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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Marketing (expected 2010)
Yale School of Management

M.A., M.Phil., Marketing
Yale School of Management

B.A., Psychology (with honors)
University of Pennsylvania, *summa cum laude*

HONORS & AWARDS

AMA-Sheth Foundation Doctoral Consortium Fellow
Whitebox Advisors Research Grant, International Center for Finance, Yale University
Whitebox Advisors Doctoral Fellow, International Center for Finance, Yale University
Graduate Fellowship, Yale University
Summa Cum Laude, B.A., University of Pennsylvania
Benjamin Franklin Scholar Certificate, University of Pennsylvania
Dean's Honor List, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Pennsylvania
Book Award, German Department, University of Pennsylvania

DISSERTATION

The Effects of Goal Breadth on Consumer Preferences

Dissertation committee: Ravi Dhar (chair); Nathan Novemsky; Joseph Simmons

Consumer choice often requires the consideration of multiple goals. For instance, a consumer shopping with the goal to buy a jacket may also have the goal to spend prudently. And, when choosing between a higher-quality, higher-priced jacket and a lower-quality, lower-priced jacket, she will have to trade off a “focal” goal (the explicit goal to buy a jacket) against her other relevant “background” goals (the goal to spend prudently). Prior research demonstrates that consumer choice is goal driven, but we have little understanding of how focal and background goals interact to influence choice. My dissertation demonstrates that whether a focal goal pursuit is framed narrowly (the goal to buy a jacket) or broadly (the goal to buy clothes) affects consumers’ consideration of background goals, and thus the influence of those goals on choices. Specifically, a consumer with a goal to buy a jacket will be more likely to choose a lower-priced jacket than will a consumer with a goal to buy clothes.

Because broad (vs. narrow) focal goals are associated with a wider variety of related sub-goals and a wider variety of means through which those goals can be attained, broad (vs. narrow) focal goals will activate more goal-related information. The increased activation of goal-related information consumes more of consumers' limited resources, leaving fewer resources available for the consideration of background goals, and thereby decreasing the weight that those background goals have on consumer choices. Thus, explicitly entertaining broad (vs. narrow) shopping goals will decrease consumers' tendency to pursue background goals, such as the goal to save money, and therefore increase consumers' tendency to choose more expensive, higher-quality goods. Furthermore, I demonstrate that although the breadth of the focal goal affects consumers' consideration of background goals, it has no effect on consumers' consideration of non-goal constructs. Thus, my work suggests that goal constructs are distinct from and consume more cognitive resources than non-goal constructs (Bargh, et al., 2001). A series of studies supports this hypothesis and my proposed process, while ruling out alternative explanations and identifying boundary conditions.

PUBLICATIONS AND MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

(see appendix for abstracts)

Dhar, Ravi, & Eunice Y. Kim. (2007). Seeing the Forest or the Trees: Implications of Construal Level Theory for Consumer Choice. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 17, 96-100.

Kim, Eunice Y., Uzma Khan & Ravi Dhar. Choosing Between Apples or Apples and Oranges: The Role of Mental Construal in Comparable vs. Non-comparable Choices. *Under review at the Journal of Consumer Research*.

Goldsmith, Kelly, Eunice Y. Kim & Ravi Dhar. Guilt: What's it Good for? Getting More out of Guilty Pleasures. *Under review at the Journal of Marketing Research*

Kim, Eunice Y. & Ravi Dhar. When Seeing is Believing: Visualization Effects on Regulating Savings Behavior. *Under review at Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*.

SELECT RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

(see appendix for abstracts)

The Effect of Monetary Loss on Subsequent Decisions (with Nathan Novemsky, Joseph Simmons, and Itamar Simonson)

Goal Threat and Distraction: Nonconscious vs. Conscious Goals (with Ravi Dhar)

Consumer Receptivity of Psychologically Near and Distant Product Communication (with Ravi Dhar and Nathan Novemsky)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Behavioral Decision Theory
Mindsets and Choices

Goals and Consumer Preferences
Self-Regulation and Emotions

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

The Effects of Goal Breadth on Consumer Preferences, 2009 *Annual Whitebox Advisors Graduate Student Conference on Behavioral Science*, New Haven, Connecticut

