



ACKOFF FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Deadline: March 3, 2013 (midnight)

Name: _____

How did you learn about the Ackoff Fellowship:

____ Ad in DP ____ Ad in Almanac ____ E-mail ____ Other (specify) _____

Address:

Telephone Number: _____ E-Mail: _____

Department/University of Pennsylvania: _____

Faculty Advisor Name: _____ E-mail _____

Faculty Department: _____

Project Title:

Amount of Request: \$ _____

Other sources of Support for your research:

Travel \$ _____

Grants \$ _____ Other (Specify) \$ _____

Proposals should only be 3 pages in length, and include the following information:

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS on Pages 1 & 2

1. Goals of the proposed research
2. Description of the planned methodology
3. Explanation of why funding is being sought

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING BUDGETARY QUESTIONS on Page 3

1. Provide specifics of how the funds will be used (note: stipends and computers will NOT be funded).
2. Include detailed budget and budget justification describing the anticipated expenses
3. Budget page should include description of other current sources of research and travel funding from your department

IMPORTANT: FOR THOSE WHO RECEIVED FUNDING IN 2012 PLEASE ATTACH A 1-PAGE SUMMARY DESCRIBING:

1. The outcome of the 2012-funded research (e.g., papers completed, presentations at conferences) and its current status
2. How the funds were used

ALL must be completed to be considered for funding

Moral Violations Reduce Oral Consumption

Research Description

People often describe moral offenses as “disgusting,” and researchers have theorized that moral disgust is built on an emotional scaffold of core disgust (Inbar et al., 2009a; Rozin et al., 2008). Consistent with this idea, prior research has demonstrated that exposure to moral violations increases self-reported intensity and facial expressions of disgust (Chapman et al., 2009; Schnall et al., 2008). One particularly important missing piece of evidence is the demonstration that moral violations produce behavioral outcomes similar to core disgust: reduced oral consumption. For example, people may consume less coffee at a café while reading the Sunday paper’s exposé of corporate fraud, a violation of ethical business practices. Or people may consume less candy at the theater while watching “Schindler’s List” or “Hotel Rwanda,” films that portray genocidal moral violations. The present research thus fills an important evidentiary gap by testing the hypothesis that exposure to moral violations reduces oral consumption, and reveals the direct effects of moral violations on consumer judgments and behavior. To date, we have conducted four experiments to test our hypothesis.

In Experiment 1A, 89 participants were randomly assigned to view one of two 6 minute documentary film clips about Africa while eating M&M’S. The moral violation film presented the genocide in Sudan, and featured displaced civilians describing the bombing, looting, and burning of their villages by the Sudanese government and Janjaweed forces. The neutral film described life in the increasingly industrialized areas of Ghana in contrast with life in nearby Cameroonian rainforests. Participants in the moral violation condition consumed fewer M&M’S ($M = 12.52$ g) than did participants in the neutral condition ($M = 18.30$ g), $t(87) = 2.27$, $p = .026$. Exposure to moral violations, a documentary about genocide, thus reduced oral consumption.

Experiment 1B offered two conceptual extensions of Experiment 1A. First, we measured consumption of bottled water, a substance less indulgent and less tinged with guilt than chocolate. Second, we tested whether a subtler type of moral violation, one that is present only by association, would reduce consumption in a manner similar to a more explicit manipulation. Participants ($N = 107$) were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: no moral violation control condition, greedy brand moral violation, or genocide video moral violation. In the control condition, participants watched the 6 minute film clip about the economic climate in Ghana while drinking from a 500 ml water bottle labeled “Water: Just H2O”. In the condition where a greedy brand served as a source of moral violation, participants watched the same neutral film clip but the water bottles were labeled “Wall Street: Water for Powerful People.” This label was confirmed to be associated with moral violations of greed, abuse of power, and selfishness. Finally, participants in the genocide video moral violation condition watched the genocide in Darfur documentary (from Experiment 1A) while drinking the neutral branded “Water: Just H2O.” Participants drank less water in the two moral violations conditions ($M = 147.15$ ml) compared with the control condition in which participants drank “Water: Just H2O” while watching a neutral documentary ($M = 192.23$ ml), as reflected by a significant contrast that compared the two moral violation conditions with the control condition, $F(1,104) = 6.63$, $p = .011$. Consumption was not different in the two moral violation conditions ($M_{\text{genocide_film}} = 144.00$ ml; $M_{\text{Wall_Street_water}} = 149.49$ ml), $p = .799$. Experiment 1B thus provides further evidence that exposure to moral violations reduces oral consumption using two different sources of moral violations and a different substance consumed.

