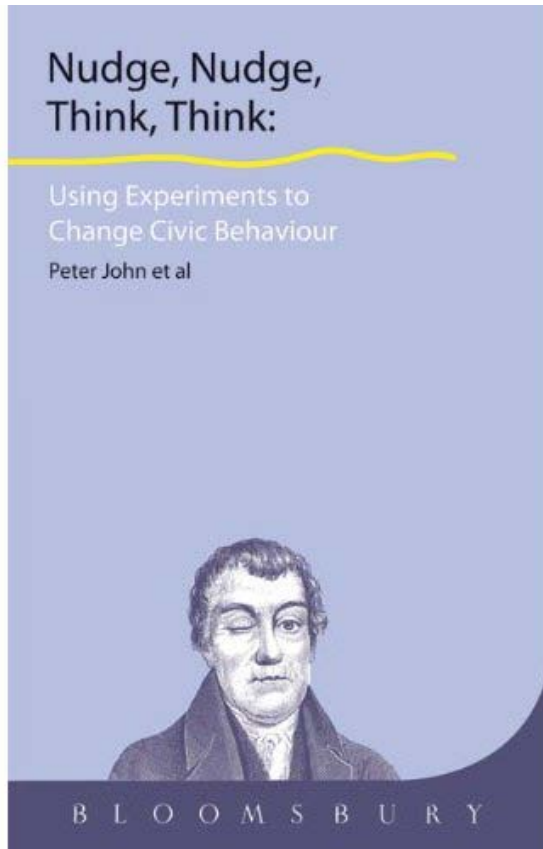


Responding to the Giving Green Paper: Lessons from research on changing civic behaviour

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Basic themes



- Testing Nudges using RCTs and design experiments
- Research policy briefs available at <http://www.civicbehaviour.org.uk/>
- Book out shortly also available for download

Example

- Test the whether the numbers of books citizens donate to charity depend on the manner in which they were asked.
- The research team randomly allocated 11,812 households in two electoral wards:
 - a control group that were just asked to donate books to Africa
 - a pledge group which were asked to pledge
 - a pledge-plus-publicity group, which got the pledge but who were told that if they donated their names would be put up in a public place.

Book Donations

	Control Group	Pledge Group	Pledge & Publicity Group
Book donation	282 (7.2%)	320 (8.1%)	346 (8.8%)
No book donation	3665 (92.8%)	3617 (91.9%)	3592 (91.2%)
Total no. of households	3937	3937	3938

Issue	Intervention	Effect in comparison to a control group
<i>Recycling experiment (household recycling)</i>	Canvassing	Recycling increased by 5% (immediate), drops to a 4% increase (3 months later)
<i>Recycling experiment (food waste)</i>	Feedback	Recycling increased by 3%
<i>Volunteering</i>	Asking Complainers	Initial surge of interest but no change in volunteering levels (63 said yes)
<i>Voting</i>	I)Telephone calls II)Canvassing	I)3.5% more votes II)3.6% more votes
<i>Petitioning</i>	Social information	9% more petitions signed in lab study
<i>Choice Architecture (organ donations)</i>	I)Presumed consent II)Mandated choice	I)Registrations increased by 8% II)Registrations increased by 5%
<i>Linking (letters to councillors)</i>	I)Weak letter II)Strong letter	i) 21% response from councillors ii) 16% response from councillors (no control group in this study)

Key general findings

- Most of our Nudges worked in a modest rather than transformative way
- Interventions work best with local partners
- Most of our nudges are about low cost activities, that people want to do anyway
- Our field work brings home the potential gap between lab findings and viable interventions
- What about harder choices....looking beyond our research

Soft Tools of Behavioural Change

Intervention tool	Defining Characteristics	Process of Creation	Demands of Government	Limits to government Capacity
Framing	Shaping the choice framework of actors based on their original values	Top-down	Presentation of multiple framing opportunities and a well-established practice	Lack of Trust in government may limit message reception
Persuasion	Shifting the beliefs of citizens	Top-down	A clear strong capacity for delivery a message	Too many conflicting perspectives or challenges can limit capacity to shift beliefs
Norm-making	Working with the processes that create positive norms in social groups	Bottom-up	An ability to cede control and work in interactive partnership with citizens	Governments fail to provide space and time to supports citizen-led activities
Norm-selection	The complex and contradictory perspectives of citizens as they think through situations and apply established norms	Bottom-up	Developing and harnessing a local knowledge that would enable understanding of how choices are made	Governments face major obstacles in seeing the world like a citizen

Thoughts

- Cognitive complexity, social pressures and moral motivations are relevant
- Translating lab insights into interventions is challenging
- Govt not always well placed to engage in soft behavioural change
- Nudge strategies may be smarter and more fluid in style than bureaucratic regulation but they cannot escape entirely normative challenge.