositions, its choreography that defied every traditional canon of gracefulness, caused mayhem, chaos, and disapproval. Today, the *Rite* is widely regarded as a seminal work of modernism, one of the most influential musical compositions of the 20th century, with repercussions that continue to reverberate in jazz, minimalism, and other contemporary movements. In each of these examples, initially, these efforts are likely to beget penalties, but those penalties erode as the atypical behavior becomes more prevalent, thereby introducing disagreement about what is considered (a)typical. In other cases, when atypical individuals occupy leadership position for instance, the meaning, utility and purpose of social practices that the majority has taken for granted are more directly questioned (Alter, 2017). As a result, atypicality may eventually open up pathways to standards' redefinition, institutional change, and social transformation (McDonald & Allen, 2021).

Illustrations and Instantiations

As discussed above, the normative lens directs attention to the fact that atypicality depends substantially on normative criteria grounded in cultural, historical, and social ideals that serve as the measuring stick to determine the degree of atypicality in specific domains. Accordingly, (a)typicality judgments are shaped by considerations about what is considered appropriate or ideal in a given context. The targets of such judgments can be, for instance, people working in occupations dominated by individuals from different demographic groups (Yu & Kuo, 2021; Leung & Koppan, 2018), employees who belong to a gender that is not predominant within their organization (Popierlaz & McPherson, 1995), organizational leaders with demographic backgrounds that are rarely associated with leadership positions (e.g., women, ethnic-minority and LGBT+ individuals) (Alter 2017), organizations that embrace a logic that stands in opposition to the dominant cultural and institutional code (Rao et al., 2003; Durand & Jourdan, 2012; Jung & Mun, 2017); individuals making career choices that defy social expectations and norms (e.g., being a multiple job holding white-collar professional, Caza et al., 2018), actors who do not abide by the existing conventions of a field (Jones et al., 2016; Jordan et al., 2022; Bellezza et al. 2014), or scientific papers exploring research questions that deviate from what is considered to be mainstream focus (Laudel & Gläser, 2014).

Contiguous Concept: Deviance

Studies in the normative lens highlight how the notion of deviance, particularly as it is applied in the context of institutional research, has some overlap with the concept of atypicality. Both atypicality and deviance signal violations of social norms, including formally and informally enacted rules. However, while acts of deviance usually entail misbehaving (Merton, 1968), and deviant actors are often regarded as outsiders (Becker, 1963), atypicality does not have an antinormative and stigmatizing connotation: atypicality is often a value-neutral term that does not inherently carry moral judgments and merely describes a departure from the norm without ascribing the inherent goodness or badness of that departure. Atypical practices might be perceived as weird or unnecessary, without being demonstrably maladaptive or negative. For instance, atypical orientations within an organization may fall within what Warren (2003) theorizes as constructive forms of deviance, or, similarly, what Jourdan (2022) calls

positive deviance, a form of departure from organizational norms that still preserves the intention to do good for the organization.

All in all, the normative lens builds upon sociological traditions to describe atypicality as a form of deviation from socio-cultural norms. This lens emphasizes how norms developed within social structures/institutions relegate atypical instances to a peripheral positioning, yet it also unravels the crucial role of atypicality in the transformation of the very same normative frameworks that surround its manifestation.

3.2. Innovative lens

Conceptualization

Underlying the *innovative* lens is the conceptualization of atypicality as a form of irregularity in established routine patterns, which is assumed to be non-recursive and not to follow a discernable trend over time. Prevalent within this lens is the adoption of statistical and probabilistic considerations about the values or features that entities are likely to assume to inform the construction of expectations of representativeness. Unlike the normative lens, these expectations of representativeness do not imply or create social norms but are naturally expressed in the form of probability distributions over the range of possible alternatives. These statistical distributions can be considered to be mental representations (Csazar & Levinthal, 2016) of expectations (usually conditioned, in the sense of being conditional on a particular context) about various aspects of a given system, including features, relationships, and causalities, based on available information at a given time (Weick, 1979; Kahneman & Tversky, 1972). Mental representations determine the likelihood of different outcomes or values occurring within a particular context, and deviations from the most likely -i.e., representative - states define atypical instances (Pentland et al., 2011). In other words, the occurrence of such observation is considered atypical compared to what would be anticipated based on prior knowledge or patterns. For instance, He and colleagues (2018) consider atypical those scientific articles whose citation trajectories do not follow the usually observed (i.e., typically expected) rise-and-fall pattern. Similarly, atypicality judgments may result from observations of features, behaviors or practices that are unlikely or infrequent within a particular domain (Popielarz & McPherson, 1995).

Like the cognitive and normative lenses, conceptualizing atypicality under an innovative lens entails the identification of a relevant comparison set. However, in order to identify the relevant set for running this comparison, scholars adopting an innovative lens usually employ what could be called an object's "association network" rather than relying on agreed-upon systems of classification (Schilling & Green, 2011). In this approach, the nodes in the network are objects, and the edges between them represent varying degrees of feature overlap or similarity. Two similar objects are connected by some relationship, and they are therefore placed close to each other in the network space, and when a new object enters a certain network location, we can think of it as sharing features with the nearby existing objects. One obvious advantage of this approach is that, from a data point of view, constructing a network is often more feasible than a full-feature space. Besides, networks do not suffer from the curse of dimensionality, which is especially useful when one deals with complex objects that cannot be easily characterized using a few features, such as papers.

Focus

The strand of work classifiable under the innovative lens is less concerned with evaluative and social dynamics than with the role of atypicality as one of the fundamental forces driving innovation and distinctiveness in organizational and market settings (Schilling & Green, 2003; Uzzi et al., 2013, Lin et

al., 2022). The innovative lens is also more processual than the other lenses, seeking to uncover the underlying processes and mechanisms that contribute to the emergence of unconventional or atypical outcomes. These outcomes often result from unusual combinatory processes that determine a discrepancy between the expected and the observed actuality.

Theoretically, the combinatorial emphasis of this lens owes much to the theory of combinatorial creativity, which views novelty as some recombination of existing elements (e.g., Schumpeter 1934; Weitzman 1998). Research from across a variety of fields demonstrates that atypical combinations of knowledge fuel exceptional impact in science (Uzzi et al., 2013, Lin et al., 2022), that innovative technological breakthroughs emerge from unconventional combinations of ideas (Fleming, 2001; Schilling and Green, 2011), that interdisciplinary publications that span fields to create new topics enjoy the same benefits (Leahey et al., 2017), and that cultural products are more likely to become successful when they combine elements differently from those commonly found in related products (deVaen et al., 2015; Berger & Packard, 2018; Wei, 2020). Accordingly, studies in this lens are often concerned with how innovative breakthroughs emerge when existing components are recombined in unconventional ways that flout prevailing configurations (Kneeland et al., 2020; Pentland et al., 2011) affording startling possibilities for novelty and creativity (Fleming, 2001; Schilling & Green, 2011). For example, Hofstra and colleagues identified papers connecting concepts previously viewed as separated or irrelevant in literature (2020), including how Lilian Bruch connected “HIV” with “monkeys” to introduce HIV’s origins in nonhuman primates, or how Londa Schiebinger linked “masculinity” to “justify” in pioneering academic studies of gender bias. Recent applications of these ideas also include the context of big data (e.g., large generative language models such as ChatGTP), where the identification and selective deployment of atypical pieces of information serve to introduce unpredictability and trigger imaginative and innovative outputs. By deviating from the expected patterns, these inputs can push the large language model's creative boundaries and encourage the generation of original insights.

Illustrations and instantiations

As discussed above, instantiations of (a)typicality within the innovative lens do not result from deviation from prototypical categorical features in a well-defined categorical space, or normative expectations within an established social context, but rather from expectations of representativeness dictated by statistical judgments. Accordingly, atypical objects fall outside the representations of statistical norms (e.g., the average, mode or median), and this reflects mere descriptive statements about the distribution of certain values within a particular population or domain based on prior probabilities or base-rate frequencies (Bakker & McMullen, 2022). In some cases, these statistical considerations are based on the central tendencies of a group as a whole, for instance, organizations that emphasize market-oriented ploys rarely used by competitors or that avoid actions frequently used by rivals (Miller & Chen, 1996), or scientists using methods that are uncommon in their fields (Koppman & Leahey, 2019) are considered atypical. In other cases, the deviation from average values is expressed in terms of characterizing features, for instance, CEOs who have names that are not widely diffused (Kang et al., 2021). Interestingly, this perspective also suggests that atypicality can be an excess of a positive attribute. For example, Wechtler and colleagues (2022) define atypical applicants as those who possess a higher level of experience compared to the average among the pool of applicants.

In other cases, instead, deviations from expectations of representativeness reflect an object’s relative location in a network structure whose dimensions correspond to object features/characteristics. In these networks, each edge is assigned a weight that reflects the strength of the relationship between the connected nodes. This network is then used to make predictions about the outcomes of the system being modeled, thereby leading to the identification of atypical patterns

or structures. A prominent illustration is the work by Uzzi, and colleagues (2013), who describe the atypicality of a paper by capturing how the paper deviates from conventional knowledge by building on “atypical” pair of references, i.e., those that come from journals that are less likely to be co-cited in the network of citations. Other similar examples include Wei et al. (2022), who infer the atypicality of crowdfunded ideas from constructing pairwise connections between ideas on the basis of direct comparison between the content of ideas; Gouvard, Goldberg, and Srivastava (2023), who rely on Text-based Network Industry Classification (TNIC) to identify the set of comparison needed to capture the atypicality of an organization; Cattani, Ferriani and Allison (2014), who use the social network of interactions between Hollywood professionals to identify those occupying a peripheral position in the network; Kneeland et al., (2020) who look at patents that occupy technological positions that are distant from the network of existing patents at their time of filing; and deVaan and colleagues (2016) who reconstructed network ties formed across careers of video games developer to map how atypical games are developed by teams based on the level of dissimilarity between the stylistic portfolios of their members.

Contiguous Concept: Novelty

The innovative lens suggests that atypicality and novelty are also closely related – to the point that scholars sometimes have operationalized them as an indistinct construct, e.g., Uzzi et al. (2013). However, while undeniably related, novelty is in fact quite different from atypicality (Wang et al., 2017). The ordinary dictionary definition of novelty refers to the quality of not being previously encountered, while atypicality is the result of a discrepancy between an expectation of typicality and an observed actuality, which does not necessarily include a paradigmatic shift in novelty (Parker et al., 2019). Accordingly prior work has suggested that a product in a given category could be viewed as more (less) novel than another one without being judged to be more atypical of the category in question (Hekkert et al., 2003). Similarly, objects can be atypical despite their lack of newness (Koppman & Leahey, 2019).

To summarize, the *innovative* lens characterizes atypicality as an impulse to depart from some routine patterns, an irregularity that is non-recursive and does not follow a discernable pattern over time. This lens emphasizes the generative potential of atypicality and magnifies its processual dimension, illuminating the intended and unintended dynamics that explain the emergence of atypical instances/occurrences.

COMBINING LENSES: AN INTEGRATIVE FRAMEWORK

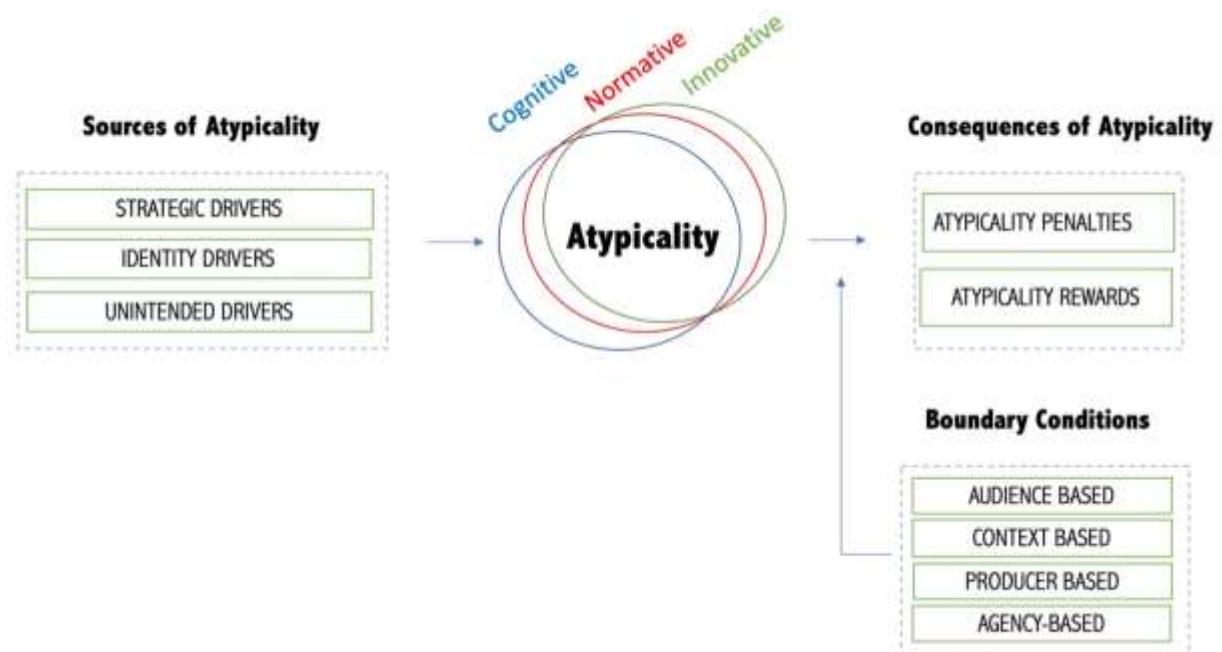
Each of the three lenses provides a distinctive and useful perspective on the role of atypicality in organizational studies, but also possibly in the broader social sciences. What should a common theoretical conversation about organizational atypicality address? We call for researchers to join in this quest, and to aid the effort, we advance an outline of what such a shared conversation could look like. We do so by combining the three lenses into a multi-lens framework with the aim of triggering a dialogue between scholars using one or the other lens and facilitating the appreciation of the underlying forces that shape atypicality’s manifestations within and across organizations. In keeping with our optical metaphor, the change of lenses in a camera allows to capture different aspects of a scene. Each lens, such as a wide-angle lens or a telephoto lens, provides a unique perspective on the scene, and by using multiple lenses, a photographer can capture a fuller and more detailed image. Similarly, in the study of a phenomenon, using multiple lenses allows researchers to capture different aspects of the issue under investigation. Furthermore, it is important to combine the lenses in a modular way, meaning that each lens is used independently to study a particular aspect of the phenomenon, but the results are then combined to form a holistic understanding. Specifically, our

multiple-lenses review of the literature suggests that organizational and management scholars have clustered their inquiries around three broad areas of research:

- 1) sources of atypicality
- 2) consequences of atypicality
- 3) boundary conditions

Figure 3 summarizes the conceptual model, and in the next section, we now discuss each of these research areas.

Figure 3. An integrative model of atypicality



4.1 The Sources of Atypicality

The origin of atypicality, in its manifold organizational manifestations, is often left unquestioned or, when explicitly addressed, it is usually traced to deliberate choices informed by strategic considerations (Durand & Thornton, 2018). Our review, however, reveals a variety of pathways leading to manifestations of atypicality within and across organizations. These include strategic behavior, spontaneous identity expressions, and chance. We discuss each of these paths separately, starting with the most prevalent in the literature, the strategic one.

