

# ROBERT MISLAVSKY

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## EDUCATION

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### **The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania**

PhD Candidate, Operations, Information, and Decisions 2013 to present  
Dissertation Committee: Uri Simonsohn (advisor), Joseph Simmons (chair), Deborah Small

### **Tepper School of Business, Carnegie Mellon University**

M.B.A., Marketing and Product Development 2011 to 2013

### **R.H. Smith School of Business, University of Maryland**

B.S., Finance and Operations Management 2005 to 2009

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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Consumer behavior, judgment and decision making, risk perceptions, want-should conflict

## PUBLICATIONS AND PAPERS UNDER REVIEW

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**Mislavsky, R.**, & U. Simonsohn (in press). When Risk is Weird: Unexplained Transaction Features Lower Valuations. *Management Science*.

**Mislavsky, R.**, B. Dietvorst, & U. Simonsohn (2017). Critical Condition: People Only Object to Corporate Experiments If They Object to a Condition. Revise and resubmit at *Marketing Science*.

Bitterly, T.B., **R. Mislavsky**, H. Dai, and K.L. Milkman (2015). “Want-Should Conflict: A Synthesis of Past Research.” In W. Hoffman and L. Nordgren (eds.) *The Psychology of Desire*.

## WORKING PAPERS

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Beshears, J., H.N. Lee, K.L. Milkman, & **R. Mislavsky** (2017). Creating Exercise Habits Using Incentives: The Tradeoff between Flexibility and Routinization. In preparation.

## **SELECTED RESEARCH IN PROGRESS**

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60% + 60% = 60%, but Likely + Likely = Very Likely (with Celia Gaertig)

Justifying Selfish Behavior (with Yonat Zwebner and Deborah Small)

## **RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS**

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**Mislavsky, R.**, & U. Simonsohn. When Risk is Weird: Unexplained Transaction Features Lower Valuations.

- Society for Judgment & Decision Making Conference, Long Beach, CA, 2014 (poster)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Best Student Poster
- Whitebox Advisors Graduate Student Conference, New Haven, CT, 2015
- Association for Consumer Research Conference, New Orleans, LA, 2015
- Society for Consumer Psychology Conference, St. Pete Beach, FL, 2016

Beshears, J., H.N. Lee, K.L. Milkman, & **R. Mislavsky**. Creating Exercise Habits Using Incentives: The Tradeoff between Flexibility and Routinization.

- Center for Health Incentives and Behavioral Economics, University of Pennsylvania, 2015
- Behavioral Decision Research in Management, Toronto, ON, 2016
- Advances in the Science of Habits Conference, Catalina Island, CA, 2016 (poster)
- Society for Judgment and Decision Making Conference, Boston, MA, 2016 (poster)

**Mislavsky, R.**, B. Dietvorst, & U. Simonsohn. Critical Condition: People Dislike Experiments Only If They Dislike One of Its Conditions.

- Society for Judgment and Decision Making Conference, Chicago, IL, 2015 (poster)

**Mislavsky, R.** & C. Gaertig. 60% + 60% = 60%, but Likely + Likely = Very Likely.

- Boulder Summer Conference on Consumer Financial Decision Making, Boulder, CO, 2017

## **AWARDS AND HONORS**

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Russell Ackoff Doctoral Student Fellowship	2014-2018
Wharton Doctoral Fellowship	2013-2018
Wharton Doctoral Travel Grant	2015

## **PROFESSIONAL AND SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

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Trainee Reviewer, Journal of Consumer Research	
Symposium Chair, Association for Consumer Research Conference	2015
Student Representative, Wharton Doctoral Program Executive Committee	2016-2017
Organizer, Behavioral Science PhD Student Journal Club	2014-2015

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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### Guest Lecturer

- The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania
  - Business Research: Design Fundamentals and Applications (Undergrad) 2015

