Symposium on Reorienting Economics

Feminism And Realism – A Contested Relationship

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Introduction

This paper engages with chapter nine of Tony Lawson’s (2003a) Reorienting Economics, ‘Feminism, Realism, and Universalism’. The chapter appeared as a journal article in Feminist Economics, in 1999. That publication provoked a remarkable set of comments by feminist economists – some of these highly critical – which were published in the same journal as a dialogue, in 2003, including two responses by Lawson. Earlier (in 1999), as well as in the set of comments in 2003, feminist philosopher Sandra Harding gave her response to Lawson’s views. In my discussion of the chapter/article on feminism and realism, I will regularly refer to this dialogue. But before doing so, let me first briefly give some indication of Lawson’s position towards feminist economics as a discipline.

Although I could not find his name in the two latest membership directories of IAFFE, the International Associations For Feminist Economics, he can certainly be characterised as a supporter of feminist economics. In his book series with Routledge, Economics as Social Theory, he has published several books by feminist economists (Nancy Folbre, 1994; Julie Nelson, 1996; Irene van Staveren, 2001; Drucilla Barker and Edith Kuiper, 2003). He is member of the editorial board of Feminist Economics, the associations’ journal, and he has participated in several annual IAFFE conferences over the past ten years. Lawson, together with some other male economists involved in IAFFE and/or Feminist Economics, can undoubtedly be characterised as a supporter of feminist economics as a sub-discipline within economics. Acknowledging his clear support for the feminist cause in economics, this paper will now focus on the ideas of critical realism that he brings to feminist economics: what are they, how are they connected to feminist economic research, and how are they evaluated by feminist economists?

The objective of his chapter on feminism is “to argue that (...) there are possible advantages to feminist explanatory and emancipatory projects from engaging (or engaging more fully) in the sort of explicit ontological analysis associated with modern versions (at least) of scientific realism” (Lawson, 2003: 219). In his view, feminists too often reject universalism wholesale (rather than only reject a priori universalism as expressed in values, experiences, objectives and interpretations of dominant groups) which would “be debilitating for the feminist project” (ibid). In order to clarify his point, he illustrates his argument with three examples, on formalistic modelling, epistemology, and emancipation. The responses to his article agree unanimously with his critique on formalistic modelling, whereas they disagree almost unanimously (except Julie Nelson, who, however, has a related disagreement) with Lawson’s universalism underlying his arguments on epistemology and emancipation.

In this contribution, I will first discuss the strong disagreement of the feminist economists
participating in the dialogue with the universalism they detect behind his critical realism. In doing so, I will not only rely on the dialogue following Lawson’s article in Feminist Economics, but also draw from a recent book (published in the book series under his editorship) that provides a state-of-the-art overview of feminist economic philosophy (Barker and Kuiper, 2003). Secondly, I will critically question the apparent agreement between Lawson and the participants in the dialogue on formalistic modelling as unhelpful for both ontological economic analysis and feminist economics. For this part of my contribution, I will partly make use of a paper on feminist econometrics by Brigitte Bechtold (1999), who instead argues for a feminist approach to modelling. I will end with a conclusion, arguing for a more explicit two-way relationship between realism and feminism.

**Feminist Opposition to Universalism**

In his original contribution ‘Feminism, Realism, and Universalism’, to which I will refer to as chapter nine of his book (Lawson 2003a, with page numbers referring to the book version), Lawson rejects a priori universalizing, that is, the mere assumption or assertion of a widespread validity or relevance of a particular position. But he warns feminists for the opposite danger he signals in feminist work, namely that “all approaches or stances are as legitimate as each other” (Lawson, 2003a: 218). Now, what does realism offer to feminism? First and foremost, Lawson claims, realism enables feminists to study gender as an ontological category, that is, as a real kind of entity rather than (only) as a representation of certain beliefs. Since gender, and its derived concepts such as gender-relations, gender-inequality, and gender-roles, is at the heart of feminist research, including feminist economics, the potential contribution of realism to feminist research is not trivial. Indeed, as Drucilla Barker and Edith Kuiper (2003: 2) state in the introduction to their valuable volume on feminist economic philosophy, “Gender analysis remains integral to feminist scholarship.” Lawson hastens to emphasise that an ontological understanding of gender does in no way imply essentialism. “… there is nothing essential to scientific or ontological realism that supposes or requires that objects of knowledge are naturalistic or other than transient, that knowledge obtained is other than fallible, partial and itself transient, or that scientists or researchers are other than positioned, biased, interested, and practically, culturally, and socially conditioned” (Lawson, 2003a: 220). The participants in the dialogue, however, are not convinced, as they notice a strong universalist claim in his defence of realism. This disagreement underlies much of the dialogue. Lawson perceives an understanding of realism among feminists which reduces this philosophy to a simple, naive version of realism, from which he distances himself. The feminists in the dialogue, however, perceive a strong version of universalism to his position, that is, essentialism, a claim about the nature of human beings, a claim against which the whole project of feminism is set up, in particular post-structuralist feminism. So, the dialogue centres round the opposition between essentialism on the one hand and relativism on the other hand.

