# Article information:

Debate: To Nudge or Not to Nudge\* - Hausman - 2010 - Journal of Political Philosophy - Wiley Online Library  
<https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.virtual.anu.edu.au/doi/full/10.1111/j.1467-9760.2009.00351.x>

# Article summary:

1. The concept of "libertarian paternalism" involves policies that push individuals towards better choices without limiting their liberty, but some of these policies can still be considered a form of paternalism.

2. Nudges are ways of influencing choice without limiting the choice set or making alternatives appreciably more costly in terms of time, trouble, social sanctions, and so forth.

3. The definition of paternalism used by Thaler and Sunstein is unsatisfactory as it mistakenly counts giving advice and rational persuasion that aims at the good of the advisee as paternalistic.

# Article rating:

May be slightly imbalanced: The article presents the information in a generally reliable way, but there are minor points of consideration that could be explored further or claims that are not fully backed by appropriate evidence. Some perspectives may also be omitted, and you are encouraged to use the research topics section to explore the topic further.

# Article analysis:

The article "Debate: To Nudge or Not to Nudge" by Hausman (2010) critically analyzes the concept of libertarian paternalism and nudges proposed by Thaler and Sunstein in their book "Nudge." The author argues that Thaler and Sunstein's definition of libertarian paternalism is flawed, as it fails to distinguish between beneficence and paternalism. The author also questions the effectiveness of nudges in promoting better decision-making, as they rely on assumptions about human behavior that may not always hold true.

The article provides a detailed analysis of the concept of nudges, which are defined as ways of influencing choice without limiting the choice set or making alternatives more costly. The author notes that while nudges may be effective in some cases, they are not always benign and can have unintended consequences. For example, policies such as requiring firms to publish toxic release inventories may lead to heavy social sanctions for polluting.

The article also critiques Thaler and Sunstein's definition of paternalism, arguing that it mistakenly counts giving advice and rational persuasion as paternalistic. The author notes that informing workers of hazards or warning people to drink water in hot weather is not necessarily paternalistic, as it does not limit freedom of choice.

Overall, the article provides a balanced critique of Thaler and Sunstein's ideas on libertarian paternalism and nudges. While acknowledging their potential benefits, the author highlights their limitations and potential risks. However, the article could benefit from exploring counterarguments more thoroughly and providing more evidence for its claims.

# Topics for further research:

* Critiques of libertarian paternalism and nudges
* Effectiveness of nudges in decision-making
* Unintended consequences of nudges
* Social sanctions for polluting
* Definition of paternalism and its limitations
* Counterarguments to Thaler and Sunstein's ideas on libertarian paternalism and nudges

# Report location:

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