

THE OBLIGATION TO CHOOSE

SPEAKER SHEENA IYENGAR

S.T. Lee Professor of Business
Columbia Business School



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23 2:30 – 4:00 P.M.
CAMPUS CENTER BALLROOM

Choice is a powerful force in our lives. It allows us to assert control and express our individuality. It enables us to go from who we are today to who we want to be tomorrow. No wonder, then, that we tend to think of choice as an unqualified good. Yet research has shown that when we are faced with a large number of options or with particularly difficult decisions, the experience of choosing is often unpleasant, even traumatic.

In her Technology and Society Forum presentation, Sheena Iyengar will address the psychological and cultural challenges of choice, and suggest answers drawn from her discipline-spanning research. She will explore the complex relationship between choice and freedom, and why one doesn't always complement the other. Iyengar will explain how too much choice can overwhelm us, and how our choices are shaped by forces both obvious and subtle.

Iyengar is the inaugural S.T. Lee Professor of Business at Columbia Business School, with a joint appointment in the Department of Psychology, and research director at the Jerome A. Chazen Institute of International Business. Iyengar's research into how people perceive and respond to choice has garnered honors that include the Best Dissertation Award from the Society of Experimental Social Psychology in 1998 and the Presidential Early Career Award in 2002.

Popular media such as *The New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Fortune* and *Time* magazines, the BBC and National Public Radio regularly cite Iyengar's work. She recently presented her insights into the complexities of choices we make each day in her first book, *The Art of Choosing*.

Rescheduled from last October, Iyengar is also coming to NJIT in March as the 2011 Lillian Gilbreth Colloquium speaker. In 1997, NJIT's Murray Center for Women in Technology established an annual colloquium during Women's History Month in honor of industrial engineer Dr. Lillian Moller Gilbreth (1878-1972), one of the pioneering systems thinkers of the 20th century. An expert in motion studies, Gilbreth refocused the attention of engineers on the human element in work. Her 1911 book *The Psychology of Management* is the foundation on which modern industrial management theory and practice is built. In the 1940s, Gilbreth became the first female professor to teach at Newark College of Engineering.

For More Information: Contact Jay Kappraff, kappraff@adm.njit.edu or 973-596-3490

Co-sponsors: NJIT Technology and Society Forum Committee, Albert Dorman Honors College, College of Science and Liberal Arts, School of Management, Murray Center for Women in Technology, Sigma Xi.

NJIT welcomes attendees from Essex County College, Rutgers-Newark, and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.

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Previous Forum presentations are available at <http://itunes.njit.edu>; search for "Technology and Society Forum."