

THE POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF QUOTIDIAN CHOICE
AND THE EXPRESSIVE THEORY OF RATIONALITY

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By

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PREVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Many of our everyday choices take place within sprawling and complex political structures and processes that bring about outcomes that we view as harms. Yet, because an individual's actions do not contribute measurably to bringing about the harms—and the individual's withdrawal from the process would not mitigate the harms—it is difficult to understand her affiliation with the harms and why she has reason for concern about involvement in the processes that bring them about. The expressivist account of rationality explains both.

I will show that political dimensions pervade everyday, ostensibly non-political choices, particularly market choices. Those frequently overlooked dimensions derive from the larger political processes and structures in which the choices are embedded; they give the choices expressive significance as political acts; and, because the political dimensions often overlap—and conflict—with agents' character-defining commitments, those dimensions also give the choices expressive significance as acts of character. In short, in making the choices, the agent is expressing a stance on the choices' political dimensions and affiliating herself with the larger structures and their consequences. To overlook the political dimensions and resulting expressive significance of such choices is to exclude from deliberation elements necessary to ensure rational

decisions by expressivist standards—to fail to ensure that “one’s actions adequately express one’s rational attitudes toward the people and things one cares about.”¹

I draw on Elizabeth Anderson’s expressive theory of rationality and Geoffrey Brennan and Loren Lomasky’s expressive theory for the rationality of voting to establish the expressive account. I also consider two theories of intention that seek to establish agents’ guilt or accountability for harms that result from the actions of larger groups of which they are part—Margaret Gilbert’s theory of group guilt and Christopher Kutz’s theory of complicity—showing why they do not succeed and how the expressive account overcomes or avoids the hurdles they face.

¹ Anderson (1993), 18.

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PREVIEW

Chapter I: Overview and Scope of the Political

I. Overview

In this dissertation, I will argue for an expressive account of rationality that provides individuals with strong reason to consider the political dimensions that pervade everyday, ostensibly non-political choices, particularly market choices, because those dimensions, though frequently overlooked, often also overlap—and conflict—with deeply held, even character-defining commitments. The political dimension of market choices, which gives them their expressive significance, derives from the larger political processes and structures in which the choices are embedded. The expressive account explains why individuals have cause for concern about their involvement, through these choices, in diffuse structures and processes that result in what they view as harm, even though they make no measurable causal contribution to bringing about the harm themselves. To overlook the political dimensions and resulting expressive significance of such choices is to exclude from deliberation elements necessary to ensure rational decisions by expressivist standards.

Some have suggested that the widespread and serious consequences brought about by complex, global structures such as those in which market choices are embedded constitute a new problem in need of a novel response. Samuel Scheffler depicts these structures as “recruiting” agents’ choices “as contributions to larger processes that typically have little to do with people’s reasons for” those choices, such that “much of the daily behaviour we take for granted is linked in complicated but often poorly appreciated ways to broader global dynamics of the greatest importance.” He accordingly declares a period of “normative confusion,” due to the absence of “a set of clear, action guiding, and psychologically feasible principles which would enable

individuals to orient themselves in relation to the larger processes.”² Dale Jamieson, discussing specifically “the possibility that the global environment may be destroyed yet no one will be responsible,” because global warming results largely from the uncoordinated activity by billions over many years, asserts: “Unless we develop new values and conceptions of responsibility, we will have enormous difficulty in motivating people to respond” to such problems.³

While I agree that some standard approaches can be set aside, I also believe the means for agents to understand, and be motivated to attend to, their place in these structures is readily at hand in the expressive account. I assume that consequentialist theories are inapt (precisely because an individual agent’s involvement in these processes makes no measurable causal difference to the harms brought about by the processes);⁴ I will show that intention theories are inadequate (because they also fail to link the agent to the outcomes of these larger processes by means of a relevant intention). I believe a more fruitful emphasis is concern about character and commitments, not conceptions of *responsibility*, and the expressive account holds that one’s actions are subject to assessment “in virtue of what they *mean*” (and thus signify about the agent), “not simply because of what they *bring about*.”⁵

I focus on market choices because they are a means by which individuals participate nearly constantly, if unreflectively, in the larger political structures cited by Scheffler and Jamieson, and thus by which agents become affiliated with serious and widespread effects, such as global warming and oppressive labor conditions. Scheffler and Jamieson are responding, of course, to a lack of concern among agents about their participation in these larger processes—

² Scheffler, 44-45, 47.

