

# Billur Aksoy

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Available for Interviews at the ASSA 2019 Meeting in Atlanta

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Public Economics, Behavioral Economics, and Experimental Economics

## EDUCATION

Ph.D. Economics, Texas A&M University 2013 - Expected May 2019

*Advisors:* Catherine Eckel and Silvana Krasteva

M.S. Economics, University of Southampton 2011

B.A. Economics, Summa Cum Laude, Ankara University 2010

## PUBLICATIONS

Aksoy, Billur, Haley Harwell, Ada Kovaliukaite, and Catherine Eckel. **“Measuring Trust: A Reinvestigation”** *Southern Economic Journal*. 2018; 84(4): 992-1000.

Aksoy, Billur, Catherine Eckel and Rick Wilson. **“Can I Rely on You?”** *Games*. 2018; 9(4): 81.

## WORKING PAPERS

**“When Does Less Information Translate into More Giving to Public Goods?”** with Silvana Krasteva (under review) (**Job Market Paper**)

**“The Effects of Scarcity on Cheating and In-Group Favoritism”** with Marco Palma (Revise and Resubmit at *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*)

## WORKS IN PROGRESS

**“Pocket Aces: Commitment against Smartphone Usage for Students”** with Lester Lusher

**“Workers Exert More Effort for Mission-Oriented Jobs”** with Catherine Eckel and Angela De Oliveira

**“Endogenous Information Acquisition in Public Goods”** with Silvana Krasteva

**“Are Women Punished More for Cheating?”** with Catherine Eckel with undergraduate students Roberto Acevedo, Blake Dallas, Rafael Torres, and Diana Tudor

**“The Effect of Scarcity on Trust: Evidence from Coffee Farmers in Guatemala”** with Marco Palma

## EXTERNAL GRANTS

National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant in Economics (SES-1756994) 03/15/2018 - 2/29/2020. \$20,055. With Silvana Krasteva.

## RESEARCH HONORS AND AWARDS

U.S. Senator Phil Gramm Doctoral Fellowship (excellence in both research and teaching), Texas A&M (2018)

Summer Time for Advancement in Research (STAR) Award, College of Liberal Arts, Texas A&M (2017)

Best Fourth Year Paper Presentation Award, Department of Economics, Texas A&M (2017)

S. Charles Maurice Fellowship in Economics, Department of Economics, Texas A&M (2017)

Dr. John Van Huyck Fellowship, Department of Economics, Texas A&M (2016)

Private Enterprise Research Center Bradley Fellow, Texas A&M (2016-17)

<b>TEACHING HONORS AND AWARDS</b>	Outstanding Graduate Instructor, Department of Economics, Texas A&M (Fall 2015) Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Economics, Texas A&M (Spring 2015)
<b>OTHER PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT</b>	Professional Development Support Award, College of Liberal Arts, Texas A&M (2015) Graduate Assistantship, Texas A&M (2013-present) Jean Monnet Scholarship, European Union Pre-Accession Financial Assistance Program for Turkey (2010-2011) Erasmus Student Exchange Program Scholarship, European Union (2009) Outstanding Economics Student Fellowship, Turkish Economic Association (2007-2010)
<b>RESEARCH EXPERIENCE</b>	Research Assistant, Catherine Eckel, Texas A&M (Summer 2015, Spring 2017, Spring 2018, Summer 2018 & Fall 2018) Research Assistant, Silvana Krasteva, Texas A&M (Summer 2016) Research Assistant, Dennis W. Jansen, Texas A&M (Spring 2014 & Fall 2014) Project Assistant, Turkmen Goksel, Ankara University, (2012-2013)
<b>TEACHING EXPERIENCE</b>	<p><b>Instructor</b> Experimental Economics, Texas A&amp;M, Fall 2017 Class Size: 47, Mean Rating: <b>4.94</b>/5, Department Average: 4.62 Principles of Microeconomics, Texas A&amp;M, Fall 2015 Class Size: 198, Mean Rating: <b>4.84</b>/5, Department Average: 4.08</p> <p><b>Undergraduate Research Mentor</b> Directed Studies, Texas A&amp;M, Spring 2018 with Catherine Eckel, Class Size: 4, Rating: N/A</p> <p><b>Teaching Assistant</b> Introduction to Econometrics, Texas A&amp;M, Spring 2016 (Steven Puller) Mean Rating: 4.82/5 Economic Data Analysis, Texas A&amp;M, Spring 2015 (Craig Schulman) Mean Rating: 4.65/5 Econometrics-II, Ankara University, Spring 2013 (Irfan Civcir) Mean Rating: N/A Calculus-II, Ankara University, Spring 2013 (Esen Agli) Mean Rating: N/A</p>
<b>CONFERENCE PRESENTA- TIONS</b>	<p>2018: Southern Economic Association Conference, Washington D.C. (planned) North-American Economic Science Association, Guatemala Decision Making for Others Meeting (<i>poster</i>), The Netherlands Economic Science Association World Meeting, Germany Texas Experimental Association Symposium, San Antonio, TX NYU-CESS Experimental Political Science Conference (<i>poster</i>), NYC, NY</p> <p>2017: Southern Economic Association Conference, Tampa, FL Texas Theory Camp, College Station, TX University of Chicago Science of Philanthropy Initiative Conference, Chicago, IL 68° North Conference on Behavioral Economics in Svolvær, Norway Economic Science Association World Meeting, San Diego, CA 7th Biennial Conference on Social Dilemmas, Amherst, MA 5th Spring School in Behavioral Economics (<i>poster</i>), San Diego, CA</p> <p>2016: Southern Economic Association Conference, Washington D.C. North-American Economic Science Association, Tucson, AZ Texas Experimental Association Symposium, Houston (<i>poster</i>), TX</p> <p>2015: North-American Economic Science Association, Dallas, TX</p>

