



# Trade and Development Seminar

## The Perils of Pressure in Promoting Merit Goods: Evidence from a Sales Experiment in India

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**10:30 am – 12:00 pm**

**119 Ruttan Hall**

Entities devote substantial energy to pressured sales of merit goods with the conviction that purchase stimulates usage. This method backfires if marketing pressure screens in individuals who purchase but do not use the product. Through a field experiment in India promoting chlorine water treatment tablets as the merit good, we show that selling a second good alongside the merit good doubles usage by alleviating pressure and introducing a positive framing effect. We also show that the price of this second good matters, as a promotion can reintroduce pressure and undo nearly all of the usage gains induced by framing. (with Camille Boudot)