Now, do feminists, and in particular feminist economists, reject or downplay realism as Lawson assumes? Does critical realism indeed have the balanced position that feminists favour between universalism and relativism, as Lawson claims in his assertion that realism is not essentialist? In order to shed light on these questions, let me now review the most important comments and replies from the dialogue on the opposition between essentialism and relativism.

On naïve realism, Sandra Harding (1999) agrees with Lawson that this version does not do justice to realism. At the same time, however, she explains that strategically, feminists have found it more helpful to argue from an epistemological perspective, in order to be heard in the scientific debate (and get research funding, for example), than from a realist perspective, in which they often remain marginalised. She argues that feminists have perceived that ontologies are embedded in moral and political projects, and are in no way disinterested. Therefore, she claims, “… it requires a great deal more than just ‘clear thinking’ to dislodge such ontologies from their status as obvious” (Harding, 1999: 130). Indeed, feminist economists have analysed the economic importance of unpaid labour and caring, the discriminatory part of the gender wage gap, negative impacts of structural adjustment policies for women in developing countries, to mention only a few feminist economic concerns. But these studies have been largely
ignored by the mainstream, as is visible in the selection of articles in the discipline’s top-ranking journals and chapters in economic textbooks. That is why, Harding states, feminists have found it more useful to rely more often on an epistemological strategy, focusing on how standards are set for what should count as knowledge, good method, objectivity, or rationality. This is precisely why feminist economists have also spent time and effort in challenging mainstream notions of economic rationality, efficiency, and work, among others, as well as their underlying gender dichotomies of fact/value, reason/emotion, and efficiency/equity. Lawson agrees with this point. The volume on feminist philosophy of economics by Barker and Kuiper provides several examples of such studies. To quote just one author in their rich volume, arguing strongly against an essentialist notion of gender, urging feminist economists to hold “no presumption that gender underlies economic processes except in culturally specific, path-dependent ways” (Eiman Zein-Elabbdin, 2003: 333).

But there is more than strategy to the feminist preference for epistemology and standpoint theory, expressing the situatedness of knowledge. Fabienne Peter (2003) draws the attention to Lawson’s assumption of a common human nature, referring to a genetic constitution and species-wide needs and capacities, which could be studied in analogy to the study of physical objects in the natural sciences. This assumption, Peter points out, denies the problematic character of science itself, and the still largely positivist science practices in economics. She argues that Lawson appears to suffer from this bias himself, with his notion of ‘judgemental rationality’ which seems to stem from a positivist conception of objective scientific explanation. Feminist economists, instead, tend to follow Harding’s position of ‘strong objectivity’, as a recognition of the situatedness of the scientist (see, fore example, Harding, 1995), acknowledging that the ideal of objectivity is untenable and rather than denying its problems, one would better recognise them explicitly. Referring to Lawson’s example on the emancipatory project of feminist economics, Peter (2003: 99) makes clear that in the face of oppression, “accommodating the potential contestedness of needs is more important than issuing universalizing statements.” Drucilla Barker (2003) elaborates this point by questioning the grounds of the presumably shared interests, needs, and motives of human beings – between women and men, but also between women or any other group. Referring to Donna Haraway (1988), Barker (2003: 107) clarifies that “collective subject positions are always socially constructed and partial”. A good illustration of this point can be found in a recent article in Feminist Economics on the different perceptions of labour standards by some western feminists and other activists on the one hand, and women workers in exporting industries in Bangladesh on the other hand. In that article, Naila Kabeer (2004) points out why a different perspective is needed, precisely for the sake of emancipation, rather than a unified image of human interests, needs, and motives. Zein-Elabdin (2003: 333) therefore proposes a feminist economic philosophy of hybrid subalterness, which she defines “as subordination deriving from heterogeneous sources rather than a single axis such as gender or colonial subjectivity”. She explains that such a philosophy should be non-modemist and grounded in a self-critical approach and ethical sensitivity to subaltern difference. “This framework remains feminist to the extent that it is partially anchored in a concern for women’s welfare; however, it is paradigmatically guided by the multiplicity and instability of difference, and is deeply aware of its own complicity in the cultural hegemony of economic discourse” (ibid).

