

# FELIX CHOPRA

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## PRE-DOCTORAL STUDIES

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University of Bonn, B.Sc. in Mathematics, 2011 – 2014

University of Bonn, M.Sc. in Mathematics (with distinction), 2014 – 2016

University of Bonn, B.Sc. in Economics (with distinction), 2012 – 2016

## DOCTORAL STUDIES

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University of Bonn, Ph.D. in Economics, 2016 – 2022 (expected)

## REFERENCES

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**Prof. Armin Falk**

University of Bonn and briq  
armin.falk@briq-institute.org

**Prof. Lorenz Goette**

University of Bonn  
lorenz.goette@uni-bonn.de

**Prof. Florian Zimmermann**

University of Bonn and briq  
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**Prof. Thomas Graeber**

Harvard Business School  
tgraeber@hbs.edu

## RESEARCH & TEACHING FIELDS

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Applied Microeconomics, Behavioral Economics

## JOB MARKET PAPER

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**“The Joneses are Broke: Media Persuasion and Consumption”**

single-authored

[\[Link to Paper\]](#)

[\[Pre-Analysis Plan\]](#)

How and to what extent can mass media programs influence individual consumption and savings decisions? I study this question by examining the impact of the *Dave Ramsey Show*, an iconic US radio talk show encouraging people to spend less and save more. To measure consumption, I draw on detailed expenditure records from a large household scanner panel. Exploiting the quasi-natural experiment created by the staggered expansion of the radio show from 2004 to 2019, I find that exposure to the radio show’s broadcast decreases household expenditures. This decrease in expenditures is driven by households purchasing fewer goods and is larger among households with high expenditures relative to their income. In a survey experiment, I show that exposure to the radio show has a persistent, negative effect on people’s attitudes towards consumption and debt. My findings highlight the potential of entertaining mass media programs for behavioral interventions aimed at changing people’s financial decisions. More generally, I provide causal evidence of mass media persuasion in the core economic domain of consumption and savings decisions.

## PUBLICATIONS

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**“Do People Demand Fact-Checked News? Evidence from U.S. Democrats”** [\[Link to Paper\]](#)  
with Ingar Haaland and Christopher Roth, *Journal of Public Economics* (*forthcoming*).

In a large-scale online experiment with U.S. Democrats, we examine how the demand for a newsletter about an economic relief plan changes when the newsletter content is fact-checked. We first document an overall muted demand for fact-checking when the newsletter features stories from an ideologically aligned source, even though fact-checking increases the perceived accuracy of the newsletter. The average impact of fact-checking masks substantial heterogeneity by ideology: fact-checking reduces demand among Democrats with strong ideological views and increases demand among ideologically moderate Democrats. Furthermore, fact-checking increases demand among all Democrats when the newsletter features stories from an ideologically non-aligned source.

## WORKING PAPERS

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**“Fighting Climate Change: The Role of Norms, Preferences, and Moral Values”** [\[Link to Paper\]](#)  
with Peter Andre, Teodora Boneva, and Armin Falk. Under Review.

We document individual willingness to fight climate change and its behavioral determinants in a large representative sample of US adults. Willingness to fight climate change – as measured through an incentivized donation decision – is highly heterogeneous across the population. Individual beliefs about social norms, economic preferences such as patience and altruism, as well as universal moral values positively predict climate preferences. Moreover, we document systematic misperceptions of prevalent social norms. Respondents vastly underestimate the prevalence of climate-friendly behaviors and norms among their fellow citizens. Providing respondents with correct information causally raises individual willingness to fight climate change as well as individual support for climate policies. The effects are strongest for individuals who are skeptical about the existence and threat of global warming.

**“Intertemporal Altruism”** [\[Link to Paper\]](#)  
with Philipp Eisenhauer, Armin Falk, and Thomas Graeber. Under Review.

