

Social Networks

POLI 100F

Course Plan

- ▶ 8/1 – Course introduction, student polls
- ▶ 8/3 – Network analysis: basics
- ▶ 8/8 – Network analysis: static networks
- ▶ 8/10 – Network analysis: dynamic networks
- ▶ 8/15 – Social norms: evolution
- ▶ 8/17 – Social norms: diffusion
- ▶ **8/22 – Social norms: planned change**
- ▶ 8/24 – Political networks
- ▶ 8/29 – Political networks
- ▶ 8/31 – Network theory, review

Evaluation

- ▶ Here's how your **final grade** will be calculated:
- ▶ Problem Set #1 - 30% [due August 12 @ 11:59pm]
- ▶ Problem Set #2 - 30% [due August 19 @ 11:59pm]
- ▶ **Research proposal - 40% [due September 2 @ 11:59pm; no final exam]**

- ▶ **Attendance** at lecture is not required, but it is recommended because you'll have the opportunity to ask questions. All lectures will be **recorded** and posted on the corresponding Canvas page.

Office hours

- ▶ I'll be holding **office hours** on Wednesdays from 9-11 am. You can sign up at the course Canvas page (“Start Here”).
 - ▶ If that time's inconvenient or if all the slots are full, we can set something up by appointment. Message me on Canvas or email me at mdraper@ucsd.edu.

Cristina Bicchieri - The Rules We Live By

- ▶ What is a norm? – “A norm can be formal or informal, personal or collective, descriptive of what most people do, or prescriptive of behavior.”
 - ▶ Conventions (coordination game)
 - ▶ Descriptive norms (coordination game)
 - ▶ Social norms (mixed motive game)

Cristina Bicchieri - The Rules We Live By

- ▶ “Given the right kind of expectations, people will have conditional preferences for obeying a norm, meaning that preferences will be conditional on having expectations about other people's conformity. Such expectations and preferences will result in collective behaviors that further confirm the existence of the norm.”
- ▶ Social norm – an informal rule supported (if at all) by informal social sanctions.
 - ▶ Distinct from legal regulation (external sanctions) and moral regulation (internal sanctions).

Cristina Bicchieri - The Rules We Live By

- ▶ “The games that social norms solve are called mixed-motive games. Such mixed-motive games are not games of coordination to start with, but **social norms...transform mixed-motive games into coordination ones**. This transformation, however, hinges on each individual expecting enough other people to follow the norm, too. If this expectation is violated, an individual will revert to playing the original game and to behaving 'selfishly.'”

Cristina Bicchieri - The Rules We Live By

- ▶ How do we choose our behavior?
 - ▶ Rational deliberation (costly, time-consuming) [The “deliberational” route].
 - ▶ Behavioral rules (habits, roles, norms) [The “heuristic” route]
- ▶ Social norms can be “cued” by particular situations, “and hence manipulated.”
 - ▶ “...we may be able to induce pro-social behavior and maintain social order at low cost.”
 - ▶ “...it may be possible to structure the environment in a way that produces desirable behavior.”

Cristina Bicchieri - The Rules We Live By

- ▶ Moral norms seem to be different from social norms in that their enforcement is entirely internal. By **internalizing** the norm, we reduce the cognitive load of compliance.
 - ▶ “what makes something a social or a moral norm is our attitude toward it.”
- ▶ “...public support might be voiced for a norm that is seldom adhered to in private.”

Cristina Bicchieri - The Rules We Live By

- ▶ “By their very nature, moral norms demand...an unconditional commitment.”
- ▶ “Under normal conditions, expectations of other people’s conformity to a moral rule are not a good *reason* to obey it. Nor is it a good reason that others expect me to follow a moral rule. If I find their expectation reasonable, it is because I find the moral norm reasonable; so the reason to obey it must reside in the norm itself...”
- ▶ “What distinguishes norms of justice from other social norms is that many of us would have a conditional preference for abiding by such norms because we acknowledge that the normative expectations...are *legitimate*, and should therefore be satisfied.”

Cristina Bicchieri - The Rules We Live By

- ▶ “...**public endorsement** of the norm may coexist with considerable **private deviance**.”
- ▶ “...following a social norm may be **contrary to self-interest**, especially if we define it in purely material terms.”
- ▶ “...it is plausible that one is guided by benevolence (or even altruism) in interacting with family and friends, but when interacting with strangers...[one is] guided by social norms.”

Robert Cialdini – Descriptive Norms as Underappreciated Sources of Social Control

- ▶ “[Recent] findings indicate that adherence to insurance regulations was much better predicted by features of: (1) the belief systems of the affected individuals; and (2) the perceived belief systems of these individuals’ friends and family than by the enforcement activities of a regulatory agency.”
- ▶ “although regulatory enforcement efforts can make a difference in compliance with the rules, the difference is often dwarfed by the influence of personal and social network factors. This is the case for a pair of reasons. First, strong formal control efforts tend to produce feelings of resentment and reactance...leading to attempts to evade the agency’s strictures. Second, when formal regulatory controls are strong, individuals come to believe that, if it is necessary to invoke stringent regulations, those regulations must exist in opposition to the preferences that “people like me” hold. These psychological mechanisms may account for the finding that, after government officials publicly increase the penalties for tax cheating, tax fraud goes up not down...”

Robert Cialdini – Descriptive Norms as Underappreciated Sources of Social Control

- ▶ [The recent] study clearly shows that, besides the influence of one's personal beliefs about complying with the law...the decision to comply was also significantly influenced by the expected evaluative reactions of friends and family (what they termed "Social Control"). This anticipated approval/disapproval factor has a more specific label in the social influence literature; it is called the injunctive social norm...
- ▶ **Injunctive social norms** refer, not to one's own view of what constitutes appropriate conduct but to one's perception of what others believe to be appropriate conduct. The norms are said to direct action by promising informal sanctions (mostly in the form of interpersonal approval/disapproval) for what is deemed by these others to be morally relevant behavior. Considerable research indicates that such moral evaluation strongly influences compliance decisions, even when the imagined others are not friends and family but are generalized society members; consequently, expectations regarding what most others approve/disapprove can be quite impactful...

Robert Cialdini – Descriptive Norms as Underappreciated Sources of Social Control

- ▶ In addition to perceptions of what most others approve (the injunctive social norm), there is a second social normative type (the descriptive social norm) that also directs behavior forcefully. **Descriptive social norms** refer to one's perception of what most others actually do. Although one's perception of what most others approve and of what most others actually do in any given situation are often related, they are conceptually and motivationally separate. Whereas injunctive social norms mobilize people into action via social evaluation, descriptive social norms move them to act via social information—in particular, social information about what is likely to be adaptive and effective conduct in the setting. Descriptive social norms send the message “If a lot of people are doing this, it's probably a wise thing to do,” which serves to initiate norm-congruent behavior.

