

MKTG 951: Consumer Judgment and Decision Making, Part 2 (PhD Seminar)

Barbara Kahn - Fall 2017

Instructor: Barbara Kahn kahn@wharton.upenn.edu

Schedule: Tuesdays 3-6 or Fridays 1:30-4:30pm (JMHH 741; Marketing conference room)

Course website: Canvas (under construction)

Part A Course Overview:

The main objective is to provide an introductory yet in depth discussion of judgment and decision making topics in consumer research. The weekly readings are intended to provide PhD level coverage of classic and current research related to consumer decision processes.

In addition to content, the other main objective is to increase your ability to think through and assess the research process. That is, my goal is to improve your ability to critically think about research and be able to generate ideas before translating them into testable hypotheses (and eventually to a publishable paper). This will be done in the context of the seminar topics, but we will also discuss some general aspects of the research process.

For each topic we 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 in consumer judgment and decision research, 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-led discussions of papers and required summaries (see below).

The readings (available on Canvas eventually, and in the meantime on dropbox) should be **read carefully** by everyone attending the class (whether enrolled or sitting in). In addition, in each class one or two students 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.

Finally, each student will be expected to prepare the following:

- (1) **Each Week:** Prior to class (*no later than 11:00 pm* the night before class), you are required to submit via Canvas (or dropbox in the short term until the canvas site is

constructed) a short “idea” based on the current set of readings. In this very brief response (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.

You do not need an idea for Day 1.

Each idea will be graded on a 1-5 scale.

*Note that although what you submit should be very brief, it 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 key ideas, methods, findings, conclusions, and yes, weaknesses. To this end, every week students will help lead a discussion on 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 the late before class at 11:00 pm*)]. Each student will do this once or twice during the course, depending on class size.

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

- a. Presentation of your research ideas after MKTG 951. Note that this is a requirement regardless of whether you are just taking MKTG 950 or both MKTG 950/951. This (brief) presentation should include all of the aspects of the research proposal described below. **DATE: December 18, 12-3 (large conference room)**
- b. Research Proposal (3-4 pages double spaced) due on December 18. The proposal must include the following: clear presentation and motivation of the problem and contribution, a concise 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 JDM topics we focus on during the seminar. Even if this idea builds on your current (non JDM) interests, the goal of this proposal is take a JDM perspective on whatever problem you are addressing.

Grading Components:

- 15% class participation
- 10% Discussion leading
- 25% weekly ideas (5% each)
- 50% Research paper
 - 5%: Paper idea outline (Due December 7, by 11:00pm)
 - 5%: In-class presentation
 - 40%: Final proposal

Course Schedule
-- subject to change --

Date	Topic
1. Tuesday, Oct. 17	Influence of Positive Affect on Decision Making; Variety-Seeking Behavior
2. Friday, Oct 20	Choice Overload and Effect of Perceived Variety on Decision-making
3. Tuesday, Oct 31	Goals and Decision Making
4. Tuesday, Nov 14	Sharing and Viral Context Decisions
5. Tuesday, Nov 28	Social Context, Status, Stigma, Conspicuous Decision-Making
6. Tuesday, Dec 5	Planning and Financial Decisions with Scarce Resources

Detailed Course Schedule and Reading List

Session 1: Influence of Positive Affect on Decision Making; Variety-Seeking Behavior

- Handbook of Emotions: Isen chapter & Frederickson Chapter
- Cavanugh, Lisa (2014), "Because I (Don't) Deserve It: How Relationship Reminders and Deservingness Influence Consumer Indulgence, *JCR*
- Kahn, Barbara E. and Alice Isen (1993), "The Influence of Positive Affect on Variety Seeking among Safe, Enjoyable Products, *JCR*
- Ratner, Rebecca, Barbara Kahn and Daniel Kahneman (1999), "Choosing Less-Preferred Experiences for the Sake of Variety," *JCR*
- **Background Reading:** Simonson, Itamar (1990), "The Effect of Purchase Quantity and Timing on Variety-Seeking Behavior," *JMR*

Session 2: Choice Overload and Effect of Variety on Decision-making

- Iyengar, Sheena and Mark Lepper (2000), "When Choice is Demotivating: Can One Desire Too Much of a Good Thing," *JPSP*
- Scheibehenne, Benjamin, Rainer Greifeneder and Peter Todd (2010), "Can There Ever be Too Many Options? A Meta-Analytic Review of Choice Overload," *JCR*
- Chernev, Alexander, Ulf Bockenholt and Joseph Goodman (2010), "Commentary on Scheibehenne, Greifeneder and Todd: Choice Overload: Is there Anything to it?"
- Chernev, Alexander (2005), "Feature Complementarity and Assortment in Choice," *JCR*
- Townsend, Claudia and Barbara E. Kahn (2014), "The "Visual Preference Heuristic": The Influence of Visual versus Verbal Deception on Assortment Processing, Perceived Variety and Choice Overload," *JCR*
- Kahn, Barbara E., Evan Weingarten and Claudia Townsend (2013), "Assortment Variety: Too Much of a Good Thing?" *Review of Marketing Research*
- **Background Reading:** Kahn, Barbara E. and Brian Wansink (2004), "The Influence of Assortment Structure on Perceived Variety and Consumption Quantity," *JCR*
- **Background Reading:** Deng, Xiaoyan, Barbara Kahn, Rao Unnava and Hyojin Lee (2016), "A 'Wide' Variety: Effects of Horizontal versus Vertical Display on Assortment Processing, Perceived Variety and Choice," *JCR*
- **Background Reading:** Huffman, Cynthia and Barbara E. Kahn (1998), "Variety for Sale: Mass Customization or Mass Confusion," *Journal of Retailing*