Lawson’s reply on the critique of his essentialism is that he pleads for seeking commonality with recognition of differences, and not a priori assuming this, which, however, makes one question what is left of the ontology of human beings’ needs and interests. Since he argues that “despite our interrelatedness and differences, indeed as a result of appreciating these features, I believe that, at an abstract level, we can give a formulation of the sort of society that is desirable” (Lawson, 2003b: 125) But the abstract level does not allow for interrelatedness and differences. Feminists instead tend to discuss what is desirable in a society at the level of the concrete. Feminist economists Barker and Kuiper are therefore explicit on their epistemological and methodological stance for economics, a discipline they see as an integral part of culture, power relations, and change: “Economics is not an abstract notion; it does not exist without people. Rather, it is a state of affairs, always implicated in global politics, regional interests, and local alliances. As economists, we are part of the picture – we study, write, and teach from interested positions. Such interests are affected by intellectual pleasure, ethnical sensibilities, as well as by prestige, uncertainty, and a variety of other institutional constraints.
Explicitly recognising our location ties us concretely to the world and enables us to envision effective strategies for change and new perspectives on economic issues (Barker and Kuiper, 2003: 3). They add, on page 15, that they adhere to the idea of a desirable society, just like Lawson, but recognise that “what constitutes the ‘social good’ can no longer be taken for granted”. Lawson appears more convincing in his reply to Barker who labelled his universalism as humanist. He agrees, but explains that his humanism is minimalist as it concerns the recognition of human capacities to flourish in human society, as distinct from the capacities of non-human beings. This conception of humanism is very close to Amartya Sen’s and perhaps even closer to Martha Nussbaum’s theories of capabilities and human development – a perspective with which feminist economists have engaged to quite an extent – largely supportive as well as, to some extent, critical.

Julie Nelson (2003: 110) shifts the attention to another bias she perceives in critical realism, namely its “privileged reason, abstraction, and precision over emotion, particularity, and what is vaguely known.” She argues, that this bias against emotion will not help feminist economists to get the economic analysis of caring out of the margin. My example on modelling care in the next section will illustrate this point. Although agreeing with the general ideas offered by scientific realism, Nelson does not find the particular branch of realism very helpful for this type of feminist research. As an alternative, she points at the work of Alfred North Whitehead on process ontology, which she finds a more organic and interconnected version of realism than Lawson’s. “By emphasising experience, including human bodily experience, as the fundamental unifying reality, he removes the mind–vs.–matter conundrum” (Nelson, 2003: 113). In his reply to Nelson, Lawson feels misinterpreted, and argues, extensively quoting from Whitehead, that his critical realism is much closer to Whitehead’s than Nelson claims. That may be so, but his three examples that aimed to show the usefulness of critical realism for feminist economics do not make this explicit – an example on core feminist concerns such as the economic analysis of childcare, or care as a motivation for certain types of unpaid and paid labour might have been a better choice to bring this point across.

In his reply to the comments, Lawson (2003: 128) re-states the objective of his chapter, as “to encourage consideration of an ontological turn in feminist theorizing.” But the dialogue that followed on his initial contribution signals that this objective, modest as it may seem, has a problematic undertone. What about a feminist turn in realist theorizing? In other words, what about a discourse in which both feminism and realism are open to mutual influencing? This seems even more desirable in the light of what Harding recognises as an oversight in Lawson’s assumption of a feminist neglect of major messages of realism. She argues that much of Lawson’s advice on ontology to feminists is ill-informed about what feminist theorists already do, and for quite some time have developed thoughtfully within feminist discourses of philosophy. She refers to work by feminist theorists from the mid-1970s onwards which “has largely already made the claims Lawson ‘proposes’ (Harding, 1999: 131).” Indeed, she argues, his suggestions on acknowledging situated knowledge “are the main points of standpoint theories” (ibid), but she finds them argued stronger in standpoint theory than in critical realism. She finds Lawson’s arguments helpful additions in the continuous defence that standpoint theory is required to do against common misunderstandings. However, the point she makes, referring to others as well, is that science is embedded in networks of beliefs, a point which she summarizes in a question to Lawson: “Shouldn’t we expect critical realism, too, to be a network of ontological, epistemological, moral, political, etc. beliefs, even though it focuses only on ontological issues?” (Harding, 2003: 154).