As part of a large scale survey of residential energy users, we inquired into respondents' views of their reasons for conserving energy at home as well as reports of their actual residential energy saving activities such as installing energy efficient appliances and light bulbs, adjusting thermostats, and turning off lights. When respondents were asked to rate the importance to them of several reasons for energy conservation—because it will help save the environments, because it will benefit society, because it will save me money, or because other people are doing it—they rated these motivations in the order just listed, with the actions of others (the descriptive social norm, Cialdini et al., 1990) clearly in last place. However, when we examined the relationship between participants' beliefs in these reasons and their stated attempts to save energy, we found the reverse: The belief that others were conserving correlated twice as highly with reported energy saving efforts than did any of the reasons that had been rated as more important personal motivators.

To assure that our findings weren't the result of the correlational nature of the survey methodology, a follow-up study employed an experimental design. Residents of a mid-size California community received persuasive appeals on door-hangers placed on their doorknobs once a week for four consecutive weeks. The appeals emphasized to residents that energy conservation efforts: (1) would help the environment; or (2) would benefit society; or (3) would save them money; or (4) were common (normative) in their neighborhood. Interviews with participants revealed that those who received the normative appeals rated them as least likely to motivate their conservation behavior. Yet, when we examined actual energy usage (by recording participants' electricity meter readings), the normative appeal proved most helpful, resulting in significantly more conservation than any of the other appeals (Schultz et al., in press).

The upshot of these studies is plain. When it comes to estimating the causes of their conduct, people seem especially blind to the large relative role of descriptive norms. They don't just fail to get this relative role right; they tend to get it precisely wrong.

Robert Cialdini – Descriptive Norms as Underappreciated Sources of Social Control

What would be the implications of the Petrified Forest and hotel recycling studies for government officials with the responsibility of reducing insurance regulation noncompliance in the situation examined by Böckenholt and van der Heijden? The first would be to avoid sending the message that such noncompliance is rampant. A second would be to determine, perhaps by using a mixture-IRR approach, the true percentage of noncompliance with insurance regulations. If that percentage proved to be significantly less than 50% (as appears to be the case in the Böckenholt and van der Heijden data wherein only 29% of the sample reported any compliance violations), the officials could honestly send the message in communication campaigns that the majority of the insured population adheres to the rules; moreover, they could add the injunctive message that “If even a few persons violate the trust between the agency and the insured, this dishonesty can lead to greater surveillance and regulatory costs that will fall unfairly on the entire group.” However, if among some other population sample the noncompliance percentage proved to be above 50%, then only the injunctive portion of the message should be sent to that population.

In sum, when communicating with the public regarding rule violation, it is important for public service communicators to avoid trying to reduce the incidence of the problem by describing it as regrettably frequent. Often, the violation is not widespread at all. It only comes to seem that way by virtue of a vivid and impassioned presentation of the problem. Instead, it would be better to honestly inform the audience of the harm resulting from even a small amount of the undesirable conduct. Furthermore, when most people are behaving responsibly, public service communicators would be remiss if they failed to publicize that fact, as the information should both validate and stimulate the desired action.

Robert Cialdini – Descriptive Norms as Underappreciated Sources of Social Control

Dan Sperber – The Epidemiology of Beliefs

- ▶ “I would like to bring together two sets of speculations: anthropological speculations on cultural representations and psychological speculations on the cognitive organization of beliefs, and to put forward, on the basis of these speculations, fragments of a possible answer to the question: **how do beliefs become cultural?**”
- ▶ “[W]e should distinguish two kinds of representations: internal, **or mental representations** - for example, memories, which are patterns in the brain and which represent something for .the owner of that brain - and external, or **public representations** - for example, utterances, which are material phenomena in the environment of people and which represent something for people who perceive and interpret them.”

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- ▶ “public representations have meaning only through being associated with mental representations.”
- ▶ “Similarity across people makes it possible to abstract from individual differences and to describe 'the language' or 'the culture' of a community, 'the meaning' of a public representation, or to talk of, say, 'the belief' that witches ride on broomsticks as a single representation, independently of its public expressions or mental instantiations. What is then described is an **abstraction.**”
- ▶ “When we talk of cultural representations - beliefs in witches, rules for the service of wines, the common law, or Marxist ideology - we refer to representations which are widely shared in a human group. To explain cultural representations, then, is to explain why some representations are widely shared.”

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- ▶ “An explanation of cultural representations, therefore, should come as part of a general explanation of the distribution of representations among humans - as part, that is, of an **epidemiology of representations.**”
- ▶ “Whatever their differences and their merits, past approaches share a crucial defect: they take the basic process of cultural transmission to be one of replication, and consider alterations in transmission as accidents.”
- ▶ “A process of communication is basically one of **transformation**. The degree of transformation may vary between two extremes: duplication and total loss of information. Only those representations which are repeatedly communicated and minimally transformed in the process will end up belonging to the culture.”

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- ▶ “Many of the propositions to which we are disposed to assent are **not represented at all in our mind** - a well-known point - and many of the propositions we are disposed not only to assent to but also to express and, in some cases, to act in accordance with are not, or not simply, stored in a data base or belief box - a more controversial point.”
- ▶ Ex: “You have long believed that there are more pink flamingos on Earth than on the Moon, but no mental representation of yours had, until now, described that state of affairs. We may well have an infinity of such unrepresented beliefs, and a large proportion of these are widely shared...”

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- ▶ ‘It is reasonable, however, to assume that what makes them unrepresented beliefs is that they are inferable from other beliefs which *are* mentally represented.’
- ▶ “...hooking the belief box up to an inferential device introduces a factor of rationality in the construction of beliefs... you get a tendency to enlarge areas of consistency.”
- ▶ Two kinds of beliefs: “**Intuitive beliefs**...paint a kind of common-sense picture of the world. Their limits are those of common sense: they are fairly superficial, more descriptive than explanatory, and rather rigidly held.”
- ▶ ...**reflective beliefs** do not form a well-defined category. What they have in common is their mode of occurrence: they come embedded in intuitive beliefs (or, since there can be multiple embeddings, in other reflective beliefs).

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- ▶ “Well-understood reflective beliefs, such as the scientific beliefs of scientists, include an explicit account of rational grounds to hold them.”
- ▶ “Half-understood or mysterious reflective beliefs are much more frequent and culturally important than scientific ones. Because they are only half-understood and therefore open to reinterpretation, their consistency or inconsistency with other beliefs, intuitive or reflective, is never self-evident, and does not provide a robust criterion for acceptance or rejection. Their content, because of its **indeterminacy**, cannot be sufficiently evidenced or argued for to warrant their rational acceptance. But that does not make these beliefs irrational: they are rationally held if there are rational grounds to trust the source of the belief (e.g. the parent, the teacher, or the scientist).”

