

**WHY WE BOYCOTT:
CONSUMER MOTIVATIONS FOR BOYCOTT PARTICIPATION
AND MARKETER RESPONSES**

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Abstract

While boycotts are increasingly relevant for management decision-making, there has been little research of an individual's motivation to boycott. Drawing upon the helping behavior and boycott literatures, we take a cost-benefit approach to the decision to boycott and present a conceptualization of motivations for boycott participation. Our framework was tested during an actual boycott of a multinational firm that was prompted by factory closings. Consumers who viewed the closures as egregious were more likely to boycott the firm, though only a minority did so. Four factors were found to predict boycott participation: the desire to make a difference, the scope for self-enhancement, counterarguments that inhibit boycotting, and the cost to the boycotter of constrained consumption. Further, the desire to make a difference and constrained consumption were significant moderators of the relationship between the perceived egregiousness of the firm's actions and boycott participation. The role of perceptions of others' participation was also explored. Implications for marketers, NGOs, policymakers and researchers are discussed.

The boycott is the way we take our cause to the public. For surely if we cannot find justice in the courts of rural California, we will find support with our brothers and sisters throughout the nation.

Cesar Chavez in Why We Boycott (United Farm Workers of America 1973)

We've taken significant actions to improve the lives, opportunities and working conditions of the people who make our product around the world, and regularly invest in the communities where we do business. And we do this so that consumers can buy Nike products with the knowledge that these products have been manufactured under safe and fair working conditions.

Nike's response to criticism in Naomi Klein's No Logo (Nike 2000)

Boycotts are an intriguing form of consumer behavior. They are unwelcome to marketers yet consistent with the marketing concept because, on the face of it, marketers of products targeted by a well-supported consumer boycott have failed to have a sufficient customer focus. With greater public attention to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the increased vulnerability of brands and corporate reputations, boycotts have become ever more relevant for management decision-making. Equally, as a source of consumer power and a mechanism for the social control of business, boycotts have public policy implications. In a quite deliberate manner, boycotters can use their "purchase votes" to favor firms with preferred societal impacts, consistent with the idea of consumer choice as a rationale for capitalism (Dickinson and Hollander 1991; Smith 1990). Yet there has been little research into the factors that influence an individual's motivation to boycott, despite the need for a better understanding by marketers, boycott organizers and policymakers.

Friedman (1985, p. 97) defines a consumer boycott as "an attempt by one or more parties to achieve certain objectives by urging individual consumers to refrain from making selected purchases in the marketplace." The "urging" and organization of a boycott typically come from a pressure group or non-governmental organization (NGO) protesting corporate practices. Boycotts are thus an extreme case of a broader category of consumer behavior where social and ethical issues, such as environmentalism, are an influence on purchase decisions. Hence, a better understanding of boycott participation is not only useful in its own right, but is likely to inform our understanding of ethical

influences on buyer behavior in general (Smith 1999).

Consumer boycotts date back at least as far as the 14th century and have contributed to some spectacular successes for relatively powerless groups. In the United States, boycotts were the key to unionization (Wolman 1916), and the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott marks the beginning of the modern civil rights movement (Friedman 1999). Elsewhere, examples include Gandhi's boycotts of British salt and cloth prior to Indian independence and the British boycott of Barclays Bank prior to its withdrawal from apartheid South Africa (Smith 1990). In the 1990s, the business press appeared to agree that boycotts were often successful and were increasing (e.g., The Economist 1990).¹ Recent prominent consumer boycotts include the European boycott of Shell over its plan to dump the Brent Spar oil platform at sea and the multi-country boycott of Nike over alleged sweatshop conditions at Asian suppliers. As these examples suggest, however, boycotts today are more typically focused on corporate practices rather than broader socio-political goals such as civil rights. This shift in boycott focus reflects both the increased power of the modern transnational corporation and, paradoxically, the heightened vulnerability of corporate reputation and brand image, and is consistent with recent findings that a firm's CSR record affects consumer perceptions of the firm's brands and its products (Brown and Dacin 1997; Sen and Bhattacharya 2001). It is with this context in mind that this article develops and tests a conceptualization of motivations for boycott participation.

MOTIVATIONS FOR BOYCOTT PARTICIPATION

Table 1 summarizes prior research on consumer boycotts, showing orientation, methodological approach and factors influencing boycott participation. Most boycott studies have been conceptual or descriptive (case studies), with a focus on boycott organizers and targets rather than on the consumer. Only two studies have reported empirical research focusing directly on variables that influence an

¹ The incidence of boycotts and their success are inherently hard to quantify because of difficulties in identifying calls for boycotts by NGOs and the understandable reluctance of firms to report sales declines due to boycotts or to publicize concessions to boycott organizers. Also, NGOs are tempted to overestimate boycott impact in high profile boycotts.

individual consumer's boycott decision. Kozinets and Handelman's (1998) netnographic study suggested that boycott participation is not only a collective effort but also a complex emotional expression of individuality and a vehicle for moral self-realization. Sen, Gurhan-Canli and Morwitz (2001) tested a theoretical framework that suggests a fundamental question underlies an individual's decision to boycott: will the boycott be successful? They find that an individual's participation is influenced by his or her perception of the likelihood of the boycott's success, susceptibility to normative social influences (social pressure), and the costs associated with boycotting.

(Insert Table 1 Here)

We take a cost-benefit approach to the investigation of boycott participation, drawing on several strands of previous research. Sen, et al. (2001) conceptualized boycotts as social dilemmas, wherein an individual chooses between the individual benefit of consumption and the wish of a collective to refrain from consumption so that all receive the shared benefits of a successful boycott. John and Klein (forthcoming) developed a theoretical economic model of boycotting, in which individuals' incentives to participate are limited by the knowledge that they are small relative to the market and by the opportunity to free-ride on the boycotting of others. Both papers suggest that social factors—such as social pressure and expectations about aggregate participation—help to counter free-riding.

These papers in turn are related to a large prior literature within social psychology on helping behavior. The study of helping behavior is, at its heart, an endeavor to understand when and why people act against selfish interests for the good of others. An explanation that has received extensive empirical support over the last three decades is the Arousal: Cost–Reward Model. According to this approach, when a potential helper encounters another person in distress, she interprets the seriousness of the situation; based on this interpretation she experiences arousal. In response to this arousal, she assesses the potential costs and benefits of helping. The higher the net benefit of helping (rewards

minus costs), the more likely it is that help will be given (e.g., Dovidio, et al. 1991).² Thus, drawing on the helping literature as well as the boycott literature, we conceptualize the decision to participate in a boycott as akin to the decision to help others in distress, contribute to a charity or to donate blood.³ Figure 1 depicts our model.

(Insert Figure 1 About Here)

Our starting point, consistent with the boycott literature (e.g., Friedman 1999; Garrett 1987; Smith 1990; Smith and Cooper-Martin 1997), is the observation that boycott participation is generally prompted by the belief that a firm has carried out some egregious act. Typically, this perception varies across consumers: some will see a given act as seriously wrong while others are less likely to do so. We propose that this level of perceived egregiousness will have a direct impact on boycott participation: the more a consumer perceives an act as egregious, the more likely she is to boycott. Similarly, people in helping situations often have different interpretations of whether the scenario they witness is serious enough to precipitate intervention (Latane and Darley 1968; Schwartz 1977).

As with helping, boycotting brings with it benefits and costs. We consider these benefits and costs to be motivations to participate (or not) in a boycott. From this perspective, our goal is as much to explain why some people do *not* boycott, as it is to explain why others do. The motivations are drawn from economic and psychological theory, especially the cost-reward model of helping, and are grouped into four categories: making a difference; enhancing one's self-concept; counterarguments; and the loss of utility due to constrained consumption.

