Preference Change

Elements in Decision Theory and Philosophy

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Abstract: For most of its history, decision theory has investigated the rational choices of humans under the assumption of static preferences. Human preferences, however, change. In recent years, decision theory has increasingly acknowledged the reality of preference change throughout life. This Element provides an accessible introduction and new contributions to the debates on preference change. It is divided into three sections. In the first section, the authors discuss what preference change is and whether we can integrate it into decision theory. In the second section, they present models of preference change, including a novel proposal of their own. In the third and final section, they discuss how we can rationally choose a course of action when our preferences might change. Both the transformative experience literature and recent work on choosing for changing selves are discussed.

In recent years, decision theory has increasingly acknowledged the reality of preference change throughout life. This Element provides an accessible introduction and new contributions to the debates on preference change. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

This Element also has a video abstract: www.Cambridge.org/EDTP:Strohmaier

Keywords: preference change, motivation, rationality, cognition, transformation

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