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- ▶ “[So] there are two classes of beliefs and they achieve rationality in different ways. Intuitive beliefs owe their rationality to essentially innate, hence universal perceptual and inferential mechanisms; as a result, they do not vary dramatically, and are essentially mutually consistent or reconcilable across cultures. Those beliefs which vary across cultures to the extent of seeming irrational from another culture's point of view are typically reflective beliefs with a content that is partly mysterious to the believers themselves. Such beliefs are rationally held, not in virtue of their content but in virtue of their source.”

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- ▶ “Whereas widespread intuitive beliefs owe their distribution both to common perceptual experiences and to communication, widespread reflective beliefs owe theirs almost exclusively to communication. The distribution of reflective beliefs takes place, so to speak, in the open: reflective beliefs are not only consciously held; they are also often deliberately spread.”

Precisely because the distribution of reflective beliefs is a highly visible social process, it should be obvious that different types of reflective beliefs reach a cultural level of distribution in very different ways. To illustrate this, let us consider very briefly three examples: a myth in a non-literate society, the belief that all men are born equal, and Gödel's proof.

A myth is an orally transmitted story which is taken to represent actual events, including 'supernatural' events incompatible with intuitive beliefs. Therefore, for a myth to be accepted without inconsistency, it has to be insulated from intuitive beliefs: that is, held as a reflective belief. A myth is a cultural representation; this means that the story is told (given public versions) often enough to cause a large enough proportion of a human group to know it (have mental versions of it). For this, two conditions must be met. First the story must be easily enough and accurately enough remembered on the basis of oral inputs alone. Some themes and some narrative structures seem in this respect to do much better cross-culturally than others. The changing cultural background affects memorability, too, so that the content of a myth tends to drift over time so as to maintain maximal memorability.

Second, there must be enough incentives to actually recall and tell the story on enough occasions to cause it to be transmitted. These incentives may be institutional (e.g. ritual occasions where telling the story is mandatory); but the surest incentive comes from the attractiveness of the story for the audience and the success the story-teller can therefore expect. Interestingly, though not too surprisingly, the very same themes and structures which help one remember a story seem to make it particularly attractive.

If the psychological conditions of memorability and attractiveness are met, the story is likely to be well distributed; but in order for it to be a myth, rather than, say, a mere tale recognized and enjoyed as

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such, it must be given credence. What rational grounds do people have to accept such a story as true? Their confidence in those who tell it to them: typically, their confidence in elders whom they have many good reasons to trust and who themselves claim no other authority than that derived from *their* elders. The originator of the chain might be a religious innovator who claimed divine authority for a distinctly different version of older myths. Reference to elders provides a self-perpetuating authority structure for a story which already has a self-perpetuating transmission structure. Still, the authority structure is more fragile than the transmission structure, and many myths lose their credibility, though neither their memorability nor their attractiveness, and end up as tales.

The belief that all men are born equal is a typically reflective belief: it is not produced by perception or by unconscious inference from perception. Rather, except for a few philosophers who originated the belief, all those who have held it came to it through communication. Such a belief does not put any significant weight on memory, but it does present a challenge for understanding, and indeed it is understood differently by different people. As already suggested, the fact that it lends itself to several interpretations probably contributed to its cultural success.

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The human cognitive organization is such that we cannot understand such a belief and not hold it. To some significant extent, and with obvious qualifications, this is the case with all successful theories in the modern natural sciences. Their cognitive robustness compensates, so to speak, for their abstruseness in explaining their cultural success. The fact that successful scientific theories impose themselves on most of those who understand them is manifest to people who don't understand them. This leads, quite rationally, to lay persons believing that these theories are true and expressing as beliefs whatever they can quote or paraphrase from them. Thus Gödel's proof, and scientific theories generally, become cultural beliefs of a different tenor, accepted on different grounds by the scientists themselves and by the community at large.

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- ▶ “We might contrast our three examples in the following way, The distribution of a myth is determined strongly by cognitive factors, and weakly by ecological factors; the distribution of political beliefs is determined weakly by cognitive factors, and strongly by ecological factors; and the distribution of scientific belief is determined strongly by both cognitive and ecological factors.”

Dan Sperber – Selection and Attraction in Cultural Evolution

- ▶ “Suppose we set ourselves the goal of developing mechanistic and naturalistic causal explanations of cultural phenomena...Of particular interest are causal chains from mental representations to public productions to mental representations and so on, where the causal descendants of a representation resemble it in content. The smallest ordinary such causal chain is an act of successful communication.”
- ▶ “Typically, the public productions that are involved in communication are **public representations** such as linguistic utterances. Public representations are artefacts the function of which is to ensure a similarity of content between one of their mental causes in the communicator and one of their mental effects in the audience.”

Dan Sperber – Selection and Attraction in Cultural Evolution

- ▶ “Communication is one of the two main mechanisms of transmission, imitation being the other. Transmission is a process that may be intentional or unintentional, co-operative or non-co-operative, and which brings about a similarity of content between a mental representation in one individual and its causal descendant in another individual.”

Dan Sperber – Selection and Attraction in Cultural Evolution

- ▶ “Most mental representations are never transmitted. Most transmissions are a one-time local affair. However, it may happen that the recipient of an act of transmission becomes a transmitter in turn, and the next recipient also, and so on, thus producing a long chain of transmission and a strain of mental representations (together with public representations in cases of communication) linked both causally and by similarity of content.”
- ▶ “Fast-moving rumors and slow-moving traditions are paradigmatic examples of such **cultural causal chains**.”

Dan Sperber – Selection and Attraction in Cultural Evolution

- ▶ “...there is a severe flaw in attempting to develop a naturalistic explanation of cultural evolution on the basis of the Darwinian model of selection...My two basic points over the years, and in preceding chapters of his book, have been (1) that representations don't in general replicate in the process of transmission, they transform; and (2) that they transform as a result of a constructive cognitive process. Replication, when it truly occurs, is best seen as a limiting case of zero transformation.”

Dan Sperber – Selection and Attraction in Cultural Evolution

- ▶ “the number of artefactual replicas of a would-be cultural item is only a poor, indirect indicator of its genuine cultural success. Waste-paper baskets and their electronic counterparts are filled with massively replicated but unread junk, while some scientific articles read by only a few specialists have changed our cultural world. The cultural importance of a public production is to be measured not by the number of copies in the environment but by their impact on people's minds.”