² Although originally developed to explain helping in emergency situations, the cost-reward approach has been extended to include non-emergency helping (Piliavin, et al. 1981; 1982), such as voting, volunteering and charitable donations (e.g., Chambre 1987; Piliavin and Charng 1990), blood donations (Piliavin and Callero 1999), and corporate philanthropy (Piliavin and Charng 1990).

³ We argue that the individual decision to boycott has close parallels with the decision to help. One apparent difference is that helping may not seem to be a collective action problem—even if many are in a position to help, only one person is often actually required to do the helping. We can reformulate the case of a single helper, however, as a situation where potential helpers are, with some probability, choosing to help (Lynch and Cohen 1978). Meanwhile, some helping behavior, such as blood donation, presents a standard collective action problem.

The first set of variables, which we label *make a difference*, represents the motivation to bring about societal change by participating in the boycott. These variables thus represent a set of perceived benefits of boycotting. *Self-enhancement*, the second set of variables, acknowledges the psychosocial dimension of boycott participation, including the boycotter's possible feeling of guilt at consuming a boycotted product (a cost of *not* boycotting) and the potential opportunity to increase self-esteem through association with the boycott (a benefit). *Counterarguments* include the belief that harm might result from the boycott, and a belief that the benefits from individual participation are very small (both may be viewed as costs). Finally, there is the cost of *constrained consumption*, the direct utility sacrifice entailed by a consumer's boycott decision.

As shown in Figure 1, we propose that these motivations directly affect boycott participation. For example, if a consumer believes that by boycotting she can change the firm's behavior, she is more likely to boycott, above and beyond the effect of egregiousness or other motivations. We also propose that these motivations will moderate the relationship between perceived egregiousness and the boycott decision. For example, the relationship between egregiousness and boycotting will be stronger for consumers who believe boycotts can bring about change than for those who do not. This prediction is consistent with helping studies that find interactions between perceptions of the seriousness of a situation and the costs and benefits of helping (e.g., Piliavin, Piliavin, and Rodin 1975; Dovidio et al. 1991).

HYPOTHESES

Perceived Egregiousness

Boycotting appears generally to be a response to a company action viewed as strikingly wrong and perceived as having negative and possibly harmful consequences for one or more parties (such as workers, consumers, society at large, or the environment). To test this proposition, we conducted a preliminary study using materials promoting the long-standing boycott of Nestlé over its marketing of

infant formula in developing countries. Perceived egregiousness was found to predict both boycott participation and a more negative brand image (Authors 2003). Accordingly, our first hypothesis predicts that perceived egregiousness will influence boycott participation.

H₁: Consumers who find the firm's actions to be more egregious are more likely to boycott.

Not all consumers who view the firm's actions as egregious will participate in the boycott, however. In our preliminary study, 70% rated the problematic company practice at or above the mid-point on a composite seven-point scale measure of egregiousness, but only a minority (45%) said they would definitely or probably boycott Nestlé. Answers to open-ended questions suggested that boycotters often had multiple and differing motivations for participation, which reflected perceived costs or benefits of participation. Thus, drawing from the helping literature and the relevant boycott literature (cited above), as well as our preliminary study, we propose four different classes of motivations linked to benefits and costs, each assessed by multiple items (see Figure 1).

Benefits and Costs

Make a Difference. Our first factor reflects a boycotters' desire to communicate a message to the target firm and to pressure the firm to change its behavior. One element of this is a *general* 'willingness to boycott,' that Smith (1990) proposed will affect a consumer's participation in any *specific* boycott. This general willingness to boycott is influenced by beliefs about whether boycotts work, that in turn are influenced by *perceived consumer effectiveness*, defined as "a domain-specific belief that the efforts of an individual can make a difference in the solution to a problem" (Ellen, Wiener and Cobb-Walgreen 1991, p. 103). Similarly, Sen et al. (2001) refer to 'perceived efficacy' as the extent to which one believes that each boycott participant can contribute significantly to the achievement of collective goals, and John and Klein (forthcoming) discuss how an exaggerated view of their effectiveness might explain why people take part in boycotts when the target is unlikely to

notice. All of this research is likewise consistent with helping research that shows that helping is more likely when the potential helper feels competent to help and has confidence that his actions will result in positive outcomes (e.g., Midlarsky 1984). Finally, perceptions of the seriousness of a situation can interact with perceived competence to help (Cramer et al. 1988).

- H_{2a}:** Beliefs in boycotting to make a difference will predict boycott participation. Those who believe that boycotting is appropriate, and that it can be effective, will be most likely to participate in the boycott.
- H_{2b}:** Beliefs in boycotting to make a difference will moderate the relationship between egregiousness and the boycott decision. When these beliefs are strongly held, the relationship between egregiousness and boycotting will be greater than when these beliefs are less strongly held.

Self-Enhancement. The second factor comprises psychosocial variables associated with self-enhancement: participation allows the boycotter to boost self-esteem, either by associating with a cause or group of people, or simply by seeing herself as a moral person. There is ample evidence from the helping behavior literature that feeling good about oneself and admired by others are key benefits of helping, while self-blame and public censure are consequences of not helping. The maintenance of self-esteem is a fundamental motive in human behavior (Baumeister 1998; Pittman 1998). According to Katz (1960), some attitudes carry a value expressive function that provides a means of expressing key aspects of the self-concept, and expressing these attitudes is inherently rewarding because it allows people to enhance their self-esteem (see also Eagly and Chaiken 1998). Thus, boycott participation and allied feelings of “doing the right thing” might be ways of boosting self-esteem. Kozinets and Handelman (1998) find evidence for this in interviews with boycotters for whom boycotting seems to permit a bettering of oneself “akin to a hygienically cleansing process”.

Smith (1990) suggested that potential boycotters may feel under a moral obligation to keep away from the company’s products in order to have “clean hands”. The guilt associated with not participating in a boycott is also likely to be partly a result of socially embedded expectations, reflecting the role of social pressure. The relevance of social pressure for boycott participation is

widely acknowledged in the boycott literature (Friedman 1999; Garrett 1987; Rea 1974; Sen et al. 2001; Smith 1990), and it is also a relevant factor in the helping literature (e.g., Dovidio et al. 1991). Thus, self-enhancement through boycott participation includes avoiding feelings of guilt or the negative perceptions of others.

- H_{3a}:** Self-enhancement factors will predict boycott participation. The more the perceived scope for self-enhancement (and avoidance of guilt or social censure), the more likely the consumer will be to boycott.
- H_{3b}:** Self-enhancement factors will moderate the relationship between egregiousness and the boycott decision. The more the scope for self-enhancement, the greater will be the relationship between perceived egregiousness and boycotting.

Counterarguments. Our third factor comprises three types of counterarguments that might inhibit boycott participation. The first involves potential external costs arising from the boycott. For example, in response to boycotts over involvement in apartheid South Africa, firms noted that these boycotts hurt those they were intended to help (Smith 1990). Firms sourcing products from low-wage economies have made similar claims. Schwartz (1977) asserted that in the process of deciding to help another in need, there is a “defensive step” of assessing potential negative outcomes of helping (e.g., injuring or embarrassing the person in need). Thus, a potential boycotter—even one who sees the firm’s actions as highly egregious—might refrain from participation if she thinks that boycotting could lead to unintended harm. Thus, concerns about harm will directly affect boycott participation and will moderate the relationship between egregiousness and boycotting.