Strategic drivers

Across the three lenses, but more intensely within the innovative and normative lens, atypicality is often portrayed as the outcome of strategic considerations (Durand & Thornton, 2018; Zhao et al., 2018). Here the impetus for atypicality stems from an explicit or implicit assessment of the opportunities to increase organizational performance by experimenting with unconventional behaviors, practices, or market spaces (Miller & Chen, 1996; Pentland et al., 2011; E. Smith, 2011;

Rindova et al., 2011; Pontikes, 2012). Atypical choices are made “strategically” in the sense that they are motivated by a willingness to innovate, improve, or establish a competitive advantage, just like Dick Fosbury, who developed his own atypical jumping style (now known as the “Fosbury Flop”) as a consequence of his poor results with the dominant high-jump technique of the time, the straddle one. Some studies emphasize that atypicality is often a strategic response to contextual factors, such as competition. For example, Miller and Chen (1996) show that competitive pressure increases the likelihood for incumbent firms to follow unconventional ‘competitive repertoires’ – i.e., the set of market-oriented actions used by individual firms to attract customers and cope with rivals. Other studies have observed that the geographical configuration of the market may also play a relevant role. Jensen and Kim (2014), for instance, show that the geographical location of opera companies affects the extent to which companies will pursue atypical repertoire. In a similar vein, Beck et al. (2019) show that physical proximity affects firms’ propensity to deviate from prototypical characteristics within industry clusters. The social interactions between market actors have also been shown to affect the ability of market participants to envision, create, and implement strategies that depart from typical industry practices (Sonenshein et al., 2017). For example, in their study of gourmet food trucks Sonenshein and colleagues (2017) document the social confrontations that arise when members of a strategic group deviate too much in their practices from the prototype. In a similar vein, Chae (2021) discusses how the economic and social fabric of consumer communities influence firms’ propensity to propose atypical offerings actively.

Identity drivers

The consequential logic that permeates the innovative and cognitive lenses leads to a strong focus on performance and thus on its strategic antecedents, shifting to a normative lens, instead, reveals ways in which atypicality may emerge out of self-expression motifs. Dean Alfange’s *An American Creed* aptly exemplifies this point: “I do not choose to be a common man. It is my right to be uncommon. I seek opportunity to develop whatever talents God gave me—not security.” (Congress, 1968). This quote subsumes one important fact about atypicality that surfaces most naturally within the normative lens: that in several cases such as the pursuit of atypical career paths (Kleinbaum, 2012), the development of atypical “Renaissance man” types of identity (Samdanis & Lee, 2021), or the emergence of unconventional identity movement (Rao et al., 2003), atypicality embodies a form of resistance to the dominant logic. Thus, rather than representing an intention to reap higher returns, it reflects, for example, individuals’ attempts to pursue multiple passions (Huyghe et al., 2016), give voice to one’s inner self (Campion et al., 2020), or nurture a new role-identity that emphasizes expanded autonomy (Rao et al., 2003). This innermost view on atypicality within and across organizational settings emphasizes, among other things, authenticity and self-expression (Sgourev & Althuizen, 2014; Caza et al., 2018), variety-seeking (Scarpi et al., 2019), and even personality elements (e.g., need for uniqueness, Simonson & Nowlis, 2000) as dispositional motifs for atypical behaviors.

Unintended drivers

The normative lens also reveals a variety of cases wherein atypicality surfaces in a non-premeditated manner, or as a result of serendipity (Kneeland et al., 2020). Both endogenous and exogenous forces may facilitate this process within and across organizations. Once such endogenous enabler is status, as low- and high-status actors have less to lose from lack of conformity than middle-status ones (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001; Durand & Kremp, 2016). Likewise, membership in high-status social groups and highly ranked organizations can boost the likelihood of engaging in atypical behavior. For instance, Koppman and Leahey (2019) show that scholars who are male and affiliated with top-tier universities have a greater hazard of using methods that diverge epistemologically from conventional methodology in sociology. Slack resources are another organizational-level factor that can stimulate

atypical behavior by granting more leeway to experiment with atypical strategies (Miller & Chen, 1996), or organizational practices (Wagner et al., 2019). Insofar as it plays a socializing role, experience too is an important enabler (Pentland et al., 2011), because it allows one to recognize and perceive “the way things are done” (Fligstein, 1996, p. 667). Thus, lacking experience in a specific domain may prevent the understanding of what is considered normal, leading to structured areas of ignorance of particular rules and norms (Becker, 1963) and, by implication, practices that defy those “ignored” rules. Similarly, the simultaneous presence of multiple, often divergent logics within a certain domain - e.g. artistic vs commercial orientation in the production of art - can generate intrinsic tensions that magnify the unintended emergence of atypical outcomes in organizational settings (Kim & Jensen, 2011;).

4.2 The consequences of atypicality

The focus on atypicality consequences is strong across all three lenses but the lenses differ significantly with respect to their specific emphasis. Studies grouped under the innovative lens are concerned primarily with understanding the role of atypicality in driving novelty; scholars using the cognitive lens pay great attention to the penalties related to lack of categorical compliance – i.e., illegitimacy, confusions; scholarship clustered within the normative lens is more mixed with several studies looking at the stigmatizing and/or marginalization that follows from various forms of atypicality and almost as many contributions concerned with positive changes resulting from atypicality such as societal transformation, competitive differentiation or career attainment. Shifting across the three lenses allows us to focus neatly on each of these potential outcomes, to which we now turn.

Atypicality penalties

Studies using an evaluation lens almost invariably agree that typicality infuses organizations, actors, and products with ambiguous identities, thereby preventing the audience from clearly understanding or interpreting them (Zuckerman, 1999; Leung & Sharkey, 2014; Hsu et al., 2009). Atypical objects spark confusion because they do not fit into the prevailing cognitive frameworks (Rosch & Mervis, 1975), and challenge an individual’s existing understanding of the world, thereby hindering the ability to use existing classification systems and prior knowledge as a reference point (Ruef & Patterson, 2009). Proponents of this lens underscore the centrality of comparisons in decision-making processes (Bowers, 2020) – e.g., comparing an individual or firm’s tangible outcomes, e.g., performance, or common attributes, against other alternatives or a benchmark. For instance, hiring decisions depend strongly on a comparison between applicants. Due to lack of a clear references, atypical objects poorly match the evaluation standards and are therefore challenging to evaluate, as it is harder to educate audience members about something they are not already familiar with (Hsu, 2006; Rosch & Mervis, 1975; E. Smith, 2011). As a consequence, audiences’ preferences are usually oriented toward less ambiguous objects (Zuckerman, 1999). Studies in cognition and psychology support this perspective demonstrating that, due to the incongruence with customers’ expectations, atypicality is usually processed with less fluency (Reber et al., 2004; Winkielman et al., 2006). Because of the processing burden, atypicality is harder to remember, learn, and understand, thereby eliciting more negative reactions compared to typicality. This perceptual mechanism leads atypical objects - be they organizations, individuals or products – to be penalized regardless of their underlying quality, skills, or actual performance (Leung & Sharkey, 2014). The puzzlement that atypical objects elicit may result not only from their incomprehensibility but also because they are subject to cognitive incommensurability, and so audiences may simply prefer to select alternative reference groups/benchmarks or downplay social comparison to facilitate evaluation. For instance, Bowers (2015) provides evidence that atypical funds are less subject to relative comparisons with other

category members, while Smith and Chae (2017) posit that the inherent ambiguity of atypicality grants evaluators greater freedom in selecting nonconforming reference groups in justifiable ways. This line of inquiry implies that this incommensurability can also offer benefits. For example, Parker and colleagues (2019) show that unconventional projects can create conceptual distance from existing gendered stereotypes and increase the likelihood to disrupt the pervasiveness of such biases. Younkin and Kashkooli (2020) instead show that due to the confusion stemming from cognitive atypical songs that blend extremely distant genres, e.g., folk and rap, audiences tend to shift to a more inclusive and abstract categorization that ultimately mitigates against a negative response. In a similar vein, Gouvard and Durand (2022) show that atypical organizations send unexpected and ambiguous cues that prompt audience members to shift between different evaluation modes that may change in their valuation of atypical organizations relative to typical ones. Finally, Mitsuhashi and Alcantara (2021), show that firms whose features (e.g., size and age) are distant from the prototypes of rivals can penetrate a new market without being recognized as competitors by incumbent players.

A second, related, negative consequence of atypicality foregrounded by cognitive lens studies, and, albeit to a lesser extent, normative lens ones, is that it invites illegitimacy. Departure from the central features of a category or normative principles violates codified and institutionalized expectations about desirable and appropriate qualities (Zuckerman et al., 2003; Hannan et al., 2019; Zuckerman, 1999; Phillips et al., 2013), thus atypical objects are often seen by audiences as illegitimate and therefore penalized. Typicality is crucial to the conferral of legitimacy (Stinchcombe, 1965; Suchman, 1995; Ruef & Scott, 1998; Kacperczyk & Younkin, 2017; Hsu et al., 2009; Suddaby et al., 2017), as “audiences organize their expectations and evaluations of how well candidates perform along the dimensions and the features that define a category” (Durand & Thornton, 2018, p. 638). Since atypical objects tend to reflect poor categorical fitness, audiences question their legitimacy as category members, developing concerns about their quality, commitment as well as their capabilities (Zuckerman et al., 2003; Ruef & Patterson, 2009; Phillips et al., 2013). As a result, for example, individuals who defy behavioral expectations are more likely to evoke negative emotions such as blame (Helweg-Larsen & lo Monaco, 2008), to be punished (Zuckerman, 1999), or to be considered uninterested in the group (Feldman, 1984).

Atypicality rewards

The innovative lens, with its emphasis on the mixing of otherwise disconnected elements, is the most explicit one in focusing attention on the exceptional outcomes, particularly in the form of radical novelty, creativity, or impact that atypicality may pave the way to (Schilling & Green, 2011; Uzzi et al., 2013; Ferguson & Carnabuci, 2017). Whether focusing on atypical links between familiar ideas (Schilling & Green, 2015), atypical movements across career boundaries (Kleinbaum, 2012), atypical scientific referencing behaviour (Wang et al., 2017) or atypical combinations of knowledge (Ferguson & Carnabuci, 2017; Wagner et al., 2019) this lens exposes the relationships between atypicality and “novel outcomes with exceptional variance in performance” (Schilling & Green, 2015, p. 1320). There are several exemplary studies in this strand. A burgeoning bibliometric scholarship indicates that articles displaying highly atypical citation patterns are more likely to be either a big hit or ignored altogether (Stephen et al., 2017; Foster et al. 2015; Uzzi et al. 2013). Similarly, songs with moderately atypical lyrics (Berger & Packard, 2018) or acoustic (Askin & Mauskapf, 2017) features -i.e., combination of features that tend to diverge from the central tendency of their genre - have greater chances to become popular hits. In other studies, participants who were primed with cues representing the concept of departure from a central behavioral tendency showed greater creative engagement than participants who were primed with conformity cues (Forster et al., 2005). Godowska et al. (2013), for instance, show that the activation of counter-stereotypical thinking propels the generation of creative ideas. Similarly, individuals’ with atypical career trajectories in organizations are more likely to become

intra-organizational brokers and stimulate the introduction of new ideas (Burt, 2004) because they create bridging ties that connect parts of the organization that are rarely linked (Kleinbaum, 2012).

An important insight that can be gleaned from the normative lens is that atypicality, under certain conditions, can be interpreted as a signal of underlying qualities. For instance, Pontikes (2012) shows how atypical organizations are more appealing to market makers, i.e., venture capitalists, that see their ambiguity as a potential for innovation and source of flexibility for future developments. Similarly, Sgourev and Althuizen (2014) demonstrate that atypical sets of artworks are associated with higher creativity, (which is the basis of an artist's impact) as long as the actor in question enjoys status privileges. Other studies in the same vein stress that deviating from behavioral standards, despite situational and normative constraints, may lead to the perception of social targets as being more powerful and assertive (Stamkou & Van Kleef, 2014). Similarly, Bellezza and colleagues (2014) showed that individuals who attended a black tie event wearing a red tie were ascribed higher status because they projected willfulness and volition. Atypicality's intrinsic signaling capacity is also sometimes backgrounded in cognitive lens studies where atypicality may signal potential opportunities which remain however hard to grasp for relevant audiences due their ambiguity. For instance, Paoella and Durand (2016) suggest that atypicality may signal the capacity to handle complex situations, and McDonald and Allen (2021) argue that the emergence of atypicality within a market space may signal an altered future state in the logic of that market, sowing the seeds of a new categorical order.

Somewhat related to this signaling orientation, the normative lens also surfaces some of the benefits that may stem from the attention-grabbing power of atypicality. Because deviating from normative order or representativeness expectations is likely to be surprising (Kunda & Oleson, 1997), atypicality can pique curiosity and trigger memorability. Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil and colleagues (2012), for instance, offer empirical evidence that quotes from movies are more memorable when they use more atypical word choices. This idea is also in line with schema theory (1982), due to atypicality's lack of schema congruence. Thus, Goodstein (1993) has shown that atypical ads induce more consumer interest, compared to typical ones, in terms of longer viewing time because they increase the motivation to scrutinize all the information available deeply – findings also supported by the study of Stafford & Stafford (2002) on atypical advertisements. Relatedly, Snurr (2017) demonstrates that customers appraise products with an atypical (vs. typical) design as more interesting, which leads to higher impressions of brand excitement. Lovelace et al. (2022) demonstrate that both nonconforming strategic actions and atypical CEO attributes are more likely to attract positive media attention, also increasing the CEO's likelihood of increasing her fame. Similarly, atypical offers can turn into a strategic assets to stand out from competitors, especially under conditions of fierce competition (Taeuscher et al., 2020). In the context of the cognitive lens, scholarship on categorical atypicality reaches similar conclusions as the core notion that the appeal of an offer is correlated with its ability to garner interest from a diverse set of audiences holds across industries (Hsu et al., 2009). Thus, when producers target and combine multiple genres, they can potentially speak to a broader set of audience (Kacperczyk & Younkin, 2017).

4.3 The boundary conditions

The plurality of outcomes has not gone unnoticed and several attempts at reconciling these inconsistencies have highlighted that the consequences of atypicality strongly depend on several boundary conditions. These conditions, which have been especially investigated by proponents of the cognitive lens, can be broadly grouped into four categories: audience based, context based, producer-based and agency based. We treat each of them separately.

Audience-based boundary conditions

Findings from an increasing number of studies within the categorization scholarship indicate that different audiences value different things; therefore, the acceptance of an atypical social object (e.g., idea, individual, organizational form, product/service offering, etc.) likely depends upon the particular theory of value embraced by audience members. Building on the intuition that the same entity may be perceived to have a different value depending on those who evaluate it, this line of research explores heterogeneity across different types of audiences, [e.g., peers and critics (Cattani et al., 2014), consumers and venture capitalists, (Pontikes, 2012), consumer and critics (Kim & Jensen, 2011)], suggesting various audience features such as expected goals (Bowers, 2020), broad preferences (Goldberg et al., 2016), cultural codes (Ubisch and Wang, 2023), expertise (Cancellieri et al., 2022), level of exposure (Landwehr et al., 2013), level of commitment (Smith & Chae, 2017), that may influence their response to atypical offers. Related research streams indicate that the taste for atypicality may vary across product categories: results from consumer research show that when audiences are primed for prestige, exclusiveness, or novelty, they are less likely to appreciate typicality and even to prefer atypicality (Ward & Loken, 1988). Similarly, scholars have shown that same audience group may interpret the same social object as more or less atypical on the basis of their particular orientation (Boulogne and Durand, 2021). In sum, this body of work suggests that the audiences' social structure may play a key role in rendering fields more or less aversive to atypicality (Cattani et al., 2014, 2017; Goldberg et al., 2016).

Context-based boundary conditions

Another line of inquiry within the cognitive lens points out that unfavorable responses to atypicality may be attenuated when the categorical system underpinning audience evaluation is emergent or in flux (Rao, Monin, & Durand, 2005; Ruef & Patterson, 2009; Wry & Lounsbury, 2013) or when new logics comes into existence (Lo & Kennedy, 2014). Additionally, in situations where output requirements are complex and the issues to be solved are non-recurrent, audiences are more likely to appreciate manifestations of atypicality (Paoella & Durand, 2016). Finally, when the domain allows for knowledge transfer between independent evaluators, when, for instance, information and experiences relative to unconventional practices, approaches, or characteristics are socialized and shared among evaluators, atypical propositions are more likely to be deemed as acceptable (Zuckerman, 2017). This is commonly the case in platform-mediated markets, where the technological and architectural components provided by platforms to limit negative externalities—that is, reviews, rankings, and recommendation systems—relieve typicality pressure.