Dan Sperber – Selection and Attraction in Cultural Evolution

- ▶ “In general, if you are serious in describing bits of culture - individual texts, pots, songs or individual abilities to produce them - as replications of earlier bits, then you should be willing to ask about any given token cultural item: of which previous token is it a direct replica? In most cases, however, you will be forced to conclude that each token is a replica not of one parent token, nor (as in sexual reproduction) of two parent tokens, nor of any fixed number of parent tokens, but of an indefinite number of tokens some of which have played a much greater 'parental' role than others. You might want, then, to envisage that this process of synthetic replication of a variable number of models is carried out **by a natural equivalent of a morphing programme...**”

Dan Sperber – Selection and Attraction in Cultural Evolution

- ▶ “Just as in a morphing programme, different inputs can be given different weights: you can have your cat-man more like a cat or more like a man, and Jill's skill and her pots may be more like Joan's than like Jane's, though still owing to both Joan's and Jane's skills and pots. The model that comes to mind now is less immediately reminiscent of the Darwinian notion of selection than of the notion of **'influence'** much used in the history of ideas and in social psychology. In the case of selection, genes either succeed or fail to replicate, and sexual organisms either succeed or fail to contribute half 'the genes of a new organism. Thus relationships of descent strictly 'determine genic similarity (ignoring mutations). Influence, by contrast, is a matter of degree.”

Dan Sperber – Selection and Attraction in Cultural Evolution

- ▶ “there is much greater slack between descent and similarity in the case of cultural transmission than there is in the biological case. Most cultural descendants are transformations, not replicas. Transformation implies resemblance: the smaller the degree of transformation, the greater the degree of resemblance. But resemblance among cultural items is greater than one would be led to expect by observing actual degrees of transformation in cultural transmission. Resemblance among cultural items is to be explained to some important extent by the fact that transformations tend to be biased in the direction of attractor positions in the space of possibilities.”

Dan Sperber – Selection and Attraction in Cultural Evolution

- ▶ “To say that there is an attractor is just to say that, in a given space of possibilities, transformation probabilities form a certain pattern: they tend to be biased so as to favour transformations in the direction of some specific point, and therefore cluster at and around that point.”
- ▶ “Once public productions massively converge towards some cultural attractor, they may foster the emergence of nearby competing attractors. This is illustrated in a dramatic way by the rapid turnover of fashions, which quickly lose their power because of their very success.”

Dan Sperber – Selection and Attraction in Cultural Evolution

- ▶ “The neo-Darwinian model and the ideas of replication and selection seemed to offer an explanation of the existence and evolution of relatively stable cultural contents. How come, if replication is not the norm, that among all the mental representations and public productions that inhabit a human population and its common environment, it is so easy to discern stable cultural types, such as common views on Bill Clinton, tellings of 'Little Red Riding Hood', English utterances, and also handshakes, funerals and pick-up trucks?”

Dan Sperber – Selection and Attraction in Cultural Evolution

- ▶ “For two reasons: first, because, through interpretative mechanisms the mastery of which is part of our social competence, we tend to exaggerate the similarity of cultural tokens and the distinctiveness of types; and second, because, in forming mental representations and public productions, to some extent all humans, and to a greater extent all members of the same population at anyone time, are attracted in the same directions.”

Gerry Mackie - Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account

- ▶ “Painful and dangerous footbinding afflicted most Chinese women for a thousand years, and reform-minded Chinese women at one time “agreed that footbinding was of no use, but could only be given up by degrees”
- ▶ “Yet footbinding ended, for the most part, in a single generation...the end of footbinding was a **convention shift**... [it] spread by imitation until people were ashamed not to practice it”

Gerry Mackie - Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account

- ▶ “The practice effloresced along three dimensions over several centuries.
- ▶ “First, it spread from the imperial palace, to court circles, to the larger upper classes, and then to the middle and lower classes; eventually the higher the social status, the smaller the foot.”
- ▶ “Second, it became more exaggerated over time; a practice supposedly originating among dancers eventually made dance a forgotten art.”
- ▶ “Third, it radiated from the imperial capitals to the rest of the empire.”
 - ▶ “exceptions only among the lowest classes, wherever woman's work was needed in the field or workshop”
- ▶ “The Manchu conquerors opposed footbinding, but their efforts to abolish it...failed entirely, despite intimidating penalties.”

Gerry Mackie - Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account

- ▶ “The first anti-footbinding societies propagandized the disadvantages of footbinding in Chinese cultural terms, promoted pledge associations, and subtly conveyed international disapproval of the custom.”
- ▶ “Footbinding started to end...among the upper strata of the larger cities. Although there was local variability in onset of cessation, available evidence is that whenever binding did end, it ended rapidly.”
- ▶ “The Chinese offered various explanations for footbinding. It was said to distinguish the Chinese from the invading Mongols and other barbarians and to enhance the difference between men and women. It was believed to promote good health and fertility (Blake 1994:686).”

Gerry Mackie - Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account

- ▶ “[FGM] is not only nearly universal and persistent where practiced, but is expanding its territory. It is spreading from Arabized northern Sudan further into indigenously populated areas of southern and western Sudan; as Arabized traders enter or as indigenes urbanize, the less advantaged adopt infibulation to make their daughters more marriageable to the high-status outsiders.”
 - ▶ “...beginning among educated urban dwellers and spreading to the uneducated in the villages.”
- ▶ “The most common explanation given by participants is that infibulation is required for marriage and honor.”

Gerry Mackie - Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account

- ▶ “How can the same mechanism explain both stability and change?”
- ▶ “If people are stuck at [an] inferior equilibrium...they may lack a concerted way to move to [a] superior equilibrium.”
- ▶ “Convention is self-enforcing: Any one person driving to the right to demonstrate its advantages would end up dead.”

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | -1 |

(A) Single Equilibrium

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | 2 |

(B) Coordination:
Indifferent Equilibria

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | 1 |

(C) Coordination:
Ranked Equilibria

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | 1 |

(D) Coordination:
Conflicting Equilibria

Gerry Mackie - Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account

- ▶ “Figure 1D...represents a coordination problem, but now with a bargaining aspect. Here, Column-Chooser does best at R1C1, while Row-Chooser does best at R2C2, and each likes either of these coordination equilibria better than miscoordination at R1C2 or R2C1.”

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | -1 |

(A) Single Equilibrium

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | 2 |

(B) Coordination:
Indifferent Equilibria

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | 1 |

(C) Coordination:
Ranked Equilibria

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | 1 |

(D) Coordination:
Conflicting Equilibria

Gerry Mackie - Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account

- ▶ “Singling out a coordination equilibrium is a matter of **concordant mutual expectations**. If there are two of us and we can talk, then we can each promise to choose either right or left, and the promise is self-enforcing. If there are hundreds of us, however, express agreement is difficult.”
- ▶ “there is no logical solution to the tacit coordination problem; rather, solutions are suggested by their **psychological salience**. The salient choice is not uniquely good, just noticeably unique.”