³ Jamieson (1992), 149-150.

⁴ Shelly Kagan does, however, attempt to show some degree of causal connection, or at least lack of certainty that there is no causal influence. See Kagan, “Do I Make a Difference?” I believe the expressive account is a more fruitful strategy, however.

⁵ Brennan and Lomasky (2000), 82.

dissociation enabled by the almost exclusive emphasis, in evaluating agents and decisions, on consequences of actions. Through the political dimension of market choices, however, agents align themselves with particular stances on important issues, rendering the market choices expressive political acts and expressive acts of character. Absent attention, an agent could easily take an expressive position on a political dimension that is counter to her commitments, sometimes deeply important commitments that constitute her sense of the good and, indeed, her character. The expressive theory, then, provides self-regarding reasons that enable agents to make sense of their place in these complex schemes and motivate them to take the political dimensions of their everyday choices into account.

While I will define the scope and nature of “political” more fully later in this chapter, I have in mind issues a) that are generally subject to state policy and regulation, or the result of processes that cannot be measurably influenced but by state intervention, and b) that are also of broad reach and importance, often profoundly shaping individuals’ opportunities, resources, experiences, and overall quality of life. Many of these political issues are matters of human dignity. A representative (certainly not exhaustive) list of issues captured in this broad category of “political” then includes matters relating to education; economics and commerce; environment; health care and public health; food and agriculture; housing; human rights, civil rights, and individual liberty; public safety and the justice system; national security; foreign policy; immigration; social safety net and entitlement programs; media and information; cultural resources; and the role of government, government regulation, and conduct of government itself.⁶ I will refer to the larger structures and processes that bring these issues to bear in market

⁶ Within each of these categories are, of course, a number of subcategories of political issues and their consequences. For example, within the category of “economics and commerce” are such political issues as tax policy, use of state resources/government spending, national debt, international trade, corporate regulation, labor and employment, wealth and poverty, housing, and infrastructure; within “food and agriculture,” as I will describe in

choices as “political structures” or “political processes,” in which I subsume what are referred to by others as economic and social structures, processes, institutions, and arrangements, as I take them all to be, fundamentally, political in nature.⁷

I will also preview here, and address more fully later, the ways in which market choices are embedded in these structures. Iris Marion Young captures succinctly the structures in which the agent becomes involved through a particular choice:

By the simple act of buying a shirt I presuppose the actions of all those people who are involved in growing the cotton, making the cloth, gathering the cutters and sewers to turn it into garments, the cutters and sewers themselves, and all the agents involved in shipping the garments and making them easily available to me.⁸

The process actually involves not just these individuals, but also all of the practices and policies that support or attend the structure. Those practices include the working conditions and wages of the workers at every step of the process; the environmental practices involved throughout the supply chain (e.g., emissions of factories, the “carbon footprint” of transporting the good) and any resulting public health effects; and government subsidies that, for example, support the production of cotton, along with tariffs and relevant trade agreements that favor some import nations over others. The process also includes the traditional political activity of participants in the supply chain, such as lobbying or supporting candidates to advance interests that affect some aspect of business operations (e.g., tax policy, environmental regulations, labor regulations, and the aforementioned subsidies and tariffs), as well as illicit political acts such as bribing

detail below, are political issues such as subsidies, labor conditions, quality and safety regulation, treatment of animals; within “human rights, civil rights, and individual liberty” are such issues as equality, rights to marry, rights to make choices about one’s own body and health; and so on for each category.

⁷ For example, while Iris Marion Young uses the term “social structure” to refer to “the accumulated outcomes of the actions of the masses of individuals enacting their own projects” that result in unintended structural injustice, in describing a particular case of an individual’s housing plight, she cites issues such as segregation, transportation, gender discrimination, access to education, and other factors that I take to be political. Young (2013), 62, 45, 54.

⁸ Young (2013), 159.

government officials to facilitate some aspect of the business. The political activity of the supply chain participants need not even be germane to bringing the good to market; it might simply reflect the personal political interests of an owner, yet be fueled by profits from the business enterprise—thus becoming part of the overall process in which a market choice is embedded.

