



Leveraging the Biology of Decision Making to Improve Economic Research

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Sufficient Reason* for Considering the Biology

- Errors of Babylonians' empiricism and Descartes' theory at work here (after Politser, 2008):
 - Empirical economists face same problem as Babylonians' ... their area of circle was a theoretical problem (needed Euclid's theory), in claiming, empirically (not accurately measured):
$$3r^2 \text{ rather than } \pi r^2$$
 - Theoretical economists depend largely on Descartes' claim that choice is all about reasoned, cognitively conscious, rational choice: Feelings (emotions; empathy-sympathy, the sentiments do not matter... albeit even Adam Smith taught us they were essential to a viable capitalism)



Sufficient Reason...

- Politser(2008) notes the almost exclusive focus on empiricism in neurobiology and almost exclusive reliance on Descartes' theory in economic theory:
 - Neurological and psychological (including behavioral economics and economic psychology) research **has unraveled the favored economic axioms** in that economic theory
 - New and modified “grand” economic theory **with more empirical support is needed**
 - Work is underway to reconcile the empirical and the theoretical in the **emerging field of neuroeconomics**
 - Need the continual interplay of theory and empirical test, and the **courage to propose new grand theories** (and continue testing same)!
 - This Symposium is focused on highlighting those with said courage, to work on new frontiers, and contribute in building that theory