Most prosocial decisions involve intertemporal tradeoffs. Yet, the *timing* of prosocial utility flows is ambiguous and has largely been disregarded in models of other-regarding preferences. We study the behavioral implications of the time structure of prosocial utility, leveraging a conceptual distinction between *consequence-dated* and *choice-dated* utility flows. We conduct a high-stakes donation experiment that comprehensively characterizes discounting behavior in self-other tradeoffs and allows us to identify different prosocial motives from their distinct time profiles. Our data can only be explained by a combination of choice- and consequence-dated prosocial utility. Both motives are pervasive and negatively correlated at the individual level.

**“Do People Value More Informative News?”** [\[Link to Paper\]](#)  
with Ingar Haaland and Christopher Roth.

Drawing on representative samples of the U.S. population with almost 12,000 respondents in total, we measure and experimentally vary people’s beliefs about the informativeness of news articles. Inconsistent with the desire for more information being the dominant motive for people’s news consumption, treated respondents who think that a newspaper is less likely to suppress information reduce their demand for news from this outlet. This finding suggests that people have other motives to read news that sometimes conflict with their desire for more information. We discuss the implications of our findings for the regulation of media markets.

## WORK IN PROGRESS

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### **“Global Survey on Climate Change Preferences”**

with Peter Andre, Teodora Boneva, and Armin Falk. Project status: Field work completed.

### **“Intergenerational Fairness Preferences”**

with Peter Andre. Project status: Pilot study completed.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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- 2020 – 21    Lecturer, Economic Research Seminar (undergraduate), University Bonn  
2018 – 19    Teaching Assistant, Microeconomics (undergraduate), University Bonn  
2014 – 16    Teaching Assistant, Mathematical Logic (undergraduate), University Bonn  
2013 – 14    Teaching Assistant, Linear Algebra (undergraduate), University Bonn

## SEMINAR AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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- 2021        PERICLES Debate on Political Information (Bocconi University); RIDGE/LACEA-PEG Workshop on Political Economy; Belief-Based Utility Flash Talks (University of Amsterdam); Workshop on Beliefs and Information about CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions (Bavarian Academy of Sciences); TriECON Workshop on Media Economics (University of Trier); 14th RGS Econ Conference on Digitization; Verein für Socialpolitik: Annual Meeting
- 2020        University of Bonn (internal seminar)
- 2019        Stanford University SITE: Experimental Economics; Econometric Society Winter Meeting (University of Rotterdam); Conference on Structural Behavioral Economics (Institute for Behavior and Inequality, Bonn); Applied Micro Seminar (University of Bonn); University of Cologne (internal seminar); University of California San Diego Spring School in Behavioral Economics (poster)
- 2018        German Economists Abroad Meeting (University of Bonn)
- 2017        Applied Micro Brown Bag Presentation (University of Bonn)
- 2016        UCPH Workshop Passive Choices (University of Copenhagen, poster)

## REFEREEING

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American Economic Review (2x), European Economic Review, Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization

## HONORS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

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- 2020 –        Associated Member, Cluster of Excellence ECONtribute: Markets & Public Policy
- 2020        Invitation to the 7th Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting in Economic Sciences
- 2019        Excellency in Teaching Award: Best Teaching Assistant, University of Bonn
- 2019 –        Research Fellow, Collaborative Research Center Transregio 224

2017        Spring School in Behavioral Economics, San Diego (UCSD & NHH)  
2016 –       briq Student Fellow  
2016 – 22    briq Scholarship  
2015 – 16    German National Merit Foundation: Scholarship for Studies Abroad  
2012 – 16    German National Merit Foundation Scholarship

## RESEARCH FUNDING AND GRANTS

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2021        ECONtribute: Markets & Public Policy, € 10,000 (with Andre)  
2021        ECONtribute: Markets & Public Policy, € 22,500 (with Andre, Boneva, and Falk)  
2020        Collaborative Research Center Transregio 224, € 3,000  
2019        Joachim Herz Foundation: Fellowship for Interdisciplinary Economics, € 12,500  
2019        Collaborative Research Center Transregio 224, € 2,000

## MISCELLANEOUS

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**Nationality:** German; **Languages:** English (fluent), German (native); **Computational skills:** Python, R, ArcGIS, Stata, Qualtrics.

Last update: October 31, 2021