Session 3: Goals and Decision Making

- Kivetz, Ran, Oleg Urminsky and Yuhuang Zheng (2006), "The Goal-Gradient Hypothesis Resurrected: Purchase Acceleration, Illusionary Goal Progress and Customer Retention," *JMR*

- Fishbach, Ayelet and Ravi Dhar (2005), “Goals as Excuses or Guides: The Liberating Effect of Perceived Goal Progress on Choice,” *JCR*
- Huang, Szu-Chi and Ying Zhang (2011), “Motivational Consequences of Perceived Velocity in Consumer Goal Pursuit,” *JMR*
- Etkin, Jordan and Rebecca Ratner (2012), “The Dynamic Impact of Variety among Means on Motivation,” *JCR*
- Sharif, Marissa and Suzanne Shu (forthcoming), “The Benefits of Emergency Reserves: Greater Preference and Persistence for Goals having Slack with a Cost,” *JMR*

Session 4: Sharing and Viral Context Decisions

- Berger, Jonah and Katherine Milkman (2011), “What Makes Online Content Viral?” *JMR*
- Reis, Harry, Shannon Smith, Cheryl Michael, Peter Caprariello, Fen-Fang Tsai, Amy Rodrigues, and Michal Maniaci (2010), “Are You Happy for Me? How Sharing Positive Events with Others Provides Personal and Interpersonal Benefits,” *JPSP*
- Hackenbracht, Joy and Karen Gasper (2013), “I’m all ears: The Need to Belong Motivates Listening to Emotional Disclosure,” *JESP*
- Chen, Zoey and Nicholas H. Lurie (2013), “Temporal Contiguity and Negativity Bias in the Impact of Online Word of Mouth,” *JMR*
- Berger, Jonah (2014), “Word of Mouth and Interpersonal Communication: A Review and Directions for Future Research,” *JCP*
- **Background Reading:** Packard, Grant and Jonah Berger (forthcoming), “How Language Shapes Word of Mouth’s Impact,” *JMR*

Session 5: Social Context, Status, Stigma, Conspicuous Decision-Making

- Berger, Jonah and Chip Heath (2007), “Where Consumers Diverge from Others: Identity Signaling and Product Domains,” *JCR*
- Galinsky, Adam, Cynthia Wang, Jennifer Whitson, Eri Anicich, Kurt Hugenberg, and Galen Bodenhausen (2013), “The Reappropriation of Stigmatizing Labels: The Reciprocal Relationship Between Power and Self-Labeling,” *Psych Science*
- Bellezza, Silvia, Francesca Gino, Anat Keinan (2013), “The Red Sneakers Effect: Inferring Status and Competence from Signals of Nonconformity,” *JCR*
- McFerran, Brent and Jennifer Argo (2013), “The Entourage Effect,” *JCR*
- Wang, Yajin and Vladas Griskevicius (2013), “Conspicuous Consumption, Relationships and Rivals: Women’s Luxury Products as Signals to Other Women,” *JCR*
- **Background Reading:** Sandikci, Ozlem and Guliz Ger (2009), “Veiling in Style: How Does a Stigmatized Practice Become Fashionable?” *JCR*

Session 6: Planning and Financial Decisions with Scarce Resources

- Fernbach, Philip, Christina Kan and John Lynch (2014), “Squeezed: Coping with Constraint through Efficiency and Prioritization,” *JCR*
- Briers, Barbara and Sandra LaPorte (2013), “A Wallet Full of Calories: The Effect of Financial Dissatisfaction on the Desire for Food Energy,” *JMR*
- Hsee, Christopher, Fang Yu, Jiao Zhang, Yan Zhang (2013), “Medium Maximization,” *JCR*
- Shah, Anuj K., Eldar Shafir and Sendhil Mullainathan (2015), “Scarcity Frames Value,” *Psych Science*
- Sharma, Eesha and Adam Alter (2012), “Financial Deprivation Prompts Consumers to Seek Scarce Goods,” *JCR*
- **Background Reading:** Shah, Anuj, Sendhil Mullainathan and Eldar Shafir (2012), “Some Consequences of Having Too Little” *Science*