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INTRODUCTION

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The International Network for Economic Method (INEM), in collaboration with College of Global Futures, Arizona State University (ASU), was honored to host the 15th Biennial Conference in Tempe, Arizona from November 12-14, 2021. This conference was generously supported by ASU Philosophy, the School of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies, the Dean of Humanities at the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the College of Global Futures, and the Dean of Law, Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law.

Because of the COVID-19 situation, INEM 21 was hybrid, and therefore required a large and dedicated team of volunteers and technical staff from ASU. Many of these volunteers were drawn from our local organizing committee that included Joshua K. Abbott, Philip Arthur, Timara Crichlow, Peter de Marneffe, C. Tyler DesRoches (Chair), Ross Emmett (co-Chair), Aubrial Harrington, Scott Scheall, and Mary Xavier.

We received approximately 90 proposals for presentation in all areas of the philosophy and methodology of economics, including the normative foundations of behavioral welfare economics, history and sociology of economics, ethics, political philosophy, as well as by feminist approaches and social ontology. Our Scientific Committee (Constanze Binder (EUR), Luc Bovens (Chapel Hill), Harold Kincaid (RSA), Chiara Lisciandra (Groningen), Rebecca Livernois (Western), Gil Hersch (Virginia Tech), Itai Sher (UMass Amherst), and Béatrice Cherrier (École Polytechnique)) evaluated the abstracts submitted for presentation at INEM 21.

We were honored to host Cass R. Sunstein (Harvard), Johanna Thoma (LSE), and Michiru Nagatsu (University of Helsinki) as keynote speakers, with their respective talks on 'Hayekian Behavioral Economics,' 'Pure Risk Paternalism in Welfare Economics,' and 'Philosophy of Economics in the Anthropocene.'

For the first time, INEM awarded a prize for the best papers submitted by young scholars. Candidates had to either be a PhD candidate or had obtained their PhD within the last 3 years prior to the conference. The winners of the 2021 INEM Young Scholars Award were: Edoardo Peruzzi (University of Siena) for 'Antitrust models in the courtroom: a methodological appraisal, (https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/8R5G2VJDH88DURSKTV57/full?target=10.1080/1350178X.2023.2267052)' Lennart Ackermans (Erasmus University Rotterdam) for 'Causal bias in measures of inequality of opportunity, (https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11229-022-03899-1)' and Marcos Picchio (University of Wisconsin–Madison) for 'What is the standard of care in development economics? (https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1470594X231181655)'

Everyone who presented at INEM 21 was invited to submit their manuscript to be considered for publication in this special issue of the *Journal of Economic Methodology*, and we are pleased to introduce the following five articles that withstood the journal's peer-review process.

The first article, 'Objectivity in economics and the problem of the individual,' by John B. Davis, delves into the concept of objectivity in economics. It critiques the prevailing notion of economics as a closed science, characterized by the aspiration to provide a 'view from nowhere,' and advocates for an open scientific approach rooted in a 'view from somewhere' perspective of objectivity. Davis

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argues that the closed science approach is associated with reductionist modeling, formalization, limited interdisciplinary engagement, and an emphasis on value neutrality. According to Davis, this approach is underpinned by the concept of the *Homo economicus* agent. The article highlights two significant issues that arise from adopting this closed science stance: one, it tends to overlook the diversity and intricacy of human values and the different roles they play in economic life; and, two, it downplays people's capacity for creative and adaptive agency in directing their lives and consequently how economies can be constructed to promote said agency. In contrast, the article explores the key practices of an open science approach to economics, rooted in a socially and historically embedded understanding of individual economic agents. These practices include complexity modeling, the utilization of mixed methods, fostering strong relationships with other disciplines, and embracing value diversity.

The second article, 'A contribution to scientific studies of norms in economics inspired by J.N. Keynes and Popper,' by Sina Badiei, also explores the topic of objectivity in economics, specifically in its normative strand. The article begins with a discussion of Keynes's version of the positive/normative distinction in economics. Following an exploration of the originality and advantages of Keynes's viewpoint, the article acknowledges that Keynes's distinction falls short in fully elucidating the precise nature of the relationship between positive and normative economics. Consequently, the article aims to enhance Keynes's position by incorporating insights from Karl Popper. According to Popper, progress in normative social science serves as the primary catalyst for resolving disagreements regarding the selection of norms that underpin social reform. The article leverages the insights of both Keynes and Popper regarding the study of norms to elucidate why normative economics can approach objectivity more readily when it focuses on highly specific and narrowly defined topics and Popper's concept of 'avoidable unhappiness.' In doing so, normative economics can help identify people's basic needs in pressing societal challenges, such as socioeconomic precarity or the ecological and climate crises.