Choosing Between Apples and Oranges: The Role of Mental Construal in Comparable vs. Non-comparable Choices (with Uzma Khan and Ravi Dhar), 2007 *Association for Consumer Research*, Memphis, Tennessee

Getting More out of Guilty Pleasures (with Kelly Goldsmith and Ravi Dhar), 2006 *Association for Consumer Research*, Orlando, Florida

Getting More out of Guilty Pleasures (with Kelly Goldsmith and Ravi Dhar), 2005 *Winter American Marketing Association*, St. Petersburg, Florida

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant, summer 2009
Marketing Management (E-MBA), Yale School of Management
Professor K. Sudhir

Teaching Assistant, spring 2008, spring 2009
Behavioral Perspectives in Management, Yale School of Management
Professor Joseph Simmons

Teaching Assistant, fall 2007, fall 2008
Problem Framing, Yale School of Management
Professors Paul Bracken and Nathan Novemsky

Teaching Assistant, spring 2007
Decision Making for Managers and Policy Makers, Yale School of Management
Professor Joseph Simmons

Teaching Assistant, fall 2005
Consumer Behavior, Yale School of Management
Professor Nathan Novemsky

TEACHING INTERESTS

Consumer Behavior
Marketing Research

Marketing Management
Behavioral Decision Theory

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Ad-Hoc reviewer for the Association of Consumer Research

Trainee reviewer for *Journal of Marketing Research*

Manager of research assistants in Consumer Decision Making Lab, Yale School of Management, 2005-2008

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Marketing Association
Association for Consumer Research
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REFERENCES

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APPENDIX

PUBLICATIONS AND MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

Seeing the Forest or the Trees: Implications of Construal Level Theory for Consumer Choice

(Journal of Consumer Psychology, 2007, vol. 17, pp.96-100)

Like many important theories that were originally tested in one domain, construal level theory has broadened the notion of temporal distance to psychological distance and examined the wide ranging implications of this construct for evaluation and behavior. This commentary seeks to take a step back to admire the “forest” that has been created and suggest additional extensions and implications for the different stages of consumer decision making: goal pursuit, consideration set formation, communication receptivity, and choice.

Choosing Between Apples or Apples and Oranges: The Role of Mental Construal in Comparable vs. Non-comparable Choices *(Under review at Journal of Consumer Research)*

Prior research suggests that choosing between options that are directly comparable (e.g., choosing between two cereals) is easier than choosing between options that are non-comparable (e.g., choosing between a magazine and a snack). Choosing among non-comparable options is more difficult because it requires consumers to exert extra effort to create a higher-level decision criterion that can be applied to all options (e.g., the level of enjoyment derived from options). Drawing on Construal Level Theory (Trope & Liberman 2003), we show that construing non-comparable alternatives abstractly (vs. concretely) facilitates the construction of a higher-level decision criterion and thereby decreases decision difficulty, decreases choice deferral, and increases decision satisfaction. Conversely, construing comparable alternatives abstractly (vs. concretely) impedes the detailed discrimination of alternatives and thereby increases choice difficulty, increases choice deferral, and decreases decision satisfaction. This research has a number of interesting implications. For example, it suggests that decisions between non-comparable options may be made easier by making them well in advance of consumption, whereas decisions between comparable options may be made easier by postponing them until just before consumption.

Guilt: What’s it Good For? Getting More out of Guilty Pleasures *(Under review at Journal of Marketing Research)*

This paper examines how the presence of negative emotions, in particular guilt, affects pleasure from consumption experiences. Prior research (and intuition) suggests that negative emotions, including guilt, detract from consumption pleasure. However, we show that because of a cognitive association between guilt and pleasure, guilt can actually increase consumption pleasure. Five studies demonstrate that guilt and pleasure are linked in the minds of individuals and that both nonconscious and conscious guilt increases the pleasure derived from actual hedonic consumption experiences. Furthermore, we demonstrate that other negative emotions, such as anger, decrease pleasure. This and other results rule out the potential alternative account that negative emotions might always increase pleasure because of a contrast effect. This paper concludes by discussing how a seemingly negative emotion can be used to improve advertising and hedonic enjoyment. For example, managers might benefit from highlighting the guilt associated with hedonic products or experiences rather than emphasizing the lack thereof (e.g. “guilt-inducing cake” vs. “guilt-free cake”).

