

Models and Simulations: Discussion Questions Week 11

Readings: Bicchieri. *Grammar of Society*. pp. 1-42.

Discussion Question 1: Definitions and Examples

1. Informally, describe the differences, according to Bicchieri, among social norms, descriptive norms, and conventions.
2. Provide examples of the following:
 - A social norm
 - A descriptive norm that is not a social norm
 - A descriptive norm that is not a convention
 - A convention that is not a social norm.
3. Can we tell whether a particular strategic profile is a social norm, descriptive norm, or convention by looking at a game- matrix? Why or why not?

Discussion Question 2: On the Formal Definition of a Social Norm

1. What is a Bayesian game?
2. Explain the relationship between a Bayesian game and Bicchieri's definition of a social norm.
3. Explain what Bicchieri by a social norm "transforming" a game.
4. What sense do social norms typically require some conflict of interest?

Discussion Question 3: On Observing Norms

1. What is the difference between prescriptive and proscriptive norms?
2. Why is it difficult to detect the existence of a proscriptive norm?
3. Explain how Turnbull's study of the Ik indicates that it may be difficult to detect the existence of certain prescriptive norms.
4. Explain the objection that "motivational distinctions are futile." How does Bicchieri respond to said objection?