Experimental studies on the psychology of property rights
el Haji, A.

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Property rights determine who owns what. Trade is very
difficult if it is unclear who owns what or if property rights are
not enforced. For this reason, many scholars argue that
property rights and their enforcement are essential to
economic prosperity. A distinction can be made between a
legal and psychological approach to property rights. A legal
approach to property rights considers how the rules of property
rights are codified in law while a psychological approach
focuses on how humans tend to think about property rights
intuitively.

The two approaches seem to diverge if more unconventional
goods are considered. This thesis consists of four studies that
investigate how consumers perceive unconventional goods in
different contexts. The aim of these four studies combined is to
gain a better understanding of consumers’ perception of
property rights, which not only furthers relevant theories but
also provides practical recommendations to policy-makers and
managers.
Experimental studies on the psychology of property rights
Experimental studies on the psychology of property rights

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor

aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam

op gezag van de Rector Magnificus

prof. dr. ir. K.I.J. Maex

ten overstaan van een door het College voor Promoties
ingestelde commissie, in het openbaar te verdedigen

in de Aula der Universiteit
op vrijdag 3 februari 2017, te 11:00 uur

door Anouar El Haji
geboren te Purmerend
Promotiecommissie

Promotor: Prof. dr. W.M. van Dolen Universiteit van Amsterdam

Co-promotor: Prof. dr. J.H. Sonnemans Universiteit van Amsterdam

Overige leden: Prof. dr. T.J.S. Offerman Universiteit van Amsterdam
Dr. A.M. Onderstal Universiteit van Amsterdam
Prof. dr. P.W.J. Verlegh Vrije Universiteit
Prof. dr. C.B. Weinberg University of British Columbia
Prof. mr. dr. N.M. Wijnberg Universiteit van Amsterdam

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possible explanations of the phenomenon at hand. The fruits of this collaboration are presented in chapter four. The fifth chapter is the result of my collaboration with Sander Onderstal whose positive and can-do attitude motivated me immensely. Sander’s deep knowledge of mechanism design helped me gain a better understanding of how economic theory can be used to improve people’s lives.

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