Experiment 2 provided a more conservative test of the prediction that exposure to moral violations reduces oral consumption. We conceptually expanded on Experiments 1A and 1B by using non-visual manipulations between moral violation and control conditions, and different types of moral violations, theft and cheating. Participants ($N = 117$) were given 3 minutes to write a story while drinking from a 500 ml water bottle. Participants in the moral violation condition were asked to write a story about cheating on an exam or stealing a car; participants in the control condition were asked to write a story about neutral acts of writing with a pen or planning a driving route. Participants in the moral violations conditions consumed significantly less water ($M = 89.39$ ml) than did participants in the neutral conditions ($M = 121.57$ ml). A 2 (moral violation, control) \times 2 (car photograph, classroom photograph) ANOVA predicting consumption revealed only a main effect of the moral violation manipulation, $F(1,113) = 4.37, p = .039$. Neither the interaction nor the main effect of photograph was significant, $ps > .381$. These results demonstrate that non-visual exposure to two additional types of moral violations, theft and cheating, reduce oral consumption of water.

Experiment 3 used a more stringent test to replicate the finding that exposure to moral violations reduces oral consumption by holding visual stimuli constant across conditions. We also introduced a new measure of oral consumption (chocolate milk) and of moral violations (incest). Participants (non-French speakers, $N = 105$) drank chocolate milk while watching a 2 minute 43 second French film clip featuring an older woman and younger man holding one another and talking. The film was described as portraying either an incestuous relationship between a mother and son (moral violation condition) or a romantic relationship (neutral condition). Participants who thought the film portrayed an incestuous relationship drank less chocolate milk ($M = 110.50$ g) than those who thought the film portrayed a romantic relationship ($M = 147.06$ g), $t(103) = 2.14, p = .035$. Participants in the moral violation condition also reported liking the chocolate milk less than those in the neutral condition ($M_{\text{moral_violation}} = 3.48; M_{\text{neutral}} = 4.23$), $t(103) = 2.90, p = .005$. Exposure to a moral violation thus influenced multiple modes of responses that have been associated with core disgust: behavior (chocolate milk consumption) and attitudes (liking of chocolate milk).

Moral violations pervade everyday life and they affect the everyday behavior of eating and drinking. Consumers are exposed to moral violations through the media, product associations, and personal observations and experiences. Our research demonstrates that these common exposures influence consumption behavior and thus provides important evidence to the broad theoretical claim that moral violations are built on an emotional scaffold of core disgust, eliciting similar behavioral, attitudinal, and affective profiles. More broadly, these results highlight a psychological truth in the metaphorical observation that moral violations “leave a bad taste” in one’s mouth.

This research is currently under second round revision for the *Journal of Consumer Psychology*. For our revision, we plan to conduct additional experiments to broaden the generalizability of our findings by testing additional moral violation stimuli and obtaining indirect or implicit process evidence (e.g., by using the new facial recognition software in the WBL). Financial support from the Wharton Risk Center would greatly assist in purchasing research materials, paying participants and research assistants, and presenting this research at academic conferences.

Estimated Budget

Data Collection (\$3 x 500 participants)	\$1,500
Research materials (food and beverages for participant consumption; \$3 x 500 participants)	\$1,500
Research assistance to conduct studies	\$500
Society for Judgment and Decision Making Conference (Nov 2013, Toronto, Canada)	
Conference registration	\$200
Travel	\$600
Hotel	\$500
<hr/>	
Total Costs	\$4,800
Less: Wharton Marketing Department funding	- \$1,000
<hr/>	
Amount Requested from Ackoff Doctoral Student Fellowship	\$3,800

2012 Funded Project: Gratitude, Guilt, and Gift-Giving

I am very grateful for the Wharton Risk Center and their generous support of doctoral student research. Because of the funding from my Ackoff Fellowship this past year, I was able to make significant progress on my research project, "Gratitude, Guilt and Gift-Giving." The funding was used to pay for research participants and materials, and to present my findings at the Society for Consumer Psychology Conference and the Behavioral Decision Research in Management Conference. I am now preparing the manuscript for journal submission, and I will be very pleased to acknowledge the support from the Ackoff Fellowship and Wharton Risk Center when the paper is ultimately published.