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# Preference Change

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Changing preferences is a phenomenon often invoked but rarely properly accounted for. Throughout the history of the social sciences, researchers have come against the possibility that their subjects' preferences were affected by the phenomenon to be explained or by other factors not taken into account in the explanation. Sporadically, attempts have been made to systematically investigate these instances, but none of these seems to have had a lasting impact. Today we are still not much further with respect to preference change than we were at the middle of the last century. This anthology hopes to provide a new impulse for research into this important subject. In particular, we have chosen two routes to amplify this impulse. First, we stress the use of modelling techniques familiar from economics and decision theory. Instead of constructing complex, all-encompassing theories of preference change, the authors of this volume start with very simple, formal accounts of some possible and hopefully plausible mechanism of preference change. Eventually, these models may find their way into larger, empirically adequate theories, but at this stage, we think that the most important work lies in building structure. Secondly, we stress the importance of interdisciplinary exchange. Only by drawing together experts from different fields can the complex empirical and theoretical issues in the modelling of preference change be adequately investigated.

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