Two other types of counterargument are associated with the belief that one is too small to make a difference and the desire to free-ride. Helping often fails to occur because the potential helper feels unable to intervene effectively; there is a sense of a powerlessness to change the victim’s predicament. Similarly, people might not participate in a boycott because they believe that their actions will have no impact: they are too small to be noticed (John and Klein, forthcoming). Free-riding is more complex. In the helping literature, free-riding tendencies are examined in studies of

“diffusion of responsibility,” which find that the probability that a person will help someone in need is drastically reduced when others are also available to help (e.g., Latane, Nida and Wilson 1981). The cost-benefit model of helping suggests that this occurs because the costs for not helping (e.g., guilt, worry about the victim) are reduced due to the expectation that the victim will receive help from others. Similarly, while boycotts require widespread participation to be effective (substantially reduce sales), if the boycott is successful all will receive the benefits regardless of whether they participated and thus some would-be participants might free ride.

- H₄:** Counterarguments concerning boycotting will be negatively related to boycott participation. The more a consumer engages in counterarguments, the less likely it is that the consumer will boycott.
- H_{4a}:** Counterarguments concerning boycotting will moderate the relationship between egregiousness and the boycott decision. The stronger the counterarguments, the weaker will be the relationship between perceived egregiousness and boycotting.

Constrained Consumption. Fairly obviously, the direct cost of boycotting—forgoing a preferred good—will also factor into the individual’s boycott decision. Boycotting likely will be most costly for heavy users of the targeted company’s products prior to the boycott. These consumers suffer the greatest constraint in their consumption if they participate in the boycott.

- H_{5a}:** The degree to which consumption is constrained will predict boycott participation. Those whose consumption is most constrained by boycotting will be less likely to boycott.
- H_{5b}:** The degree to which consumption is constrained will moderate the relationship between egregiousness and the boycott decision. There will be a weaker relationship between egregiousness and boycotting for those who would suffer the greatest constraint in their consumption.

Estimated Participation of Others

Sen et al (2001) and John and Klein (forthcoming) suggest that individual boycott participation also may be affected by perceptions of how many others are boycotting. We refer to this as estimated participation. This part of our research is more exploratory because there are several ways in which estimated participation might influence the individual decision (also, our data are not

rich enough to distinguish among them). First, increased participation by others is likely to give rise to social pressure to participate in the boycott. Thus, we would expect that an increase in estimated participation would lead to an increase in actual participation. We might also expect that estimated participation would moderate the effect of our self-enhancement variables. Second, an increase in estimated participation might change perceptions of boycott efficacy. When more people are taking part in the boycott it is probable that an individual thinks her own participation may affect the outcome, analogous to the idea that one is more likely to cast a critical vote in a close election. Thus we expect estimated participation to moderate the effect of making a difference.

In addition, estimated participation will affect the incentive to free-ride. When more people participate, the boycott is more likely to be successful and so the temptation to free-ride increases (John and Klein, forthcoming). This effect therefore acts in the opposite direction to those we have just discussed and also suggests that estimated participation will moderate our free-rider variable. Finally, Sen et al. (2001) suggest that when the direct cost of boycotting is high, people will be particularly averse to being exploited by others' free-riding (see also Wiener and Doescher 1991; Schwartz (1977) similarly notes that a danger of altruistic action is exploitation). In terms of our framework, they argue that estimated participation will moderate constrained consumption.⁴

Brand Image

Consistent with our preliminary study, we expect egregiousness to affect brand image: those who feel a firm has erred will have a more negative image of it compared to those who do not judge its actions as egregious (also see Dawar and Pillutla 2000; Smith and Cooper-Martin 1997).

H_{6a}: There will be a direct relationship between egregiousness and brand image; the greater the perceived egregiousness, the more negative will be the brand image.

⁴ These arguments also imply the possibility of three-way interactions between estimated participation, egregiousness, and the variables that we discuss. We do not search for such interactions here because our model is already complex. This discussion also does not exhaust the possible ways that, as a matter of theory, estimated participation might affect boycotting. For example, individuals might infer egregiousness from estimated participation.

We also expect that boycotting will damage brand image, above and beyond the direct effects of egregiousness. It is well established within social psychology that actions can intensify attitudes in the direction of the behavior. Both cognitive dissonance theory (e.g., Festinger 1957) and self-perception theory (e.g., Bem 1972) predict that undertaking an action leads to behavior-consistent attitudes. Thus, independently of egregiousness perceptions, consumers who boycott are likely to devalue their perception of the brand, simply because they boycotted.

H_{6b}: The relationship between egregiousness and brand image will be mediated by the boycott decision.

Finally, given the potential direct harms to the firm (lost sales) as well as indirect harms (brand image suffers) the management of targeted firms can be expected to communicate with consumers to discourage boycott participation. These marketer responses are also investigated.

METHODS

The Bremmer Boycott

Our hypotheses were tested in an empirical study of an actual, on-going boycott. This contrasts with Sen et al. (2001), who conducted a laboratory study (they informed subjects about an on-going boycott and manipulated factors predicted to affect participation) and Kozinets and Handelman (1998), who examined internet chat room data (selecting sites for their prevalence of discussions of boycott). Our study is thus the first quantitative, consumer-focused study of an on-going boycott in a naturalistic setting.⁵ The advantage of this approach is that we capture real-time reactions to a boycott within the social milieu in which it occurred. While our study lacks the experimental control of the laboratory, we gain access to a real boycott, with all its inherent emotion and public controversy, without needing to elicit or simulate moral outrage in an artificial setting.

⁵ Miller and Sturdivant (1977) studied an actual boycott due to worker mistreatment, but they focused on the effect of one firm's actions on perceptions of an affiliated firm, and did not examine consumer motivations for participation.

The boycott in question was called against Bremmer (name disguised), a European-based multinational firm that sells consumer food products, primarily through grocery outlets. The announcement of two factory closings occurred approximately one month before the data collection. The closings were a major event that received extensive media coverage and attracted substantial attention, and some consumers began boycotting.⁶ Two weeks after the announcement, the Bremmer CEO was interviewed in the media about the closings. A large demonstration at one of the closing factories was staged a week later, and an official boycott was called by a group of Bremmer employees and various pressure groups, including an NGO well known for its campaigning against globalization. Consumers were asked to boycott all of the firm's products, but two product brands received the most media attention: the brand made in the factories to be closed (Brand A), and Bremmer brand name products made in other factories (Brand B). Bremmer had other brands, but only some consumers were aware that it produced these brands.

Corporate tracking studies conducted by Bremmer's research firm incorporated questions formulated to test our hypotheses. We also had access to sales tracking data for Brand A, which showed a sharp decrease in market share during this time. The immediate response was particularly dramatic: market share fell by about 11 percent (relative to levels in the three previous months) in the first two weeks following the announcement of the factory closings and before the boycott was "officially" called. Sales then recovered somewhat, but for the four months following the call to boycott, market share was down an average of about 4 percent. No significant events occurred between the start and end of the data collection reported here (the second to the ninth weeks following the call for a boycott) and market share remained low and steady during this period. Sales did not

⁶ Our confidentiality agreement precludes direct identification of the boycott target and hence no cites are provided here (although, in accordance with our agreement, we did identify the target to the reviewers of this paper). The plant closures and resulting boycott were highly significant events that resulted in front-page newspaper articles and major coverage in other media. The negative media coverage included the company's plant closures being described in the press as "brutal" and the company depicted as a "symbol of corporate greed" because it was making closures even though it was profitable. A government minister even decried the closures as "unacceptable".

recover to near their pre-boycott levels until five months after the boycott was announced.

The Study

Our study was conducted by Bremmer's research agency. We composed questions to add to the survey, but we did not have control over exact question wording or the format of the response scales (because of the need to maintain consistency with previous Bremmer tracking studies).