There may be elements of such processes that an agent views as harms—that do not align with her commitments to, for example, fair labor or protecting the environment. Yet with billions of consumers involved, her purchase of a shirt tips no balance in demand and makes no direct, measurable causal contribution to another worker’s being added to the rolls of a sweatshop. She is in no way seeking to bring about this harm, but sets out to accomplish a specific, discrete purpose; she is “following the rules, minding [her] own business, and trying to accomplish [her] legitimate goals.”⁹ The agent would seem able to claim: “I did nothing to bring about this undesired outcome and did not intend it, so there is no problem for me here.” Intuitively, though, agents *should* be concerned that in their everyday lives and quotidian choices, they find themselves affiliated with harm through processes in which the choices are embedded, even if they have no meaningful influence on those harms. The challenge is to capture the harm and the overall process convincingly within the scope of individual action.

Because of their political dimensions, market choices, as I will show, are not merely discrete choices of goods; they also “say” something about the agent: “I am the sort of person who cares about X”; or “I am not the sort of person who cares about Y.” Further, by expressivist standards, practical reason requires that, *ceteris paribus*, “one’s actions adequately express one’s rational attitudes toward the people and things one cares about.”¹⁰ Accordingly, if one cares

⁹ Ibid., 63.

¹⁰ Anderson (1993), 18.

about workers' rights and dignity and purchases apparel made in a sweatshop, the action does not express the proper attitude and is, on its face, irrational.

I will consider a range of agents in specific situations and explore the expressive significance of their market choices arising from the political dimensions of the choice, as well as the quality of the agents' reasoning in making the choice. I will also describe the process by which an agent should evaluate the expressive significance of market choices in making a rational all-things-considered decision. While I seek, through the expressive account, to show that agents have compelling, self-regarding reason to be concerned about their involvement in harms produced by the larger processes in which their actions are embedded, harm need not be the only focus. The expressive account also explains why, on the basis of an agent's deeply held commitments, she might rationally make a market choice in order to convey approval or endorsement of a particular political position embodied in the choice, even though the action is futile with respect to practical fulfillment of ends related to that commitment. As expressive political acts—and expressive acts of character—such practically futile action in the market arena is akin to traditionally politically expressive (and practically inefficacious) acts such as draft card burning.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will summarize the chapters to follow and then provide a more detailed description of the political dimensions at work in market choices.

II. Chapter Summary

A. Chapter II: Two Intention Theories

Before proceeding with an expressive account, it is worth considering whether other theories sufficiently explain why agents should be concerned about their involvement in the largely uncoordinated and diffuse processes or structures in which market choices are embedded and their consequences. Accordingly, chapter two will explore two intention theories: Margaret Gilbert's theory of group guilt and Christopher Kutz's theory of complicity.¹¹ Both seek to apply some form of "joint" or "shared" intention to link the individual agent to outcomes of some group or process of which he is part, even in cases in which the agent does not specifically intend the outcomes and, in fact, wishes they did not occur. While I do not think their accounts succeed for reasons that I will show, they identify hurdles a successful account would need to avoid or overcome and also suggest the role an expressive account might play.

With respect to Gilbert, I will argue that her attempt to establish an individual's participation in a "joint commitment" is unpersuasive not only in the more diffuse cases I have in mind, but even in more narrowly defined or closely knit groups. The challenges to Gilbert's theory that I will outline range from her insistence that an individual cannot unilaterally withdraw from a joint commitment, to joint commitment's inability to accommodate situations in which an agent is wholly ignorant of—or is aware of and actively dissents from—the group action, to the difficulty of finding a description for a shared goal that each participant would recognize and accept as capturing his individual aim. In addition, Gilbert's concept of "membership guilt," which seems indivisible into allocations of individual guilt, is not a persuasive basis for an agent's concern about involvement in a group or process that brings about harm. Neither the emphasis on guilt, nor the irreducible collectivity of the guilt seems fruitful.

¹¹ In particular, I will draw on Gilbert 1997, 2002, 2006 ("Who's to Blame?"), 2009 and Kutz 2000.

