

Conrad Heilmann

Erasmus University Rotterdam

Erasmus Institute for Philosophy and Economics (EIPE) and Faculty of Philosophy

“Time Discounting for Intrapersonal Connectedness”

In this paper, I discuss possible connections between intertemporal decision-making and models of multiple selves. In a first step, I develop a simple model of a decision-maker as consisting of time-indexed selves over time. Similarity comparisons between these different temporal selves can be interpreted as a measure of their intrapersonal connectedness. Given certain conditions on the similarity comparisons between selves, different time discounting functions can be derived. In a second step, I show how such a model structurally coheres with the main problems in different theories of personal identity over time, which offers various substantial interpretations of intrapersonal connectedness. Finally, I discuss to what extent time discounting functions thus derived can be used in intertemporal decision-making, and suggest more sophisticated versions of the model to deal with more complicated cases.