Accepted Manuscript

Voluntary Disclosure in Bilateral Transactions

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PII: S0022-0531(18)30077-2

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jet.2018.02.005

Reference: YJETH 4751

To appear in: Journal of Economic Theory

Received date: 19 May 2017 Revised date: 9 February 2018 Accepted date: 12 February 2018



Please cite this article in press as: Glode, V., et al. Voluntary Disclosure in Bilateral Transactions. *J. Econ. Theory* (2018), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jet.2018.02.005

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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

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February 13, 2018

Abstract

We characterize optimal voluntary disclosures by a privately informed agent facing a counterparty endowed with market power in a bilateral transaction. Although disclosures reveal some of the agent's private information, they may increase his information rents by mitigating the counterparty's incentives to resort to inefficient screening. We show that when disclosures are restricted to be ex post verifiable, the informed agent optimally designs a disclosure plan that is partial and that implements socially efficient trade in equilibrium. Our results shed light on the conditions necessary for asymmetric information to impede trade and the determinants of disclosures' coarseness.

Keywords: Information Design; Disclosure; Asymmetric Information; Market Power; Persuasion.

JEL Codes: D42, D82, D83, G24, L12

^{*}We thank the editor, Laura Veldkamp, and two anonymous referees for their constructive and insightful feedback. In addition we thank Eduardo Azevedo, Jeremy Bertomeu, Jules van Binsbergen, Briana Chang, Itay Goldstein, Mirko Heinle, Rich Kihlstrom, Doron Levit, George Mailath, Greg Nini, Kent Smetters, Luke Taylor, Liyan Yang, Jaime Zender, Pavel Zryumov, and seminar participants at Amsterdam, DIW-Berlin, Federal Reserve Board, Helsinki, Indiana, Johns Hopkins, Laval, McGill, Texas, Vienna Graduate School of Finance, Wharton, the AEA Meetings, the Colorado Finance Summit, the Junior Accounting Theory Conference, and the WFA Meetings for helpful comments and discussions. Glode (corresponding author) and Opp are at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, 3620 Locust Walk, Philadelphia, PA 19104 and can be reached by e-mail at vglode@wharton.upenn.edu and opp@wharton.upenn.edu. Zhang is at the Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado at Boulder, 995 Regent Drive, Boulder, CO 80302 and can be reached by e-mail at xingtan.zhang@colorado.edu.

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