Producer-based boundary conditions

Another consistent pattern emerging from the examined studies is that a variety of producer-level (i.e., individual or organizational) characteristics may affect perceptions of atypicality. For instance status (Phillips, Turco, & Zuckerman, 2013) or public displays of quality, e.g., the demonstration of positive performance and commitment (E. Smith, 2011; Zuckerman, 2017), have been shown to shield actors against the negative consequences of atypicality. Other examples include Barone & Jewell (2013) study that shows how a brand's innovative reputation can enable it to effectively employ strategies that deviate from market conventions, or the work by Beck et al. (2019) that illustrates how increased distance from the center of an industry cluster gives organizations more freedom to deviate from the prototype and suffer fewer of the negative consequences that result from such deviations. Similarly, Koppman and Leahey (2019) describe how sociologists adopting atypical methodological approaches in their field can successfully reduce career penalties by demonstrating competence in conventional methods and then distancing themselves from the method chosen. Other studies have posited the role of other identity features such as reputation (Sgourev & Althuizen, 2014) in insulating against evaluative discounts faced by atypical actors. The finding that famous chefs have the freedom to erode

established cuisine categories without losing audience favor (Rao et al., 2005) is illustrative of this line of scholarship. Interestingly, how producer-level features are combined – e.g., their order (B. K. Kim & Jensen, 2011; Leung, 2014; Wry et al., 2014), mutual fit (Paoella & Durand, 2016; Ruef & Patterson, 2009; Younkin & Kashkooli, 2020), or how they are presented to the audience (Johnson & Kovács, 2014; Leung & Sharkey, 2014), may also shape perceptions of atypicality

Agency-based boundary conditions

The three aforementioned boundary conditions illustrate a variety of factors shaping evaluative responses to atypicality, yet explanations based on such factors are limited in their ability to offer prescriptive guidance to actors who do not enjoy reputational/status advantages or who must simply hope for demand characterized by heterogeneous evaluative orientations; exogenous conditions of categorical flux; or, more simply, audiences' orientation. Trying to address this limitation, recently some scholars have started to shed light on how organizational actors can strategically mobilize cultural elements to shape audience members' responses to atypicality (Cutolo & Ferriani, 2023; Smith & Chae, 2016; Vossen & Ihl, 2020; Zhao, Ishihara, & Lounsbury, 2013; Krzeminska et al., 2021). For instance, Caza et al., (2018) describe how individuals who pursue atypical careers engage in impression-management practices to gain social validation; Smith and Chae (2016) show that atypical organizations choose evocative names to signal membership in a legitimate category and this practice reduces the ambiguity in the eyes of evaluators; Noseworthy and colleagues (2018) discuss how marketers can help consumers make sense of atypical products features by strategically incorporating semantically related features that enable mental association; Kannan-Narasimhan (2014) demonstrate that corporate innovators can successfully marshal resources using unconventional actions (practices beyond the organization's dominant understandings) by hiding what is unacceptable within the organization and highlighting what is culturally acceptable. Finally, Cutolo and Ferriani (2023) describe how atypical crafters can leverage their narrative's features to provide their target audiences with the means to more easily understand their atypical propositions' meaning and value, thereby increasing their market appeal.

Taken together, by combining the three lenses into an integrative framework, our review extends beyond synthesis to suggest ways in which scholars interested in organizational atypicality could join forces to cultivate a shared theoretical conversation as opposed to making siloed contributions. It also points to a variety of ways in which research on atypicality could progress and spark new avenues of inquiry, to which we now turn.

AN AGENDA FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

To guide future organizational and managerial research on atypicality, we discuss here what we view as five key implications that come out of the review and the questions they raise. These center around the nature of atypicality, issues related to the process underlying its manifestation, its measurement, the conditions shaping its expression, and the evolution of atypicality over time.

The Nature of Atypicality

Our conceptual understanding of the world reflects the world's inherent structure and how such structure impresses itself onto our mind, but it is also a result of how we subjectively interpret it based on our goals and idiosyncratic contextual constraints. This dual way of encoding information is always at play in our efforts to organize concepts, shaping our judgments of representativeness – i.e., what and what is not typical of something (Dieciuc & Folstein, 2019). Correspondingly, it is apparent from our review that atypicality scholars employ in their conceptualizations two distinct, yet often intertwined, representations of atypicality. One is descriptive in nature, because it (often implicitly) rests on the idea that individuals use the statistical properties of their environments, e.g., the particular

distribution of specific variables/features or probabilistic considerations about the range of possible alternatives, to acquire information about central tendencies and form expectations of representativeness (Bear & Knobe, 2017). Any observed deviation from this distribution thus indicates an atypical observation. Much work on prototype theory has shown that statistical factors affect these expectations in one way or another (Rosch & Mervis, 1975). For example, a white penguin with a black underbelly would be considered atypical in a world populated by black penguins with white underbelly. According to this logic, job applicants with a high degree of expertise in a specific skill set may be considered atypical compared to other applicants who have, on average, only basic knowledge in that area (Wechtler et al., 2022). Similarly, a woman seeking employment in a male-dominated job is atypical just because her gender is demographically unlikely to be the norm in that context (Leung & Koppman, 2018; Yu & Kuo, 2021). Likewise, the most representative articles (hence the least atypical) for each topic presented in Table 1 are determined based on statistical considerations of probability distributions. The second way of representing atypicality has a prescriptive, rather than descriptive, nature. It builds upon experiential considerations, and it incorporates normative notions of social, behavioral, and cultural ideals (Barsalou, 1985). For example, when organizations adopt practices that conflict with widespread institutional beliefs and norms (Durand & Jourdan, 2012; Jung & Mun, 2017), or employees who do not adhere to widely diffused and accepted practices, e.g., wearing red sneakers in formal professional settings (Bellezza et al., 2014) are atypical. Although conceptually different, the descriptive and prescriptive ways of understanding (a)typicality appear deeply intertwined: the statistical interpretation can inform the normative one, and vice versa, as norms and expectations often shape the way social and economic contexts are organized, and often individuals tend to take into account both descriptive and prescriptive considerations when making (a)typicality judgments (Bear & Knobe, 2017).

This intertwining emerges perhaps most vividly in Barsalou's (1985) seminal study, where participants rated different category exemplars on a number of descriptive dimensions, such as central tendency (how similar they are to an average member of that category) or frequency of instantiation, as well as prescriptive ones (how well the exemplar object fulfilled some goal that was assigned to them). The study demonstrates that both these dimensions – i.e., the statistical norm and the normative desirability – predict atypicality ratings of the object, suggesting that people's representation of what is (a)typical may not be purely statistical or purely moral but rather a hybrid of the two. Yet, most organizational scholarship we have reviewed is surprisingly reticent on this duality. Scholars frequently either implicitly invoke different representations of atypicality at once or a representation at the neglect of others. Such ambiguity not only creates conceptual confusion and limits the ability to communicate among scholars (Suddaby, 2010) but also restraints the possibility of precise theorizing about relationships between atypicality and other constructs (Bacharach, 1989).

For instance, this distinction suggests the possibility that atypicality and typicality may coexist as people judge them on different dimensions. This observation points to several important questions that organizational scholars could ask themselves when developing lines of further inquiry about the nature of atypicality. What factors influence people's representations of atypicality? How and why do people switch from one representation to another? Do different representations lead to different orientations towards rewarding/penalizing organizational manifestations of atypicality? Investigating the cognitive processes, social influences, and contextual factors that shape people's perceptions of atypicality can provide deeper insights into how atypicality is understood and evaluated in various domains. Moving forward, we encourage scholars studying organizational atypicality to consider the underlying representational assumptions underlying their research design with respect to both theorizing and empirical study.

The Manifestation of Atypicality

Across the studies reviewed, we observed that atypicality manifests in two distinct and potentially orthogonal ways. In its first manifestation, which we label inconsistency-based, atypicality occurs via the manipulation of focal characteristics. It is associated with having fewer (more) of the features that define the expectations of representative (categorical, normative, or probability-based), so that objects become incomparable and atypical with respect to other related objects in the reference group (Miller & Chen, 1996; B. K. Kim & Jensen, 2011; Pentland et al., 2011; Bowers, 2015; Smith & Chae, 2017; Beck et al., 2019). Examples of this form of atypicality include organizations that avoid actions frequently used by rivals in the same field or industry (Miller & Chen, 1996; Barone et al., 2013; Geletkanycz & Hambrick, 1997), or do not conform to features and standard references shared by their peers (Beck et al., 2019; Durand & Kremp, 2016; Sgourev & Althuizen, 2014; Smith & Chae, 2016); individuals whose choices violate expected norms in a professional context (Bellezza et al., 2014), actors who defy conventional and dominant paradigms (Rao et al., 2003; Khaire & Hall, 2016), or individuals with career trajectories that are atypical in their organization (Kleinbaum, 2012); and products whose features deviate from those commonly encountered in other products of the same category⁴ (Garus & Alkias, 2020).

The second manifestation of atypicality, which we label blending-based, occurs when a deviation from the expectations of representativeness results from the presence of features, characteristics, or practices that belong to other domains (social, cultural, or categorical). The underlying idea is that copying or borrowing elements from other contrasting domains results in a combination of features that would not normally be expected to go together, thereby making objects not typical members of any of the spaces blended (Kovács & Hannan, 2010; Pontikes & Hannan, 2014). This is the case of organizations claiming multiple identities in press releases (Pontikes, 2012) or recombining together existing market categories to craft unconventional market positions (Desantola et al., 2022), restaurants serving a concoction of cuisines (Johnson & Kovács, 2014; Kovács & Hannan, 2010), wineries spanning different styles (Negro et al., 2010; Negro & Leung, 2013), individuals who compile previous experiences from disparate job categories (Leung, 2014); projects that combine mainstream and niche ideas (Kan et al., 2022), products assigned by market intermediaries to multiple genres and segments (Hsu, 2006; Goldberg et al., 2016), or papers connecting concepts previously viewed as separated or irrelevant (Hofstra et al., 2020).

The two manifestations of atypicality are often conflated in prior works, or the authors do not elaborate theoretically on their distinction⁵. Both these instantiations of atypicality underscore deviation from contextualized expectations of what is representative in this setting. Yet, the processes leading to their manifestation are profoundly different, raising important questions about how such differences should inform our understanding of atypicality and its consequences. When and under what conditions is atypicality more likely to manifest as inconsistency or blending? How is the manifestation of atypicality related to its representation? Is atypicality as blending more or less likely

⁴ While inconsistency-based atypicality in some cases is conceived as a form of extreme differentiation (Durand & Kremp, 2016) or distinctiveness (de Vaan et al., 2015; Haans, 2019), it is important to note that a differentiation strategy does not necessarily imply inconsistency. Indeed, some form of differentiation may occur (and usually it always does) quite naturally also among those that are not atypical (Hannan et al., 2007; Pontikes & Hannan, 2014; Kovács & Hannan, 2015). For instance, as pointed out by Zuckerman (2017), typical members of a category "must at least be nominally differentiated, in the sense that each offering must have characteristics by which it is distinguished from other members of the category" (p. 34). In other words, the process through which actors seek to differentiate themselves from other actors does not need to cause a departure from the central features of a domain.

⁵ For instance, in their study of restaurants, Johnson and Kovács (2014) differentiate analytically between the two dimensions, operationalizing incongruity-based atypicality mapping the feature space (how items on the menu deviate from prototypical offering), and blending-based atypicality from the label space (how the restaurants mix different cuisine categories). However, they do not elaborate theoretically on this distinction. Similarly, in defining the rules of *nouvelle cuisine*, Rao, Monin, and Durand (2005) argue that this (originally) atypical culinary code relied on the rules of transgression – using unconventional techniques, and acclimatization – importing of exotic foreign cuisine techniques and ingredients, but they do not map out different mechanisms, consequences, or when they are most likely to be at play.

to elicit an aversive reaction than atypicality as inconsistency? We also encourage future research to investigate more directly why and how inconsistency and blending relate to each other. Recent evidence would seem to indicate that inconsistency may operate independently from blending – as objects that do not borrow elements from different domains can still present an atypical re-configuration of features - and vice versa (Gouvard et al., 2023). Scholars would do well to consider the interplay of these two processes to offer greater insights into the multidimensional nature of atypicality.

The Measurement of Atypicality

The multidimensional nature of atypicality naturally points to the importance of discussing the methodological issues involved in its measurement. Determining how to measure atypicality effectively is a complex task, and our multi-lens approach reveals that researchers have adopted multiple approaches to address this issue. Different studies measure atypicality in terms of an object's positioning within a categorical /conceptual space - for instance, measuring the number of categories spanned and the conceptual distance between them (Goldberg et al., 2016; Cutolo & Ferriani, 2023) or how their features deviate from the central tendency (Gouvard et al., 2023). In other cases, instead, the researchers utilized more probabilistic approaches like the z-score (Uzzi et al., 2013) or considerations about base-rate frequency to evaluate the representativeness of instances (Kang et al., 2021). This diversity in measurement approaches reflects the multifaceted nature of atypicality, yet it exhorts scholars to carefully reflect on the underlying assumptions and implications of each approach and select the appropriate measurement strategy based on the specific research question, context, and dimensions of atypicality one aims to capture.

For instance, measuring atypicality as a deviation from central tendency is a more suitable approach to evaluate how the properties of an object fit within its context, while a probabilistic approach that captures the likelihood of particular instances based on previous occurrences is more focused on evaluating the consequences (or the antecedents) of specific configurations of features over others. To further illustrate how variation in analytical approaches can influence our understanding of atypicality in organizational and market settings, consider Askin & Mauskapt's (2017) analysis of what makes cultural products popular hits. In their work, they measure atypicality as the distance from prototypical musical features of a genre and unravel an inverted U-shaped relationship between a song's atypicality and its Billboard Hot 100 charts performance. However, they also measure atypicality as the combination of multiple genres, which instead results in a positive effect on a song's performance in the top 100 charts. Measuring atypicality correctly is essential to develop a clear understanding of atypicality and its contrasting effects. Recent developments in NLP techniques based on deep learning and transformer models seem to hold great promise in producing typicality measures that parallel human judgments (Le Mens et al., 2023), yet more research is needed to validate the applicability of these tools across different empirical domains. In this regard, we especially encourage future research to investigate more systematically how different analytical approaches influence current theories and frameworks about atypicality, since, as we have shown, methodological considerations can impact the extent to which atypicality is correctly captured and incorporated in research and decision-making processes.

The Expression of Atypicality

We still know relatively little about the processes underlying atypical actors' efforts at navigating the tension between compliance and deviation, and this issue is particularly salient when atypicality operates within organizational boundaries. For instance, cultivating an atypical identity usually entails the socio-psychological burden of organizational isolation or a sense of estrangement from dominant social values. To the point, Caza et al. (2018) show how atypical workers tend to distance themselves

from others due to the misconceptions surrounding their professional choices, while Popielarz and McPherson (1995) demonstrate that atypical group members are marginalized because of homophilous pressures toward group homogeneity. Similarly, Bakker and McMullen (2022) discuss how often unconventional entrepreneurs live the subjective experience of being marginalized from society. Shedding light on how atypical actors overcome these difficulties, for instance, by fostering communities to feel more secure in pursuing their atypical paths, will provide a deeper understanding of the conditions that support the successful development of atypical identities or practices within or between organizations.