### Teaching Assistant

- The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania
  - Decision Processes (Undergrad) 2014
  - Foundations of Teamwork and Leadership (MBA) 2015
  - Managerial Decision Making (MBA) 2015-2016
  - Managerial Decision Making (Executive MBA) 2015
- Tepper School of Business, Carnegie Mellon University
  - Statistical Decision Making (MBA) 2013
- R.H. Smith School of Business, University of Maryland
  - Business Statistics (Undergrad) 2006-2009

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

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Association for Consumer Research	2015-present
Society for Consumer Psychology	2016-present
Society for Personality and Social Psychology	2015-present
Society for Judgment and Decision Making	2014-present

## REFERENCES

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### **Uri Simonsohn (advisor)**

*Professor of Operations, Information, and Decisions*

*Professor of Marketing*

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### **Joseph Simmons (committee chair)**

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### **Deborah Small**

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*Professor of Psychology*

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## **SELECTED RESEARCH ABSTRACTS**

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**Mislavsky, R.,** & U. Simonsohn. (in press) “When Risk is Weird: Unjustified Transaction Features Lower Valuations.” *Management Science*.

We define transactions as weird when they include unexplained features, that is, features not implicitly, explicitly, or self-evidently justified, and propose that people are averse to weird transactions. In six experiments, we show that risky options used in previous research paradigms often attained uncertainty via adding an unexplained transaction feature (e.g., purchasing a coin flip or lottery), and behavior that appears to reflect risk aversion could instead reflect an aversion to weird transactions. Specifically, willingness to pay drops just as much when adding risk to a transaction as when adding unexplained features. Holding transaction features constant, adding additional risk does not further reduce willingness to pay. We interpret our work as generalizing ambiguity aversion to riskless choice.

**Mislavsky, R.,** B. Dietvorst, & U. Simonsohn. (2017) “Critical Condition: People Dislike Experiments Only If They Dislike One of Its Conditions.” Revised and resubmitted to *Marketing Science*.

Why have companies faced a backlash for running experiments? Academics and pundits have argued that it is because the public finds corporate experimentation objectionable. In this paper we investigate “experiment aversion,” finding evidence that, if anything, experiments are rated more highly than the least acceptable policies that they contain. In six studies participants evaluated the acceptability of either corporate policy changes or of experiments testing those policy changes. When all policy changes were deemed acceptable, so was the experiment, even when it involved deception, unequal outcomes, and lack of consent. When a policy change was unacceptable, the experiment that included it was deemed less unacceptable. Experiments are not unpopular, unpopular policies are unpopular.

Beshears, J., H.N. Lee, K.L. Milkman, & **R. Mislavsky.** (2017) “Creating Exercise Habits Using Incentives: The Tradeoff between Flexibility and Routinization.” In preparation.

How can the formation of beneficial, lasting habits be promoted? Previous research suggests that persistent habits often involve regular, cue-triggered routines. We conducted a field experiment with 2,508 employees of a Fortune 500 company to test whether incentives for exercise routines—paying participants each time they visit a company gym within a daily two-hour window—lead to more persistent exercise behavior than flexible exercise incentives—paying participants each time they visit a company gym, regardless of the time of day. We find that an incremental gym visit in the daily two-hour window, compared to an incremental gym visit outside the window, was actually less likely to generate gym visits during the weeks after incentives were removed. Thus, while routines may be a common and important component of many lasting habits, encouraging overly rigid routines can undermine habit formation.

**Mislavsky, R., & C. Gaertig.** “60% + 60% = 60%, but Likely + Likely = Very Likely.” Work in progress.

To make optimal decisions, consumers must make accurate predictions about the likelihood of uncertain events. As such, they may solicit opinions from multiple advisors, who can make their own predictions using verbal probabilities (“X is likely”) or numeric probabilities (“There is a 60% chance that X will happen”). Although existing research documents differences in how we process verbal and numeric probabilities in isolation, much less is known about how we integrate multiple probabilities of each type. We find that people primarily average advisors’ numeric probabilities, but when combining verbal probabilities, they make forecasts that are more extreme than each individual advisor’s forecast.