MGMT 759: Moral Consumer Decision Making

(PhD Seminar)

Deborah A. Small – Spring 2, 2024

Instructor: Deborah Small   deborah.small@yale.edu

Schedule: Wednesdays 2:30-5:30pm, 3/27/24-5/8/24

Classroom Location: Evans Hall 440

Course website: Canvas

Course Overview:

The main objective of this 7-week course is to provide a deep, focused study on topics related to morality in consumer decision making. The weekly readings are intended to provide PhD level coverage of classic and current research on this topic.

For each topic we will cover, articles have been chosen (although this list might be revised), and we will discuss those in detail. Our goals with these readings will be to gain exposure to the latest ideas, to determine the main ideas and research questions driving current work in each topic area, and to develop novel related research questions. In particular, our goal each week is to generate in class the design/idea for at least one new study in the focal topic area. In addition, my goal is to help you develop the skill of reading and critiquing an academic paper. We will therefore have student lead discussions of papers and required summaries (see below).

The readings (available on Canvas) should be **read carefully** by everyone attending the class (whether enrolled or sitting in; if you are unprepared, do not show up). In addition, in each class one or two students (depending on class size) will be responsible for leading the discussion on one of the papers. This responsibility entails two things: (1) guiding discussion on a specific paper, and (2) bringing a one-page summary of that paper to class – make copies for the whole class (and post on Canvas). For the article for which you are responsible, make sure to examine the stated objective and positioning of the research, the conceptual framework and hypotheses, the methodology, the results, the actual contribution and opportunities for further research.

The target audience for this course is Consumer Behavior PhD students and other students interested in pursuing research in this special topic.

Each student will be expected to prepare the following:

(1) **Each Week**: Prior to class (*no later than then Tuesday, 10:00 pm*), you are required to submit on Canvas a <u>short</u> "idea" based on the current set of readings. In this <u>very brief response</u> (a short paragraph, or a few bullet points), you could respond to a criticism you have about one of the papers, extend the original paper theoretically (maybe through developing boundary conditions), or suggest a more appropriate research approach (methods or analysis). Some of your ideas will be discussed in class each week.

*Note although what you submit should be very brief that does not mean I expect little attention/time paid to thinking about this. To the contrary, this should be the most important/challenging action on your part—to come up with a thoughtful criticism/idea and to succinctly describe it.

(2) One goal of this seminar is to help you develop the skills to read academic papers and be able to communicate the key ideas, methods, findings, conclusions, and yes, weaknesses. To this end, every week students will help lead a discussion of a paper and will circulate a **1-page summary of that paper** [hardcopies in class, posted on Canvas, and also by email to me the evening before (*no later than Tuesday at 10:00 pm*)]. Each student will do this once or twice during the semester, depending on class size.

(3) **Research Proposal**. This includes two (2) components:

a. Presentation of your research ideas on the final meeting. This (brief) presentation should include all of the aspects of the research proposal described below.
b. Research Proposal (3-4 pages double spaced) due on May 15. The proposal must include the following: clear presentation and motivation of the problem and contribution, a <u>concise</u> mention of key findings from the literature, well developed hypotheses, and most importantly, a plan to test your hypotheses (e.g., experiment).
* Note that the proposed research idea must (generally) relate to the topics we focus on during the quarter.

Grading Components:

➤ 10% Discussion leading
➤ 50% weekly ideas (10% each)
➤ 40% Research paper
  • 5%: Paper idea outline (Due May 1)
  • 5%: In-class presentation (On May 8)
  • 40%: Final proposal (Due May 15)

Course Schedule
-- *subject to change* --

Revised: March 12, 2024

Date	Topic	Deadlines
1. March 27	Overview	
2. April 3	Charitable Giving	Idea 1
3. April 10	Moral-signaling in consumption	Idea 2
4. April 17	Consumers' ethical concerns	Idea 3
5. April 24	Moral judgments of brands and firms *This session will be held via zoom*	Idea 4
6. May 1	Deception and Manipulation	Idea 5 and Paper Idea Outline
7. May 8	Presentations	Student research presentations

Detailed Course Schedule and Reading List
-- *subject to change* --

Session 1: Introduction

Falk, A. and Nora Szech (2013). Morals and Markets. *Science,* 340, 707-11.

Haidt, J. (2007).The New Synthesis in Moral Psychology. *Science,* 316, 998-1002.

McGraw, A.P., & Tetlock, P.E. (2005). Taboo trade-offs, relational framing and the acceptability of exchanges. *Journal of Consumer Psychology,* 15, 2-15.

Small, Deborah A. and Cynthia Cryder (2016) Prosocial Consumer Behavior, *Current Opinion in Psychology: Consumer Behavior* 10, 107-111.

Silver, I. M., George Newman, and Deborah A. Small (2021), Inauthenticity aversion: Moral reactance toward tainted actors, actions, and objects *Consumer Psychology Review* 4, 70-82.