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | -1 |

(A) Single Equilibrium

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | 2 |

(B) Coordination:
Indifferent Equilibria

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | 1 |

(C) Coordination:
Ranked Equilibria

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | 1 |

(D) Coordination:
Conflicting Equilibria

Gerry Mackie - Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account

- ▶ “The women who practice infibulation are caught in a belief trap. The Bambara of Mali believe that the clitoris will kill a man if it comes in contact with the penis during inter- course. In Nigeria, some groups believe that a baby will die if its head touches the clitoris during delivery (Lightfoot-Klein 1989:38-9).”
- ▶ “I call these **self-enforcing beliefs**: a belief that cannot be revised because the believed costs of testing the belief are too high...the cost of testing pertinent beliefs is prohibitive to any one individual.” [compare Sperber]

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | -1 |

(A) Single Equilibrium

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | 2 |

(B) Coordination:
Indifferent Equilibria

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | 1 |

(C) Coordination:
Ranked Equilibria

| | C1 | C2 |
|----|----|----|
| R1 | 2 | 0 |
| R2 | 0 | 2 |

(D) Coordination:
Conflicting Equilibria

Gerry Mackie - Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account

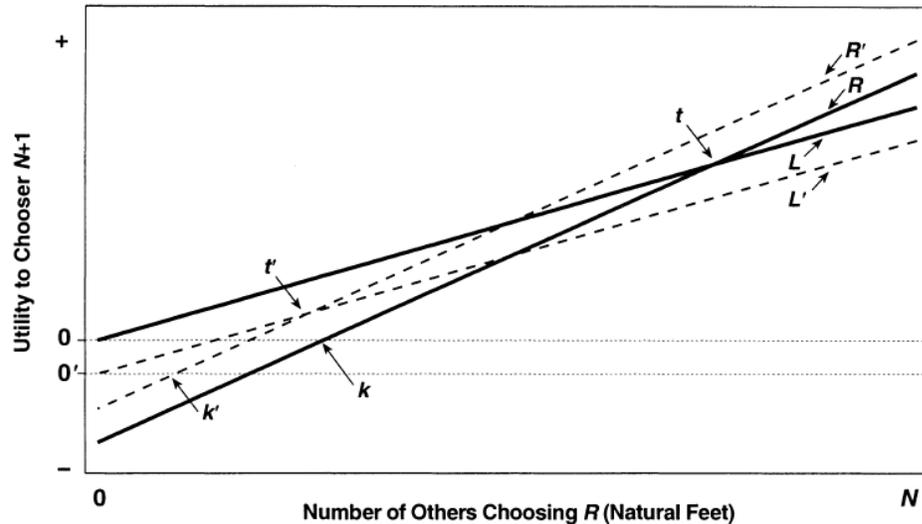


Figure 2. Schelling Coordination Diagram for Chinese Footbinding

Note: L = utility of choice resulting in an inferior equilibrium (footbinding); R = utility of choice resulting in a superior equilibrium (natural feet); L' = utility of footbinding after hearing of its disadvantages; R' = utility of natural feet after hearing of its advantages; k = minimum number of people required to be better off together choosing natural feet; k' = new smaller k resulting from a successful propaganda campaign; t = Point at which marriage market tips to either footbinding or to natural feet; t' = new tipping point resulting from a successful propaganda campaign; 0 = arbitrary zero value of inferior equilibrium (footbinding); $0'$ = arbitrary zero value of footbinding after hearing of its disadvantage.

- ▶ “The work of the antifootbinding reformers had three aspects (Drucker 1981; Levy 1966: 74-88). First, they carried out a modern education campaign, which explained that the rest of the world did not bind women's feet...”
- ▶ “Second, their education campaign explained the advantages of natural feet and the disadvantages of bound feet.”
- ▶ “Third, they formed natural-foot societies, whose members pledged not to bind their daughters' feet nor to let their sons marry women with bound feet. These three tactics are appropriate for escaping an inferior convention.”

Gerry Mackie - Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account

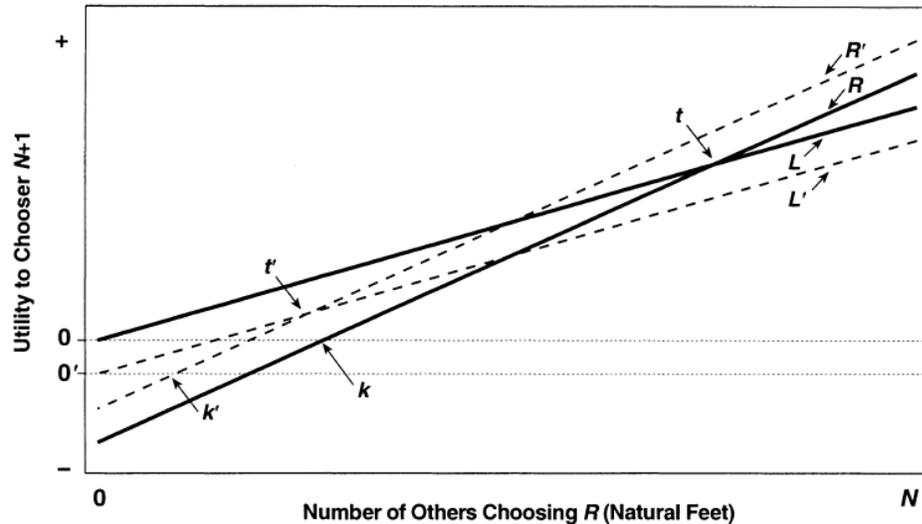


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- ▶ “if k or more of us can organize into an antfootbinding association, pledging not to footbind daughters nor let sons marry footbound women, we are better off; beyond this threshold, the advantages of natural feet outweigh the disadvantages of a smaller mate-selection pool.”
- ▶ “The initial k formations were enforced by public pledge within church fellowships, and the proven technique then was borrowed and spread by nonchurch reformers. Reneging on a public pledge is damaging to family honor, and any temptation to renege disappears upon reaching k : Getting to k is getting over the hump.”