This also begs the question of whether and how organizational settings can be made more open and inclusive. Often atypical actors must overcome barriers to emancipation and fear of stigmatization caused by the adherence to norms that marginalize them and the subjective failure to enforce the right they have. Sometimes the fear of discrimination can be so intense that it can encourage alignment to group norms as well as enforcement of them by individuals seeking to preemptively emphasize other's diversity to prevent their potential social isolation (Bakker and McMullen 2022). Can formal institutions be actively shaped such that they support organizational settings to be more welcoming of atypical individuals? Tackling this and related questions could produce exciting insights for the organizational design of inclusion in the workplace and respond to broader calls for neurodiversity in organizations on the ground that the atypical talents that tend to accompany neurodiverse people can amount to a competitive advantage (Austin & Pisano, 2017; Russo et al., 2023). Another interesting, related avenue for future research is examining how people's responses to atypicality vary across domains (Blijlevens et al., 2012). Some domains have a more restricted range of acceptable behaviors and leave little room for individual expression (e.g., the financial world). In contrast, others are more ambiguously structured and place fewer external constraints on individuals (e.g., the art world). Domains of higher situational constraint (Price and Bouffard, 1974) may be less tolerant of atypicality expressions than domains of lower situational constraint. So, for instance, a given leader's behavior that is atypical and unexpected by followers in one organization may be usual fare in another organization operating in a different domain. How do various situational constraints affect the expression of atypicality? How do the situational constraints of a given domain affect how organizational atypicality emerges and takes root?

More broadly, there seem to be ample research opportunities to theorize what atypical organizational actors may do to overcome resistance in appealing to critical audiences. Take the case of innovation and entrepreneurship scholarship. Within the new venture context, research highlights the environmental pressures faced by highly innovative pioneering ventures that combine either existing market categories and recombine them to craft new market positions or even industries (Schumpeter 1934, Nelson & Winter 1982). These ventures are often atypical by nature as disruption is highly unlikely for agents who are deeply embedded in conventional practices (DeSantonal et al., 2022; Mitshuashi & Alcantara, 2022), and enlisting influential field members is crucial for them to overcome macro-level homogenizing pressures (Cattani et al., 2017). So how can these kinds of agents manoeuvre into positions that increase their likelihood of success? What kind of audiences are more receptive to claims of atypicality? What if the evaluative principles of these audiences are themselves atypical? Consider the case of NBA player Dennis Rodman as depicted in the recent ESPN documentary "The Last Dance," which chronicles the 1997-98 Chicago Bulls season. With his larger-than-life personality and bizarre off-court antics, Rodman is considered one of the most unorthodox NBA players ever joining the league. While many NBA teams passed on him because of his eccentric if unpredictable behavior, Chicago Bulls' head coach Phil Jackson was able to understand his persona and grow him into the elite player he became. Phil Jackson's atypicality, as confirmed by the coach himself as well as his biographers, was crucial in helping him lay the ground for handling Rodman. Often described as a freethinking hippie if not an outsider to the league, Jackson was very different

from the typical NBA player. Are atypical audiences more likely to understand, appreciate, and cultivate atypicality by virtue of cognitive, e.g., a more straightforward understanding of how atypical ideas are formulated (Schilling & Green, 2011), psychological, e.g., similarity bias (Franke et al., 2006), or sociological, e.g., homology (Bourdieu, 1979; Cattani et al., 2014), mechanisms?

The Evolution of Atypicality

Atypicality judgments seem to imply some level of stability. Indeed, except for some studies grouped within the normative lens, the bulk of articles we reviewed either do not take a clear stance about the meaning and nature of atypicality over time or suggest that individuals implicitly expect atypicality to remain constant. However, as we sought to stress through our proposed definition, there exists some degree of tension about the contextual nature of the concept due to its inherently relative nature -i.e., the atypicality of an object is determined largely by perceptions of representativeness that are either statistically - i.e., informed by what is average in a population - or normatively - i.e., informed by what is prescriptively ideal – driven. Consequently, attributions of atypicality might change over time even if an entity itself remains unchanged. The fashion industry is a particularly good example to illustrate this point. Fashion is intrinsically cyclical, and different trends, i.e., the typical stylistic elements translated into the designs for every collection (Godart & Galunic, 2019), are reintroduced at pointed moments in history.

For this reason, the same piece of a collection considered atypical in a specific season may become typical in a few years. This is also true when many members of a particular category alter their characteristics, for instance, in presence of emulation dynamics (Rao et al., 2005), or industry logics (McDonald & Allen, 2021; Vergne, 2012), creating opportunities for changing how people conceive the category. This means a focal category member who was once typical of that category might become atypical. For example, a Greek musician who still plays the classic style three-courses (thricordo) bouzouki that she learned many decades ago might have been a highly typical member of the Rebetiko music when she entered the music scene, but very atypical today in a world dominated by the four-courses variant. Just as typical entities may become atypical over time, it may also be possible for the atypical to become typical. Nanotechnology, for instance, began as a weird science that combined many different disciplines. Still, as the number of scientists interested in nanotechnology applications grew, the perception that they were working in a peculiar domain disappeared (Lo and Kennedy, 2015). More generally, changes in feature values by some members can affect categorization for others.

In summary, despite lay expectations that atypicality judgments ought to be relatively stable over time, such attribution may come and go even if the entity remains relatively unchanged. In a manner resembling evolutionary perspectives, our review emphasizes that atypicality is not simply a static designation that reflects pre-existing conditions but rather an established attribution that evolves repeatedly and dynamically through interactions with the context (Gouvard et al., 2023). While emphasizing the key role of contextual dynamics, our review also recognizes the relevance of agency in the evolution of atypicality, as individuals actively engage in behaviors and enact roles that lead to the emergence of atypical outcomes (Pentland et al., 2011), or spearhead efforts at recasting attributions of atypicality in a different light (Alter, 2017). Research on tempered radicals (Meyerson & Scully, 1995; Quinn & Meyerson, 2008), for example, shows that atypical orientations within an organization can be associated with a strong desire to buck the system and break away from the conventions of the prevailing groups or logic. This drive, in turn, can lead to the gradual erosion of the taken-for-granted membership criteria and norms of behavior. Indeed, as unconventional yet recognized members of a given organizational domain (Alter, 2017), atypical actors may have more latitude to instigate change in existing frames and logics than institutionalized insiders or disembedded outsiders (Cattani et al., 2017).

Understanding that what is considered "atypical" on any one parameter, as well as the parameters themselves, may shift over time raises fascinating research questions surrounding the dynamics of organizational atypicality. This process is still vastly understudied. Through what normalization process do atypical organizational actors become more accepted over time? How and why perceptions of atypicality may wax and wane? What is the relationship between structure, agency, and atypicality over time? Even if scholars can only examine atypicality at a single point in time, conclusions drawn would be enriched by considering the shifting socio-cultural contexts in which individuals make atypicality attributions; we encourage research to devote more attention to these possibilities.

Conclusion

Atypicality in organizational and market settings holds the potential for novelty and sociocultural change. Yet, it also invites skepticism and encourages rejection because people prefer objects/agents/behaviours that adhere to expectations and predictable stimuli. While research to reconcile this inconsistency has accumulated rapidly, the literature has remained unstructured and scattered across several disciplines. In this paper, we have taken stock, reviewed, and systematized this substantial body of work by developing a multi-lens integrative framework. Looking back, this framework's objective is to provide clarity and structure to understand the sources, consequences, and enabling conditions of atypicality in organizational and market settings. Looking forward, we hope to equip scholars with analytical tools to better inform their research inquiries, facilitate a broader exchange of ideas, and spark new scholarship on open questions that remain within each lens.

Overall, by viewing organizational atypicality through the simultaneous or selective use of the cognitive, normative, and innovative lens, we can encourage scholars to re-examine current assumptions around what atypicality means and does for and to organizational actors. At a time of "new normal" (Bridoux et al., 2021) in which the challenges to the normalizing society evoked by Foucault (1979) appear to have never been greater, sustained scholarship on the meaning, sources, and consequences of atypicality within and across organizations and markets should continue to spark valuable theoretical and practical insight. We hope this review motivates and inspires scholars to commit fresh energy to this fascinating intellectual enterprise.

References

- Abdollahpouri, H., Mansoury, M., Burke, R., & Mobasher, B. (2019). The unfairness of popularity bias in recommendation. *ArXiv Preprint ArXiv:1907.13286*.
- Aguinis, H., & Glavas, A. (2012). What We Know and Don't Know About Corporate Social Responsibility: A Review and Research Agenda. *Journal of Management*, 38(4), 932–968. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206311436079>
- Askin, N., & Mauskopf, M. (2017). What Makes Popular Culture Popular? Product Features and Optimal Differentiation in Music. *American Sociological Review*, 82(5), 910–944. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122417728662>
- Austin, R. D., & Pisano, G. P. (n.d.). *Neurodiversity as a Competitive Advantage*.
- Bacharach, S. B. (1989). Organizational Theories: Some Criteria for Evaluation. *The Academy of Management Review*, 14(4), 496. <https://doi.org/10.2307/258555>
- Bakker, R. M., & McMullen, J. S. (2023). Inclusive entrepreneurship: A call for a shared theoretical conversation about unconventional entrepreneurs. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 38(1), 106268. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2022.106268>
- Barley, S. R., Bechky, B. A., & Milliken, F. J. (2017). The Changing Nature of Work: Careers, Identities, and Work Lives in the 21st Century. *Academy of Management Discoveries*, 3(2), 111–115. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amd.2017.0034>
- Barone, M. J., & Jewell, R. D. (2013). The Innovator's License: A Latitude to Deviate from Category Norms. *Journal of Marketing*, 77(1), 120–134. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.10.0145>
- Barsalou, L. W. (1985). Ideals, central tendency, and frequency of instantiation as determinants of graded structure in categories. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 11(4), 629.
- Beck, N., Swaminathan, A., Wade, J. B., & Wezel, F. C. (2019). Industry Clusters and Organizational Prototypes: Evidence From the Franconian Brewing Industry. *Journal of Management*, 45(7), 2978–3008. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206318773411>
- Becker, H. S. (1963). *Outsiders: Studies in the sociology of deviance*. Free Press.
- Bellezza, S., Gino, F., & Keinan, A. (2014). The Red Sneakers Effect: Inferring Status and Competence from Signals of Nonconformity. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 41(1), 35–54. <https://doi.org/10.1086/674870>
- Berger, J., & Packard, G. (2018). Are Atypical Things More Popular? *Psychological Science*, 29(7), 1178–1184. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797618759465>
- Blijlevens, J., Gemser, G., Mugge, R., 2012. The Importance of Being 'Well-Placed': The Influence of Context on Perceived Typicality and Aesthetic Appraisal of Product Appearance, *Acta Psychologica*, 139 (1), pp. 178-186
- Boulongne, R., & Durand, R. (2021). Evaluating Ambiguous Offerings. *Organization Science*, 32(2), 257–272. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2020.1402>
- Bourdieu, P. (1979). Symbolic Power. *Critique of Anthropology*, 4(13–14), 77–85. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308275X7900401307>
- Bowers, A. (2015). Relative Comparison and Category Membership: The Case of Equity Analysts. *Organization Science*, 26(2), 571–583. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2014.0908>
- Bowers, A. (2020). Balanced but not fair: Strategic balancing, rating allocations, and third-party intermediaries. *Strategic Organization*, 18(3), 427–447. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476127019828359>
- Bridoux, F., Bundy, J., Gond, J., Haack, P., Petriglieri, J., Stephens, J.P., & Sutcliffe, K., 2021. The new normal: Positive organizational impact in an age of disruption. In Call for Papers: Academy of Management Review Special Topic Forum.

- Brixy, U., Brunow, S., & D'Ambrosio, A. (2020). The unlikely encounter: Is ethnic diversity in start-ups associated with innovation? *Research Policy*, 49(4), 103950. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2020.103950>
- Bu, J., Zhao, E. Y., Li, K. J., & Li, J. M. (2022). Multilevel optimal distinctiveness: Examining the impact of within- and between-organization distinctiveness of product design on market performance. *Strategic Management Journal*, smj.3377. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.3377>
- Buhr, H., Funk, R. J., & Owen-Smith, J. (2021). The authenticity premium: Balancing conformity and innovation in high technology industries. *Research Policy*, 50(1), 104085. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2020.104085>
- Campion, E. D., Caza, B. B., & Moss, S. E. (2020). Multiple Jobholding: An Integrative Systematic Review and Future Research Agenda. *Journal of Management*, 46(1), 165–191. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206319882756>
- Cattani, G., Ferriani, S., & Allison, P. D. (2014). Insiders, Outsiders, and the Struggle for Consecration in Cultural Fields: A Core-Periphery Perspective. *American Sociological Review*, 79(2), 258–281. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122414520960>
- Cattani, G., Ferriani, S., & Lanza, A. (2017). Deconstructing the Outsider Puzzle: The Legitimation Journey of Novelty. *Organization Science*, 28(6), 965–992. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2017.1161>
- Caza, B. B., Main, K., & Stuart-Edwards, A. (2022). Jack of All Trades, Master of None? Exploring Factors That Influence Responses to White-Collar Professionals with Multiple Jobs. *Academy of Management Discoveries*, 8(4), 585–607. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amd.2020.0109>
- Caza, B. B., Moss, S., & Vough, H. (2018). From Synchronizing to Harmonizing: The Process of Authenticating Multiple Work Identities. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 63(4), 703–745. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839217733972>
- Chae, H. (2022). Income or education? COMMUNITY-LEVEL antecedents of firms' CATEGORY-SPANNING activities. *Strategic Management Journal*, 43(1), 93–129. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.3328>
- Congress, U. S. (1968). *Congressional record: Proceedings and debates of the 90th congress* (114(8)).
- Csaszar, F. A., & Levinthal, D. A. (2016). Mental representation and the discovery of new strategies: Mental Representation and the Discovery of New Strategies. *Strategic Management Journal*, 37(10), 2031–2049. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.2440>
- Cudennec, A., & Durand, R. (2022). Valuing Spanners: Why Category Nesting and Expertise Matter. *Academy of Management Journal*, amj.2020.0042. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2020.0042>
- Cutolo, D., & Ferriani, S. (2023). Now It Makes More Sense: How Narratives Can Help Atypical Actors Increase Market Appeal. *Journal of Management*, 014920632311516.
- Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil, C., Cheng, J., Kleinberg, J., & Lee, L. (2012). *You had me at hello: How phrasing affects memorability*. Proceedings of the ACL.
- de Vaan, M., Vedres, B., & Stark, D. (2015). Game Changer: The Topology of Creativity. *American Journal of Sociology*, 120(4), 1144–1194. <https://doi.org/10.1086/681213>
- DeSantola, A., Gulati, R., & Zhelyazkov, P. I. (2023). External Interfaces or Internal Processes? Market Positioning and Divergent Professionalization Paths in Young Ventures. *Organization Science*, 34(1), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2021.1561>
- DiMaggio, P., Nag, M., & Blei, D. (2013). Exploiting affinities between topic modeling and the sociological perspective on culture: Application to newspaper coverage of US government arts funding. *Poetics*, 41(6), 570–606.
- Durand, R., & Jourdan, J. (2012). Jules or Jim: Alternative Conformity to Minority Logics. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(6), 1295–1315. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2011.0345>