Session 2: Charitable Giving

Latane, Bibb and John Darley (1968). Group Inhibition of Bystander Intervention in Emergencies: Diffusion of Responsibility, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 8(4), 377-383

Dana, Jason, Daylian Cain, & Robyn Dawes (2006). What you don't know wont hurt me: Costly (but quiet) exit in dictator games. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 100, 193-201.

Small, Deborah A. and Uri Simonsohn (2008). Friends of victims: Personal experience and prosocial behavior. *Journal of Consumer Research,* 35(3), 532-42.

Gneezy, Uri, Elizabeth A. Keenan, & Ayelet Gneezy (2014). Avoiding overhead aversion in charity, *Science,* 346, 632-35.

Berman, Jonathan Z., Alixandra Barasch, Emma E. Levine, and Deborah A. Small (2018), Impediments to Effective Altruism: The Role of Subjective Preferences in Charitable Giving, *Psychological Science,* 29 (5), 834-44.

Session 3: Moral signaling in Consumption

Gneezy, Ayelet, Uri Gneezy, Leif D. Nelson, and Amber Brown (2010). Shared Social Responsibility: A Field Experiment in Pay-What-You-Want Pricing and Charitable Giving,", *Science,* 329 (5989), 325-327.

Tannenbaum, David, Eric Luis Uhlmann, and Daniel Diermeier (2011), Moral signals, public outrage, and immaterial harms, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 47(6) 1249-1254.

Critcher, Clayton, Yoel Inbar, & David Pizarro (2012). How Quick Decision Illuminate Moral Character. *Social Psychological and Personality Science,* 4(3), 308-15.

Zlatev, Julian J., and Dale T. Miller (2016), Selfishly Benevolent or Benevolently Selfish: When Self-interest Undermines Versus Promotes Prosocial Behavior, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes,* 137, 112-122.

Berman, Jonathan Z. and Deborah A. Small (2018), Discipline and desire: On the relative importance of willpower and purity in signaling virtue, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 76, 220-30.

Session 4: Consumers' Ethical Concerns about Products

Luchs, Michael G., Rebecca W. Naylor, Julie R. Irwin, and Rajagopal Raghunathan (2010). The sustainability liability: Potential negative effects of ethicality on product preference. *Journal of Marketing,* 74, *18-31.*

Rozin, Paul, Maureen Markwith, and Caryn Stoess (1997). Moralization and Becoming a Vegetarian. *Psychological Science,* 8(2), 67-73.

Scott, S. E., & Rozin, P. (2017). Are additives unnatural? Generality and mechanisms of additivity dominance. *Judgment and Decision Making*, *12*(6), 572-583.

De Freitas, Julian, Andrew Censi, Bryant Walker Smith, Luigi Di Lillo, Sam E. Anthony and Emilio Frazzoli (2021). From Driverless Dilemmas to More Practical Commonsense Tests for Automated Vehicles. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences,* 118(11).

Bigman, Y. E., Waytz, A., Alterovitz, R., & Gray, K. (2019). Holding robots responsible: The elements of machine morality. *Trends in cognitive sciences*, *23*(5), 365-368.

Levine, Sydney, Max Kleiman-Weiner, Laura Schulz, Joshua Tenenbaum, and Fiery Cushman (2020). The Logic of Universalization Guides Moral Judgment. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 117 (42), 26158-26169.

Session 5: Moral Judgments of Brands and Firms

Chernev, Alexander and Sean Blair (2015). Doing Well By Doing Good: The Benevolent Halo of Corporate Social Responsbility" *Journal of Consumer Research,* 41(6) 1412-1425.

Makov, Tamar and George E. Newman (2016). Economic Gains Stimulate Negative Evaluations of Corporate Sustainability Initiatives. *Nature Climate Change,* 6(9), 844-846.

Bhattacharjee, Amit, Jason Dana, and Jonathan Baron (2017). Anti-profit beliefs: How People Neglect the Societal Benefits of Profit. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 113(5), 671-696.

Silver, Ike M., Brooke Kelly, and Deborah A. Small, (2021) Selfless First Movers and Self-Interested Followers: Order of entry signals purity of motive in pursuit of the greater good. *Journal of Consumer Psychology,* 31(3), 501-17.

Session 6: Deception and Manipulation

Gneezy, Uri. "Deception: The role of consequences." *American Economic Review* 95.1 (2005): 384-394.

Sommers, Roseanna and Meirav Furth-Matzkin (2020). Consumer Psychology and the Problem of Fine-print. *Stanford Law Review.* 72, 503.

Levine, Emma E., and Shannon Duncan (2022). Deception and the Marketplace of Ideas. *Consumer Psychology Review.* 5(1), 33– 50.

Sunstein, Cass (2015). Fifty Shades of Manipulation. SSRN.