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Of course Smith did not limit his vision of economic reality to what could be seen through the metaphysical lens of classical mechanics. But a century later the founders of Neoclassical economics did exactly that and even boasted that they were doing so. Their justification of course – and it was a defensible one at the time – was the enormous success that exclusive devotion to this approach had yielded in physics. In time, especially from the 1930s onwards, undivided allegiance to this determinist-atomistic narrative became, with few exceptions, a basic requirement for making a career in economics.

History, however, has shown that there was a great irony in economics' decision to become zealously fixated on taking this particular approach toward economic reality. In the same decades that Neoclassical economics was being created, physics was moving rapidly away from its insistence upon the determinist-atomistic narrative and towards narrative pluralism.