- Durand, R., & Khaire, M. (2017). Where Do Market Categories Come From and How? Distinguishing Category Creation From Category Emergence. *Journal of Management*, 43(1), 87–110. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206316669812>
- Durand, R., & Kremp, P.-A. (2016). Classical Deviation: Organizational and Individual Status as Antecedents of Conformity. *Academy of Management Journal*, 59(1), 65–89. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2013.0767>
- Durand, R., & Thornton, P. H. (2018). Categorizing Institutional Logics, Institutionalizing Categories: A Review of Two Literatures. *Academy of Management Annals*, 12(2), 631–658. <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2016.0089>
- Elsbach, K. D., & Knippenberg, D. (2020). Creating High-Impact Literature Reviews: An Argument for ‘Integrative Reviews.’ *Journal of Management Studies*, 57(6), 1277–1289. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12581>
- Espeland, W. N., & Sauder, M. (2007). Rankings and reactivity: How public measures recreate social worlds. *American journal of sociology*, 113(1), 1–40.
- Fleming, L. (2001). Recombinant Uncertainty in Technological Search. *Management Science*, 47(1), 117–132. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.47.1.117.10671>
- Fontana, M., Iori, M., Montobbio, F., & Sinatra, R. (2020). New and atypical combinations: An assessment of novelty and interdisciplinarity. *Research Policy*, 49(7), 104063. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2020.104063>
- Foss, N. J. (2021). The Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Firms’ Organizational Designs. *Journal of Management Studies*, 58(1), 270–274. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12643>
- Foucault, M. (1979). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Penguin.
- Franke, N., Gruber, M., Harhoff, D., & Henkel, J. (2006). What you are is what you like—Similarity biases in venture capitalists’ evaluations of start-up teams. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 21(6), 802–826. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2005.07.001>
- Garaus, M., & Halkias, G. (2020). One color fits all: Product category color norms and (a)typical package colors. *Review of Managerial Science*, 14(5), 1077–1099. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11846-018-0325-9>
- Garud, R., Dunbar, R. L. M., & Bartel, C. A. (2011). Dealing with Unusual Experiences: A Narrative Perspective on Organizational Learning. *Organization Science*, 22(3), 587–601. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1100.0536>
- Geletkanycz, M. A., & Hambrick, D. C. (1997). The External Ties of Top Executives: Implications for Strategic Choice and Performance. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 42(4), 654. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2393653>
- Goldberg, A., Hannan, M. T., & Kovács, B. (2016). What Does It Mean to Span Cultural Boundaries? Variety and Atypicality in Cultural Consumption. *American Sociological Review*, 81(2), 215–241. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122416632787>
- Goodstein, R. C. (1993). Category-Based Applications and Extensions in Advertising: Motivating More Extensive Ad Processing. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20(1), 87. <https://doi.org/10.1086/209335>
- Gouvard, P., & Durand, R. (2022). To Be or Not To Be (Typical): Evaluation-Mode Heterogeneity and its Consequences for Organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, amr.2020.0314. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2020.0314>
- Gouvard, P., Goldberg, A., & Srivastava, S. B. (2023). Doing Organizational Identity: Earnings Surprises and the Performative Atypicality Premium. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 00018392231180872. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00018392231180872>

- Haans, R. F. J. (2019). What's the value of being different when everyone is? The effects of distinctiveness on performance in homogeneous versus heterogeneous categories. *Strategic Management Journal*, 40(1), 3–27. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.2978>
- Hahl, O., & Ha, J. (2020). Committed Diversification: Why Authenticity Insulates Against Penalties for Diversification. *Organization Science*, 31(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2019.1317>
- Hannigan, T. R., Haans, R. F., Vakili, K., Tchalian, H., Glaser, V. L., Wang, M. S., ... & Jennings, P. D. (2019). Topic modeling in management research: Rendering new theory from textual data. *Academy of Management Annals*, 13(2), 586–632.
- Hampton, J. A. (2007). Typicality, Graded Membership, and Vagueness. *Cognitive Science*, 31(3), 355–384. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15326900701326402>
- Hannan, M. T. (2010). Partiality of Memberships in Categories and Audiences. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 36(1), 159–181. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-021610-092336>
- Hannan, M. T., Le Mens, G., Hsu, G., Kovács, B., Negro, G., Pólos, L., Pontikes, E. G., & Sharkey, A. J. (2019). *Concepts and Categories: Foundations for Sociological and Cultural Analysis*. Columbia University Press. <https://doi.org/10.7312/hann19272>
- Hannan, M. T., Pólos, L., & Carroll, G. (2007). *Logics of organization theory: Audiences, codes, and ecologies*. Princeton University Press.
- He, Z., Lei, Z., & Wang, D. (2018). Modeling citation dynamics of “atypical” articles. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 69(9), 1148–1160. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.24041>
- Hofstra, B., Kulkarni, V. V., Munoz-Najar Galvez, S., He, B., Jurafsky, D., & McFarland, D. A. (2020). The Diversity–Innovation Paradox in Science. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 117(17), 9284–9291. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1915378117>
- Hsu, G. (2006). Jacks of All Trades and Masters of None: Audiences' Reactions to Spanning Genres in Feature Film Production. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 51(3), 420–450. <https://doi.org/10.2189/asqu.51.3.420>
- Hsu, G., Hannan, M. T., & Koçak, Ö. (2009). Multiple Category Memberships in Markets: An Integrative Theory and Two Empirical Tests. *American Sociological Review*, 74(1), 150–169. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240907400108>
- Huyghe, A., Knockaert, M., & Obschonka, M. (2016). Unraveling the “passion orchestra” in academia. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 31(3), 344–364. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2016.03.002>
- Johnson, R., & Kovács, B. (2014). Contrasting alternative explanations for the consequences of category spanning: A study of restaurant reviews and menus in San Francisco. *Strategic Organization*, 12(1), 7–37. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476127013502465>
- Jones, C., Svejenova, S., Pedersen, J. S., & Townley, B. (2016). Misfits, Mavericks and Mainstreams: Drivers of Innovation in the Creative Industries. *Organization Studies*, 37(6), 751–768. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840616647671>
- Jordan, R., Fitzsimmons, T. W., & Callan, V. J. (2022). Positively Deviant: New Evidence for the Beneficial Capital of Maverickism to Organizations. *Group & Organization Management*, 105960112211022. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10596011221102297>
- Jung, J., & Mun, E. (2017). Does Diffusion Make an Institutionally Contested Practice Legitimate? Shareholder Responses to Downsizing in Japan, 1973–2005. *Organization Studies*, 38(10), 1347–1372. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840616677631>
- Kacperczyk, A., & Younkin, P. (2017). The Paradox of Breadth: The Tension between Experience and Legitimacy in the Transition to Entrepreneurship. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 62(4), 731–764. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839217700352>

- Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (1972). Subjective probability: A judgment of representativeness. *Cognitive Psychology*, 3(3), 430–454. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0285\(72\)90016-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0285(72)90016-3)
- Kamp, H., & Partee, B. (1995). Prototype theory and compositionality. *Cognition*, 57(2), 129–191.
- Kan, Y., Yu, Y., Jiang, Y., & Tan, Y. (2022). Afraid of Niche, Tired of Mass: Atypical Idea Combination on Crowdfunding Platform. *SSRN Electronic Journal*.
<https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4180052>
- Kang, Y., Zhu, D. H., & Zhang, Y. A. (2021). Being extraordinary: How CEOs' uncommon names explain strategic distinctiveness. *Strategic Management Journal*, 42(2), 462–488.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.3231>
- Kannan-Narasimhan, R. (Priya). (2014). Organizational Ingenuity in Nascent Innovations: Gaining Resources and Legitimacy through Unconventional Actions. *Organization Studies*, 35(4), 483–509.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840613517596>
- Kennedy, M. T. (2008). Getting Counted: Markets, Media, and Reality. *American Sociological Review*, 73(2), 270–295. JSTOR.
- Kennedy, M. T., & Fiss, P. C. (2013). An Ontological Turn in Categories Research: From Standards of Legitimacy to Evidence of Actuality: An Ontological Turn in Categories Research. *Journal of Management Studies*, 50(6), 1138–1154. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12031>
- Khaire, M., & Hall, E. V. (2016). Medium and Message: Globalization and innovation in the production field of Indian fashion. *Organization Studies*, 37(6), 845–865.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840615622061>
- Kim, B. K., & Jensen, M. (2011). How Product Order Affects Market Identity: Repertoire Ordering in the U.S. Opera Market. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 56(2), 238–256.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839211427535>
- Kim, J., & Lakshmanan, A. (2015). How Kinetic Property Shapes Novelty Perceptions. *Journal of Marketing*, 79(6), 94–111. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.14.0284>
- Kim, T. J., & Petitjean, M. (2021). Atypical package design and product category prestige. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 38(3), 379–397. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jpim.12574>
- Kleinbaum, A. M. (2012). Organizational Misfits and the Origins of Brokerage in Intrafirm Networks. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 57(3), 407–452.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839212461141>
- Koppman, S., & Leahey, E. (2019). Who moves to the methodological edge? Factors that encourage scientists to use unconventional methods. *Research Policy*, 48(9), 103807.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2019.103807>
- Kovács, B., & Hannan, M. T. (2010). The consequences of category spanning depend on contrast. In G. Hsu, G. Negro, & Ö. Koçak (Eds.), *Research in the Sociology of Organizations* (Vol. 31, pp. 175–201). Emerald Group Publishing Limited. [https://doi.org/10.1108/S0733-558X\(2010\)0000031008](https://doi.org/10.1108/S0733-558X(2010)0000031008)
- Kovács, B., & Hannan, M. T. (2015). Conceptual Spaces and the Consequences of Category Spanning. *Sociological Science*, 2, 252–286. <https://doi.org/10.15195/v2.a13>
- Krzeminska, A., Lundmark, E., & Härtel, C. E. J. (2021). Legitimation of a heterogeneous market category through covert prototype differentiation. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 36(2), 106084.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2020.106084>
- Kuhn, K. M., & Maleki, A. (2017). Micro-entrepreneurs, Dependent Contractors, and Instaserfs: Understanding Online Labor Platform Workforces. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 31(3), 183–200. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.2015.0111>
- Kunda, Z., & Oleson, K. C. (n.d.). *When Exceptions Prove the Rule: How Extremity of Deviance Determines the Impact of Deviant Examples on Stereotypes*.

- Landwehr, J. R., Wentzel, D., & Herrmann, A. (2013). Product Design for the Long Run: Consumer Responses to Typical and Atypical Designs at Different Stages of Exposure. *Journal of Marketing*, 77(5), 92–107. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.11.0286>
- Laudel, G., & Gläser, J. (2014). Beyond breakthrough research: Epistemic properties of research and their consequences for research funding. *Research Policy*, 43(7), 1204–1216. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2014.02.006>
- Leahey, E., Beckman, C. M., & Stanko, T. L. (2017). Prominent but Less Productive: The Impact of Interdisciplinarity on Scientists' Research. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 62(1), 105–139. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839216665364>
- Leung, M. D. (2014). Dilettante or Renaissance Person? How the Order of Job Experiences Affects Hiring in an External Labor Market. *American Sociological Review*, 79(1), 136–158. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122413518638>
- Leung, M. D., & Koppman, S. (2018). Taking a Pass: How Proportional Prejudice and Decisions Not to Hire Reproduce Gender Segregation. *American Journal of Sociology*, 124(3), 762–813. <https://doi.org/10.1086/700677>
- Leung, M. D., & Sharkey, A. J. (2014). Out of Sight, Out of Mind? Evidence of Perceptual Factors in the Multiple-Category Discount. *Organization Science*, 25(1), 171–184. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2013.0828>
- Lin, Y., Evans, J. A., & Wu, L. (2022). New directions in science emerge from disconnection and discord. *Journal of Informetrics*, 16(1), 101234. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2021.101234>
- Litov, L. P., Moreton, P., & Zenger, T. R. (2012). Corporate Strategy, Analyst Coverage, and the Uniqueness Paradox. *Management Science*, 58(10), 1797–1815. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.1120.1530>
- Lockwood, C., Giorgi, S., & Glynn, M. A. (2019). “How to Do Things With Words”: Mechanisms Bridging Language and Action in Management Research. *Journal of Management*, 45(1), 7–34. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206318777599>
- Lovelace, J. B., Bundy, J., Pollock, T. G., & Hambrick, D. C. (2022). The Push and Pull of Attaining CEO Celebrity: A Media Routines Perspective. *Academy of Management Journal*, 65(4), 1169–1191. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2020.0435>
- Max Wei, Y. (2020). The Similarity Network of Motion Pictures. *Management Science*, 66(4), 1647–1671. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.2018.3261>
- McDonald, R. M., & Allen, R. T. (2021). A Spanner in the Works: Category-Spanning Entrants and Audience Valuation of Incumbents. *Strategy Science, Forthcoming*.
- Medin, D. L., & Schaffer, M. M. (1978). Context theory of classification learning. *Psychological Review*, 85(3), 207.
- Merton, R.K. 1968. Social structure and anomie, in Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*, pp. 185-214. New York: Free Press.
- Mervis, C., & Rosch, E. (1981). Categorization of Natural Objects. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 32(1), 89–115. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.ps.32.020181.000513>
- Meyerson, D. E., & Scully, M. A. (1995). Tempered Radicalism and the Politics of Ambivalence and Change. *Organization Science*, 6(5), 585–600. JSTOR.
- Miller, D., & Chen, M.-J. (1996). Nonconformity in Competitive Repertoires: A Sociological View of Markets. *Social Forces*, 74(4), 1209. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2580349>
- Mitsuhashi, H., & Alcantara, L. L. (2021). Off the rivals' radar in emerging market segments: Non-mutual rival recognition between new firms and incumbents. *Long Range Planning*, 54(2), 101888. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2019.06.001>

- Mugge, R., & Dahl, D. W. (2013). Seeking the Ideal Level of Design Newness: Consumer Response to Radical and Incremental Product Design: Seeking the Ideal Level of Design Newness. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 30, 34–47. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jpim.12062>
- Mukherjee, S., Uzzi, B., Jones, B., & Stringer, M. (2016). A New Method for Identifying Recombinations of Existing Knowledge Associated with High-Impact Innovation: Innovation Combined with Existing Technology. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 33(2), 224–236. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jpim.12294>
- Murphy, G. L. (2002). *The big book of concepts* (1. MIT Press paperback ed). MIT Press.
- Negro, G., Hannan, M. T., & Rao, H. (2010). Categorical contrast and audience appeal: Niche width and critical success in winemaking. *Industrial and Corporate Change*, 19(5), 1397–1425. <https://doi.org/10.1093/icc/dtq003>
- Negro, G., Hannan, M. T., & Rao, H. (2011). Category Reinterpretation and Defection: Modernism and Tradition in Italian Winemaking. *Organization Science*, 22(6), 1449–1463. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1100.0619>
- Negro, G., & Leung, M. D. (2013). “Actual” and Perceptual Effects of Category Spanning. *Organization Science*, 24(3), 684–696. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1120.0764>
- Palmer, S. E., Schloss, K. B., & Sammartino, J. (2013). Visual Aesthetics and Human Preference. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 64(1), 77–107. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-120710-100504>
- Paolella, L., & Durand, R. (2016). Category Spanning, Evaluation, and Performance: Revised Theory and Test on the Corporate Law Market. *Academy of Management Journal*, 59(1), 330–351. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2013.0651>
- Parker, O., Mui, R., & Titus, V. (2020). Unwelcome voices: The gender bias-mitigating potential of unconventionality. *Strategic Management Journal*, 41(4), 738–757. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.3104>
- Pentland, B. T., Hærem, T., & Hillison, D. (2011). The (N)Ever-Changing World: Stability and Change in Organizational Routines. *Organization Science*, 22(6), 1369–1383. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1110.0624>
- Phillips, D. J., Turco, C. J., & Zuckerman, E. W. (2013). Betrayal as Market Barrier: Identity-Based Limits to Diversification among High-Status Corporate Law Firms. *American Journal of Sociology*, 118(4), 1023–1054. <https://doi.org/10.1086/668412>
- Phillips, D. J., & Zuckerman, E. W. (2001). Middle-Status Conformity: Theoretical Restatement and Empirical Demonstration in Two Markets. *American Journal of Sociology*, 107(2), 379–429. <https://doi.org/10.1086/324072>
- Piters, R., & Stokmans, M. J. W. (1997). The influence of typicality of book covers on preferences. In G. Guzman, A. Jose, & S. Sanz (Eds.), *The XXII International Colloquium of Economic Psychology* (Vol. 1, p. 41). Unknown Publisher.
- Pontikes, E. G. (2012). Two Sides of the Same Coin: How Ambiguous Classification Affects Multiple Audiences’ Evaluations. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 57(1), 81–118. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839212446689>
- Pontikes, E. G., & Hannan, M. (2014). An Ecology of Social Categories. *Sociological Science*, 1, 311–343. <https://doi.org/10.15195/v1.a20>
- Popielarz, P. A., & McPherson, J. M. (1995). On the Edge or In Between: Niche Position, Niche Overlap, and the Duration of Voluntary Association Memberships. *American Journal of Sociology*, 101(3), 698–720. <https://doi.org/10.1086/230757>
- Quinn, R., & Meyerson, D. (2008). The Positive Pontential of Tempered Radicals. In C. C. Manz, K. S. Cameron, K. P. Manz, & R. D. Marx, *The Virtuous Organization* (pp. 247–258). WORLD SCIENTIFIC. https://doi.org/10.1142/9789812818607_0013