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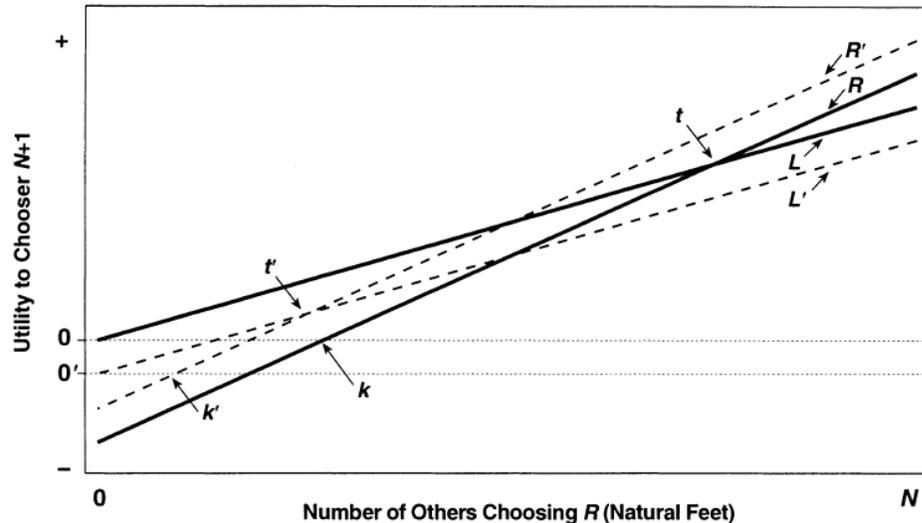


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- ▶ “First, k organizes; second, k propagandizes; third, if the propaganda is successful the tipping point t' becomes less than the k already organized; thus, fourth, the entire marriage market tips to the superior equilibrium.”

Gerry Mackie - Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account

- ▶ “An analogy may ease comprehension of the model. For originating circumstances, imagine a seated audience where the tallest people have grabbed the front row. The view of the tallest...in the front row is obscured by being too close to the elevated stage, so they stand (footbind). Thus the second, third, and all the rest of the rows must stand to regain their views of the stage.”
- ▶ “The front row is better off, but everyone else is worse off because their view is no better than before, but now they incur the cost of standing...[I]magine that over time the tallest drift away from the audience and that the ease of sitting (natural feet) is forgotten. Standing is now entrenched as the convention.”

Gerry Mackie - Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account

- ▶ “Visitors tell people that elsewhere audiences sit. People begin to think that sitting might be better, but only if enough other people sit; any one person sitting alone gets no view of the stage (reproductive death). If a column (k) can be organized to sit, its members suffer a poor view of the stage but are compensated by the ease of sitting. The members of k then have two incentives, to recruit the contiguous columns and to inform everyone that sitting is better and that standing is worse than people thought.”

Gerry Mackie - Social Norms Change, Believing Makes It So

- ▶ Types of fact: **brute** (does not depend on us) and **institutional** (depends on us).
- ▶ **Reference group**: the group of people who create an institutional fact.
 - ▶ Social norms originate in capacities of joint attention (Tomasello) in a local setting.
- ▶ “A social norm is a rule constructed from an individual’s beliefs and evaluations: her beliefs about what others do (**descriptive norm**), her beliefs about what others dis/approve of (**injunctive norm**), and her evaluation about whether what certain others do and dis/approve of is enough reason for her to comply (**reference group**).”
- ▶ “Social norms can be quite stable and even operate behind people’s backs for generations, because they are **locked in by such interdependence.**”

Gerry Mackie - Social Norms Change, Believing Makes It So

- ▶ Because interdependent action requires coordination of beliefs, social norms often (usually) seem objective – even though we create them.
 - ▶ A suitable social norm can become harmful when circumstances change.
 - ▶ “An important way to change a social norm is for those in favor of change to **join together in a new reference group.**” Example: Tostan community empowerment program (CEP).

Gerry Mackie - Social Norms Change, Believing Makes It So

- ▶ Three kinds of belief: beliefs can be about:
 - ▶ The **nonsocial environment**, such as that a tree exists, or how to grow the best millet, or what causes disease;
 - ▶ The **social environment**, such as what one believes about the minds of others, including social norms; and
 - ▶ The **self**, such as what one believes about one's own mind, one's own beliefs, desires, intentions, and one's conception of oneself.
- ▶ Beliefs are formed in one of three ways:
 - ▶ Personal experience, reflection, testimony (social proof)

Gerry Mackie - Social Norms Change, Believing Makes It So

- ▶ “A **harmful social practice** can be caused, in whole or in part, by harmful false beliefs about the nonsocial world.”
- ▶ **Social proof**: observing similarly-situated peers adopting a new approach to the norm.
 - ▶ “The observed actions of a local minority were more credible to the larger community than the messages of an external change agent.”

Gerry Mackie - Social Norms Change, Believing Makes It So

- ▶ **Coordinated Abandonment or Adoption:** “enough people must believe that enough people are changing” and “seeing is believing.”
 - ▶ “What works is **redundantly** to make visible repeatedly, at many levels and in many ways, that enough people see that enough people are changing.” [What’s the role of common knowledge?]
- ▶ “A harmful social practice is held in place by a web of beliefs, evaluations, and actions within the individual and within her group. These cultural models organize one’s knowledge about objects and events, other people, and oneself.”

Gerry Mackie - Social Norms Change, Believing Makes It So

- ▶ “[R]esearchers were surprised to discover that changes in individuals’ and communities’ **conceptions of themselves** were also essential to beneficial change.”
 - ▶ Adopting new roles: “It’s easier to act your way into a new way of thinking, than to think your way into a new way of acting.”
- ▶ “Policy should rely first on moral regulation, next on social regulation, and only as a last resort on legal regulation. In response to a particular harm, legitimate and effective regulation requires that the applicable moral, social, and legal norms be in harmony rather than discord.”
 - ▶ Example: *Cultura Ciudadana* (Citizenship Culture) in Bogotá.

Gerry Mackie - Social Norms Change, Believing Makes It So

- ▶ “the experience of “**seeing is believing**” was essential to the change process...The visibility of beneficial changes had several effects.
- ▶ “First, they continually **challenged**, with the power of direct observation, prior cultural models inconsistent with changed practices.”
- ▶ “Second, many people saw that many people were seeing these changes; there was growing **joint awareness** of the changes.”

Gerry Mackie - Social Norms Change



The Norm of Legal Obedience

- ▶ Nagin and Pogarsky (2001, 869)
 - ▶ “A belief that illicit conduct is wrong [moral], and the fear of peer disapproval, embarrassment, or social stigma [social] discourage offending behavior.”
 - ▶ Further, several studies investigating the relative strength of both sanction forms find
 - ▶ the “conforming influence of extralegal sanctions to be far greater than that from legal sanctions.”

