

Summaries of Articles

L'analytique et le synthétique en économie, by Philippe Mongin

This article applies to microeconomics a classic distinction of the philosophy of language, i.e., that between analytical and synthetic propositions. A further article will combine it with the epistemological distinction between *a priori* and *a posteriori* knowledge. We start by reconsidering the main definitions of the analytical and the synthetic. We rebut Quine's famous objections against them, and then show how they operate on the theory of Giffen goods and substitute goods. The distinction makes it possible to clarify decisions that microeconomists leave implicit, at the risk of falling into semantic traps. In the particular instance, it reinforces the existing critique of Hicks's definition of substitutes. As an secondary contribution, we show that economic methodology wrongly identifies analytical propositions with tautologies, and synthetic propositions with testable ones.

Keywords: analytical, synthetic, Quine, Giffen goods, substitutes, Hicks, consumer theory.

Journal of Economic Literature classification numbers: B41, B21, B22, D11.

Flexible Technologies and tacit collusion, by Armel Jacques

The aim of this paper is to study the links between flexibility technological choices and tacit collusion in a duopoly. We prove that adoption of flexible technologies improves tacit collusion, when competition is à la Bertrand, but makes it more difficult, when competition is à la Cournot. We characterize the technological equilibria in this repeated game framework. We show that semi-collusion improves the adoption of flexible technologies.

Keywords: technological choices, flexibility, tacit collusion.

Journal of Economic Literature classification numbers: D43, L13, L23.

Usage de l'Internet et investissement en capital social, by Thierry Pénard and Nicolas Poussing

This paper aims to understand the impact of the Internet on social capital. Does the Internet usage influence the investments in social networks? First, we theoretically address this question with a micro-economic model of social capital. Second, thanks to Luxembourg data, we evaluate the determinants of the investments in social capital *via* the Internet. The results show a complementarity between the online investments and the offline investments (measured by the belonging to some associations or formal organizations), except for individuals who have had professional or personal mobility and who tend to intensively use the Internet to invest in social capital.

Keywords: social capital, Internet usage, digital divide.

Journal of Economic Literature classification numbers: L86, Z13, D12.

Precautionary saving, eligibility, and equilibrium unemployment rate, by Sébastien Ménard

In this paper, we examine the role of the size and duration of unemployment insurance on welfare in a dynamic economy with precautionary savings. We consider three instruments of economic policy: the replacement ratio, the duration of UI benefits and the eligibility conditions. We show that an increase of the duration with a reduction of the replacement ratio improve the welfare. Low replacement ratio for first months of unemployment is not costly in terms of welfare, as the eligible unemployed workers have precautionary savings to decumulate.

Keywords: unemployment insurance, precautionary savings, job search.

Journal of Economic Literature classification numbers: J64, J65, J68.