Subjects. A nationally representative stratified random sample of 1,216 adult consumers participated in the study via a telephone survey (response rate was 40%). Respondents were asked to participate in "a survey on some companies" and there was no reference during recruitment to Bremmer or to the boycott. Interviews were conducted in May and June 2001 (factory closings were announced in April). Females were 52.6% of the sample and the average age was 46.⁷

Measurement. Respondents were asked to indicate on a 3-point scale (from "poor" to "very good") their opinion of the firm (the brand for many of Bremmer's products). They were then asked if they had heard about the factory closings. ("There have been recent reports in the press about planned factory closings and job losses in the Bremmer group. Have you heard about them?") They were also asked three questions that measured their perceptions of the egregiousness of the closings. For the first two, respondents were asked to rate their confidence (on a 4-point scale of "no confidence at all" to "complete confidence") in the managers of Bremmer to: "not close factories except when necessary" and "ensure that the factory closings take place in the best possible way for the workers". The third question asked for agreement on a four-point scale to the statement, "Bremmer must close certain unprofitable factories to avoid putting its entire [product] line in danger."⁸ Respondents were also asked whether they disapproved of Bremmer's actions.

⁷ Professionals represented 12% of the sample; mid-to low-level managers and technicians, 15%; clerical workers, 11%; unskilled workers, 22%; and unemployed or retired, 32%. A stratified sampling approach was taken to ensure that sample demographics matched those of the population.

⁸ For the third question, it should be noted that much of the anger associated with the boycott was attributed in the media to reports that Bremmer was making factory closures despite being profitable overall.

The next question asked about boycott participation, stating that there had been appeals to boycott Bremmer in reaction to the factory closings. Respondents were given three possible responses: “I am boycotting the products of Bremmer;” “I am tempted to boycott, but I don’t know if I will;” and “I am not boycotting the products of Bremmer.”⁹ Respondents were also asked to estimate what percent of Bremmer customers were boycotting Bremmer products.

Questions tapping the hypothesized benefit and cost motivators were measured on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree) scale. Table 2 lists the questions, together with descriptive statistics, for the “make a difference”, self-enhancement and counterargument items. Constrained consumption was measured by previous purchase frequency, since heavy purchasers of Bremmer products would pay a higher price for boycotting than light purchasers. Respondents were asked how often they generally had bought the two focal brands (A and B).¹⁰

Bremmer management had communicated two messages about the factory closings that they hoped would reduce negative opinion. These two messages were that three alternative jobs had been offered to each worker in the closing factories, and that Bremmer was looking for other companies that would be willing to create jobs at the sites to be closed. In the survey, respondents were asked if they had heard these messages (“yes” or “no”) and whether they were more sympathetic to the firm as a result of these initiatives, on a 1 (“not at all”) to 4 (“very”) scale.

RESULTS

The controversy was well publicized: 95% of the sample had heard about the factory closings. Overall, 67% of the sample were not boycotting, 17% were tempted to boycott, and 16% were boycotting. While respondents overwhelmingly disapproved (81%) of Bremmer’s factory closings,

⁹ This question was modified in the June phase of the survey. Interviewers first asked if the respondent was boycotting; if the answer was negative they asked if he or she was tempted to boycott.

¹⁰ The purchasing history of four brands produced by Bremmer was assessed. Brands A and B were strongly associated with the firm and the controversy, while brands C and D shared a much weaker association with the firm and the boycott (corporate surveys verified that a large majority of consumers were unaware that brands C and D were produced by Bremmer). Thus, the constrained consumption measures were based on purchase frequencies of Brands A and B.

the majority (61%) of those consumers who disapproved were non-boycotters. Only 19% of disapprovers were currently boycotting, while 20% were tempted to boycott, but had not yet done so. For the majority of consumers, disapproval of the firm's actions did not lead to boycotting.

The three measures of egregiousness described above were averaged (Cronbach's $\alpha = .73$). The mean egregiousness score was 2.79 (recall that responses to these questions were on a four-point scale, with higher numbers indicating greater egregiousness). While 60% of the sample averaged 3 or higher on the scale, only 22% of these boycotted (21% were tempted), again suggesting that not all consumers who view a firm's actions as wrong participate in a boycott.¹¹

A principal components analysis with varimax rotation of the cost-benefit (motivation) variables found four factors, as predicted (Table 3). PCAs conducted factor by factor revealed each to be unidimensional.

The most strongly endorsed items were the counterarguments, particularly the idea that boycotting would hurt other jobs and lead one to buy foreign products.¹² Least strongly endorsed were self-enhancement items, particularly those associated with social pressure. As Table 2 shows, all motivations showed the expected differences across boycott groups (all p 's < .001).

(Insert Tables 2 and 3)

Regression Analyses

We first indexed our motivations according to our four predicted factors: the items of the first factor were indexed to represent the construct of "make a difference" (Cronbach's $\alpha = .78$); the items of the second factor formed the construct of "self-enhancement" (Cronbach's $\alpha = .73$); and the two purchase history questions were averaged as a measure of constrained consumption ($r = .485$, $p <$

¹¹ Of those in the sample who were high in egregiousness (3 or higher) and who disapproved, 25.5% were boycotting, 20.2% were tempted and 54.3% were not boycotting.

¹² There were no substantial changes over time in the measures reported in Table 1, with the exception that the June respondents gave higher ratings to the belief that "boycotts are an effective means to make a company change its actions" ($p < .05$), and there were fewer respondents who felt tempted to boycott in June as respondents were more decided on boycott participation. As a precaution, the time of interview is included as a control in our regression analyses.

.01).¹³ The counterargument items, while forming a clear factor in the principal components analysis, had a Cronbach's α of only .61; we return to this issue below.

As Table 2 shows, the means of each of the motivation variables is consistent with an equal interval dependent variable: in each case, the mean for "tempteds" falls in between the means for the non-boycotting and boycotting groups, equidistant or close to equidistant from the two extreme means. (This was the case across both phases of the data collection.) We thus elected to use simple OLS regression in our analysis. Predictor variables were centered (raw score – mean; Cohen and Cohen 1983).

Model A in Table 4a is our benchmark model. It includes egregiousness and all of the cost-benefit motivation factors, plus the interaction terms of each of these factors with egregiousness. Gender was included in the model (see discussion below), and a dummy variable was added for the phase of the data collection. As predicted by H₁, egregiousness has a direct effect on boycotting, as do the four sets of cost-benefit factors (all significant findings are in bold).¹⁴ There were significant interactions between egregiousness and constrained consumption, and between egregiousness and make a difference, and the interaction between self-enhancement and egregiousness was close to significance. The counterargument * egregiousness interaction is in the predicted direction but not significant. Table 5 indicates the magnitude of the findings (as suggested by Irwin and McClelland 2001), demonstrating that they are of substantive as well as statistical significance.

(Insert Tables 4a, 4b and 5 Here)

In models B–E, we examined the counterarguments in more detail. Although the four counterarguments did load on a single factor, they measure different objections to boycotting: free-

¹³ If respondents answered the questionnaire appropriately, these purchase history questions should capture constrained consumption. There are two mismeasurement issues that could arise, however: first, those who never purchased Bremmer's products might decide to report themselves as boycotters; and, second, respondents might have misinterpreted the purchase history question as a question about their current purchases. As a check, we also ran our analyses omitting those who reported never purchasing Bremmer's products; our results were essentially unchanged.

