

0109. Why Some People Choose Not to Know 为什么有些人选择不知道

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1. Why Some People Choose Not to Know 为什么有些人选择不知道

Header 1	你(主动)选择得到 vs 你的伴侣会(被动)得到	实验结果
透明环境中	你选5, 他就得5 或, 你选6, 他就得1	← 55%人选 ← 45%人选
在模棱两可的环境下 (选择1)	你选5, 他就得5 或, 你选6, 他就得1	← ← 60%人选
在模棱两可的环境下 (选择2)	你选5, 他就得1 或, 你选6, 他就得5	

Despite **the plethora (n.)**过多；过量；过剩 of scientific evidence for climate change, for instance, many people still avoid **engaging** 与...建立密切关系；尽力理解 **with** facts about global warming.

Nor 也不 do they always want to know about the harsh living conditions of farm animals.

And consumers often ignore **the ethical** （有关）道德的；伦理的 **origins** of the products they purchase.

尽管有大量关于气候变化的科学证据，但许多人仍然避免接触有关全球变暖的事实。他们也并不总是想了解农场动物的恶劣生活条件。消费者常常忽视他们购买的产品的道德起源。

As behavioral scientists, we wanted to understand just how prevalent **willful 有意的；任性的；故意的 ignorance** is — as well as **why people engage in it**.

Together with our colleagues, we pooled (v.)集中资源（或材料等） data from multiple research projects that collectively involved more than 6,000 people.

We discovered that **willful ignorance** is common and harmful, with 40 percent of people choosing “not to know” the consequences of their actions to free (v.) themselves of guilt while maximizing their own earnings.

But we also found about 40 percent of people are altruistic 利他的: they seek out **rather than** avoid information about the consequences of their actions to increase the benefits to others.

作为行为科学家，我们想要了解“故意无知”的现象有多普遍，以及人们为何会这样做。我们与同事一起汇总了多个研究项目的数据，这些项目总共涉及 6,000 多人。我们发现，故意无知是常见且有害的，40% 的人选择“不知道”自己行为的后果，以摆脱负罪感，同时最大化自己的收入。但我们还发现，大约 40% 的人是利他主义者：他们寻求而不是回避有关其行为后果的信息，以增加他人的利益。

In the experiments, researchers asked **one member of each pair** to choose between two options.

The selection would determine (v.) the earnings for themselves and their partner. These decisions were made in one of two settings.

In the transparent 透明的,显而易见的 setting 环境；背景, decision-makers had information about how their choice would affect themselves and their partner.

In an ambiguous 模棱两可的；含混不清的 setting, the decision-maker knew how their choice would matter (v.)事关紧要；要紧；有重大影响 for themselves but not their teammate 同队队员；队友 — though 虽然；尽管；即使 they could request (v.)（正式或礼貌地）请求，要求 that insight 洞悉；了解.

在实验中，研究人员要求每组中的一名成员，在两个选项中进行选择。选择将决定他们自己和伴侣的收入。这些决定是在两种情况之一下做出的。在透明的环境中，决策者可以了解他们的选择，将如何影响他们自己和他们的伴侣。在模棱两可的环境中，决策者知道他们的选择，对他们自己，而不是对他们的队友很重要——尽管他们可以要求获得这种洞察力。

For example, participants in several studies had to decide between receiving either \$5 or \$6.

In the transparent setting, if they chose \$5 for themselves, they knew their partner would also receive \$5.

If, however, they chose \$6 for themselves, they knew their partner would receive only \$1 in return.

例如，多项研究的参与者，必须在接受 5 美元还是 6 美元之间，做出决定。在透明环境中，如果他们为自己选择 5 美元，他们知道他们的伴侣也会收到 5 美元。然而，如果他们为自己选择 6 美元，他们知道他们的伴侣只会得到 1 美元的回报。

In the ambiguous setting, the payout (n.) 付出的巨款 for partners worked differently. This time, there were two possible scenarios 设想；方案；预测.

In one, if the decision-maker selected \$6 for themselves, their partner would receive \$1, and if the decision-maker choose \$5, their partner would receive \$5 (just like the transparent case).

But in a second scenario 设想；方案；预测, the decision-maker could pick \$6 and their partner would receive \$5, or the decision-maker could select \$5 and their partner would receive \$1.

在模棱两可的环境下，合作伙伴的支付方式有所不同。这一次，有两种可能的情况：在一种情况下，如果决策者为自己选择 6 美元，他们的伙伴将收到 1 美元；如果决策者选择 5 美元，他们的伙伴将收到 5 美元（就像透明案例一样）。但在第二种情况下，决策者可以选择 6 美元，他们的合作伙伴将收到 5 美元，或者决策者可以选择 5 美元，他们的合作伙伴将收到 1 美元。

Example 1. 案例

scenario

(n.) a description of how things might happen in the future 设想；方案；预测

- Let me suggest a possible scenario . 我来设想一种可能出现的情况。
- a nightmare scenario 最坏的可能

The decision-maker **knew** these two systems existed and **understood** how to receive a higher payout for themselves — but **they were not initially aware of** which scenario they were in.