- Rao, H., Monin, P., & Durand, R. (2003). Institutional Change in Toque Ville: Nouvelle Cuisine as an Identity Movement in French Gastronomy. *American Journal of Sociology*, 108(4), 795–843. <https://doi.org/10.1086/367917>
- Rao, H., Monin, P., & Durand, R. (2005). Border Crossing: Bricolage and the Erosion of Categorical Boundaries in French Gastronomy. *American Sociological Review*, 70(6), 968–991. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240507000605>
- Reber, R., Schwarz, N., & Winkielman, P. (2004). Processing Fluency and Aesthetic Pleasure: Is Beauty in the Perceiver's Processing Experience? *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 8(4), 364–382. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327957pspr0804_3
- Reschke, B. P., & Leung, M. D. (2022). Variety is the Spice of Life: Heterogeneity in Evaluator Engagement and the Valuation of Atypicality. In G. Cattani, D. Deichmann, & S. Ferriani (Eds.), *Research in the Sociology of Organizations* (pp. 163–186). Emerald Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S0733-558X20220000077012>
- Rindova, V., Dalpiaz, E., & Ravasi, D. (2011). A Cultural Quest: A Study of Organizational Use of New Cultural Resources in Strategy Formation. *Organization Science*, 22(2), 413–431. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1100.0537>
- Rosch, E. (1973). Natural Categories. *Cognitive Psychology*, 4(3), 328–350. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0285\(73\)90017-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0285(73)90017-0)
- Rosch, E. (1975). Cognitive representations of semantic categories. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 104(3), 192–233. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0096-3445.104.3.192>
- Rosch, E. (1978). Principles of categorization. In E. Rosch & B. Lloyd (Eds.), *Cognition and categorization* (pp. 28–49). Erlbaum.
- Rosch, E., & Mervis, C. (1975). Family resemblances: Studies in the internal structure of categories. *Cognitive Psychology*, 7(4), 573–605. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0285\(75\)90024-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0285(75)90024-9)
- Ruef, M., & Patterson, K. (2009). Credit and Classification: The Impact of Industry Boundaries in Nineteenth-Century America. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 54(3), 486–520. <https://doi.org/10.2189/asqu.2009.54.3.486>
- Ruef, M., & Scott, W. R. (1998). A Multidimensional Model of Organizational Legitimacy: Hospital Survival in Changing Institutional Environments. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 43(4), 877. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2393619>
- Russo, E. R., Ott, D. L., & Moeller, M. (2023). Helping Neurodivergent Employees Succeed. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 64(3), 1–11.
- Scarpi, D., Pizzi, G., & Raggiotto, F. (2019). The extraordinary attraction of being ordinary: A moderated mediation model of purchase for prototypical products. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 49, 267–278. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.03.006>
- Schilling, M. A., & Green, E. (2011). Recombinant search and breakthrough idea generation: An analysis of high impact papers in the social sciences. *Research Policy*, 40(10), 1321–1331. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2011.06.009>
- Schnurr, B. (2017). The impact of atypical product design on consumer product and brand perception. *Journal of Brand Management*, 24(6), 609–621. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-017-0059-z>
- Sgourev, S. V., & Althuizen, N. (2014). “Notable” or “Not Able”: When Are Acts of Inconsistency Rewarded? *American Sociological Review*, 79(2), 282–302. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122414524575>
- Silvestri, D., Riccaboni, M., & Della Malva, A. (2018). Sailing in all winds: Technological search over the business cycle. *Research Policy*, 47(10), 1933–1944. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2018.07.002>

- Simonson, I., & Nowlis, S. M. (2000). The Role of Explanations and Need for Uniqueness in Consumer Decision Making: Unconventional Choices Based on Reasons. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27(1), 49–68. <https://doi.org/10.1086/314308>
- Smith, E. (2011). Identities as Lenses: How Organizational Identity Affects Audiences' Evaluation of Organizational Performance. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 56(1), 61–94. <https://doi.org/10.2189/asqu.2011.56.1.061>
- Smith, E. B., & Gai, S. L. (2017). Institutional interruption: A relational account of the growth and decline of product heterogeneity in the global hedge fund industry. *Industrial and Corporate Change*, 26(6), 1039–1066. <https://doi.org/10.1093/icc/dtx007>
- Smith, E., & Chae, H. (2016). “We do what we must, and call it by the best names”: Can deliberate names offset the consequences of organizational atypicality?: Deliberate Naming. *Strategic Management Journal*, 37(6), 1021–1033. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.2386>
- Smith, E., & Chae, H. (2017). The Effect of Organizational Atypicality on Reference Group Selection and Performance Evaluation. *Organization Science*, 28(6), 1134–1149. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2017.1154>
- Solso, R. L., & McCarthy, J. E. (1981). Prototype formation: Central tendency model vs. attribute-frequency model. *Bulletin of the Psychonomic Society*, 17(1), 10–11. <https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03333651>
- Sonenshein, S., Nault, K., & Obodaru, O. (2017). Competition of a Different Flavor: How a Strategic Group Identity Shapes Competition and Cooperation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 62(4), 626–656. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839217704849>
- Stafford, T. F., & Stafford, M. R. (2002). The Advantages of Atypical Advertisements for Stereotyped Product Categories. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 24(1), 25–37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10641734.2002.10505125>
- Stinchcombe, A. L. (1965). Organizations and social structure. In J. March (Ed.), *Handbook of organizations* (Vol. 44, pp. 142–193). Rand McNally.
- Suchman, M. C. (1995). Managing Legitimacy: Strategic and Institutional Approaches. *Academy of Management Review*, 20(3), 571–610. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1995.9508080331>
- Suddaby, R. (Ed.). (2010). Editor's Comments: Construct Clarity in Theories of Management and Organization. *Academy of Management Review*, 35(3), 346–357. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.35.3.zok346>
- Suddaby, R., Bitektine, A., & Haack, P. (2017). Legitimacy. *Academy of Management Annals*, 11(1), 451–478. <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2015.0101>
- T. Loiacono, E., & Ren, H. (2018). Building a Neurodiverse High-tech Workforce. *MIS Quarterly Executive*, 2018(4). <https://doi.org/10.17705/2msqe.00001>
- Taeuscher, K., Bouncken, R. B., & Pesch, R. (2020). Gaining Legitimacy by Being Different: Optimal Distinctiveness in Crowdfunding Platforms. *Academy of Management Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2018.0620>
- Taeuscher, K., Zhao, E. Y., & Lounsbury, M. (2022). Categories and narratives as sources of distinctiveness: Cultural entrepreneurship within and across categories. *Strategic Management Journal*, smj.3391. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.3391>
- Tang, Y., & Wezel, F. C. (2015). Up to standard? *Journal of Business Venturing*, 30(3), 452–466. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2014.07.010>
- Toubia, O., & Netzer, O. (2017). Idea Generation, Creativity, and Prototypicality. *Marketing Science*, 36(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mksc.2016.0994>
- Ubisch, S., & Wang, P. (2023). Typical products for outside audiences: The role of typicality when products traverse countries. *Strategic Organization*, 21(1), 248–279. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14761270221143984>

- Uzzi, B., Mukherjee, S., Stringer, M., & Jones, B. (2013). Atypical Combinations and Scientific Impact. *Science*, 342(6157), 468–472. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1240474>
- Vergne, J. P., & Wry, T. (2014). Categorizing Categorization Research: Review, Integration, and Future Directions: Categorizing Categorization Research. *Journal of Management Studies*, 51(1), 56–94. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12044>
- Voorspoels, W., Vanpaemel, W., & Storms, G. (2011). A formal ideal-based account of typicality. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 18(5), 1006–1014. <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13423-011-0122-9>
- Wagner, C. S., Cai, X., & Mukherjee, S. (2020). China's scholarship shows atypical referencing patterns. *Scientometrics*, 124(3), 2457–2468. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-020-03579-2>
- Wagner, C. S., Whetsell, T. A., & Mukherjee, S. (2019). International research collaboration: Novelty, conventionality, and atypicality in knowledge recombination. *Research Policy*, 48(5), 1260–1270. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2019.01.002>
- Wang, J., Veugelers, R., & Stephan, P. (2017). Bias against novelty in science: A cautionary tale for users of bibliometric indicators. *Research Policy*, 46(8), 1416–1436. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2017.06.006>
- Ward, J., & Loken, B. (1988). The generality of typicality effects on preference and comparison: An exploratory test. *ACR North American Advances*.
- Warren, D. E. (2003). Constructive and Destructive Deviance in Organizations. *The Academy of Management Review*, 28(4), 622. <https://doi.org/10.2307/30040751>
- Wechtler, H. M., Lee, C. I. S. G., Heyden, M. L. M., Felps, W., & Lee, T. W. (2022). The nonlinear relationship between atypical applicant experience and hiring: The red flags perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 107(5), 776–794. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000953>
- Wei, Y., “Max,” Hong, J., & Tellis, G. J. (2022). Machine Learning for Creativity: Using Similarity Networks to Design Better Crowdfunding Projects. *Journal of Marketing*, 86(2), 87–104. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00222429211005481>
- Weick, K. E. (1979). *The social psychology of organizing* (2. ed., [Nachdr.]). McGraw-Hill.
- Winkielman, P., Halberstadt, J., Fazendeiro, T., & Catty, S. (2006). Prototypes Are Attractive Because They Are Easy on the Mind. *Psychological Science*, 17(9), 799–806. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2006.01785.x>
- Wry, T., Lounsbury, M., & Jennings, P. D. (2014). Hybrid Vigor: Securing Venture Capital by Spanning Categories in Nanotechnology. *Academy of Management Journal*, 57(5), 1309–1333. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2011.0588>
- Younkin, P., & Kashkooli, K. (2020). Stay True to Your Roots? Category Distance, Hierarchy, and the Performance of New Entrants in the Music Industry. *Organization Science*, 31(3), 604–627. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2019.1323>
- Yu, W., & Kuo, J. C.-L. (2021). Gender-Atypical Occupations and Instability of Intimate Unions: Examining the Relationship and Mechanisms. *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*, 7, 237802312110001. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23780231211000177>
- Zadeh, L. A. (1965). Fuzzy sets. *Information and Control*, 8(3), 338–353. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0019-9958\(65\)90241-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0019-9958(65)90241-X)
- Zhao, E. Y., Ishihara, M., Jennings, P. D., & Lounsbury, M. (2018). Optimal Distinctiveness in the Console Video Game Industry: An Exemplar-Based Model of Proto-Category Evolution. *Organization Science*, 29(4), 588–611. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2017.1194>
- Zuckerman, E. W. (1999). The Categorical Imperative: Securities Analysts and the Illegitimacy Discount. *American Journal of Sociology*, 104(5), 1398–1438. <https://doi.org/10.1086/210178>
- Zuckerman, E. W. (2017). The Categorical Imperative Revisited: Implications of Categorization as a Theoretical Tool. In R. Durand, N. Granqvist, & A. Tyllström (Eds.), *Research in the Sociology of*

Organizations (Vol. 51, pp. 31–68). Emerald Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S0733-558X20170000051001>

Zuckerman, E. W., Kim, T., Ukanwa, K., & von Rittmann, J. (2003). Robust Identities or Nonentities? Typecasting in the Feature-Film Labor Market. *American Journal of Sociology*, 108(5), 1018–1073. <https://doi.org/10.1086/377518>

Appendix A- Method of Article Identification

In the attempt to develop our conceptual framework and generate new perspectives on organizational atypicality, we follow the integrative approach suggested by Elsbach and Knippenberg (2020). For electing literature to be included, we followed a multistep approach: 1) first, we conducted a broad search in the database Web of Knowledge, considering only peer review journals listed in the Financial Times FT50 journal list - as a broad inclusion criterion of high-quality (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Durand & Thornton, 2018; Lockwood et al., 2019) - that have published theoretical as well as empirical research on atypicality. The search terms we used include atypical*; unconventional*; unusual*; uncommon*, yielding a total of 180 articles. We took an inclusive approach concerning the set of publications under consideration: we reviewed all the articles for their relevance, and, after careful examination, we eliminated those that did not conceptualize or explore at least some aspects of atypicality; 2) second, to ensure completeness, we also included studies identified by cross-checking reference sections of the articles resulting from the first step, and we relied on our knowledge of the literature to include relevant articles published in other impactful journals, edited volumes, and books.

To be included, articles were required to theoretically or empirically investigate the nature, consequences, sources of atypicality or moderators/mediators of atypicality–outcomes relations. Sources in our model are the factors that predict atypical outcomes and behaviors. Consequences are the outcomes associated with atypicality in organizational and/or market settings, and moderators/mediators describe the contingency factors affecting the magnitude of atypicality's influence (or lack thereof) on the outcomes of interest. Studies on atypicality in medicine and education settings and other articles that evoke the concept of atypicality but do not either draw from or contribute to organizational literature were excluded from the analysis. To determine whether the above-mentioned inclusion criteria were met, we examined the title and abstract of the article.

For each of these articles, we collected information on the field of the journal in which an article was published (we broadly distinguish between Management and Organizations, Sociology, Psychology, Marketing, and Interdisciplinary (Other)), the major focus of each article, the level of analysis and the method used in the research.

Appendix B- Full list of papers reviewed and codes assigned.

For each of these articles, we collected information on the field of the journal in which an article was published the major focus of each article, the level of analysis and the method used in the research.

Author(s)

Year

Title

Journal

Field –We broadly distinguish between Management and Organizations (MAN-ORG), Sociology (SOC), Psychology (PSYCH), Marketing (MKT), and Interdisciplinary (OTHER).