**WORKSHOP  
PARTICIPATION**

- 2018: Recent Advances in the Economics of Philanthropy, WZB, Germany
- 2017: FAIR- The Choice Lab PhD Workshop, NHH Norwegian School of Economics  
5th Spring School in Behavioral Economics, UC San Diego
- 2016: The International Foundation for Research in Experimental Economics  
(IFREE) 21st Graduate Student Workshop, Chapman University
- 2015: Interdisciplinary Workshop on Cooperation, Conflict and the Evolution of  
Sociality, Texas A&M  
SED Doctoral School in Experimental Economics, Bilgi University

**PROFESSIONAL  
ACTIVITIES**

**Refereeing:** Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, American Political Science Review

**Service:** Mentor for Undergraduate Students at Aggie Graduate and Professional Community Club, TAMU; Mentor for Women in Economics Club, TAMU.

**Member** of American Economic Association, CSWEP, Economic Science Association, Southern Economic Association.

**ABSTRACTS  
OF  
WORKING  
PAPERS**

**“When Does Less Information Translate into More Giving to Public Goods?”**  
with Silvana Krasteva (under review) (**Job Market Paper**)  
*Funded by a National Science Foundation Dissertation Improvement Grant*

Most donors make contributions to public goods without doing any research. Organizations that aim to increase cooperation can encourage more informed giving by providing more and detailed information to society. However, information provision is costly and organizations have limited resources. Thus, it is important for these organizations to consider the benefits of such provision. This paper investigates the capacity of information to increase public good contributions. We theoretically and experimentally examine the impact of information provision on voluntary contributions to a linear public good with an uncertain marginal per-capita return (MPCR). Uninformed subjects make contribution decisions based only on the expected MPCR (i.e. the prior distribution), while informed subjects observe the realized MPCR before contributing. Using a theoretical model of other-regarding preferences, we find that the impact of information on average contributions crucially depends on the generosity level of the population, modeled as a stochastic increase in the pro-social preferences. In particular, a less generous population substantially increases contributions in response to good news of higher than expected MPCR and reduces contributions relatively little in response to bad news of lower than expected MPCR. The opposite is true for a more generous population. Thus, the overall impact of information is to increase (reduce) average contributions when the population is less (more) generous. We find strong support for these theoretical predictions using a two-stage lab experiment. First, we measure subjects' levels of generosity in the public good game using an online experiment. Then using the data collected in the online experiment, we control for the level of generosity in the lab. Our findings are in line with the theoretical predictions, and suggest that a more targeted information provision may be a successful strategy to improve contributions to public goods.

**“The Effects of Scarcity on Cheating and In-Group Favoritism”** with Marco Palma (under review)

We study the impact of scarcity on cheating and in-group favoritism using a two-stage lab-in-the-field experiment with low-income coffee farmers in a small and isolated village in Guatemala. During the coffee harvesting months, farmers in this village experience a significant income boost from selling their coffee beans. However, during the non-harvesting months, they experience a substantial decline in income, inducing a pronounced state of scarcity, while other factors remain similar. Using this distinctive variance in income, we first conduct our experiment before the coffee harvest (Scarcity

period). We then repeat the experiment with the same group of subjects during the harvest season (Abundance period). First, using the Fischbacher and Follmi-Heusi (2013) die-roll paradigm, we find that subjects cheat at high levels in both periods when the beneficiary of the cheating is oneself. And scarcity does not impact this cheating behavior. Secondly, we find significant in-group favoritism for cheating in the Abundance period, which disappears during the Scarcity period. Finally, using a dictator game, we show that this finding holds when the cost of favoring an in-group member is monetary rather than moral.

## REFERENCES

### **Catherine Eckel**

University Distinguished Professor  
Department of Economics  
Texas A&M University  
College Station, TX 77843  
e-mail: ceckel@tamu.edu  
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### **Silvana Krasteva**

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### **Timothy Gronberg**

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### **Marco Palma**

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