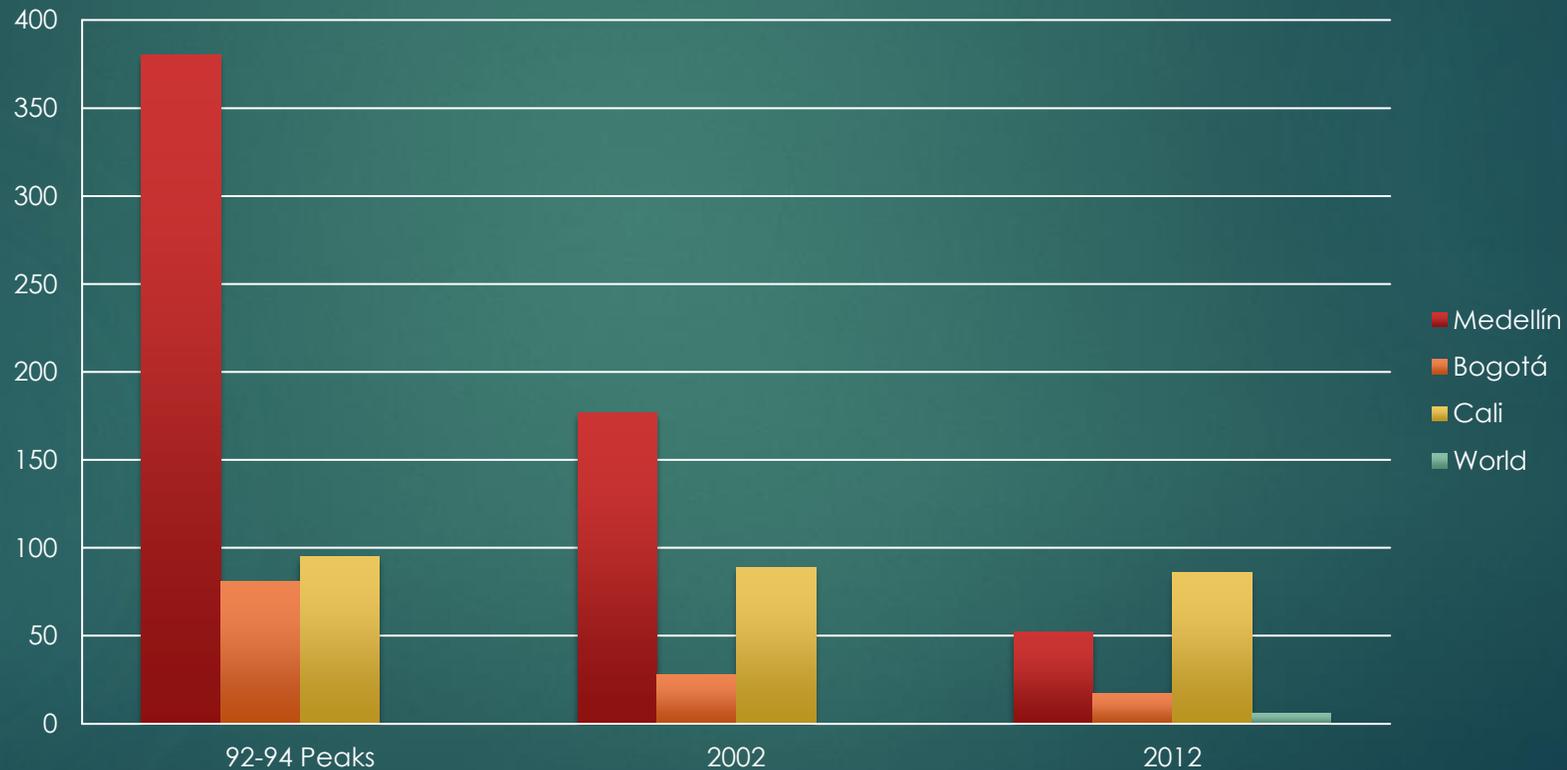


Yvonne Riaño - Urban Fear and Violence in Bogotá

- ▶ “In 1995, Bogotá represented an extreme case of violence and insecurity in terms of numbers of homicides (3,657 per year), street robberies (13,027 per year), house robberies (1,301), bank assaults (382), and traffic accidents.”
- ▶ “Pérgolis summarized the then prevalent imaginary among the city's residents with the following words: “Bogotá of fear. Unliveable Bogotá. City of street robberies, beggars, armed pedestrians, never-ending traffic jams, uncollected rubbish. Bogotá of panic, intolerance, and hate” (30).”
- ▶ “A decade later, dramatic changes had taken place...Residents are proud to live in Bogotá; they are willing to contribute to the city's finances; they are more inclined to respect traffic signals; their participation in development plans is steadily increasing. What is behind such a transformation?”

Why Social Transformation in Bogotá & Medellín, but not in Cali?

Homicides per 100,000
Three Largest Cities in Colombia



Yvonne Riaño - Urban Fear and Violence in Bogotá

- ▶ [A new approach] was conceived and implemented in the early 1990s by Antanas Mockus, when he was newly elected as mayor of Bogotá. The idea was to mobilize urban residents to adopt a set of shared habits, actions, and regulations that generate a sense of belonging and facilitate urban coexistence.”
- ▶ Mockus “shaped the approach of **cultura ciudadana** [“culture of citizenship”], founded on the idea that urban violence is best combated by inducing citizens to be respectful of each other and thereby make peaceful interaction possible.”
- ▶ “...the interventions of Bogotá’s mayors during the period of study have been comprehensive—including reform of the police, the *establishment* of legal, educational, and cultural systems—and have been implemented within the framework of multi-sectoral partnerships.”

Mayor Antanas Mockus, Bogotá

Core Moral Motivations

Slide by GM

Life is Sacred

Talk not Violence



Yvonne Riaño - Urban Fear and Violence in Bogotá

- ▶ “Mockus argued that violence is rooted in a lack of shared values, in a lack of communication, and in mutual fear. The result is an absence of respect for other people’s lives and disregard for the law. Acquisition of the values and attitudes of citizenship is central to his arguments. He argues that an ‘individual is not born as a citizen but becomes one.’”
- ▶ “Overall, the culture of citizenship consists of a set of shared habits, actions, and regulations that generate a sense of belonging, facilitate urban coexistence, and lead to the respect and recognition of civic rights and duties...Losing the fear of each other and being less prone to violence takes place via intensified communication.”

Yvonne Riaño - Urban Fear and Violence in Bogotá

- ▶ “...being able to mobilize a culture of citizenship first requires an understanding of the mechanisms that regulate people’s actions and behavior in the public sphere. What are these mechanisms? Mockus’s answer is that three different types of systems regulate the behavior of individuals: (a) self-regulation, (b) mutual regulation, and (c) legal regulation, as seen in table 1.”
- ▶ “According to Mockus, the challenge of urban coexistence is the harmonization of these three types of regulation. Urban violence arises when the connection between these three regulatory systems is absent.”

| Types of regulation | Negative mechanisms | Positive mechanisms |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Self-regulation | Fear of guilt | Satisfaction of obeying one’s conscience |
| Mutual regulation | Fear of social rejection/shame | Social recognition |
| Legal regulation | Fear of legal punishment | Satisfaction of obeying the law |

Table 1: The behavior of individuals in the public sphere: three types of regulatory systems.

