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Independent Individual Decision-Makers in Household Models and the New Home Economics

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This is especially the case with the specifically independent individual models presented in his theory of marriage. Decision-making models assuming independent individual household members in the Becker tradition are reminiscent of models of labor markets in which firms and workers are independent decision-makers. As basis for econometric estimations, such models may be preferable to models imposing the structure of a game or a household welfare function.

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Notes

1. The term “unitary” was coined by Browning et al. ([1994](#)).
2. References to Becker’s unitary model can be found in articles on a diverse range of applications of household economics, ranging from labor supply – such as Chiappori ([1988](#)), Chiappori et al. ([2002](#)), Chau et al. ([2007](#)) – to fertility (including Tiefenthaler [1999](#); Klawon and Tiefenthaler [2001](#)), care work (e.g., Bergeron [2009](#)), child labor and school attendance – such as Emerson and Souza ([2007](#)) – and demand for pets (see Schwarz et al. [2007](#)).
3. The NHE was called “New” to distinguish applications of household economics based on economic analysis from “Home Economics”, an academic discipline

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