



Fachbereich Philosophie
Wintersemester 2023/2024

Fachbereichskolloquium

Donnerstags 17 bis 1830 Uhr, Raum G307

Im Rahmen des Philosophischen Kolloquiums findet am **Donnerstag, dem 21.12.2023** folgender Vortrag statt:

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Universität Bayreuth

The Futility of Preference Purification

Behavioural economics has taught us that human agents don't always display consistent, context-independent and stable preferences in their choice behaviour. Many behavioural economists believe, however, that perfect rationality would require choice in accordance with such consistent, context-independent and stable preferences. Most welfare economics, moreover, is built on the basis of agents being ascribed such preferences. Methods have thus been proposed to 'purify' observed choices and preferences to arrive at a preference relation that fulfils the requirements of perfect rationality. In accordance with the anti-paternalist ideal of contemporary welfare economics, the ambition for such preference purification is that it uncovers a preference relation that provides a true measure of an agent's subjective interest. In this paper, I present two obstacles for such 'preference purification' in behavioural welfare economics. Both are obstacles that arise even if we grant that perfect rationality requires stability, context-independence and adherence to the axioms of orthodox expected utility theory. The first is indeterminacy in which of a number of consistent preference relations tracks an agent's subjective interests, stemming from vagueness in her ultimate goals. And the second is the possibility of non-neutral attitudes to risk in contexts of uncertainty.

Alle Interessierten, insbesondere Studierende, sind herzlich eingeladen.