¹⁴ The models include a large number of variables with low to moderate correlations among each other (from .01 to .58, the average correlation is .13, for Model A). Thus, the relative size of the effect of the variables should be considered and a significance level of .10 is used.

riding is not the same as refraining from boycotting because other jobs will be hurt. Further, the Cronbach's α of .61 is below the generally accepted cut-off of .70, suggesting that the items should perhaps be represented individually in the regression equation. At the same time, they are correlated with one another (as indicated by the factor analysis and by r 's ranging from .18 to .45), so including all four items in a single equation presents collinearity problems. We thus ran four separate regressions (models B – E) including each counterargument, in turn, as an individual variable. (While this raises the possibility of misspecification bias, this appears to be limited given that the results for the rest of the model are very similar in all five models in Table 4a.) In effect, these individual regressions allow us to see the maximum possible effect of each individual counterargument. The counterargument variables all have significant direct effects on boycotting, and “too small” and “hurts jobs” show significant interactions with egregiousness. The interaction terms are all in the predicted direction, indicating that these motivations moderated the relationship between egregiousness and boycotting.

Thus, from Models A-E, we find support for H_1 , H_{2a} , H_{2b} , H_{3a} , H_{3b} (directional but not significant), H_{4a} , H_{4b} (directional but not significant, though significant differences were found for the counterargument variables “too small” and “hurts jobs”), H_{5a} , and H_{5b} . The strongest direct effects were found for “make a difference” and for the counterarguments. The interactions were less powerful but were often significant and were all in the predicted direction, with the strongest moderators being constrained consumption and make a difference.

Table 4b presents results for a model that includes estimated participation. As the top portion of Table 4b shows, the basic model (egregiousness and cost-benefit motivations) remains basically unchanged from the models shown in Table 4a, and the explanatory power only increases slightly with the inclusion of these additional variables. Still, perception of others' boycott activity plays a

significant role in the model. Estimated participation has a significant direct effect on boycotting, interacts significantly with counterarguments, and interacts at a level close to significance with self-enhancement.¹⁵

Brand Image. Tracking data indicated that prior to public knowledge of the intended factory closings, Bremmer's image was extremely positive: 96% had a "very good" or "good" opinion of the firm, and 2% had a "poor" image. This positive rating had dropped to 68% by the start of our data collection and the percent holding a negative opinion rose to 30% during the same time period. Thus, the controversy damaged an image that had previously been almost universally positive.

We predicted that egregiousness would have a direct effect on brand image and an indirect effect through the boycott decision (Figure 1). Egregiousness did, in fact, predict brand image: higher egregiousness was inversely related to brand image ($\beta = -.33, p < .001$; standardized coefficients are reported here for ease of comparison), supporting H_{6a}. Egregiousness also predicted the boycott decision ($\beta = .31, p < .001$). When both egregiousness and the boycott decision predict brand image, both are significant ($\beta = -.24, p < .001$, and $\beta = -.27, p < .001$), and the direct path from egregiousness to boycotting drops significantly (from $-.33$ to $-.24, t = 2.19, p < .05$).

Thus, support is found for the partial mediation of boycotting on the relationship between egregiousness and brand image (Baron and Kenny 1986). This finding suggests that boycotting itself—above and beyond the effects of perceived egregiousness—predicts brand image, supporting H_{6b}. The effect of boycotting on brand image stays significant even if all direct effects and interactions (Model F) are included in the regression ($\beta = -.20, p < .001$).¹⁶ From a different angle,

¹⁵ When the argument variables are included separately in this model (analogously to Models B – E), the interactions between estimated participation and "hurt jobs" and between estimated participation and "country" are significant ($p < .01$), and the interactions with the other two counterargument variables are close to significance ($p = .15$ for free-riding and $p = .11$ for small).

¹⁶ An alternative model, in which brand image mediated the relationship between egregiousness and the boycott decision, was not supported.

among those who were high in egregiousness (3 or above on the 4-point egregiousness scale), 72% of boycotters assigned a “poor” rating to Bremmer, while only 24.2% of non-boycotters gave this rating. These figures are much higher than the pre-boycott, full sample “poor” rating of 2%.

Other Results

Corporate Messages and Egregiousness. We investigated whether corporate messages concerning the factory closings were related to perceived egregiousness. Those who had heard that Bremmer had offered alternative jobs to dismissed workers gave significantly lower egregiousness ratings than those who had not heard this communication ($m = 2.58$ and 2.86 , respectively, $t(1203) = 5.04$, $p < .001$). Similar results were found for the message that Bremmer had tried to find other firms to employ the workers ($m = 2.65$ and 2.86 , respectively, $t(1204) = 4.29$, $p < .001$). For those who had heard either message, a positive reaction to the message was inversely related to egregiousness ($r = -.32$, $p < .001$ and $r = -.19$, $p < .001$ for other jobs and other firms, respectively). However, responsiveness to corporate messages was not a moderator of the relationship between egregiousness and the boycott decision (interaction terms were non-significant). Thus, while corporate messages pertaining to the egregious act were effective in reducing egregiousness, other types of messages (perhaps regarding boycott efficacy) might be required to disrupt the relationship between egregiousness and boycotting. This issue will be addressed in the implications section.

Demographics. There was no correlation between age and egregiousness or age and the boycott decision ($r = -.04$, n.s. and $r = -.06$, n.s., respectively). The relationship between the boycott decision and gender, however, was significant ($\chi^2 = 11.01$, $p < .01$), with 19% of women boycotting compared to 13% of men. Further, in the models presented in Tables 4a and 4b, gender was significant. An examination of mean differences between men and women shows that women tended

to be stronger on the motivations for boycotting, with significant differences in perceived egregiousness, make a difference, self-enhancement, and free-riding.

DISCUSSION

Our study investigated a high profile social-issue boycott. The boycott target had been widely condemned, with extensive negative coverage in national print and broadcast media. Respondents were well aware of the issue leading to the boycott and overwhelmingly disapproved of the company's actions.¹⁷ It was surely a situation marketers would prefer to avoid.

The perceived egregiousness of the firm's actions was a powerful predictor of boycott participation. The more egregious a consumer perceived the firm's behavior to be, the more likely was that consumer to boycott. Moreover, the level of participation reported in the study corresponded to retail audit evidence of sales declines during the boycott. While participation was low relative to disapproval, it nevertheless represented substantial lost sales in a highly competitive market. Perceived egregiousness notwithstanding, most of the sample was not participating in the boycott. To help understand this, we used a cost-benefit approach to identify factors influencing individual boycott participation. These motivators were: a desire to make a difference; self-enhancement; counterarguments; and constrained consumption. All four were significant direct predictors of boycotting, with counterarguments and make a difference playing the strongest role. The moderating effects were all in the predicted direction, with constrained consumption and make a difference as the strongest moderators.

We also found that estimated participation played a role in the boycott decision. Although our analysis here is more speculative, all estimated participation variables (main effects and moderators) have the expected sign and some are significant. Several points are worthy of attention. First, on

¹⁷ As further, indirect evidence of perceived egregiousness, a national poll at the time of the boycott had found that nearly nine out of ten people judged it "unacceptable" for profitable companies to make people redundant.

average, respondents thought that 27% of consumers were boycotting, which was a substantial overestimate of the actual number reporting participation (16%). Second, as predicted, estimated participation had a direct effect: the greater the number a consumer thought were participating, the more likely was that consumer to join in. Third, the direct effect was moderated by self-enhancement ($p = 0.12$), which is consistent with the idea that individuals are influenced by social pressure. Fourth, the effect was moderated by counterarguments, and more specifically (see footnote 15), by the propensity to free-ride ($p = 0.15$), consistent with the prediction that the incentive to free-ride is stronger when more people are participating. Finally, there was some evidence (though at a non-significant level) that the direct effect was moderated by costs ($p = 0.22$), consistent with Sen et al.'s (2001) prediction that individuals fear being “suckers” when the cost of boycotting is high.