Kutz's emphasis is more satisfyingly placed on individual accountability, but he encounters difficulties similar to those Gilbert faces. He substitutes "overlapping participatory intention" for Gilbert's "joint commitment," but the challenge remains: how to describe the intention of individuals at the point of overlap such that all participants in some collective enterprise (however loosely affiliated) would recognize and accept the common ground as capturing their motivation and aims. Kutz goes to some pains to make technical distinctions to navigate this challenge, seeking, for example, to separate "participatory intention" from "group intention" and "executive intention" from "subsidiary intention," but the distinctions are ultimately unpersuasive. In addition, while Gilbert overreaches to incriminate agents in collective guilt, Kutz at times seems to overreach in seeking to mitigate their accountability (e.g., in the case of an engineer making improvements to "little black boxes" that may ultimately be deployed in landmines, as we shall see). In the case of "unstructured collective harms" (e.g., ozone depletion and resulting incidences of skin cancer brought about by the emissions from millions of drivers' cars), Kutz interestingly appeals in passing to "reasons of character," suggesting a possible role for concern about what an agent's involvement in certain processes or structures says about who he is and what he values.¹²

Ultimately, I will set aside intention theories—and their focus on guilt and accountability—as unpersuasive and will substitute the expressive account's focus on commitments and rationality.

¹² Kutz, 186 and 43. Kutz appeals to the expressive account in the simplest case he offers, too—that of a contemporary beneficiary of long-ago harms.

B. Chapter III: The Expressive Account

Chapter three will outline the expressive theory on which I will rely, drawing on Elizabeth Anderson's expressive theory of rationality and her treatment, in collaboration with Richard Pildes, of expressive legal theory, and also on Geoffrey Brennan and Loren Lomasky's expressive theory of voting.¹³ I will then describe in detail the application of the expressive account to specific cases of politically laden market choice and the resulting expressive significance of those choices. I will consider the respective degrees to which the agent's intention and a third-party's interpretation of the agent's action determine expressive significance. I will also describe the assessment of expressive significance required by an agent for her reasoning to be consistent with expressive principles of rationality. Where relevant, I will return to cases raised in the Gilbert and Kutz discussion, showing that the expressive theory handles these cases while avoiding the challenges intention and accountability theories encounter.

Elizabeth Anderson, in her expressive theory of rationality, holds that "Practical reason demands that one's actions adequately express one's rational attitudes toward the people and things one cares about."¹⁴ On this view, what will allow an agent to express her attitudes appropriately is a criterion by which to choose "from among the many actions [she] could perform, the action which it makes most sense to perform."¹⁵ Anderson and Pildes also stipulate that the agent herself is not the sole arbiter of the expressive significance of her own action, and so the agent must take possible third-party interpretations into account in deciding whether, all things considered, an action adequately expresses her attitudes toward what she cares about.¹⁶

¹³ Brennan and Lomasky, 1997 and 2000; Anderson (1993); Anderson and Pildes, 2000.

¹⁴ Anderson (1993), 18.

¹⁵ Ibid., 22.

¹⁶ Anderson and Pildes, 1513.

Here I will also draw on Adler's "speaker's meaning"/"sentence meaning" distinction, as described in his debate with Anderson and Pildes.¹⁷

To this foundation of my expressive case, I will add elements drawn from Brennan and Lomasky's depiction of voting as fundamentally an expressive exercise. Their assumption is that, except in highly improbable circumstances, any given voter's ballot will make no difference to the outcome of an election; therefore, some factor other than efficacy must explain the rationality of voting. I will show how this insight applies to market choice, where decisions are typically taken to be more decisive than expressive; the marketplace is also, however, to a large degree, a political arena.

In the remainder of the chapter, I will explore in detail the application of the expressive view to cases of market choice. I will consider a range of cases: 1) the intentional expressive agent (i.e., one who makes a particular choice specifically in order to affiliate himself with a political dimension of that choice); 2) inculpably ignorant agents, including the deceived agent (who do not intend to ally themselves with the political dimension in question, but are nevertheless unintentionally expressive agents); 3) the unconsciously biased agent (whose true beliefs do not match his professed commitments); 4) the rationally ignorant agent (whose willingness to "roll the dice" with what the expressive significance of his act might be is itself revealing of his character and commitments); and 5) the all-things-considered decision-making agent (who may, in the end, rationally make a choice at odds with the commitments pertaining to the political dimensions of the choice). In each case, I will consider the agent's knowledge of the relevant political dimensions of a market choice and his intentions, if any, with respect to those dimensions, and will assess the resulting expressive significance (including third-party interpretations) of the action and its rationality. It will become clear that even if choices counter

¹⁷ Adler, "Expressive Theories," 1387-88.

to some commitments are not uncontestably irrational, there is sufficient reason for an agent to take the political dimension and expressive significance into account in deliberation, which is primarily what I set out to show. These cases are meant to raise and address questions to flesh out the expressive account in relation to the expressive significance of market choice, but I will also consider more ordinary cases of everyday market choice that I believe to be the most prevalent kinds of cases. Finally, I will distill from the cases considered the elements of the deliberative process necessary, including the place of third-party interpretations, to fulfill the requirements of practical reason by expressivist standards.

