Overall, *Cognitive Processes and Economic Behaviour* is a stimulating volume that presents insightful work by leading scholars and belongs to the reading list of economists interested in theoretical, philosophical and psychological foundations of rationality. The book is most useful because it takes the reader to deeper and more comprehensive levels of analysis in its examination of critical facets of economic theory. As such, the book is a good supplementary material for a graduate seminar where students need to develop critical appraisals of topics in rationality (from an economic or psychological perspective) as preparation for advanced theoretical research. However, many chapters lack empirical support, do not address the important role of evidence in theory development, nor do they offer methodologies for acquiring the necessary empirical evidence to support their theoretical claims. For many psychologists – and economists – that could be a serious limitation, especially when we consider that the troubles of economic theory addressed in this book were first brought forward by powerful empirical evidence.

**References**


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The book *Classical Utilitarianism from Hume to Mill* by Frederick Rosen is an exhaustive survey of this topic. It is indispensable reading for anyone who
wants to understand the concept of utility and its uses. It calls utilitarianism the use of a concept of "utility" in general (as in continental European languages nowadays), and not only the social ethical theory of maximizing a sum of individuals' utilities (as in present-day economics and political philosophy). Utilitarianism (in any sense) is not the historically central thought that English and American scholars are used to consider it is. Yet, it has had an important role in the history of the social science and in the present state of parts of it (economics). Hence, knowing the social science requires knowing utilitarianism. Moreover, this work is in fact as much about liberty and justice as it is about utility, in line with the thought of the thinkers it discusses. In addition, it also presents the foundation of utilitarianism that the early utilitarians found in the refined psychology of pleasure of Epicurianism. Now, the relation of utility with psychology, liberty, and justice are precisely the reflections needed by many present-day uses of concepts of utility in order to get out of impasses created by the narrowing in scope and depth from the philosophy of classical utilitarians (such shortcomings are particularly found in normative applications and in issues concerning social interactions). Hence, the importance of Rosen's book is not only for knowing the past of the concept of utility, but also – perhaps most importantly – for building its future.

This book restates, discusses, and defends against common misunderstandings, the arguments first developed by the major thinkers in this utilitarian tradition, such as Hume, Smith, Helvétius, Palay, Bentham, and J. S. Mill. The concept of utility is used at three levels: a classical hedonistic explanation of behaviour; personal normative and "moral" conduct in the tradition of Hellenistic philosophy introduced by Epicureanism; and the social ethical theory of maximizing the sum of utilities introduced by Bentham. The presentation is followed, in a Part II, by four essays. The first three defend utilitarianism against common criticism with arguments derived from the thought of the original authors – the ideas that utilitarianism may require punishing the innocent or sacrificing some to achieve the greatest happiness of others or "of society," and that it may lead to a "tyranny of the majority". The last chapter discusses and situates Isaiah Berlin's "negative liberty", the absence of forceful interference (the qualificative "forceful" is unfortunately bypassed) which is also Bentham's "security", J. S. Mill's "liberty", the classical "civil liberty" or social freedom, or Benjamin Constant's "liberty of the moderns" (the "ancients" were supposed to call liberty political participation), and it ends by a discussion of the worrying possible opposition between liberty and democracy.