Method - Qualitative (QUAL); Quantitative (QUANT); Mixed -method (MIX); Theoretical (THEO)

Focus – Description of atypicality in the study

Lens – Cognitive (COGN); Normative (NORM); Innovative (INN)

Level of analysis – Organizational (ORG); Individual (IND); Product (PRO)

Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal	Field	Focus	Method	Level of analysis	Lens
Alter, N.	2017	The Stranger's Gaze	Management and Diversity	Management and Organization	Leaders originating from unusual demographic backgrounds (non-privileged, non-dominant, under-represented, or disadvantaged)	THEO	Individual	NORM
Askin, N., & Mauskopf, M.	2017	What Makes Popular Culture Popular? Product Features and Optimal Differentiation in Music	American Sociological Review	Sociology	Songs combining musical features differently from others in the same genre	QUANT (Regression)	Product	COG
Bakker, R. M., & McMullen, J. S.	2023	Inclusive entrepreneurship: A call for a shared theoretical conversation about unconventional entrepreneurs	Journal of Business Venturing	Management and Organization	Entrepreneurs falling outside the parameters of conventional entrepreneurship across various dimensions (physical, cognitive, behavioral)	THEO	Individual	INNO
Barone, M. J., & Jewell, R. D.	2013	The Innovator's License: A Latitude to Deviate from Category Norms	Journal of Marketing	Marketing	Marketing Strategies that deviate from those strategies perceived by consumers to be typically or commonly used by brands in a product or service category	QUANT (Experiment)	Product	NORM
Beck, N., Swaminathan, A., Wade, J. B., & Wezel, F. C.	2019	Industry Clusters and Organizational Prototypes: Evidence From the Franconian Brewing Industry	Journal of Management	Management and Organization	Organizational forms that deviate from the prototypical features within a certain category	MIXED	Organizational	NORM
Bellezza, S., Gino, F., & Keinan, A.	2014	The Red Sneakers Effect: Inferring Status and Competence from Signals of Nonconformity	Journal of Consumer Research	Marketing	Individual's behaviors that deviate from contextual standards	QUANT (Experiment)	Individual	NORM
Berger, J., & Packard, G.	2018	Are Atypical Things More Popular?	Psychological Science	Psychology	Songs with atypical lyrics compared to others in their genre.	QUANT (Regression)	Product	INNO
Boulongne, R., & Durand, R.	2021	Evaluating Ambiguous Offerings	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Products that incorporate features that are unrelated to a category prototype	MIXED	Product	COG
Bowers, A.	2015	Relative Comparison and Category Membership: The Case of Equity Analysts	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Organizations that do not fit into generalized industry categories	QUANT (Regression)	Organizational	COG

Bowers, A.	2020	Balanced but not fair: Strategic balancing, rating allocations, and third-party intermediaries	Strategic Organization	Management and Organization	Organizations that do not fit into generalized industry categories	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Brixy, U., Brunow, S., & D'Ambrosio, A.	2020	The unlikely encounter: Is ethnic diversity in start-ups associated with innovation?	Research Policy	Other	Organizations whose employees combination of national origins is statistically unusual	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	INNO
Bu, J., Zhao, E. Y., Li, K. J., & Li, J. M.	2022	Multilevel optimal distinctiveness: Examining the impact of within- and between-organization distinctiveness of product design on market performance	Strategic Management Journal	Management and Organization	Products (cars) with design features deviating from the typical design of other products in the same segment	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	COG
Cattani, G., Ferriani, S., & Allison, P. D.	2014	Insiders, Outsiders, and the Struggle for Consecration in Cultural Fields: A Core-Periphery Perspective	American Sociological Review	Sociology	Professionals occupying a peripheral position in industry network	QUANT' (Regression)	Individual	NORM
Caza, B. B., Main, K., & Stuart-Edwards, A.	2022	Jack of All Trades, Master of None? Exploring Factors That Influence Responses to White-Collar Professionals with Multiple Jobs	Academy of Management Discoveries	Management and Organization	Career choices that defy social expectations and norms (e.e. being a multiple jobholding white-collar professional)	QUAL	Individual	NORM
Caza, B. B., Moss, S., & Vough, H.	2018	From Synchronizing to Harmonizing: The Process of Authenticating Multiple Work Identities	Administrative Science Quarterly	Management and Organization	Career choices that defy social expectations and norms (e.e. being a multiple jobholding white-collar professional)	QUAL	Individual	NORM
Chae, H.	2022	Income or education? Community-level antecedents of firms' category-spanning activities	Strategic Management Journal	Management and Organization	Restaurants offering products not typical of the claimed category	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Cudennec, A., & Durand, R.	2022	Valuing Spanners: Why Category Nesting and Expertise Matter	Academy of Management Journal	Management and Organization	Organizations that span multiple industry categories	MIXED	Organizational	COG
Cutolo, D., & Ferriani, S.	2023	Now It Makes More Sense: How Narratives can help Atypical Actors Increase Market Appeal	Journal of Management	Management and Organization	Crafters whose offering mix elements that characterize categories that lie far apart in the feature space	QUANT' (Regression)	Individual	COG
DeSantola, A., Gulati, R., & Zhelyazkov, P. I.	2022	External Interfaces or Internal Processes? Market Positioning and Divergent Professionalization Paths in Young Ventures	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Ventures that position themselves in unconventional market spaces (bring together existing market categories and recombine them to craft new market positions or even industries)	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	NORM

de Vaan, M., Vedres, B., & Stark, D.	2015	Game Changer: The Topology of Creativity	American Journal of Sociology	Sociology	Games whose combination of stylistic elements deviate from all games produced before	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	INNO
Durand, R., & Jourdan, J.	2012	Jules or Jim: Alternative Conformity to Minority Logics	Academy of Management Journal	Management and Organization	Organizations conforming to the demands of minority actors promoting alternative institutional logic(s)	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	NORM
Durand, R., & Kremp, P.-A.	2016	Classical Deviation: Organizational and Individual Status as Antecedents of Conformity	Academy of Management Journal	Management and Organization	Organizations not exhibiting highly salient attributes key to their field or industry	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	NORM
Ferguson, J.-P., & Carnabuci, G.	2017	Risky Recombinations: Institutional Gatekeeping in the Innovation Process	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Patents that combine bodies of knowledge rarely connected in the past	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	INNO
Fleming, L.	2001	Recombinant Uncertainty in Technological Search	Management Science	Management and Organization	Patents with configurations of subclasses that have not been utilized frequently or recently.	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	INNO
Fontana, M., Iori, M., Montobbio, F., & Sinatra, R.	2020	New and atypical combinations: An assessment of novelty and interdisciplinarity	Research Policy	Other	Scientific papers combining distant and rarely related disciplines	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	INNO
Formilan, G., & Boari, C.	2021	The reluctant preference: Communities of enthusiasts and the diffusion of atypical innovation	Industrial and Corporate Change	Management and Organization	Music records that combine multiple distant genres	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	COG
Gaffney, A. M., Rast III, D. E., & Hogg, M. A.	2018	Uncertainty and influence: The advantages (and disadvantages) of being atypical	Journal of Social Issues	Sociology	individuals who do not embody the attributes that define their group's identity	THEO	Individual	NORM
Garaus, M., & Halkias, G.	2020	One color fits all: Product category color norms and (atypical) package colors	Review of Managerial Science	Management and Organization	Products whose features do not overlap with those commonly encountered in the category	QUANT' (Experiment)	Product	COG
Garud, R., Dunbar, R. L., & Bartel, C. A.	2011	Dealing with Unusual Experiences: A Narrative Perspective on Organizational Learning	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Combination of events that bear little or no resemblance to the types of experiences that have occurred in the past	QUAL	Product	INNO

Geletkanycz, M. A., & Hambrick, D. C.	1997	The external ties of top executives: Implications for strategic choice and performance	Administrative Science Quarterly	Management and Organization	A firm's business strategy profile deviating from central tendencies of its industry	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	NORM
Goldberg, A., Hannan, M. T., & Kovács, B.	2016	What Does It Mean to Span Cultural Boundaries? Variety and Atypicality in Cultural Consumption	American Sociological Review	Sociology	Products (movies) and firms (restaurants) that combine elements from multiple, dissimilar categories (genres, and cousines)	QUANT' (Experiment)	Product	COG
Goodstein, R. C.	1993	Category-Based Applications and Extensions in Advertising: Motivating More Extensive Ad Processing	Journal of Consumer Research	Marketing	Ads deviating from the prototypical ad schema	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	COG
Gouvard, P., & Durand, R.	2022	To Be or Not To Be (Typical) : Evaluation-Mode Heterogeneity and its Consequences for Organizations	Academy of Management Review	Management and Organization	Organizations that are dissimilar to a category's prototype	THEO	Organizational	COG
Gouvard, P., Goldberg, A., & Srivastava, S. B.	2021	Doing Organizational Identity: Earnings Surprises and the Performative Atypicality Premium	[Working Paper]	Management and Organization	a) Organizations that do not fit into generalized industry categories and b) Organizations whose communication with outside stakeholders diverges from the meanings commonly expressed by their peers in the industry	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	COG
He, Z., Lei, Z., & Wang, D.	2018	Modeling citation dynamics of “atypical” articles	Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology	Other	Scientific articles whose citation trajectories do not follow the normal predicted rise-and-fall pattern	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	INNO
Hofstra, B., Kulkarni, V. V., Munoz-Najar Galvez, S., He, B., Jurafsky, D., & McFarland, D. A.	2020	The diversity–innovation paradox in science	Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences	Other	Papers connecting concepts previously viewed as separated or irrelevant in literature	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	INNO
Hsu, G.	2006	Jacks of All Trades and Masters of None: Audiences' Reactions to Spanning Genres in Feature Film Production	Administrative Science Quarterly	Management and Organization	Movies that combine elements from multiple genres	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	COG
Hsu, G., Hannan, M. T., & Koçak, Ö.	2009	Multiple Category Memberships in Markets: An Integrative Theory and Two Empirical Tests	American Sociological Review	Sociology	a) Movies that combine features from multiple genres, b) online sellers who auction goods in multiple categories	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	COG

Jensen, M., & Kim, B. K.	2014	Great, Madama Butterfly again! How robust market identity shapes opera repertoires	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Firms whose products deviate from conventional standards and exhibit salient attributes rarely adopted by peers in a given period of time	QUANT (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Jones, C., Svejnova, S., Pedersen, J. S., & Townley, B.	2016	Misfits, mavericks and mainstreams: Drivers of innovation in the creative industries	Organization Studies	Management and Organization	Actors who do not abide by the existing conventions of a field	THEO	Individual	NORM
Johnson, R., & Kovács, B.	2014	Contrasting alternative explanations for the consequences of category spanning: A study of restaurant reviews and menus in San Francisco	Strategic Organization	Management and Organization	Restaurants proposing dishes that does not fit the prototypical offering in that category	QUANT (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Jordan, R., Fitzsimmons, T. W., & Callan, V. J.	2022	Positively Deviant: New Evidence for the Beneficial Capital of Maverickism to Organizations	Group & Organization Management	Management and Organization	Organizational members not conforming to organizational norms and seen (mostly) positively in the organization	QUAL	Individual	NORM
Jung, J., & Mun, E.	2017	Does diffusion make an institutionally contested practice legitimate? Shareholder responses to downsizing in Japan, 1973–2005	Organization Studies	Management and Organization	Organizational Practices that defy institutionalized prescriptions of what organizations should or should not do	QUANT (Regression)	Organizational	NORM
Kacperczyk, A., & Younkin, P.	2017	The Paradox of Breadth: The Tension between Experience and Legitimacy in the Transition to Entrepreneurship	Administrative Science Quarterly	Management and Organization	Artists who merge abilities from diverse occupational roles in a unique manner unparalleled by their peers	QUANT (Regression)	Individual	COG
Kan, Y., Yu, Y., Jiang, Y., & Tan, Y.	2022	Afraid of Niche, Tired of Mass: Atypical Idea Combination on Crowdfunding Platform. Tired of Mass: Atypical Idea Combination on Crowdfunding Platform	[Working Paper]	Other	Kickstarters projects that combine a) mainstream and niche ideas, or b) multiple different niche ideas	QUANT (Regression)	Product	INNO
Kang, Y., Zhu, D. H., & Zhang, Y. A.	2021	Being extraordinary: How CEOs' uncommon names explain strategic distinctiveness.	Strategic Management Journal	Management and Organization	Names that are rarely used in a specific population (by gender)	QUANT (Regression)	Individual	INNO
Kannan-Narasimhan, R.	2014	Organizational ingenuity in nascent innovations: Gaining resources and legitimacy through unconventional actions	Organization Studies	Management and Organization	Organizational actors circumventing organizational procedures and using unconventional processes to seek resources	QUAL	Individual	NORM
Khaire, M., & Hall, E. V.	2016	Medium and message: Globalization and innovation in the production field of Indian fashion	Organization Studies	Management and Organization	Artistic Paradigm deviating from established conventions and traditions	QUAL	Individual	NORM

Kim, B. K., & Jensen, M.	2011	How Product Order Affects Market Identity: Repertoire Ordering in the U.S. Opera Market	Administrative Science Quarterly	Management and Organization	Firms whose products exhibit salient attributes rarely adopted by peers in a given period of time	QUANT (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Kim, J., & Lakshmanan, A.	2015	How Kinetic Property Shapes Novelty Perceptions	Journal of Marketing	Marketing	Products whose attributes are distinct from other members of the same category	QUANT (Experiment)	Product	COG
Kim, T. J., & Petitjean, M.	2021	Atypical package design and product category prestige	Journal of Product Innovation Management	Other	Product that deviates from its category's typical design	QUANT (Experiment)	Product	COG
Kleinbaum, A. M.	2012	Organizational Misfits and the Origins of Brokerage in Intrafirm Networks	Administrative Science Quarterly	Management and Organization	Individuals who followed career trajectories that are atypical in their organization	QUANT (Regression)	Individual	NORM
Kneeland, M. K., Schilling, M. A., & Aharonson, B. S.	2020	Exploring uncharted territory: Knowledge search processes in the origination of outlier innovation	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Patents that occupy technological positions that are away from the body of existing patents at their time of filing—that is, they are unusual in terms of their technological combinations.	QUANT (Regression)	Product	INNO
Koppman, S., & Leahey, E.	2019	Who moves to the methodological edge? Factors that encourage scientists to use unconventional methods	Research Policy	Other	Scientists using methods that are uncommon and unconventional in their fields	MIXED	Individual	INNO
Kovács, B., & Hannan, M. T.	2010	The consequences of category spanning depend on contrast	Research in the Sociology of Organizations	Sociology	Restaurants that claim membership in multiple categories	QUANT (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Kovács, B., & Hannan, M. T.	2015	Conceptual Spaces and the Consequences of Category Spanning	Sociological Science	Sociology	Restaurants that combine multiple categories that lie far apart in the market space	QUANT (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Krzeminska, A., Lundmark, E., & Härtel, C. E.	2021	Legitimation of a heterogeneous market category through covert prototype differentiation.	Journal of Business Venturing	Management and Organization	Entrepreneurs establishing prototype variants	QUAL	Individual	NORM

Kunda, Z., & Oleson, K. C.	1997	When exceptions prove the rule: How extremity of deviance determines the impact of deviant examples on stereotype	Journal of Personality and Social Psychology	Psychology	Actors stepping outside of the stereotypical portrayal of their role	QUANT' (Experiment)	Individual	NORM
Landwehr, J. R., Wentzel, D., & Herrmann, A.	2013	Product Design for the Long Run: Consumer Responses to Typical and Atypical Designs at Different Stages of Exposure	Journal of Marketing	Marketing	Products (cars) with design features deviating from the typical design of all the products in the same segment	QUANT' (Experiment)	Product	COG
Laudel, G., & Gläser, J.	2014	Beyond breakthrough research: Epistemic properties of research and their consequences for research funding	Research Policy	Other	Research projects a)deviating from mainstream focus, b) applying non-mainstream approaches or methods to mainstream problems, and c) linking otherwise separate bodies of knowledge	QUAL	Product	NORM
Leung, M. D.	2014	Dilettante or Renaissance Person? How the Order of Job Experiences Affects Hiring in an External Labor Market	American Sociological Review	Sociology	Individuals who compile previous experiences from disparate job categories	QUANT' (Regression)	Individual	COG
Leung, M. D., & Koppman, S.	2018	Taking a pass: How proportional prejudice and decisions not to hire reproduce gender segregation	American Journal of Sociology	Sociology	Job applicants whose gender does not match the occupation stereotype	QUANT' (Regression)	Individual	NORM
Leung, M. D., & Sharkey, A. J.	2014	Out of Sight, Out of Mind? Evidence of Perceptual Factors in the Multiple-Category Discount	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Individuals affiliated with multiple, distant social categories	MIXED	Individual	COG
Lin, Y., Evans, J. A., & Wu, L.	2022	New directions in science emerge from disconnection and discord	Journal of Informetrics	Other	Academic papers drawing upon unusual combinations of previously unconnected fields	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	INNO
Litov, L. P., Moreton, P., & Zenger, T. R.	2012	Corporate Strategy, Analyst Coverage, and the Uniqueness Paradox	Management Science	Management and Organization	Companies developing a competitive strategy that departs from the standard in its primary industry	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	NORM
Lo, J. Y.-C., & Kennedy, M. T.	2014	Approval in Nanotechnology Patents: Micro and Macro Factors That Affect Reactions to Category Blending	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Patents that incorporate combinations of primary classes which are not commonly seen in other patents	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	COG

