

Comments on individual chapters:

Manipulation of cursed beliefs: a natural model that explores an interesting question. My main concern is that the “main take-away” is presented as “here is what happens if you combine cursed beliefs with online reviews” whereas I really see the results as “here is what ***could*** happen if you combine cursed beliefs with online reviews.” I could easily imagine a model where cursed belief lead to lower prices. For instance, suppose that terrible reviews are destructive to the firm. Then, the firm would want to avoid a situation where consumers simultaneously have overly optimistic beliefs and face a very high price. But cursed equilibrium could lead to the former and thus lead the firm to avoid the latter. I am not suggesting a change in the model, just the change in the language that describes the results.

Bayesian persuasion with costly information acquisition:

An excellent paper. I don't have any comments except to encourage Ludmila to continue producing work of such high quality.

Habit formation: an experimental study.

My least favorite paper of the three. Frankly, I think the laboratory is the worst place to study habit formation. Nothing that happens in the lab can possibly tell me whether my marginal utility of living in a big house is influenced by the size of the house I lived in last year. I would discourage Ludmila from doing further work along these lines. The lab is great for studying certain questions. It is terrible for studying others.

Overall assessment:

This is a great dissertation and obviously suffices for formal and content requirements for a PhD thesis in Economics; thus I recommend it for a defense. There are no binding recommendations that have to be changed.

Best,
Emir