

Rhetoric in Economics

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- So does statistics: kernel methods, nearest-neighbor methods...

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- Specifically, much of modern economic theory is of this type

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- Many economic models are of this type – cases
- ... though typically without the similarity function

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- Economists feel that they “learn a lot” from models of “nothing”
- Economists are not always troubled by violations of theories in experiments
- Economists think that everything is an example of their model
- Economists deeply cherish the common language of their paradigm

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- **And this is why axioms are important**

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- There are questions of interpretation, but the 1st Welfare Theorem appears more relevant.

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- Indeed, according to the classical view of science, there is no room for rhetoric
- Yet, much of modern economic theory is not of this type
- It uses models for qualitative reasoning, relying on analogies
- **And then axioms matter.**