C. Chapter IV: Challenges to the Expressive Account

In the fourth chapter, I will explore three possible objections to the expressive account: the charge of smuggled consequentialism; the charge that the expressive theory demands too much of an agent (both in terms of knowledge and deliberation, and in assuming a range of available alternatives that do not exist for some agents); and the charge that, conversely, the expressive account requires too little of agents, specifically in terms of their working to change the political structures in which they participate if harms are brought about by those structures.

1. Smuggled Consequentialism

First, I will respond to a possible objection suggested by Matthew Adler's treatment of expressive legal theory: that to the degree an agent is concerned about how others might interpret the expressive significance of his action—or might incur “expressive harm” as a result of his action—he is actually concerned not about an expressive dimension, but about a causal consequence.¹⁸ That is, if one believes that someone will interpret the meaning of his action as,

¹⁸ See Adler, “Expressive Theories,” 1424, 1438, 1494.

for example, expressing a lack of respect for her as a member of a minority group, the problem is the insult as an outcome. I will respond that my account does not rely on consequentialist considerations.

2. Demandingness

I will then shift to an objection that my expressive account places an unreasonable burden on the agent to identify and consider the political dimension of market choices. I will consider what might be called the “demandingness” objection from the perspective of two kinds of agent: the Privileged Agent and the Constrained Agent.

The Privileged Agent has time to explore the political dimensions of ostensibly non-political choices; the education and ability to interrogate such choices and assimilate and evaluate relevant available information; and the resources to make different choices if, for example, the cheapest and most accessible choice proves inconsistent with some important commitment she holds. At a certain point, however, the amount of time and effort required to ensure consistency between choices and commitments may represent an irrational pursuit—too costly in terms of the loss of opportunity to pursue other interests or too costly for the benefits derived.

The Constrained Agent, on the other hand, is severely limited in his ability to investigate the political dimension of ostensibly non-political choices (e.g., time, access to information, ability to interpret and apply the information) and in his set of choices, such that, even if he preferred an option more consistent with certain commitments, it would be inaccessible to him for reasons of cost or some other factor. One might object that my claims either put rationality beyond his reach or fail to account for his situation all together.

I will show that the demandingness objection can be adequately addressed, though it requires some concessions. Practical reason obviously requires the agent to strike a reasonable balance; it would no more be rational for everyone to become a zealot focusing monomaniacally on rooting out hidden political dimensions than it would be for agents blithely to ignore those dimensions all together. Fortunately, information about these political dimensions is, in many cases, abundant (indeed, nearly inescapable). In other instances, a modest amount of reflection may reveal that the agent's attachment to certain principles is not all that strong—his assumed commitments are not really commitments after all. I will also consider the “scalability” of commitments; adherence to them need not be an all-or-nothing affair.

With respect to the Constrained Agent, I will acknowledge that the circumstances described are impoverished indeed. Conducting his life in a manner consistent with any fundamental commitments beyond basic survival is beyond this agent's reach. That is not necessarily to say that because he cannot act in ways consistent with commitments with respect to the political dimensions of market choices his reasoning is flawed or that rationality is beyond his reach. While his impoverished circumstances are problematic, they are not problematic for *my theory*.

3. *Not Demanding Enough*

Finally, I will consider the objection that the expressive theory lets agents off too easily. Young and Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, for example, hold that harms resulting from complex political structures require a *practical, political* response from participants in the structure—specifically, working actively to change the structures. Young emphasizes that even the Constrained Agent bears some burden to resist or change the circumstances that constrain him.¹⁹

¹⁹ Young (2003), 43.

I will respond that I do not seek to preclude agents from doing more than the expressive account requires, but that expressivism achieves my primary aim of establishing a reason for individuals to be concerned about their participation in these structures that bring about outcomes they view as harms. In addition, it would be curious, if not hypocritical, to set about changing a structure—and seeking to engage others to do so—while still making, as a participant that structure, everyday, unreflective choices inconsistent with one’s commitments.