In addition to the loss of sales experienced by the firm as a result of boycott participation, there were also indirect costs. The egregious act harmed the firm's brand image, and the act of boycotting had an adverse effect on the brand, above and beyond the effects of perceived egregiousness. One explanation is that boycotters tried competitors' products, found they preferred them, and rejected the Bremmer brand as a result. Another explanation comes from cognitive dissonance and self-perception theories that predict that attitudes would be brought into line with behavior.

Managerial Implications

Based on our findings, we propose a variant of the well-known ATR (Awareness, Trial, Repurchase) model. Our AEB (Awareness, Egregiousness, Boycott) framework permits diagnosis of the strengths and weaknesses of a boycott and so is of relevance to managers of firms who seek effective responses and of NGOs who wish to mount successful boycotts. Figure 2 depicts the model, with data from the Bremmer boycott. We thus derive propositions for managers of firms and of NGOs. While propositions are offered to each separately, we would note that each party should be

aware of the opposing party's propositions as a source of insight on its likely strategy and tactics.

(Insert Figure 2 Here)

The first step is the measurement of awareness. For many boycotts, awareness is extremely low, in which case managers typically will wish to monitor the boycott without necessarily engaging in any active response. With low awareness, managers may only want to respond if the boycott is a wake-up call about the firm's actions (in which case they might choose to cease the egregious act) or if early monitoring reveals that the boycott is rapidly gaining momentum. If awareness levels are high or growing, the next step is to measure perceived egregiousness in order to understand both the degree of disapproval and the specific aspects of the firm's actions that consumers find objectionable. Firms can then decide whether to change current practice, engage in mitigating actions, or communicate the reasons behind their actions. Good customer relationships are likely to facilitate communication with customers and investments in branding might also be a form of "insurance" that will counteract information about egregious conduct, as Dawar and Pillutla (2000, p. 224) suggest in the context of product-harm crises.

Firms should not assume that non-boycotters are unaffected by the boycott. In our study, many non-boycotters strongly disapproved of the company's practice and overall brand image was harmed. Reducing perceptions of egregiousness protects brand image as well as reducing boycott participation. This leads to our first propositions for firms (P_{1f}) and NGO's (P_{1n}), as shown in Figure 2.

The next part of the AEB model invites a comparison between the percentage of people who find the firm's actions egregious and the percentage participating in the boycott. Here our findings concerning costs and benefits come into play. If consumers believe that the boycott will affect the firm's actions (the "make a difference" motivation) they are more likely to boycott. (This is consistent with findings that people are more cooperative in social dilemmas if they expect that the group will attain its goals; Wiener and Doescher 1991.) As P_{2f} suggests, firms might reduce boycott participation

by communicating that they cannot or will not change their actions. The firm could either demonstrate that its action is irreversible or make it unambiguously clear that it is confident that its actions represent the best option. In addition, managers might reduce participation by communicating that consumer concerns have been heard. Obviously, the message that the firm will not change its policies must be communicated carefully, so as to avoid further increasing consumer anger or generating feelings of powerlessness. Thus, showing that consumer objections have been heard is a key component of P_{2f} . Corresponding strategies for NGO's are suggested in P_{2n} .

Our findings suggest that people will boycott in order to feel good about themselves (or to avoid guilt) but are less likely to boycott if they perceive potential negative consequences of boycotting. While managers should refrain from directly challenging the self-enhancement value of social action, communicating harmful effects of boycotting could reduce the feel-good aspects of participation. For example, a firm boycotted over low wages (by Western standards) to overseas workers could state that a "successful" boycott would result in the closure of overseas factories, leaving former employees in poverty. Thus, we propose P_{3f} .

NGOs should prepare rebuttals to company arguments about boycott-induced harms (P_{3n}). For example, in response to the claim that blacks were hurt most by boycotts of firms associated with apartheid South Africa, NGOs responded that the goal of freedom from apartheid was more important. Further, a key insight for NGOs is that their motivations and the motivations of individual consumers need not be the same. Even if the NGO has a strongly instrumental goal, it may best achieve its aims by encouraging the self-enhancement aspects of boycotting. NGOs could communicate that failure to participate (through apathy or free-riding) will lead one to feel guilty, though this should probably be done in a subtle fashion so as to avoid reaction against the NGO.

Consumers who participate in a boycott are forgoing consumption of a favored product or brand. The extent of this sacrifice is inversely related to boycotting. Reminding consumers about the

positive attributes of the brand (or the negative attributes of the competition) could thus enhance the perceived cost of boycotting. Firms facing a boycott often cut advertising spending drastically (this was the case for Bremmer), not wishing to draw attention to the brand or believing that in the heat of the controversy resources spent promoting the product would be wasted. The opposite strategy may in fact be warranted. Such a strategy might not only increase the cost of boycotting, but also strengthen brand commitment and reinforce positive associations to the brand in memory, helping to counteract the effects of negative information (Ahluwalia, Burnkrant, and Unnava 2000; Tybout, Calder and Sternthal 1981). Further, attributes that tap into values, such as health and safety, might be particularly relevant as forgoing a product with these attributes may reduce the self-enhancement advantages of boycott participation. Thus, P_{4f} and P_{4n} .

Study Limitations and Directions for Further Research

Our research faced some limitations that stem from the exigencies of researching an actual boycott in progress. While many of our measures were informed by our prior study, we did not have the luxury of piloting some measures and we did not have absolute discretion over the content and administration of the survey. We formulated questions for inclusion consistent with our hypotheses, but some changes were made by Bremmer and its research firm in line with their data collection objectives. Nonetheless, we believe that these limitations do not materially influence our results and that, on balance, they are minor relative to the opportunity to study a real, on-going boycott.

There are, of course, issues of generalizability. Our study is of a particular boycott on a specific issue. The egregious act in this case—factory closings— may be associated with greater self-interest than is the case for boycotts prompted by animal rights, say, or the use of sweatshop labor by overseas suppliers. The boycott was particularly high profile – which is all the more useful to the extent that we are interested in explaining why people do *not* boycott – but it is possible, or even probable, that our results are not relevant to the many calls for boycott that are largely ignored by

consumers (and can probably be safely ignored by management, too). In addition, while our data are from a nationally representative sample, they are from a specific country. We doubt that the trigger for this boycott (factory closings) would have had the same resonance in the United States, for example. We have sound theoretical reasons for believing that the motivations that we uncover are quite general, but this remains to be confirmed by research on other boycotts in different countries and prompted by different issues.

It is unlikely that we have uncovered all the potential motivations for boycott participation, and future research could investigate other costs and rewards of boycotting that we may have failed to capture in our model. We also did not investigate the boycotter's decision-making process, and in particular whether egregiousness leads to a firm's product being excluded from the consumer's consideration set, or whether the firm's actions are traded off against product attributes. The answer may lie in the level of perceived egregiousness: perhaps at moderate levels of egregiousness the firm's actions might be traded-off against other attributes, but at very high levels the brand is not considered as an option.

The study also has implications for research on corporate associations and CSR-related issues. Our findings with respect to boycotts may well extend to the broader category of ethical influences on consumer behavior, suggesting the scope for exploring the role of a similar set of moderators in the models of Brown and Dacin (1997) and Sen and Bhattacharya (2001), for example.

Finally, in light of our claims regarding self-enhancement, we believe it is appropriate to identify boycotting as part of a broader form of "symbolic nonconsumption". Writing on possessions and symbolic consumption, Belk (1988, p. 139) has claimed: "That we are what we have... is perhaps the most basic and powerful fact of consumer behavior." What does it mean when consumers choose *not* to consume a product because of a social issue associated with the producer? Perhaps we boycott because we are also what we do not have.