When Seeing is Believing: Visualization Effects on Regulating Savings Behavior (*Under review at Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*)

A major challenge facing many American households is how to save and plan financially for the future. Although many have expressed the desire to save, they find that they lack the needed self-control. We propose that visualizing oneself engaging in routine tasks at an older age leads to greater self-regulation and thereby enhances savings. Prior research has focused on how visualizing the pursuit of a goal (e.g., studying for an exam) or engaging in a specific goal-related behavior (e.g., going to the library) can facilitate successful goal pursuit by helping individuals form specific plans and manage stress and anxiety. We propose, however, that merely visualizing oneself performing routine tasks that are unrelated to the goal at hand increases self-regulation. We demonstrate that visualization decreases feelings of anxiety and stress, which can cause people to freeze and feel that a task is unmanageable. As anxiety decreases, and peacefulness increases, people re-affirm the importance of saving and are motivated to save. Furthermore, this paper compares and contrasts visualization with incidental primes of elderly people. We show that the effect of visualization is distinct from goal priming.

SELECT RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

The Effect of Monetary Loss and Tainted Accounts on Subsequent Spending Decisions

Many individuals engage in or observe others engaged in behaviors of purging mementos and souvenirs, such as photos, which serve as reminders of negative experiences. We suggest that the same phenomenon can occur with money that is leftover from a tainted mental account. We propose that a loss of money from a mental account can taint that account. Moreover, we argue that any leftover money serves as a reminder of the loss. This then motivates people to spend or give away the leftover money so as to not to be reminded of the loss. A series of experiments demonstrate that individuals are more willing to donate money after a loss than after no loss. Furthermore, we find that people are only willing to donate after a loss if they can donate all of the remaining tainted money. This and other findings rule out a potential alternative explanation based on mood repair, which suggests that people donate because they feel bad about losing money and want to improve their mood. This project contributes to our understanding of why and in which contexts individuals might not only be more likely to contribute but also be more likely to contribute larger amounts of money to charities.

Goal Threat and Distraction: Nonconscious vs. Conscious Goals

A large body of research suggests that nonconscious goals operate similarly to conscious goals. This project examines when and how these two types of goals might diverge. We posit that because conscious goals are active and recognizable in working memory, they allow for modulation. For instance, compared to those who may have a nonconscious goal to study, those with a conscious goal to study will be better able to increase motivation and attentional focus to block out distractions. In a series of studies, we demonstrate that distractions in the form of other goals, thoughts unrelated to the focal goal, and cognitive load decrease the pursuit of a nonconscious focal goal but have no influence on the pursuit of the same conscious focal goal.

Consumer Receptivity of Psychologically Near and Distant Product Communication

Prior research demonstrates that psychological distance affects consumer choice. However, many of these findings depend on the explicit salience of distance in controlled experimental sessions. In two field studies, we examine the influence of naturally occurring temporal distances on the effectiveness of advertising claims. Furthermore, while most demonstrations of construal effects manipulate distance to the target object, we manipulate distance from

consumption and decisions involving the target object. To examine distance from consumption, individuals either inside a Laundromat or outside unrelated stores (e.g., Staples) were asked about laundry detergents following exposure to central or peripheral claims. We find that the relative weight of central claims versus peripheral claims was greater when far from consumption (i.e., outside Staples) than close to consumption (i.e., in a Laundromat). To capture distance from choice, one study was conducted on two groups of shoppers inside a local supermarket: those in the detergent aisle who were about to purchase detergent (low distance from choice) and those in other aisles who were not planning to buy detergent on this particular shopping trip (high distance from choice). They rated the attractiveness of detergents, which were again described using either central or peripheral claims. We find that the relative weight of peripheral claims versus central claims was greater for those about to purchase detergent than those not about to purchase detergent. These findings suggest that construal theory could be broadened to include distance to consideration of objects, not just distance to objects. It also has several practical implications for the role of consistency in advertising.