Lord, C. G., Desforges, D. M., Ramsey, S. L., Trezza, G. R., & Lepper, M. R.	1991	Typicality effects in attitude-behavior consistency: Effects of category discrimination and category knowledge	Journal of Experimental Social Psychology	Psychology	Individuals who lack the prototypical characteristics of a social group	QUANT' (Experiment)	Individual	COG
Lovclace, J. B., Bundy, J., Pollock, T. G., & Hambrick, D. C.	2022	The push and pull of attaining CEO celebrity: A media routines perspective	Academy of Management Journal	Management and Organization	a) Firms engaging in strategic behaviors that deviate from their industries' norms and b) CEOs having minority status	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	NORM
McDonald, R. M., & Allen, R. T.	2021	A Spanner in the Works: Category-Spanning Entrants and Audience Valuation of Incumbents	Strategy Science	Management and Organization	Startups combining previously unconnected categories.	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Mervis, C., & Rosch, E.	1981	Categorization of Natural Objects	Annual Review of Psychology	Psychology	Objects not sharing salient features with members of the focal category and 2) sharing features and properties with members of contrast categories	THEO	Product	COG
Miller, D., & Chen, M.-J.	1996	Nonconformity in Competitive Repertoires: A Sociological View of Markets	Social Forces	Sociology	Organizations that emphasize market-oriented plays rarely used by competitors or that avoid actions frequently used by rivals	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	INNO
Mitsuhashi, H., & Alcantara, L. L.	2021	Off the rivals' radar in emerging market segments: Non-mutual rival recognition between new firms and incumbents	Long Range Planning	Management and Organization	Organizations deviating from incumbents' prototype of rivals owing to differences in features	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Mugge, R., & Dahl, D. W.	2013	Seeking the Ideal Level of Design Newness: Consumer Response to Radical and Incremental Product Design: Seeking the Ideal Level of Design Newness	Journal of Product Innovation Management	Other	A product design that departs from the established design of a specific product category	QUANT' (Experiment)	Product	COG
Mukherjee, S., Uzzi, B., Jones, B., & Stringer, M.	2016	A New Method for Identifying Recombinations of Existing Knowledge Associated with High-Impact Innovation: Innovation Combined with Existing Technology	Journal of Product Innovation Management	Other	Academic papers combining contributions that are unlikely to be linked in prior work	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	INNO
Negro, G., & Leung, M. D.	2013	"Actual" and Perceptual Effects of Category Spanning	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Wine producers that combine elements from multiple winemaking styles	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Negro, G., Hannan, M. T., & Rao, H.	2010	Categorical contrast and audience appeal: Niche width and critical success in winemaking	Industrial and Corporate Change	Management and Organization	Wine producers that combine elements from multiple winemaking styles	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	COG

Negro, G., Hannan, M. T., & Rao, H.	2011	Category Reinterpretation and Defection: Modernism and Tradition in Italian Winemaking	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Wine producers that combine elements from multiple winemaking styles	QUANT (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Noseworthy, T. J., Murray, K. B., & Di Muro, F.	2018	When Two Wrongs Make a Right: Using Conjunctive Enablers to Enhance Evaluations for Extremely Incongruent New Products	Journal of Consumer Research	Marketing	Products featuring a combination of elements that are incongruent with those found in other products within the same category.	QUANT (Experiment)	Product	COG
Palmer, S. E., Schloss, K. B., & Sammartino, J.	2013	Visual Aesthetics and Human Preference	Annual Review of Psychology	Psychology	Objects not conforming to categorical prototypes	THEO	Product	COG
Paoletta, L., & Durand, R.	2016	Category Spanning, Evaluation, and Performance: Revised Theory and Test on the Corporate Law Market	Academy of Management Journal	Management and Organization	Companies combining expertise from multiple domains	QUANT (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Parker, O., Mui, R., & Titus, V.	2020	Unwelcome voices: The gender bias-mitigating potential of unconventionality	Strategic Management Journal	Management and Organization	Movies proposing an uncommon mix of elements from various genres	QUANT (Regression)	Product	NORM
Pentland, B. T., Hærem, T., & Hillison, D.	2011	The (N)Ever-Changing World: Stability and Change in Organizational Routines	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Sequences of actions that differ from the usual pattern in a routine	QUANT (Regression)	Product	INNO
Phillips, D. J., & Zuckerman, E. W.	2001	Middle-Status Conformity: Theoretical Restatement and Empirical Demonstration in Two Markets	American Journal of Sociology	Sociology	Firms crossing boundaries between market segments	QUAL	Organizational	NORM
Phillips, D. J., Turco, C. J., & Zuckerman, E. W.	2013	Betrayal as Market Barrier: Identity-Based Limits to Diversification among High-Status Corporate Law Firms	American Journal of Sociology	Sociology	Firms crossing boundaries between market segments	QUANT (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Piters, R., & Stokmans, M. J. W.	1997	The influence of typicality of book covers on preferences	The XXII International Colloquium of Economic Psychology	Psychology	Products that incorporate features that are unrelated to a category prototype	QUANT (Experiment)	Product	COG
Pontikes, E. G.	2012	Two Sides of the Same Coin: How Ambiguous Classification Affects Multiple Audiences' Evaluations	Administrative Science Quarterly	Management and Organization	Firms affiliating with multiple ambiguous categories	QUANT (Regression)	Organizational	COG

Pontikes, E. G., & Hannan, M.	2014	An Ecology of Social Categories	Sociological Science	Sociology	Organizations combining features from multiple dissimilar categories	THEO	Organizational	COG
Popielarz, P. A., & McPherson, J. M.	1995	On the Edge or In Between: Niche Position, Niche Overlap, and the Duration of Voluntary Association Memberships	American Journal of Sociology	Sociology	Employees whose gender does not match the dominant gender in the organization	QUANT' (Regression)	Individual	NORM
Rao, H., Monin, P., & Durand, R.	2003	Institutional Change in Toque Ville: Nouvelle Cuisine as an Identity Movement in French Gastronomy	American Journal of Sociology	Sociology	Actors embracing new logics in opposition to the dominant cultural and institutional code	QUANT' (Regression)	Individual	NORM
Rao, H., Monin, P., & Durand, R.	2005	Border Crossing: Bricolage and the Erosion of Categorical Boundaries in French Gastronomy	American Sociological Review	Sociology	Organizations borrowing elements from oppositional categories	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Reber, R., Schwarz, N., & Winkielman, P.	2004	Processing Fluency and Aesthetic Pleasure: Is Beauty in the Perceiver's Processing Experience?	Personality and Social Psychology Review	Psychology	Objects not conforming to categorical prototypes	THEO	Product	COG
Reschke, B. P., & Leung, M. D.	2022	Variety is the Spice of Life: Heterogeneity in Evaluator Engagement and the Valuation of Atypicality	Research in the Sociology of Organizations	Sociology	Actors who propose a particular rare combination of categories	QUANT' (Regression)	Individual	COG
Rindova, V., Dalpiaz, E., & Ravasi, D.	2011	A Cultural Quest: A Study of Organizational Use of New Cultural Resources in Strategy Formation	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Organizations engaging in strategies of action that depart from industry conventions	QUAL	Organizational	NORM
Rosch, E.	1973	Natural Categories	Cognitive Psychology	Psychology	Objects not sharing salient features with members of the focal category and 2) sharing features and properties with members of contrast categories	QUANT' (Experiment)	Product	COG
Rosch, E.	1978	Principles of categorization	Cognition and categorization	Psychology	Objects not sharing salient features with members of the focal category and 2) sharing features and properties with members of contrast categories	QUANT' (Experiment)	Product	COG
Rosch, E., & Mervis, C.	1975	Family resemblances: Studies in the internal structure of categories	Cognitive Psychology	Psychology	Objects not sharing salient features with members of the focal category and 2) sharing features and properties with members of contrast categories	QUANT' (Experiment)	Product	COG

Ruef, M., & Patterson, K.	2009	Credit and Classification: The Impact of Industry Boundaries in Nineteenth-Century America	Administrative Science Quarterly	Management and Organization	Organizations that operate across multiple unrelated categories	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Scarpi, D., Pizzi, G., & Raggiotto, F.	2019	The extraordinary attraction of being ordinary: A moderated mediation model of purchase for prototypical products	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	Management and Organization	Products sharing fewer features with the typical design form of their respective categories	QUANT' (Experiment)	Product	COG
Schilling, M. A., & Green, E.	2011	Recombinant search and breakthrough idea generation: An analysis of high impact papers in the social sciences	Research Policy	Other	Academic papers combining fields that are unlikely to be linked in prior work	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	INNO
Schnurr, B.	2017	The impact of atypical product design on consumer product and brand perception	Journal of Brand Management	Marketing	Products with design features deviating from the typical design of other products in the same segment	QUANT' (Experiment)	Product	COG
Silver, D., Childress, C., Lee, M., Slez, A., & Dias, F.	2022	Balancing Categorical Conventionality in Music	American Journal of Sociology	Sociology	Bands combining multiple genres that do not co-occur regularly	QUANT' (Regression)	Individual	COG
Silvestri, D., Riccaboni, M., & Della Malva, A.	2018	Sailing in all winds: Technological search over the business cycle.	Research Policy	Other	Patents that combine distant technological components rarely connected in the past	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	INNO
Simonson, I., & Nowlis, S. M.	2000	The Role of Explanations and Need for Uniqueness in Consumer Decision Making: Unconventional Choices Based on Reasons	Journal of Consumer Research	<i>Marketing</i>	Options that are not selected by the majority of people	QUANT' (Experiment)	Product	NORM
Sgourev, S. V., & Althuizen, N.	2014	“Notable” or “Not Able”: When Are Acts of Inconsistency Rewarded?	American Sociological Review	Sociology	Artists that combine multiple inconsistent artistic styles in their work	QUANT' (Experiment)	Individual	INNO
Smith, E.	2011	Identities as Lenses: How Organizational Identity Affects Audiences' Evaluation of Organizational Performance	Administrative Science Quarterly	Management and Organization	Organizations with combinations of attributes that deviate from an average, hypothetical firm of the same category	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Smith, E. B., & Gai, S. L.	2017	Institutional interruption: A relational account of the growth and decline of product heterogeneity in the global hedge fund industry	Industrial and Corporate Change	Management and Organization	Organizations with combinations of attributes that deviate from an average, hypothetical firm of the same category	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	COG

Smith, E., & Chae, H.	2016	“We do what we must, and call it by the best names”: Can deliberate names offset the consequences of organizational atypicality?: Deliberate Naming	Strategic Management Journal	Management and Organization	Organizations with combinations of attributes that deviate from an average, hypothetical firm of the same category	QUANT' (Regression)	Organizational	NORM
Smith, E., & Chae, H.	2017	The Effect of Organizational Atypicality on Reference Group Selection and Performance Evaluation	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Firms whose manager employed a unique combination of competitive choices compared to most other firms in the same industry	QUANT' (Experiment)	Organizational	NORM
Sonenshein, S., Nault, K., & Obodaru, O.	2017	Competition of a different flavor: How a strategic group identity shapes competition and cooperation	Administrative Science Quarterly	Management and Organization	Firms deviating from their group's prototypical characteristics and identity	QUAL	Organizational	NORM
Stafford, T. F., & Stafford, M. R.	2002	The Advantages of Atypical Advertisements for Stereotyped Product Categories	Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising	Marketing	Ads sending messages which are prototypical of the product category	QUANT' (Experiment)	Product	COG
Taeuscher, K., Zhao, E. Y., & Lounsbury, M.	2022	Categories and narratives as sources of distinctiveness: Cultural entrepreneurship within and across categories	Strategic Management Journal	Management and Organization	Narratives deviating from the prototypical content in the listing's category	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	COG
Toubia, O., & Netzer, O.	2017	Idea generation, creativity, and prototypicality	Marketing Science	Marketing	Ideas that combine concepts in a way that is different from the typical arrangement of concepts found in other related ideas	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	INNO
Ubisch, S. S. V., & Wang, P.	2022	Typical Products for Outside Audiences: The Role of Typicality When Products Traverse Countries.	Strategic Organization	Management and Organization	Movies not adhering to the genre-based centroid	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	COG
Uzzi, B., Mukherjee, S., Stringer, M., & Jones, B.	2013	Atypical Combinations and Scientific Impact	Science	Other	Academic papers combining contributions that are unlikely to be linked in prior work	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	INNO
van Ooijen, I., Fransen, M. L., Verlegh, P. W. J., & Smit, E. G.	2016	Atypical food packaging affects the persuasive impact of product claims	Food Quality and Preference	Marketing	Products that incorporate features that are unrelated to a category prototype	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	COG
Vossen, A., & Ihl, C.	2020	More than words! How narrative anchoring and enrichment help to balance differentiation and conformity of entrepreneurial products	Journal of Business Venturing	Management and Organization	Games that combine elements from multiple, dissimilar categories	QUANT' (Regression)	Product	COG

Wagner, C. S., Cai, X., & Mukherjee, S.	2020	China's scholarship shows atypical referencing patterns	Scientometrics	Other	Academic papers combining contributions that are unlikely to be linked in prior work	QUANT (Regression)	Product	INNO
Wagner, C. S., Whetsell, T. A., & Mukherjee, S.	2019	International research collaboration: Novelty, conventionality, and atypicality in knowledge recombination	Research Policy	Other	Academic papers combining contributions that are unlikely to be linked in prior work	QUANT (Regression)	Product	INNO
Wang, J., Veugelers, R., & Stephan, P.	2017	Bias against novelty in science: A cautionary tale for users of bibliometric indicators	Research Policy	Other	Academic papers combining contributions that are unlikely to be linked in prior work	QUANT (Regression)	Product	INNO
Wei, Y. M.	2020	The similarity network of motion pictures	Management Science	Management and Organization	Movies that combine elements distinct from those commonly found in similar films	QUANT (Regression)	Product	INNO
Wei, Y. M., Hong, J., & Tellis, G. J.	2022	Machine Learning for Creativity: Using Similarity Networks to Design Better Crowdfunding Projects	Journal of Marketing	Marketing	Crowdfunding projects that combine elements distinct from those commonly found in similar projects	QUANT (Regression)	Product	INNO
Wechtler, H. M., Lee, C. I., Heyden, M. L., Felps, W., & Lee, T. W.	2022	The nonlinear relationship between atypical applicant experience and hiring: The red flags perspective	Journal of Applied Psychology	Psychology	Job applicants with unconventional (over or under experienced) levels of experience relative to the applicant pool	QUANT (Regression)	Individual	INNO
Winkielman, P., Halberstadt, J., Fazendeiro, T., & Catty, S.	2006	Prototypes Are Attractive Because They Are Easy on the Mind	Psychological Science	Psychology	Configurations of elements that departure from prototypical patterns	QUANT (Experiment)	Product	COG
Younkin, P., & Kashkooli, K.	2020	Stay True to Your Roots? Category Distance, Hierarchy, and the Performance of New Entrants in the Music Industry	Organization Science	Management and Organization	Songs combining distant genres	MIXED	Product	COG
Yu, W. H., & Kuo, J. C. L.	2021	Gender-Atypical Occupations and Instability of Intimate Unions: Examining the Relationship and Mechanisms	Socius	Sociology	Individuals working in occupations with larger shares of the other sex	QUANT (Regression)	Individual	NORM
Zhao, E. Y., Ishihara, M., & Lounsbury, M.	2013	Overcoming the Illegitimacy Discount: Cultural Entrepreneurship in the US Feature Film Industry	Organization Studies	Management and Organization	Movies that combine elements from multiple genres	QUANT (Regression)	Product	COG

Zuckerman, E. W.	1999	The Categorical Imperative: Securities Analysts and the Illegitimacy Discount	American Journal of Sociology	Sociology	Companies that do not easily fit into to generalized industry categories	QUANT (Regression)	Organizational	COG
Zuckerman, E. W.	2017	The Categorical Imperative Revisited: Implications of Categorization as a Theoretical Tool	Research in the Sociology of Organizations	Sociology	Unconventional configurations of features/actions within defined categories	THEO	Organizational	COG
Zuckerman, E. W., Kim, T., Ukanwa, K., & von Rittmann, J.	2003	Robust Identities or Nonentities? Typecasting in the Feature-Film Labor Market	American Journal of Sociology	Sociology	Actors whose work experience spans more film genres	MIXED	Individual	COG