

# The Jacob Marschak Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Mathematics in the Behavioral Sciences at UCLA

Young Research Library Conference Room 11360 | March 5, 2015 at 3-4:30 pm



## When Morals Matter in Economic Decision Making

Speaker: Felix C. Brodbeck, Professor of Economic and Organizational Psychology, Ludwig-Maximilians Universität (LMU), Munich, Germany

Host: Alan Page Fiske, Professor of Anthropology, UCLA

Contrary to predictions from Expected Utility Theory and Game Theory, when making economic decisions in interpersonal situations, people take the interest of others into account *and* express various forms of solidarity, even in one-shot interactions with anonymous strangers. Research in such ‘other-regarding behavior’ is dominated by behavioral economical and evolutionary biological approaches. Psychological theory building, which addresses mental processes underlying other-regarding behavior, is rare. In the research to be presented it is proposed that decision behavior in interpersonal situations is regulated via conscious and unconscious (automatic) processes which can be described in terms of relational models and respective moral motives (cf. Fiske, 1992, Rai & Fiske, 2011). In a series of experiments it is demonstrated that (conscious and unconscious) moral motives impact on other regarding behavior in interpersonal, but not in solitary, situations. Further analyses revealed that the moral motive of ‘Unity’ leads to behavior which is in accord with the Golden Rule (“treat others how you wish to be treated”) whereas the moral motive of ‘Proportionality’ made people give others less than they gave themselves. These and further studies’ results will be discussed in the light of how humans mindfully and unconsciously regulate their (social) interactions with other agents.

Before joining LMU Munich, Felix Brodbeck held the Chair of Organizational and Social Psychology at Aston Business School, Aston University, UK. For more than 10 years he served as a member of the coordination team of the GLOBE Program (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness, Wharton School of Management, headed by Robert House). He published eight books and more than 100 scholarly articles in the fields of cross-cultural psychology, leadership, group and organizational effectiveness, decision making, innovation, economic psychology, and applied research methods. He is co-owner and senior partner of a consulting company in Munich, Germany, specializing on employee surveys, leadership and organizational development in large multinational companies, which rounds up his track record as a curious traveler in two complementary worlds, the academic world, developing and testing theories empirically, and the practical world, adapting and applying theories in real world settings.