Interestingly, the decision-maker had the opportunity to resolve that ambiguity (n.) 模棱两可；不明确: by clicking a button, they could learn which payout scheme would apply to their decision.

主 This option 后定 to learn more 谓 **offered** scientists **a way** of assessing **willful ignorance**.

决策者知道这两个系统的存在，并且了解如何为他们两人一起获得更高的支付，但他们最初并不知道自己处于哪种情况中。有趣的是，决策者有机会来解决这种模糊：通过按按钮，他们就能知道他们身处哪种支付方案中。这种给予被试者机会，来了解更多信息的选择，为科学家提供了一种评估"故意无知"的方法。

Across all studies, we found that when participants were told the consequences of their choices — the transparent setting — the majority (55 percent) chose (v.) the altruistic 利他的 option.

That is, they **gave up** a part of their earning **to share equally with** their partner. The remaining 45 percent **knowingly 故意地；蓄意地 kept a bigger payout** at a cost to their partner.

在所有研究中，我们发现，当参与者被告知他们选择的后果（透明环境）时，大多数人（55%）选择了利他主义选项。也就是说，他们放弃了一部分收入，与伴侣平均分享。剩下的45%的人故意以牺牲合作伙伴的利益为代价，来保留更大的支出。

In the ambiguous setting, however, 40 percent of participants chose to remain ignorant.

主 Not knowing 谓 freed (v.) them to be selfish: 60 percent of people in the ignorant group chose (v.) a higher personal payout in scenarios 设想；方案；预测 where this choice came **at the expense of** their partner.

Among those **who requested more information**, 主 36 percent 谓 knowingly kept (v.) a higher payout **at a cost** to their partner.

然而，在模棱两可的环境中，40%的参与者选择保持无知。无知让他们变得自私：无知群体中60%的人选择了更高的个人支出，而这种选择是以牺牲伴侣为代价的。在那些要求提供更多信息的人中，36%的人故意以牺牲合作伙伴的利益为代价，来维持更高的报酬。

That means the overall balance **tipped (v.) (使) 倾斜，倾倒，翻覆 toward** selfishness when participants **had the option** to avoid information.

Only 39 percent of people in the ambiguous setting **made the choice** that

ultimately 最终；最后；终归 benefited (v.) their partner — **a significant drop** from 55 percent in the transparent condition.

这意味着当参与者可以选择回避信息时，整体平衡就会倾向于自私。在模糊环境下，只有 39% 的人做出了最终有利于伴侣的选择——与透明环境下的 55% 相比，这一比例显著下降。

Example 2. 案例

tip

(n.) the thin pointed end of sth 尖端；尖儿；端

- the tips of your fingers 手指尖

But **how do we know** if ignorance in the ambiguous setting was willful? **Could it be that** some people avoided information unintentionally 无意地；非故意地；非存心地? To understand this point, we conducted a second analysis **focused on** what motivates 后定 people to seek information.

但我们如何知道在模棱两可的情况下的无知, 是否是故意的呢? 难道有些人无意中回避了信息? 为了理解这一点, 我们进行了第二次分析, 重点关注人们寻求信息的动机。

In this analysis **we looked at** 主 how people who obtained (尤指经努力) 获得, 赢得 additional information 谓 behaved (v.) **in comparison with** those who were given information.

We found that 主 people who chose to receive information in the ambiguous setting 系 **were** seven percentage points **more likely** to make the altruistic choice **than** were people in the transparent setting.

In other words, our analyses identified (v.) 确认；认出；鉴定; 找到；发现 some truly altruistic actors: people who **sought information out** and then made a decision that benefitted their partner, even **at a cost to themselves**.

That means information-seeking **is at least partially motivated by** the desire to do right. **By the same token** 同样地；出于同样原因, the finding also suggests 主 choosing ignorance 谓 has value for people who want an excuse 借口；理由；辩解 to be selfish.

在这项分析中，我们比较了”主动获得额外信息”的人,与”被告知信息”的人的行为方式。我们发现，选择在模糊环境中接收信息的人,比在透明环境中的人,做出利他选择的可能性高七个百分点。换句话说，我们的分析发现了一些真正无私的行为者：这些人寻求信息，然后做出有利于他们的伴侣的决定，即使是以自己为代价。这意味着"主动寻求信息"至少部分是出于"想要正确行事"的愿望。出于同样的原因，这一发现还表明，对于那些想要为自私找借口的人来说，选择无知是有价值的。

We cannot **rule out** 把...排除在外；认为...不适合 that some people **failed to click** the button for more information **unintentionally** 无意地；非故意地；非存心地. But if confusion, laziness or even indifference (n.)漠不关心；冷淡；不感兴趣；无动于衷 **were** the only drivers of ignorance, we would not have observed any real difference in our comparison 比较.

