**CyLab Usable Privacy and Security Laboratory** | Carnegie Mellon University

# Dark Patterns in Cookie Consent

## How do design choices in cookie consent management platforms (CCMPs) affect the way users feel and interact with cookie notices?

## Variables

We first designed a consent notice that represents "best practice." By examining consent notices on 200 real websites using the top 5 CCMPs, we decided on 7 study variables:

1. the prominence of the notice 2. the layout of the text in the notice 3. whether the text is persuasive 4. how the consent and choice buttons are labeled

5. how to reach the choice interface 6. how easy (or difficult) it is to change your choices later

7. the layout of the choice interface



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You've definitely seen a message like this when browsing the web. They exist to comply with privacy laws (e.g. GDPR and CCPA) which require that people be informed of the data collected about them. Cookie collection should ideally be opt-in and people should be able to make informed choices about their cookies easily and efficiently. However, CCMPs often hide these choices behind confusing, tedious interfaces.

**ELLIE YOUNG** 

## Study Design

For each study condition, we started with the "best practice" design and changed one variable.

We recruited participants via Prolific and directed them to a fabricated ecommerce storefront, where they would interact with one of our 12 cookie consent notices.

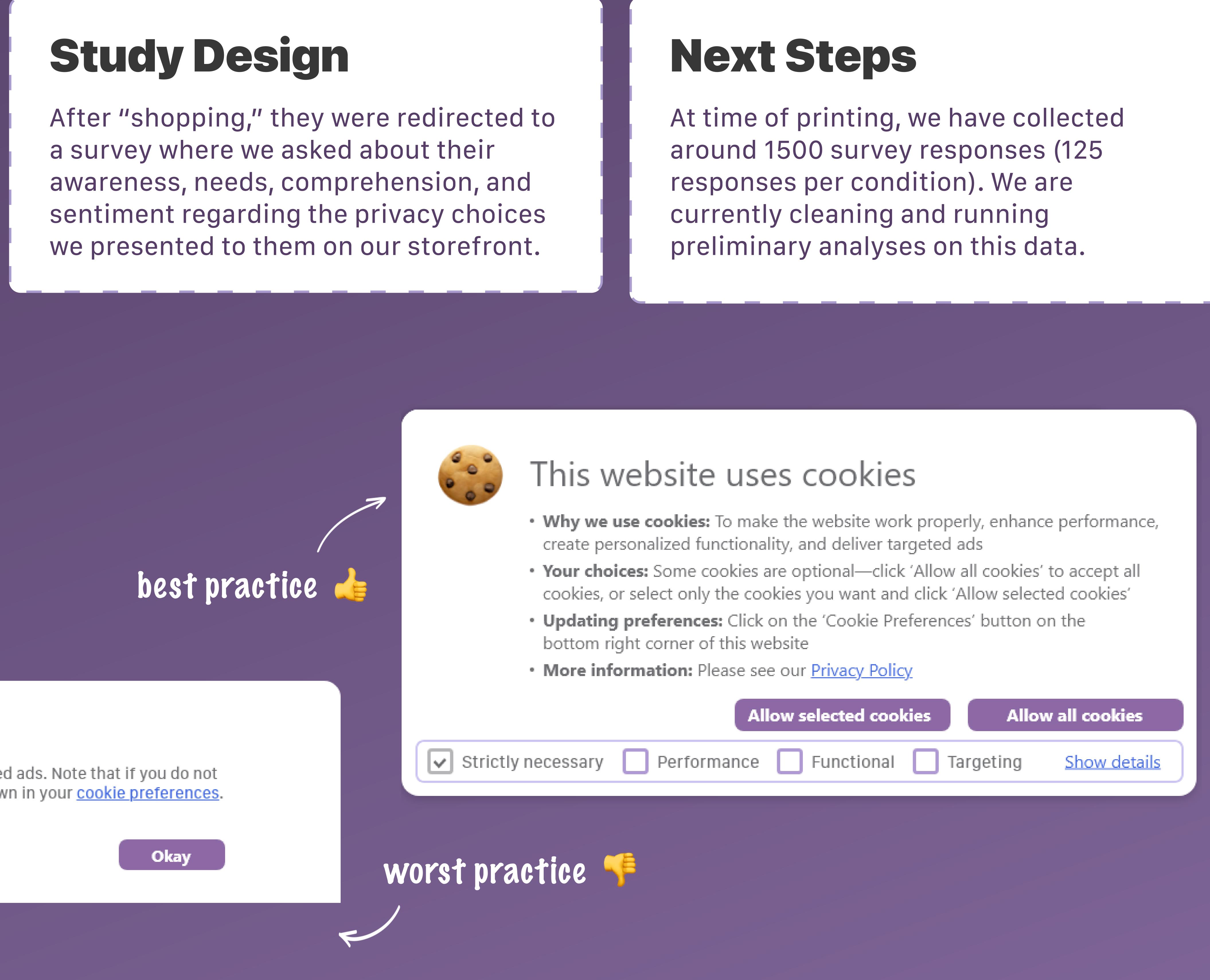
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### LORRIE CRANOR

**Example 10** Carnegie Mellon University Security and Privacy Institute



How about a real cookie? 🤤