**Formalistic Models in Feminist Economics**

In his chapter nine, Lawson uses the example of formalistic modelling to illustrate why realism/ontology matters. He argues that the method of formalistic modelling is not at all well equipped for illuminating the social realm and he notices that feminist economists have also criticised it as masculinist, with which he concurs. He convincingly argues that the basic assumption for phenomena to be appropriately analysed with the method of formalistic modelling is that they occur in closed systems, while the social realm, of which the economy is part, is characterised by openness, as well as by structure and dynamics.
Moreover, his critique extends beyond the particular type of models that are formalistic (relying on mathematical proofs) to also include econometrics (relying on statistical tests). He claims that both types of models – theoretical as well as econometric – have been rather unsuccessful. Feminist economists have, however, used modelling as one among a variety of methods, although the type of models used are far more often econometric than formalistic (except for some household bargaining models). Lawson rejects both types of modelling for feminist economic analysis: formalistic as well as econometric approaches. “I think that feminists may have been too cautious in their criticisms of formalistic modelling” (Lawson, 2003: 228). On econometric models, he continues: “there are grounds for supposing that those empirically-oriented feminists in economics insistent upon applying standard econometric methods in all contexts are proceeding wholly in the wrong direction” (ibid).

Now, how did the feminist economists participating in the dialogue react to this assertion? Surprisingly, perhaps, they agreed. Peter (2003: 94) agrees with Harding’s endorsement of Lawson’s critique, finding “Lawson’s article […] strongest in its critique of formalistic modelling.” Barker (2003: 104) states: “I think that many feminists will find this argument familiar and persuasive.” But she adds that his ontological critique misses the sociological fact that it is precisely formal modelling which provides mainstream economists with their status as scientists. Finally, Nelson (2003: 111) asserts that the critical-realist approaches shares with the feminist approach a wish “to develop a more adequate investigatory practice, not hidebound by allegiance to formal modelling.” These three confirmative responses to Lawson’s critique on the use of formalistic modelling in general, and within feminist economics in particular, require, however, a bit more detailed discussion than they received in the dialogue. There is not enough space in this article to do that, nor would I be best positioned to do this, as predominantly employing qualitative rather than quantitative methods in my own work. But I do think the matter deserves somewhat more attention than it received in the dialogue. Therefore, I will try to point out briefly how feminist economists tend to make use of modelling, and to what extent the outcomes of this method contributes to the understanding of the economic behaviour of women and men and how economic processes influence differently on the economic lives of women and men.

It seems fruitful to start with the example of the disappointing results of modelling the gender wage gap in an illuminative entry on econometrics by Julie Nelson in the Elgar Companion to Feminist Economics. In that chapter, Nelson (1999) points out that econometrics has not been able to settle the dispute on the (extent of) discrimination underlying the pay difference between women and men. “Consider regression results suggesting that a wage gap still exists between men and women, even when they have the same observable skills, experience, and so on. Those who do not believe discrimination exists commonly argue that such results could be explained by the omission of important – perhaps unobservable – variables (for example, greater ambition on the part of men). On the other hand, those who believe that the impact of discrimination is actually understated by such studies will argue that some of the included variables (for example, seniority) themselves reflect labour market discrimination” (Nelson, 1999: 155). She explains the different positions on this as resulting from different underlying beliefs, arguing that econometric testing therefore will never be able to settle the argument. This shows again the importance of epistemology for feminist economists, and the need to challenge masculine beliefs reflected in econometrics.

The ways in which feminists address these biased beliefs is partly through employing a broader set of quantitative tools for empirical investigation, including more refined data sets, the use of survey data, and creative technical specifications of models, as well as triangulation with qualitative methods. At the annual conference of feminist economics held in Oxford, in August of 2004, a roundtable on the relationships between feminist economics and Post Keynesian economics, Lawson re-stated his view on the uselessness of models for feminist purposes, while various of the feminist economists present in the session pointed out that this would throw out the baby with the bath water. Feminists have done valuable econometric work in a different way than the mainstream commonly does: not axiomatic but explorative, not claiming explanation but complementing found correlations with theoretical analysis relating to gendered norms, institutions, and power. An example of technical specifications that point to gender inequalities in explanatory variables are power parameters in household production models, that reflect
male control over household resources such as labour time, land, or income. Such parameters do more justice to the underlying gender mechanisms than including only a few separate variables for men and women, such as male and female labour time. Moreover, feminist econometricians tend to be quite cautious about the explanatory power of models, often being aware that more is needed than just regressions with observable variables in order to explain gender differences.