We found that seeking information **was linked to** a clear motivation: these truly altruistic individuals wanted to benefit their partner.

As such 像这样的情况,既然是这样,因此, ignorance is at least partially driven by the desire to shield 保护某人或某物（免遭危险、伤害或不快） oneself from one’s own judgment.

我们不能排除某些人无意中未能点击"获取更多信息的按钮"。但如果困惑、懒惰甚至冷漠,是"无知"的唯一驱动因素，那么我们在比较中,就不会观察到任何真正的差异。我们发现，寻求信息与一个明确的动机有关：这些真正利他的人,希望让他们的伴侣受益。因此，"无知"至少部分是由保护自己免受自己判断的欲望驱动的。

Example 3. 案例

Table 1. as such

Header 1	Header 2
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Header 1	Header 2
<p>1.such 指代前面提到的人或事物”表示“像这样的人或事物”、“以这种名义、身份或资格”。</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She is a competent leader and has always been regarded as such by her colleagues. 她是个很有能力的领导人, 她的同事一向都是这样认为的。 • So far as I am aware, she is the author of the article, but she does not desire to be known as such. 据我所知, 她是这篇文章的作者, 但她不想让人知道她是这篇文章的作者。
<p>2.置于名词后面, 表示 in the exact sense of the word 或 in itself , 意为“就本身而论”、“..... 本身”。</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money, as such, does not bring happiness. (=in itself) 钱本身并不给人带来快乐。 • I don't oppose the plan as such, but I don't think it is proper at the present time. 我不是反对这个计划本身, 我只是认为现在实施这个计划不合时宜。
<p>3.有时用于否定句中, 表示按某词词义“算不上.....”、“并不真是.....”的意思。(It is used with a negative to indicate that a word or expression is not a very accurate description of the actual situation.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The position, as such, does not appeal to him, but the salary is a lure. 这个职位算不上对他有什么吸引力,但薪水倒是蛮有诱惑的。 • He isn't American as such, but he's spent most of his life there. 他算不上是美国人,但他一生中大部分时间都是在美国生活的。

Header 1	Header 2
<p>4.as such 位于句首，such 指代前面句子中提及的事或情况，表示“像这样的情况”、“既然是这样”，在句中用作状语，表示因果关系，因此在现代英语中有人把它当作副词 therefore 用，（说是新的“therefore”），</p> <p>不过遭到不少人反对，理由是 such 是代词，指代前面说到名词 (such in as such is in fact a pronoun and, as a result, it should have an antecedent. The sentence with as such in the beginning of the sentence can be quite confusing.)</p> <p>单纯从意义上看，位于句首as such 确有“因此”的含义，这也许“说是新的 therefore”的原因吧。两种情况的例句下面都列举。</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the age of nineteen Allen was made Master Sergeant. As such he commanded dozens of men older than himself. 19岁时，艾伦被任命为军士长。就这样，他指挥着几十个比他年长的人。 • Tim had an accident, totalled the car and broke his leg. As such, he's not in condition to go to work. 蒂姆出了车祸，撞坏了汽车，摔断了腿。既然是这样，他的身体状况不适合去工作。 • Every week, we must write a column. As such, we sometimes struggle to find ideas. 每周，我们必须写一篇专栏。因此，我们有时很难找到题材。

Our work suggests 主 some altruistic behaviors in life 谓 **are done** because people **feel pressure to do** what is expected of them.

When the consequences of choices are made clear, people may feel obliged (v.) (以法律、义务等) 强迫，迫使 to make a small sacrifice and be generous to others. But when given a chance, people may want to ignore the consequences of their actions. Ignorance shields (v.) people from knowing how their actions harm (v.) others and makes them feel (v.) less like a bad person.

我们的研究表明，生活中的一些利他行为, 是因为人们感到有压力去做别人期望他们做的事情。当选择的后果变得清晰时，人们可能会觉得有必要做出小小的牺牲, 并对他人慷慨。但一旦有机会，人们可能会想忽略自己行为的后果。无知使人们不知道自己的行为如何伤害他人，并使他们感觉自己不像一个坏人。

This presentation 提交；授予；颁发；出示 is **fertile ground** for willful ignorance because it **poses** a threat 威胁；恐吓 **to** a person's self-image, heightening the sense that — if you know what's really going on — you will have to make harder choices

to be a good person.