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Table 1
Prior Research on Boycott Participation

Author(s)	Orientation	Methodological Approach	Variables Influencing Boycott Participation ¹⁸
Sen et al. (2001)	Consumer behavior	Experimental (laboratory studies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of boycott success likelihood (as function of expectations of overall participation, perceived efficacy of participation, message frame of proboycott communications) • Susceptibility to normative social influences (internal and external social pressure from boycotting reference group) • Costs of boycotting (preference for boycotted product and access to substitutes)
Friedman (1999; 1995; 1991; 1985)	Consumer policy/activism	Multiple methods: historical research (price increase boycotts, 1900-1970); secondary sources (media reports of U.S. boycotts, 1970-1980) plus survey research (with boycott organizers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Valence” (consumers care about the boycott issues and objectives; issue is exciting/engaging; consumer anger and desire for justice or to punish target) • Ease of participation (target easy to identify, few brand names, few competing boycotts) • No adverse consequences (extent of sacrifice, substitutes readily available and acceptable) • Social pressure
Kozinets and Handelman (1998)	Consumer behavior	Ethnographic (netnographic data collection with active boycotters)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking widespread social change • Moral self expression • “Individuation” (coming to selfhood and self realization) • Express uniqueness (differentiate from the crowd) • “Cleansing” (free from guilt)

¹⁸ Only Sen et al. (2001) and Kozinets and Handelman (1998) focused directly on variables influencing an individual consumer’s boycott decision. Other papers cited referred to variables influencing boycott participation or these variables could be reasonably inferred from the investigation reported.

Smith (1990)	Consumer policy/activism	Case studies (of ongoing boycotts based on interviews with boycott organizers and targets plus secondary sources)	<p>Consumers must be concerned, willing and able (to boycott). More specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer characteristics (aware of the boycott, “moral outrage” over the issue, perceived consumer effectiveness) • Issue characteristics (right issue at the right time, understanding of and sympathy for the cause) • Product characteristics (connection with the issue, low cost, frequently purchased, visibility of purchase/consumption) • Product substitutability (availability of alternatives, consumer preferences)
Witkowski (1989)	Consumer behavior	Historical research (colonial nonimportation movement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political and moral values (force repeal of tax laws, patriotism, rejection of materialism) • Availability of substitutes • Social pressure • Guilt • Sacrifice (inferior alternatives or abstention)
Garrett (1987)	Marketing management	Survey research (boycott targets & organizers) and secondary sources (media reports)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential participants’ awareness of the boycott, • Whether participant attitudes are consistent with boycott goals • Participant values • Participant cost of participation • Social pressure • Credibility of the boycott leader
Miller and Sturdivant (1977)	Consumer behavior	Survey research (during boycott)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential participants’ awareness of the boycott • Attitudes toward social responsibility
Mahoney (1976)	Consumer behavior	Survey research (in advance of boycott start date)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations of success, • Participant alienation (e.g., powerlessness) • Participant values (freedom and wisdom).

**TABLE 2:
Descriptive Statistics**

Variable	Means for:		
	Mean (s.d)	Non-Boycotters	Boycotters
<u>Egregiousness</u>	2.77 (0.82)	2.60 (0.81)	3.00 (0.66)
<u>Make a difference</u>	4.64 (2.55)*	3.71 (2.13)	5.69 (2.19)
Boycotts are an effective means to make a company change its actions. Everyone should take part in the boycott because every contribution, no matter how small, is important. By boycotting, I can help change Bremmer's decision. I am angry and I want Bremmer to know.	4.73 (3.14)	3.98 (2.90)	5.47 (2.98)
<u>Self-Enhancement</u>	2.82 (2.15)*	2.21 (1.76)	3.41 (2.03)
I would feel guilty if I bought Bremmer products. I would feel uncomfortable if other people who are boycotting saw me purchasing or consuming Bremmer products. My friends/my family are encouraging me to boycott Bremmer. I will feel better about myself if I boycott Bremmer.	3.27 (3.10)	2.49 (2.64)	4.07 (2.94)
<u>Counterarguments</u>	5.68 (2.24)*	6.27 (2.01)	5.10 (2.01)
I do not need to boycott Bremmer; enough other people are doing so. I do not buy enough Bremmer products for it to be worthwhile boycotting; it would not even be noticed. One shouldn't boycott because it will put other Bremmer jobs in danger. I don't boycott Bremmer because it is a (country) company and boycotting would lead me to buy foreign products.	4.53 (3.33)	4.85 (3.37)	4.34 (2.95)
<u>Constrained Consumption (Purchase History)</u>	5.24 (3.35)	5.56 (3.37)	5.25 (3.07)
Brand A (central)	7.03 (3.05)	7.92 (2.62)	5.89 (2.82)
Brand B (central)	5.89 (3.47)	6.69 (3.29)	4.91 (3.11)
* Descriptive statistics are for the average of the items within each factor.	2.77 (0.75)*	2.88 (0.66)	2.80 (0.68)
	2.61 (0.89)	2.70 (0.85)	2.60 (0.89)
	2.92 (0.85)	3.06 (0.75)	3.00 (0.72)
			2.27 (0.95)
			2.27 (0.99)
			2.28 (1.06)

TABLE 3:
Principle Components Analysis with Varimax Rotation: Eigenvalues and Item Loadings

	Component			
	Make a difference	Self- Enhancement	Counter- Arguments	Constrained Consumption
Eigenvalue (% of Variance)	4.00 (28.57)	2.04 (14.56)	1.38 (9.84)	1.01 (7.20)
Boycotts are an effective means to make a company change its actions.	.835	.014	.030	.045
Everyone should take part in the boycott in the boycott because every contribution, no matter how small, is important.	.761	.201	-.164	.085
By boycotting, I can help change Bremmer's decision.	.764	.339	-.091	.020
I am angry and I want Bremmer to know.	.529	.407	-.066	.033
I would feel guilty if I bought Bremmer products.	.307	.712	-.069	.112
I would feel uncomfortable if other people who are boycotting saw me purchasing or consuming Bremmer products.	.149	.700	.177	.028
My friends/my family are encouraging me to boycott Bremmer.	.024	.751	.064	-.041
I will feel better about myself if I boycott Bremmer	.479	.628	-.124	.129
I do not need to boycott Bremmer; enough other people are doing so.	.104	.065	.732	-.041
I do not buy enough Bremmer products for it to be worthwhile boycotting; it would not even be noticed.	-.010	.000	.629	.238
One shouldn't boycott because it will put other Bremmer jobs in danger.	-.310	-.082	.634	-.223
I don't boycott Bremmer because it is a (country) company and boycotting would lead me to buy foreign products.	-.205	.105	.657	-.264
Purchase History Brand A	.036	.013	-.047	.830
Purchase History Brand B	.082	.097	-.067	.834