In a recent paper (van Staveren, forthcoming), I have reviewed modelling work on unpaid labour and the care economy. Of course, modelling is not an end in itself or a substitute for theory (although for some economists there is hardly any difference between model and theory). But given the high status that modelling has in the discipline, as Barker has pointed out, it seems strategically wise not to shy completely away from it, not even in the case of analysing caring, a highly under-measured economic activity. Various feminist economists therefore have expressed a need for experimentation with the modelling of care (Frances Woolley, 1993; Martha MacDonald, 1995; Irene van Staveren, 1999; Sue Himmelweit, 2003) – despite the acknowledged limitations. In a comparison I did of two models, each including a variable for unpaid labour (childcare or a broader variable including domestic work), the feminist model appeared to do more justice to the gendered structure of labour markets and the gender division of labour in the household than the non-feminist model. That is because the non-feminist model assumed high substitution elasticities between paid and unpaid work as well as between male and female labour time. Hence, the only way that model could account for observed inflexibilities and rigidities was by including extra constraints for one or both genders. It did opt for a maximum value for female paid working time of 20 hours a week and a minimum value of 20 hours of female time spent on childcare at home, for women with children. For men, no such limits were set. Such choices by modellers severely limit the explanatory power of the model, as it assumes what needs to be explained and thereby does not allow for changes towards a more gender equal distribution of labour between men and women. In the words of Lawson’s example on the emancipatory project of feminist economics, the model excluded such a project form the beginning. The other model, however limited in other aspects, did allow for changing gender relations to some extend, as it modelled low substitution elasticities, reflecting job segregation in the labour market as well as norms and institutions supporting the status quo of the unequal division of paid and unpaid labour between women and men. Admittedly, these needed to be explained outside the model, but at least the choice of low substitution rates made such additional explanation possible, whereas the non-feminist model foreclosed the possibility of emancipation altogether.

My conclusion of the discussion of the models referred to above and several other models of care that I have reviewed is that they may be useful to clarify the structural dimensions of economic relationships, including gendered structures. Choices between exogenous and endogenous variables appeared to matter, as well as inclusion of care receivers next to care givers; including care in the savings function (as a substitute for purchased services) appeared to enable one model to show a counter-cyclical trend in women’s unpaid labour time; and, finally, the modelling experiences indicated that the care economy can be understood as much richer than only in terms of labour time, by including variables such as caring goods, caring productivity, and substitutability with market goods. Such empirical models remain important in order to bring marginalized topics (such as unpaid labour) and differentiated economic processes (such as the gender wage gap) to the attention of the discipline. Moreover, such models on the structure of gender in the economy often serve to refute commonly held beliefs on the benign effects of markets for all economic agents. To give just one example, the carefully developed regressions with additional institutional analysis, by Stephanie Seguino (2000) on the gender wage gap in the Asian tiger economies has shown that wage discrimination is an important factor behind the export success and economic growth of these countries. Such empirical studies are necessary in the discourse on globalisation, especially in the light of unsubstantiated views held by well-known trade economists such as Jagdish Bhagwati (2004, in particular chapter 7 on women), on a presumed equalizing impact of global trade.

But models appear to be very limited, in line with Lawson’s claims, when we are interested in learning about the causation, dynamics, and meaning of these relationships in the economy, which relate
to motivation, reasons, beliefs, and interaction effects of economic agents. But perhaps we should rather
give up the ideal of (full) explanation and use models pragmatically to explore possible relationships
between gendered variables, than dismissing models wholesale.

