

MELANIE BRUCKS

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EDUCATION

Stanford University, Graduate School of Business June 2019 (expected)
Ph.D., Marketing

University of Arizona 2013
B.S. with Honors, Psychology with Chemistry Minor
summa cum laude

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Creativity and Innovation
- Effect of Technology on Consumer Psychology
- Information Processing

PUBLICATIONS AND MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

Brucks, Melanie and Szu-chi Huang, “The Creativity Paradox: Soliciting Creative Ideas Undermines Ideation,” under review at *Journal of Marketing Research*. See Appendix for Abstract.

Kupor, Daniella, **Melanie Brucks** and Szu-chi Huang, “And the Winner is...? Forecasting the Outcome of Others’ Competitive Efforts,” revise and resubmit at *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. See Appendix for Abstract.

Carey, Angela L., **Melanie Brucks**, Albrecht C.P. Kufner, Nicholas Holtzman, Fenne große Deters, Mitja D. Back, M. Brent Donnellan, James W. Pennebaker, and Matthias R. Mehl (2015), “Narcissism and the Use of Personal Pronouns: Revisited,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 109(3), e1.

Sarkar, Sujata, Shivali Justa, **Melanie Brucks**, Judith L. Endres, David A. Fox, Xiaoqun Zhou, Fatima Alnaimat, Brian Whitaker, John C. Wheeler, Brian H. Jones and Swaroopa R. Bommireddy (2014), “IL-17A, F, and AF in inflammation: a study in collagen induced arthritis and rheumatoid arthritis,” *Clinical & Experimental Immunology*, 177(3), 652–661.

SELECTED WORKS IN PROGRESS

“Technology-Mediated Innovation” with Jonathan Levav, [See Appendix for Abstract.](#)

“How the Kinesthetic Properties of a Response Scale Affect Judgment” with Jonathan Levav, [See Appendix for Abstract.](#)

“Identity Change After Goal Attainment” with Szu-chi Huang and Margaret Campbell

“Habitual Creativity” with Szu-chi Huang

“Dichotomous Thinking” with S. Christian Wheeler and Zakary Tormala

HONORS AND AWARDS

AMA-Sheth Foundation Doctoral Consortium Fellow 2017

Jaedicke Award 2014
Stanford Graduate School of Business

William James Psychology Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research 2013
University of Arizona

Phi Beta Kappa 2013
University of Arizona

CHAired SYMPOSIA

Brucks, Melanie (2017, October). *It's Not About What You Do, But How You Do It. The Impact of Technology-Mediated Modalities*. Chaired Symposium at the Association for Consumer Research (ACR), San Diego, CA.

Brucks, Melanie (2016, October). *Researching Outside the Box: The Cognitive and Motivational Processes of Creativity*. Chaired Symposium at the Association for Consumer Research (ACR), Berlin, Germany.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Brucks, Melanie & Huang, Szu-chi (2018, February). *The Pursuit of Creativity in Idea Generation Contests*. Paper presented at the Winter American Marketing Association (AMA), New Orleans, LA

Brucks, Melanie & Levav, Jonathan (2018, February). *How the Kinesthetic Properties of a Response Scale Affect Judgment*. Paper presented at the Society of Consumer Psychology (SCP), Dallas, TX.

Brucks, Melanie & Levav, Jonathan (2017, October). *How the Kinesthetic Properties of a Response Scale Affect Judgment*. Paper presented at the Association for Consumer Research (ACR), San Diego, CA.

Brucks, Melanie & Huang, Szu-chi. (2017, April). *The Pursuit of Creativity in Idea Generation Contests*. Paper presented at the Annual Whitebox Advisors Graduate Student Conference, New Haven, Connecticut.

Brucks, Melanie & Huang, Szu-chi. (2017, February). *The Pursuit of Creativity in Idea Generation Contests*. Paper presented at the Society of Consumer Psychology (SCP), San Francisco, CA.

Brucks, Melanie & Huang, Szu-chi. (2016, October). *The Pursuit of Creativity in Idea Generation Contests*. Paper presented at the Association for Consumer Research (ACR), Berlin, Germany.

Brucks, Melanie, Giacobbi, P., & Mehl, M.R. (2014, February). *The Effects of Social Media Sharing on Physical Activity Adherence*. Poster presented at the 15th Annual Meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Austin, TX.