TABLE 4a: Regression Models A - E

	4 Factor Model (A)			3 Factors + Freeride (B)			3 Factors + Too Small (C)			3 Factors + Hurt Jobs (D)			3 Factors + Country (E)		
	b	t	Sig.	b	t	Sig.	b	t	Sig.	b	t	Sig.	b	t	Sig.
	Adjusted R ² = .47			Adjusted R ² = .42			Adjusted R ² = .42			Adjusted R ² = .45			Adjusted R ² = .44		
Egregiousness	.08	3.64	.00	.11	4.71	.00	.12	5.00	.00	.09	3.93	.00	.09	3.77	.00
Make a difference	.10	11.70	.00	.12	12.75	.00	.11	12.51	.00	.10	11.43	.00	.11	12.32	.00
Difference * Egreg.	.02	1.70	.09	.02	1.75	.08	.02	1.67	.10	.02	1.75	.08	.02	1.72	.09
Self-Enhancement	.07	6.67	.00	.06	5.91	.00	.06	5.65	.00	.05	5.31	.00	.06	6.14	.00
Enhance * Egreg	.02	1.50	.13	.02	1.74	.08	.02	1.61	.11	.02	1.63	.10	.02	1.99	.05
Arguments	-.09	-11.72	.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Arg. * Egreg	-.01	-1.20	.24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Constrained Cons.	-.11	-4.56	.00	-.13	-5.31	.00	-.14	-5.69	.00	-.10	-4.32	.00	-.11	-4.40	.00
CC * Egreg.	-.07	-2.46	.01	-.09	-3.10	.00	-.08	-2.78	.01	-.07	-2.56	.01	-.09	-2.97	.00
Free Ride	-	-	-	-.03	-6.00	.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Free Ride * Egreg.	-	-	-	-.00	-0.46	.65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Too Small	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.03	-5.95	.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
Small * Egreg.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.01	-2.24	.03	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hurt Jobs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.06	-9.69	.00	-	-	-
Hurt Jobs * Egreg.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.02	-2.20	.03	-	-	-
Country Products	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.05	-9.18	.00
Country * Egreg	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.00	-.79	.43
Gender	.08	2.33	.02	.08	2.18	.03	.06	1.79	.07	.07	2.00	.05	.07	2.03	.04
Phase	.08	2.42	.02	.09	2.67	.01	.10	2.69	.01	.09	2.66	.01	.08	2.47	.01

TABLE 4b:
Regression Model F Including Estimated Participation (% of Others Boycotting¹⁹)

	Adjusted R ² = .49		
	b	t	Sig.
Egregiousness	.09	3.55	.00
Make a difference	.09	10.21	.00
Difference * Egreg.	.02	1.46	.14
Self-Enhancement	.05	4.60	.00
Enhance * Egreg	.02	1.26	.21
Arguments	-.10	-11.17	.00
Arg. * Egreg	-.01	-.64	.52
Constrained Cons.	-.13	-5.15	.00
CC * Egreg.	-.07	-2.21	.03
Free Ride	-	-	-
Free Ride * Egreg.	-	-	-
Too Small	-	-	-
Small * Egreg.	-	-	-
Hurt Jobs	-	-	-
Hurt Jobs * Egreg.	-	-	-
Country Products	-	-	-
Country * Egreg	-	-	-
Percent Others	.005	4.61	.00
Others * Egreg	-.001	-.65	.52
Others * Difference	.000	.86	.39
Others * Enhance	.001	1.58	.12
Others * Arg.	-.001	-2.85	.01
Others * CC	.001	1.24	.22
Others * Free	-	-	-
Others * Small	-	-	-
Others * Hurt Jobs	-	-	-
Others * Country	-	-	-
Gender	.07	1.86	.06
Phase	.07	2.11	.04

¹⁹ Mean estimate of the percent of other people boycotting = 27% (s.d. = 19.12).

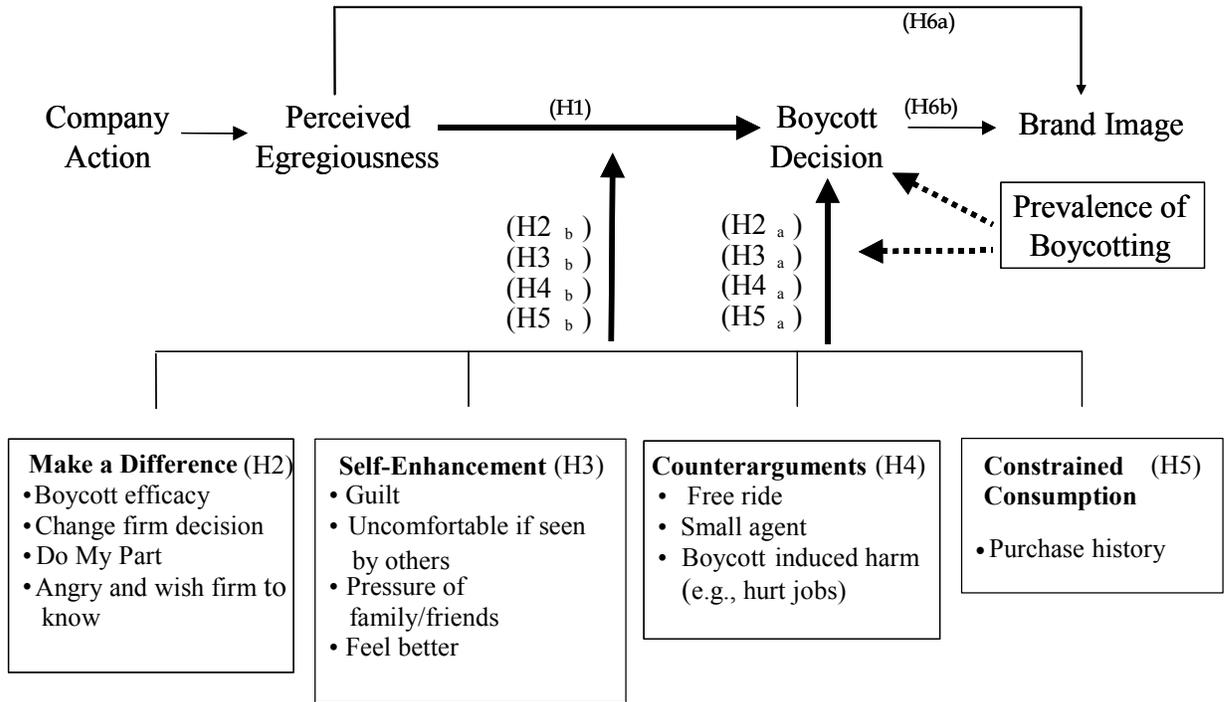
TABLE 5:
Illustration of Magnitude of Effects: Boycott Levels ^a

		Egregiousness	
		Low	High
“Make a difference”	Low	1.24	1.30
	High	1.75	1.99^b
Self-enhancement	Low	1.40	1.48
	High	1.63	1.86
Counter-arguments	Low	1.70	1.90
	High	1.29	1.38
Constrained consumption	Low	1.54	1.82
	High	1.45	1.48

^a The numbers in the table are predicted values for the dependent variable (boycotting) for a woman (gender = 2) in the first wave of data collection (phase = 1), who is at the mean score (0) of all the cost-benefit motivations (that is, all the other independent variables in the model) except the one being varied. If all the cost-benefit variables in the model are at the mean, the predicted value of boycotting is 1.56. (Recall that the dependent variable is on a 1-3 scale, so such a consumer lies about half way between not boycotting (1) and being tempted to boycott (2).) Low and high values are found by splitting the egregiousness and cost-benefit variables into 3 groups and taking the mean for the low and for the high groups.

^b The combined effect of shifting an individual from the low group for both egregiousness and make a difference (1.24) to the high group for both (1.99) is enough to move an individual up .75 points on the scale, or from close to not boycotting to being tempted to boycott. If make a difference is low, increasing egregiousness from its low (1.24) to its high value (1.30) increases the dependent variable by only 0.06, while if egregiousness is low, increasing make a difference from low (1.24) to high (1.75) increases the dependent variable by 0.51. Thus, the total shift due to the two main effects is from 1.24 to 1.81, or .57. One can therefore interpret the interaction as contributing .18 (the difference between 1.99 and 1.81), or 24% of the total shift in the dependent variable.

**FIGURE 1:
Motivators of Boycott Decisions**



**FIGURE 2:
AEB (Awareness, Egregiousness, Boycott) Model**