The third article, 'Markets, market algorithms, and algorithmic bias,' by Philippe Van Basshuysen, traces the shift within economics from understanding markets as an outcome of 'spontaneous order' to emphasizing the role of intentional design to achieve particular market outcomes. This shift is attributed to two pivotal developments in the recent history of economics. Firstly, Leonid Hurwicz's perspective of institutions as mechanisms that should be purposefully crafted to align incentives with social goals. Secondly, the emergence of the concept of marketplaces, comprising infrastructure and algorithms, that ought to be intentionally designed to exhibit stable properties. These theoretical developments have motivated economists to construct marketplaces tailored to specific purposes by devising suitable algorithms. The article argues that the ambition to create marketplaces necessitates a shift in ethical reasoning. Instead of debating whether markets should encroach upon certain aspects of life, the focus now lies on how market algorithms should be conceived. To illustrate this shift, the article delves into the issue of biased market algorithms and argues that transparency should be considered a fundamental objective in the design of market systems.

The fourth article, 'The usefulness of well-being temporalism,' by Gil Hersch, deals with the perennial question of whether well-being should predominantly be considered as a temporal concept or whether it should be a lifetime concept. The article contends that the resolution of this fundamental philosophical disagreement does neither carry significant practical implications for the field of well-being science nor that of well-being policy. It argues that the direct measurement of lifetime well-being is exceedingly challenging and offers limited utility in guiding public policies aimed at enhancing well-being. On the other hand, assessing temporal well-being serves as a sufficiently indirect measure of lifetime well-being and provides a suitable focal point for the purpose of shaping public policies that promote well-being. The article concludes that even if our ethical concern revolves around lifetime well-being, it is advisable to employ temporal measures of well-being and concentrate on policies that address temporal well-being.

The final article in this issue, 'Models on trial: antitrust experts face *Daubert* challenges,' by Edoardo Peruzzi, addresses the issue that economists frequently find themselves serving as expert witnesses in antitrust litigation cases. The article identifies the adherence to the *Daubert* standard, which governs the admissibility of expert testimony in U.S. federal courts, as a particular challenge economists encounter when testifying in court cases. The article delves into the interaction between the applicability of economic models and the *Daubert* standard, emphasizing the significance of differentiating between two types of applicability claims. The first type, weak applicability claims, asserts that a model's fundamental assumptions align with those of the subject under scrutiny. The second type, strong applicability claims, goes further by establishing connections between empirical models and specific quantitative aspects of the market. The article employs this twofold distinction to assess recent antitrust cases where expert testimonies, grounded in economic models, were evaluated in light of the *Daubert* standard. The article concludes by drawing normative implications, offering two main insights on how to enhance judges' assessments of model-based arguments: one, make it explicit whether the judge must assess only weak applicability claims or both weak and strong applicability claims; second, include court-appointed experts that help judges in assessing the evidence for the applicability claims and excluding testimonies that are not reliable.

It has been an honor to edit these articles from various areas of philosophy and methodology of economics. We wish to openly acknowledge a challenge we faced when curating this special issue: the gender imbalance of the contributions, which may reflect wider structural diversity issues and power imbalances within the fields of economics, philosophy, and philosophy and methodology of economics. In an attempt to address this issue before the conference and when organizing this special issue, we actively encouraged submissions from female scholars. Although we received positive reactions to these efforts, the outcome remained the same. The lesson we learned from this experience is clear: the lack of diversity *is* a real problem. It reveals itself in the identity of scholars as well as recognized methods and approaches. Be that as it may, change is afoot. There is, for example, an INEM-related initiative organized by Cléo Chassonnery-Zaïgouche, Catherine Herfeld, Magdalena Malecka, and Samuli Reijula that problematizes these challenges. As an outcome of this initiative, a JEM special issue will appear on 'Diversity in Philosophy of Economics and Economic Methodology.' We invite all JEM subscribers and members of INEM to read and engage with this forthcoming special issue.

Notes on contributors

Malte Dold is assistant professor in the Economics Department at Pomona College in California. Previously, he spent two years as a post doctoral fellow at New York University. He holds a master's degree in Philosophy and Economics from the University of Bayreuth, and received his PhD in Economics from the University of Freiburg. His research lies at the intersection of behavioral economics, philosophy of economics, and history of economic thought.

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Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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