III. Defining the Political

The remainder of this first chapter will define the political dimensions of everyday, ostensibly non-political market choices that result from the larger political processes in which the choices are embedded. I will begin by distinguishing traditional political activity (presumably uncontroversially accepted as such) and expand from there to describe in detail the kinds of political issues pervasive in market choices.

A. Traditional Political Activity

While the political dimensions of market choice as I describe them represent a kind of constant political engagement by agents, attention to which is necessary to ensure actions consistent with one’s commitments and sense of the good, what I have in mind is not civic humanism—which suggests political life as a “privileged locus of the good life” because we are political beings “whose essential nature is most fully realized in a democratic society in which there is widespread and vigorous participation in political life.”²⁰

I am also not referring to traditional political activity available to citizens in democracies and certain other forms of government such as voting (or not voting) for candidates for elected

²⁰ Rawls, 206.

office and pursuing or holding elected office oneself; attempting to influence the outcome of an election by fund raising for a candidate, directly contributing one's own funds, or canvassing for votes; or attempting to influence the decisions or stances of fellow citizens or elected representatives or otherwise to shape law or public policy by participating in public fora and debates, marching in demonstrations, and personally lobbying decisionmakers or financially supporting lobbying organizations.²¹ I also set aside political activity such as fulfilling (or refusing to fulfill) certain civic obligations, such as serving on a jury and paying taxes.

In some cases, one's profession constitutes traditional political activity. Relevant jobs include not just holding office, holding certain staff positions for government officials or bodies, and serving as a political appointee, but also work with the primary objective of furthering certain state ends (e.g., the roles of prosecutors and public defenders) or influencing the outcome of law or policymaking (e.g., organizers and activists, lobbyists and advocacy group staff, and professional political satirists and some artists). These sorts of roles are not the kind of political activity I will address. What is relevant, though, is any political dimensions of ostensibly non-political professional positions, as I will discuss; that dimension, too, derives from the larger structures of which the position and enterprise are part.

Finally, traditional political activity includes efforts to be an "informed citizen" (following current significant questions and the various positions on them), as well as revolution and dissent (including expressive acts such as writing a letter to the editor or standing on a soapbox and holding forth in the public square; flying or burning a flag; and displaying a bumper

²¹ As a comparative government survey is beyond the scope of this dissertation, I will focus, for purposes of simplicity, on issues that are prominent in the political arena in the United States. These are not uncommon issues in other western representative governments. With respect to more authoritarian regimes, where citizen participation in shaping policy is severely curtailed—as market choices might also be—the question of expressivism is different or even moot. The situation of individuals in these political structures is akin to that of the "Constrained Agent," to whom I will return in the last chapter.

sticker, lapel pin, or yard sign promoting or opposing a candidate or cause).²² These are behaviors that have a direct analog in market arena cases, as I will discuss.

While the common thread of what constitutes the political dimension of interest to me is difficult to define precisely, it is sufficient for my broad purposes to say that “the political” corresponds to matters subject to public policy or state regulation (where “state” includes any government entity, including that of the smallest locality) or having to do with the conduct of the state itself. This is, of course, true by definition. Included, too, as I have suggested, are the kinds of complex structures (e.g., aspects of international trade) that can likely be changed only at the governmental level or through use of state power.²³ In addition, the issues of interest to me are, I believe, political because they have a profound effect on those within their scope (and the scope is quite broad, spanning nations and transcending borders) and profound influence on the quality of lives.

B. The Political Dimension of Ostensibly Non-Political Market Choices

1. The Intersection of Commitments and the Political Dimension

I shift now to how one’s stance on political issues via market choice reflects, if not helps constitute, one’s character. The activity on which I will focus does not, on its face, appear to involve larger, character-defining personal commitments, but rather simply to address quotidian wants and needs, such as what to eat and where to acquire it. The choices are undertaken to achieve some immediate interest or end and are typically viewed as trivial choices. It is a mistake, however, to ignore the intersection between such everyday choices and the deeper, more

²² A yard sign with the name of a candidate, or that supports or opposes commercial development in a neighborhood, or that supports or opposes a ballot initiative, or that comments on an international relations issue would be political activity. As can be inferred from my argument in chapter three, however, a sign advertising one’s lawn maintenance company may also constitute a political statement, in so far as it represents an environmental stance such as condoning the use of industrial chemicals for the sake of a green lawn or perhaps preferring organic treatments to achieve the same end.

²³ For discussion of this point, see: Jamieson (2007), 170 and Sinnott-Armstrong, 312.