

Education

Since 2018	PhD, University of Cambridge, History and Philosophy of Science Topic: Why we need to talk about preferences Supervisor: Dr. Anna Alexandrova
Spring 2020	Visitor, Carnegie Mellon University, Department of Philosophy Host: Prof. Kevin Zollman
2016 - 2018	Master of Arts, University of Bayreuth, Philosophy and Economics GPA: 1.3 (1= highest, 5 = lowest) First ranked graduate of my Cohort
Spring 2016	Semester at EIPE, Erasmus University of Rotterdam
2012 - 2016 2014	Bachelor of Arts, University of Bayreuth, Philosophy and Economics Exchange Semester, Erasmus University Rotterdam

Areas of Specialization

Philosophy of Economics, Philosophy of Social Science, Game and Social Choice Theory

Areas of Competence

General Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Cognitive Science, Philosophy and Public Policy, Meta-Ethics

Publications and Manuscripts

Journal Articles

- Beck, L., & Jahn, M. (2021). Normative Models and Their Success. Philosophy of the Social Sciences, 51(2), 123-150.
- New Functionalism and the Social and Behavioral Sciences (co-authored with James Grayot). European Journal for Philosophy of Science. Accepted.

Other Publications

- Beck, L., & Alexandrova, A. (2019). Measuring utility: from the marginal revolution to behavioral economics: by Ivan Moscati, Oxford studies in history of economics, New York, Oxford University Press, 2018, 352 pages, £ 22.99 (paperback), ISBN: 9780199372775. Journal of Economic Methodology, 26(4), 380-384.

- Beck, L., (2017). Can economics be a separate science. *Rerum Causae*, 9(2).

Completed Manuscripts

- Why we need to talk about preferences!
Under Review

Two traditions of experiments in economics are especially prominent, namely cognitive psychology experiments in the heuristics and biases tradition (*H&B-experiments*) and *experimental economics* in the tradition of Vernon Smith. In this paper, I aim to offer a novel reconstruction of the two experimental paradigms that can highlight a plausible source of their pervasive disagreements. Towards this aim, I focus on preferences as one of the most fundamental concepts in economics. I argue that *experimental economics* can be reconstructed as holding that the constituents of preferences can be partially located in agents' environments, while *H&B-experiments* implicitly assume that the constituents of preferences are entirely located within agents' bodies. The paper (i) outlines how my reconstruction can account for the disagreement between the two paradigms, (ii) defends the plausibility of this reconstruction, (iii) and highlights its implications for the debate about the nature of preferences in economics.

- The Econ within or the Econ above?
Under review (R&R)

Scholars of behavioral welfare economics disagree about the plausibility of preference purification - the idea that some "purer" preferences track people's welfare better than others. Some tout preference purification as a familiar phenomenon and a solution to the problem of paternalism in welfare policy. Others denounce it as conceptually incoherent, postulating that it relies on the psychologically implausible assumption of an inner rational agent. I argue that the debate turns on different notions of rationality: the account of the foundations of preference purification that its critics use to undermine its psychological plausibility aligns with a procedural notion of rationality. Yet, some of its proponents align more closely with a structural notion of rationality. In a first step, I, therefore, explicate how structural rationality allows us to offer a more defensible account of the foundations of preference purification, one that doesn't appeal to an inner rational agent. In a second step, I argue that, while this recasting by itself is unlikely to resolve the debate, it sits particularly well with the so-called evidential account of the relationship between preferences and welfare. In this regard, I point out two challenges for preference purification that emerge under the novel account introduced here and argue that the evidential account has the resources to address these challenges.

At early stages

- Do you believe in deep down?: On two notions of personal values
Co-authored with Marcel Jahn

In this paper, we propose a distinction between two conceptions of valuing that have remained largely unrecognized in the extant philosophical literature. These conceptions are based on two models of what it means to value something. On the first – which we refer to as the surface-model – valuing something is exclusively a matter of having certain behavioral, cognitive and/or emotional dispositions. In contrast, the second model – which we call the layer-model – assumes that valuing necessarily involves the presence of certain representational states underlying those dispositions, e.g., representations of a particular set of normative reasons. After introducing this distinction, we

will show that it is unclear on which side of the distinction several prominent accounts of valuing fall. This is because it remains unclear whether these account list constituents or merely “symptoms” of valuing. We will then support the relevance of this distinction by i) showing how it maps onto the debate between psycho-functionalists and dispositionalists about the nature of beliefs, ii) highlighting how the accounts can lead to different value assignments, iii.) demonstrating how the surface-model threatens to narrow the gap between Aristotelean and valuing accounts of wellbeing by making valuing more akin to a character trait, and iv.) explicating that most approaches to behavioral welfare economics are implicitly committed to the layer-model.

- The spectre of revealed preference theory

My aim in this paper is to argue that the recent defenses of revealed preference theory do not withstand scrutiny. Towards this aim I will first outline revealed preference theory. I will then briefly present the two most common arguments that the received view offers against it. Afterwards, I will outline three argumentative strategies for rehabilitating revealed preference theory, and successively rebut each of them.