这份研究的展现, 为去做"故意无知"的行为, 提供了沃土, 因为它对一个人的自我形象构成了威胁, 增强了这样一种感觉: 如果你知道到底发生了什么, 你将不得不做出更艰难的选择才能成为一个好人。

If we can avoid **putting a strong moral emphasis on** decisions, it may make people **feel less threatened** and, as a result, less willfully ignorant.

如果我们能够避免"在决策中过分强调道德", 可能会减少人们的威胁感, 从而减少"故意去无知"的现象。

2. Why Some People Choose Not to Know

Despite the plethora of scientific evidence for climate change, for instance, many people still avoid engaging with facts about global warming. Nor do they always want to know about the harsh living conditions of farm animals. And consumers often ignore the ethical origins of the products they purchase.

As behavioral scientists, we wanted to understand just how prevalent willful ignorance is—as well as why people engage in it. Together with our colleagues, we pooled data from multiple research projects that collectively involved more than 6,000 people. We discovered that willful ignorance is common and harmful, with 40 percent of people choosing “not to know” the consequences of their actions to free themselves of guilt while maximizing their own earnings. But we also found about 40 percent of people are altruistic: they seek out rather than avoid information about the consequences of their actions to increase the benefits to others.

In the experiments, researchers asked one member of each pair to choose between two options. The selection would determine the earnings for themselves and their partner. These decisions were made in one of two settings. In the transparent setting, decision-makers had information about how their choice would affect themselves and their partner. In an ambiguous setting, the decision-maker knew how their choice would matter for themselves but not their teammate—though they could request that insight.

For example, participants in several studies had to decide between receiving either \$5 or \$6. In the transparent setting, if they chose \$5 for themselves, they knew their partner would also receive \$5. If, however, they chose \$6 for themselves, they knew their partner would receive only \$1 in return.

In the ambiguous setting, the payout for partners worked differently. This time, there were two possible scenarios. In one, if the decision-maker selected \$6 for themselves, their partner would receive \$1, and if the decision-maker choose \$5, their partner would receive \$5 (just like the transparent case). But in a second scenario, the decision-maker could pick \$6 and their partner would receive \$5, or the decision-maker could select \$5 and their partner would receive \$1.

The decision-maker knew these two systems existed and understood how to receive a higher payout for themselves—but they were not initially aware of which scenario they were in. Interestingly, the decision-maker had the opportunity to resolve that ambiguity: by clicking a button, they could learn which payout scheme would apply to their decision. This option to learn more offered scientists a way of assessing willful ignorance.

Across all studies, we found that when participants were told the consequences of their choices—the transparent setting—the majority (55 percent) chose the altruistic option. That is, they gave up a part of their earning to share equally with their partner. The remaining 45 percent knowingly kept a bigger payout at a cost to their partner.

In the ambiguous setting, however, 40 percent of participants chose to remain ignorant. Not knowing freed them to be selfish: 60 percent of people in the ignorant group chose a higher personal payout in scenarios where this choice came at the expense of their partner. Among those who requested more information, 36 percent knowingly kept a higher payout at a cost to their partner.

That means the overall balance tipped toward selfishness when participants had the option to avoid information. Only 39 percent of people in the ambiguous setting made the choice that ultimately benefited their partner—a significant drop from 55 percent in the transparent condition.

But how do we know if ignorance in the ambiguous setting was willful? Could it be that some people avoided information unintentionally? To understand this point, we conducted a second analysis focused on what motivates people to seek information.

In this analysis we looked at how people who obtained additional information behaved in comparison with those who were given information. We found that people who chose to receive information in the ambiguous setting were seven percentage points more likely to make the altruistic choice than were people in the transparent setting. In other words, our analyses identified some truly altruistic actors: people who sought information out and then made a decision that benefitted their partner, even at a cost to themselves. That means information-seeking is at least partially motivated by the desire to do right. By the same token, the finding also suggests choosing ignorance has value for people who want an excuse to be selfish.

We cannot rule out that some people failed to click the button for more information unintentionally. But if confusion, laziness or even indifference were the only drivers of ignorance, we would not have observed any real difference in our comparison. We found that seeking information was linked to a clear motivation: these truly altruistic individuals wanted to benefit their partner. As such, ignorance is at least partially driven by the desire to shield oneself from one's own judgment.

Our work suggests some altruistic behaviors in life are done because people feel pressure to do what is expected of them. When the consequences of choices are made clear, people may feel obliged to make a small sacrifice and be generous to others. But when given a chance, people may want to ignore the consequences of their actions. Ignorance shields people from knowing how their actions harm others and makes them feel less like a bad person.

This presentation is fertile ground for willful ignorance because it poses a threat to a person's self-image, heightening the sense that—if you know what's really going on—you will have to make harder choices to be a good person.

If we can avoid putting a strong moral emphasis on decisions, it may make people feel less threatened and, as a result, less willfully ignorant.