Brucks, Melanie, Giacobbi, P., & Mehl, M.R. (2013, March). *Checking-in on Facebook: How Sharing Affects Physical Activity Adherence*, Poster presented at the 2nd Annual Meeting of the Social Psychologists of Arizona, Tucson, AZ.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Product Launch (MBA Foundations) <i>Guest Speaker</i> , Jonathan Levav, Stanford GSB	2018
Behavioral Decision Theory (PhD Seminar) <i>Grader</i> , Itamar Simonson, Stanford GSB	2015–2018
Product Launch (MBA Foundations) <i>Course Assistant</i> , Jonathan Levav, Stanford GSB	2016–2018
Introduction to Statistics in Psychology (undergraduate) <i>Teaching Assistant and Weekly Review Instructor</i> , University of Arizona	2011–2013

ACADEMIC SERVICE

<i>University Service</i> Stanford GSB Student Mentor	2015–2018
PhD Organization of Women, Officer	2017–2018
<i>Ad Hoc Reviewing</i> Trainee reviewer, Journal of Consumer Research Conference reviewer, Association for Consumer Research and Society of Consumer Psychology	

REFERENCES

Szu-chi Huang

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Jonathan Levav

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APPENDIX: SELECTED ABSTRACTS

Brucks, Melanie and Szu-chi Huang, “The Creativity Paradox: Soliciting Creative Ideas Undermines Ideation,” under review at *Journal of Marketing Research*.

When developing product ideas and original marketing content, firms and marketers often organize ideation activities to harvest a rich set of new ideas. We explore a popular paradigm for guiding these activities—explicitly requesting *creative* ideas—in the context of consumer idea generation contests. We demonstrate that this common practice can paradoxically undermine ideation, decreasing the total number of novel ideas that contestants generate (i.e., ideas rated as surpassing the threshold of average novelty). A single paper meta-analysis across six incentive-compatible ideation contests on different products (toy, office supply, toiletry, and mobile app) involving close to 2,000 contestants estimated that soliciting creative ideas resulted in 1.49 fewer novel ideas per contestant, which amounted to a 20% decrease in productivity and a loss of 500 unique novel ideas in total. This productivity loss occurs because soliciting creative ideas prompts people to self-impose a high standard, which leads to a unique cognitive process that restrains (instead of expands) their thinking. This research also offers important solutions for marketers to ensure the productivity of ideation and fuel innovation.

“How the Kinesthetic Properties of a Response Scale Affect Judgment” with Jonathan Levav, (*in prep*)

The present research investigates how the kinesthetic properties of responding can induce different psychological processes used to generate the response and thus, change the response itself. We test this proposition in the context of radio button and slider scales, two ubiquitous and ostensibly interchangeable response formats that differ in their kinesthetic properties. Across four studies, using questions regarding personality, numerical estimates, moral judgments, willingness to pay, attitudes, net promoter score, consumer satisfaction and philosophical standing, including incentive-compatible contexts, and involving more than 9000 participants, we find that responding using a slider scale yields values closer to the scale endpoint compared to responding using a radio button scale. We posit that the motion of sliding on a scale prompts a serial hypothesis testing process: After passing each value, one momentarily considers whether or not this value is a suitable answer, engages in confirmatory search, leading to the selection of the first response that fits within the latitude of acceptance (i.e., the first to seem suitable). As a result, when the latitude of acceptance is narrower, the effect is attenuated. We document two important downstream consequences of this kinesthetic effect. First, consumers are significantly less certain of their responses when using a slider; and, second, the difference in responses translates to real consumer behavior. These results suggest that subtle kinesthetic changes in our decision environment can significantly impact consumer decision-making.

“Technology-Mediated Innovation” with Jonathan Levav (*in progress*)

As geographically-distributed teams become more common, firms increasingly leverage video-conferencing technology to facilitate internal ideation. The present research investigates the impact of this technology-mediated communication modality on the cognitive processes of idea generation and subsequent idea selection. We find that while face-to-face pairs generate a larger total number of high-potential ideas, virtual pairs (communicating using video-conferencing) select a higher quality idea for further development. We posit that this occurs because the shared environment of virtual teams is limited to the screen in front of them, and this narrowed environmental focus seeps into team cognition: virtual pairs are more narrowly focused, which inhibits the expansive, generative process of ideation, but facilitates the analytical, evaluative process of idea selection. We are currently documenting these effects in the field in over ten ideation workshops for engineers in Portugal, Finland, and Israel.

Kupor, Daniella, Melanie Brucks and Szu-chi Huang, “And the Winner is...? Forecasting the Outcome of Others’ Competitive Efforts,” revise and resubmit at *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

People frequently forecast the outcomes of competitive events. Some forecasts are about oneself (e.g., forecasting how one will perform in an athletic competition, school or job application, or professional contest), while many other forecasts are about others (e.g., predicting the outcome of another individual’s athletic competition, school or job application, or professional contest). In this research, we examine people’s forecasts about others’ competitive outcomes, illuminate a systematic bias in these forecasts, and document the source of this bias as well as its downstream consequences. Six experiments with a total of 1,643 participants in a variety of competitive contexts demonstrate that when observers forecast the outcomes that another individual will experience, they systematically overestimate the probability that this person will win. Importantly, this misprediction stems from a previously undocumented lay belief—the belief that other people generally achieve their intentions—which skews observers’ hypothesis testing. We find that this lay belief biases people’s predictions even in contexts in which the contestant’s intent is unlikely to generate the desired outcome, and even when forecasters are directly incentivized to be accurate.