

Propositions submitted with the thesis

*The Behavioral Economics of Social Interaction: Incentives, Intrinsic motivation, and Value Learning*

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1. Intrinsic motivation is best understood as an outcome of a process of value learning through interaction in a cognitively rich social and institutional environment. (this thesis)
2. The so-called intrinsically motivated activity is not significant because it represents a type of motivation that is not oriented towards rewards; it is significant because it represents a practice through which a specific value conflict gets resolved. (this thesis)
3. Incentives are not objective facts of the social world; they matter only insofar they are interpreted as such by people. (this thesis)
4. The key question with respect to behavioral economics is not whether psychology is, or should be, in or out of economics. The key question is what kind of psychology do economists import. (this thesis)
5. Institutions are not simply incentive structures, but resources for making sense of the world and the establishment of social relations. (this thesis)
6. Behavioral economics of social interaction is part of humanomics, an approach to economic science that emphasizes the different worlds that people inhabit, each with its own distinct logic and evaluating framework that give meaning to actions within it.
7. Human rationality cannot be assumed, and cannot come about by construction. People learn how to be rational within a given value system through engagement with cultural and cognitive resources in their environment.
8. The notion of means-ends rationality is in itself meaningless. The study of rationality in economics must include the discussion of the plurality of values that make human conduct meaningful.
9. Entrepreneurship should also refer to the process by which individuals acquire new values. Parents are value entrepreneurs, identifying and acting on the opportunities for providing relevant role models for their children.
10. Freedom is not a state, but an ongoing process of figuring out what it means to be free.
11. A dog has a perfectly happy life without thinking about anything. It is, however, a dog's life.