Professional Experience

2021

Organizing and coordinating a successful panel submission for the 2022 Annual meeting of the American Economic Association on the notion of ‘mistakes’ in behavioural welfare economics (Speakers: Prof. Johanna Thoma (LSE), Prof. Douglas Bernheim (Stanford), Lukas Beck (Cambridge); Chair: Dr. Kate Vredenburg)

2020

Teaching (full responsibility), University of Bayreuth

- BA Seminar: Preferences and Welfare in Economics (Summer 2020)

Designing and Recording a Podcast with Dr. Anna Alexandrova as supplementary material for her Philosophy of Economics Lecture at the University of Cambridge.

2019-2020

Graduate Assistant of the BSPS Committee

2019

Convener (together with Olesya Bondarenko) of the “Social Epistemology of Science” reading group at HPS Cambridge

Convener (together with Dr. Christopher Clarke) of the “Measuring Wellbeing by Eliciting Preferences?” reading group at CRASSH Cambridge

Since 2018

Supervisor, University of Cambridge

- Philosophy and Scientific Practice (Michaelmas and Lent 2018, Michaelmas and Lent 2019)
- Philosophy of Economics (Michaelmas 2018, Michaelmas, Michaelmas 2020)

2018

Organizer of the 2018 Bayreuth Wittgenstein Lectures

Topic: Climate Change and Obligations to future Generations

Lecturer: Prof. Joseph Heath (University of Toronto)

2017

Teaching (full responsibility), University of Bayreuth

- Philosophical Writing (Summer 2017)
- 2015 - 2018 Teaching Assistant, University of Bayreuth
- Introduction to Philosophical Analysis (Winter 2017)
 - Introduction to Philosophy of Science (Winter 2016)
 - Introduction to Ethics (Winter 2015)
 - Introduction to Philosophy of Science (Summer 2015)
- 2016 - 2017 Organizer of Think! (International Student Conference in Analytic Philosophy)
- February - April 2015 Internship at The Institute for Economic Policy, Cologne
- 2012 - 2013 Project Manager of Bayreuth Dialogue (Symposium for Philosophy, Economics and Society)

Talks and Comments

Upcoming talks:

- Panel participant “What is a Mistake?”
- 2022 Annual meeting of the American Economic Association, 7-9.01.2022, in Boston.
- Why we need to talk about preferences!
- Biennial Meeting of the Philosophy of Science Association, 11-14.11.2021, in Baltimore, USA.
- The Econ within or the Econ above?
- 15th Conference of the International Network for Economic Method, 12-14.11.2021, in Tempe, USA
- Normative Models and their Success (with Marcel Jahn).
- DGPhil 2021, 05-08.09.2021, in Erlangen, Germany.

Past talks:

- New functionalism and the Social and Behavioral Sciences (with James Grayot).
- 5th International Economic Philosophy Conference, 23-25.06.2021, in Warsaw, Poland.
- Joint meeting of the Asian Network for the Philosophy of the Social Sciences, the European Network for the Philosophy of the Social Sciences, and the Philosophy of Social Science Roundtable, 04-07.03.2021, in Tokyo, Japan.
- Why we need to talk about preferences!
- Annual meeting of the British Society for the Philosophy of Science 2020 [cancelled due to Covid-19].
- Normative Models and their Success (with Marcel Jahn).
- Philosophy of Social Science Roundtable, 13-15.03.2020, in Atlanta, USA.

- On the Dispositional Conception of Preferences.
 - Biennial meeting of the European Philosophy of Science Association, 11-14.09.2019, in Geneva, Switzerland.
 - 14th Conference of the International Network for Economic Method, 19-21.08.2019, in Helsinki, Finland.
 - INEM Summer School - Economic Behaviours: Models, Measurements, and Policies, 30.06-05.07.2019, in Como, Italy.
 - Philosophy of Social Science Roundtable, 12-14.04.2019, in Burlington, USA.
- The Econ above or the Econ within?
 - 8th Conference of the European Network for the Philosophy of the Social Sciences, 28-30.08.2019, in Athens, Greece.
- Comment on “Representing moral choice dispositions: from moral preferences to moral reasons” by Prof. Christian List
 - Preference-based modelling workshop at LSE, 10.11.2018, in London, UK.
- Can Economics be a Separate Science?
 - 5th LSE-Bayreuth Student Philosophy Conference, 11-12.05.2017, in London, UK.

Funding and Travel Grants

Funding

- PhD Scholarship of the German Academic Scholarship Foundation (since 2019)
- PhD Scholarship of the Foundation of German Business (2018-2019)

Travel Grants

- Travel grant of King’s College Cambridge for POSS-RT 2019 and POSS-RT 2020
- Travel and accommodation grant of HPS Cambridge for visit at CMU
- Travel grant of the German Academic Scholarship Foundation for EPSA 2019, ENPOSS 2019, INEM 2019
- Travel grant of Young Scholars Initiative for INEM (declined)

Service to the Profession

Referring

- Philosophy of Science

Non-academic work

- Secretary of the King’s College Graduate Society (2020)
- Co-organizer of the seminar “Mental Health in the Workplace” at LSE for awardees of the Foundation of German Business (2019)
- Co-Representative of my Master Cohort (2016 - 2018)

Other Experience

Languages

- German (native)
- English (proficient)
- Latin (Latinum certificate)

IT Skills

- SciLab (advanced)

London, 31.08.2021