Online Appendix III
Robustness

Campus effects

In this appendix, we discuss the robustness of the results to subject pools and learning effects. We first turn to a finer analysis of the data by breaking the data down by subject pool.[1] The bottom panels of Tables 3-7 report percentage point differences. To estimate the size and significance of the subject pool effects, we ran probit regressions of the empirical averages on a campus dummy with cluster-robust standard errors to account for the statistical dependence of observations caused by the repeated appearance of the same subjects in our sample. Overall, the data from the experiments at Princeton and the data from the experiments at Berkeley present a qualitatively similar picture so we draw the same conclusions from both subject pools separately as from the pooled analysis.

The differences between the Princeton and Berkeley data are most substantial in the line network (Table 3). In the first decision turn, the position-A subjects are more likely to contribute (0.173) and the position-C subjects are less likely to contribute (-0.320) in the Berkeley data than in the Princeton data (the numbers in brackets are percentage points). These differences are statistically significant at the 1 percent level. There is also a marginally significant difference in the second decision turn, where position-B subjects in the Berkeley sample are less likely to contribute (-0.318) if they observe a contribution by a position-C subject. Finally, in the third decision turn, both position-A and position-B subjects are more likely to contribute (0.153 and 0.275, respectively) if they have not observed a contribution in the Berkeley sample as compared to the Princeton sample.

Both of these findings suggest that in the line network the subjects in the Berkeley sample developed different expectations about the actions of the other subjects in the same network, and this prevents them from coordinating on a salient equilibrium. As we have argued, in the line network, it is not clear which of two equilibria is the more salient, the one in which A and B contribute or the one in which B and C contribute. Perhaps it is not surprising that we do not get a clear answer from both samples. There was also more coordination failure in the Berkeley data – the efficiency (the total contribution is two tokens) of the line network in the Berkeley sample was 0.487 compared to 0.653 the Princeton sample (Table 1). Apart

[1] The tables and figures based on the data from each campus are available for downloading at http://emlab.berkeley.edu/~kariv/CGKP_I_A3_F1.pdf.

from the differences in the line network, we observe the same regularities in both subject pools, which gives us some confidence that our conclusions are robust.

When we look at the other networks, only a few quantitative differences in contribution rates are significant and none change the main findings from the full analysis of the pooled data. One of these quantitative differences is that the isolated subjects in the one-link (Table 5) and pair (Table 7) networks are more likely to contribute in the Berkeley data than in the Princeton data. In the empty network, where all subjects are uninformed and unobserved, the contribution rate is higher, though not significantly so, in the Princeton data than in the Berkeley data. So it is in the asymmetric situations — where salience would seem to suggest that isolated subjects, who cannot coordinate with the other subjects, should not contribute — that the Berkeley subjects are more likely to contribute. In fact, the contribution rates of the isolated Berkeley subjects in the one-link and the pair networks are similar to the contribution rates of subjects in the empty network (Table 2). This could suggest altruistic, non-strategic behavior on the part of the Berkeley subjects though, given the large number of equilibria, there may be other equally plausible explanations.

In the one-link network, there are also significant differences between the Berkeley and Princeton data in the behavior of the subjects in positions A and B: a lower contribution rate (-0.311) by position-A subjects at the second decision turn after observing a contribution and a lower contribution rate (-0.247) by position-B subjects at the third decision turn. These lower rates may be a response to the higher contributions by subjects in position C. In the pair network, we observe two significant differences: the contribution rates of subjects in positions A and B in the Berkeley sample are lower at the second and third decision turns (-0.211 and -0.293, respectively) after observing a contribution. Again, this could be a response to the higher contributions of the isolated subjects at position C. These differences are all significant at the 5 percent level.

Finally, in the star-out network (Table 4) we observe a few differences in contribution rates, but the differences are quantitatively small. The Berkeley subjects in position A are slightly more likely to contribute (0.107) in the first decision turn. In a few cases the Berkeley subjects in position A contributed a token when the public good had already been provided. These contributions appear to be simple mistakes (the "trembling hand"). So both sets of data seem to support our conclusions about salience and equilibrium in the star-out network. Finally, in the star-in network (Table 6), there are no significant differences between the Berkeley data and the Princeton data.

Learning effects

To examine robustness to learning, we conducted a parallel analysis of the data using only the last 15 rounds of each session.[2] The findings are very similar to the 25-round pooled data set, with some small improvements in coordination rates over time. We also investigated behavior at the level of the individual subject. Not surprisingly, there is some heterogeneity across subjects. Nevertheless, the choices made by most of our subjects reflect clearly classifiable strategies which are stable across decision-rounds. As far as we could tell, "session effects" were caused by a few subjects in the session.

[2] The tables and figures based on the last 15 rounds of observations are available for downloading at http://emlab.berkeley.edu/~kariv/CGKP_I_A3_F2.pdf.