Finally, let me say a few words on the possibility of feminist econometrics as suggested by Brigitte
Bechtold (1999). She starts by listing ten practices in econometrics that she labels as non-feminist,
including the violation of random sampling for gender differences (as well as class and other differences),
the emphasis on monetary variables, and the use of dummy variables as a way to accommodate gender
differences. She argues that some types of modelling do better than others, while she deems time-series
analysis as particularly problematic. But, she does not imply that we should discard econometrics, but
rather use it more carefully and with more attention to data gathering. “While bulky and seemingly
detailed simultaneous equation macromodels as well as VAR [vector autoregression, IVS] models have
major shortcomings in terms of inclusiveness, and the basic classical regression model is lacking in
stochastic qualities required to apply limiting theorems, all is not lost” (Bechtold, 1999: 49-50). Instead,
she recommends eight ‘feminist econometric habits’: look for higher t-values; use limited dependent
variable methods; avoid technical corrections for serial correlation (they may hide misspecification); avoid
dummy variables; use survey and experimental methods; link to findings obtained in other disciplines;
avoid re-affirming the status quo; and replace deductive hypothesis testing with inductive methods of
analysis. Interestingly, this last recommendation comes close to Lawson’s recommendation of
contrastive explanation as an alternative to formalistic modelling – apparently, modelling and inductive
methods are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Bechtold even suggests that deduction can be done
through formalistic models, applying mathematical proofs².

**Conclusion: from Realism to Feminism … and Back?**

Lawson’s chapter nine has triggered an important debate among feminist economists, a feminist
philosopher, and Tony Lawson, on the importance of realism versus epistemology, the balance between
universalism and relativism, and strategic choices for the emancipatory project of feminist economics.
Various issues were resolved, as they appeared merely misunderstandings or partial interpretations – for
example the role of culture in knowledge construction (not only a hindrance but also productive) and the
role of humanism (about human capabilities rather than common interests, needs, and motivations) in
realism. Also, the dialogue has shown that much of what Lawson had proposed to feminist economists is
already wide-shared practice among many feminist economists. Other issues, however, remain
unresolved, in particular because feminist economists reject, more strongly than Lawson does,
universalist conceptions of human beings and human agency.

On modelling, the participants in the dialogue largely agreed with Lawson’s realist/ontological
critique, but the point was also raised that modelling has high status in the discipline as it is driven partly
by modellers’ beliefs. Therefore, it remains necessary, next to critiquing modelling as a masculinist
practice with limited explanatory power, to engage in theoretical and empirical modelling and the
discourses that surround these two forms of modelling. Several suggestions were made how this can be
approached in a gender-aware and generally more inclusive way.

Finally, a note on the tone of the dialogue and the various misinterpretations that contributed to the
somewhat tense tone. It seems to me that part of the critical tone of the dialogue may be arising from a,
at least seemingly, one-way interest by Lawson in linking realism and feminism: from realism to
feminism, and not also the other way around. Feminist theorists, and particularly feminist philosophers
like Sandra Harding, appear to have something valuable to say on realism with implications for realism. In
particular in issues of epistemology. Moreover, feminist economists working on the philosophy of
economics, may also have something to contribute to Lawson’s critical realism project in economics, for
example in the area of identity and agency, as well as from their analysis of caring in economics.
Lawson’s message in his chapter on feminism is clearly one of urging feminist economists to learn from
realism, and not about what realism may learn from feminism. This one-way approach of his critical
realism project towards feminism does not stand alone, as he has published similar articles on the relationship from realism to Post Keynesianism (Lawson, 1999b) as well as to institutional economics (Lawson, 2001). This is not to say, of course, that such urging of heterodox traditions in economics to consider more explicitly a certain philosophy of science would not be relevant or legitimate – we have probably seen too little engagement with philosophy in economics over the past decades. But there appears to be an implicit request for a stronger commitment to mutual learning in the dialogue on Lawson’s chapter and which should not be ignored, in particular if both strands of thought – realism and feminism – are to benefit from future dialogues.

Notes

1. The volume includes, among other things, a review of work on consumer theory by an early twenty-century economist; a literary analysis of the notion of efficiency; a political-economy study of wage setting; a critical reading of Adam Smith, revealing the construction of masculine identity; a demonstration of cultural biases in social statistics; two studies of the identity gap in rational economic man; four chapters analysing caring and unpaid labour as economic activities; and various chapters focusing partly or completely on the importance of a postcolonial or subaltern perspective for feminist theorizing in economics.

2. “A mathematical proof using induction uses three steps: (a) prove the proposition at hand for the first element, (b) prove it for consecutive representative elements ‘k’ and ‘k+1,’ and (c) draw the conclusion that it holds in the sample or population under consideration” (Bechtold, 1999: 51).

References


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