Yvonne Riaño - Urban Fear and Violence in Bogotá

- ▶ “Rather than hiring more traffic officers, the Mockus administration hired ‘traffic mimes’ (mostly young actors and students of the dramatic arts), whose task was not to mete out fines to traffic offenders but to motivate citizens to behave in a more civic way”
- ▶ “...more than 400 traffic mimes stood at major street intersections and admonished, with extravagant gestures, any bus or car drivers who ran red lights, who failed to stop at pedestrian crossings, or parked on sidewalks.”
- ▶ “With time, many Bogotanos became terrified of being caught by a traffic mime because they did not want to experience social shame.’



Fig. 1: Traffic mimes were used by the Mockus administration to motivate traffic offenders to behave in a more civic way. Photograph © Danita Echeverry.

Example: traffic behavior (Social)



*Social regulation cards: 350 000 distributed,
very high visibility, citizens willing to try them out.*

- **Fostered new normative expectations**
consistent with legal norm compliance.

Example: traffic behavior (Moral)



Black stars marked the spot of a death resulting from traffic accident. Later specified age and sex of deceased.

- Re-appropriation of a **common cultural symbol**: simultaneously fostered moral and social regulation – provided opportunities for discussing and coordinating beliefs

Example: traffic behavior (Legal)



- Corrupt traffic police fired and replaced: signal of **strong institutional commitment**.
- Mimes: initially 40, then 400!
- Dramatic success in terms of **visibilization**, but replication *questionable*.
- **Further strengthened anticipations of disapproval**

Yvonne Riaño - Urban Fear and Violence in Bogotá

- ▶ “before the beginning of the *cultura ciudadana* campaign, the homicide rate was 80 per 100,000 inhabitants (i.e., about 3,500 people killed each year). Less than a decade later, the rate had dropped to 22 per 100,000 inhabitants.”
- ▶ “...a 20% reduction in the number of deaths caused by traffic accidents (from 25 to 20 per 100,000 inhabitants) was also achieved.”
- ▶ “[B]efore the campaign only 26% of drivers and pedestrians respected conventional traffic signs...this percentage rose to 75%”
- ▶ “96% considered that these programs should continue.”



Fig. 3: *Ciclovías* allow runners, skaters, and bicyclists to take over car lanes on Sundays. Photograph © Mike Ceaser.

Yvonne Riaño - Urban Fear and Violence in Bogotá

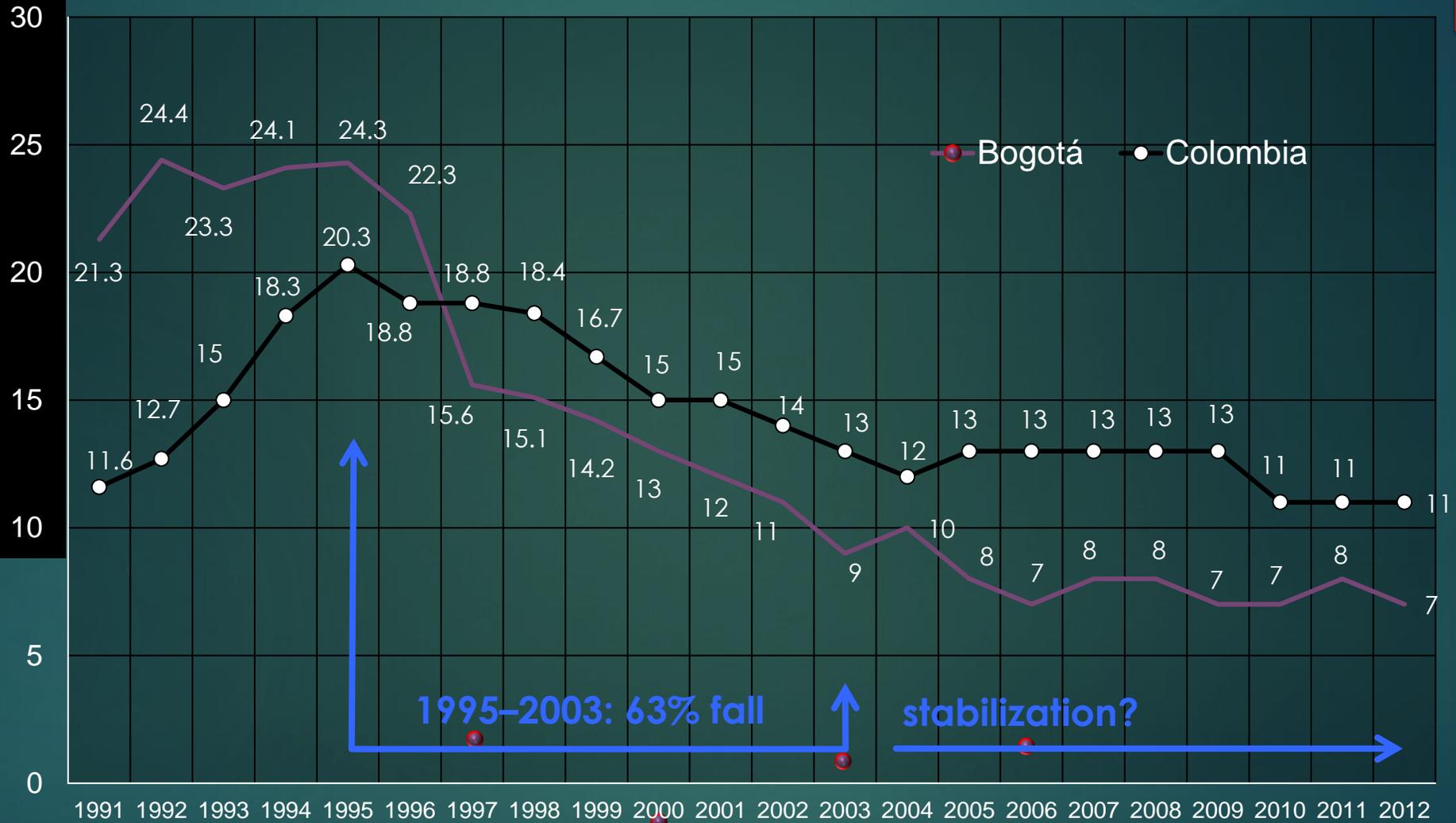
- ▶ ““The most surprising part of our experience, and what has intrigued many social scientists who have studied Bogotá’s experience, is that we have been able to plan and modify, from City Government, social norms at a large scale” (Mockus 2004).”



Fig. 3: *Ciclovías* allow runners, skaters, and bicyclists to take over car lanes on Sundays. Photograph © Mike Ceaser.

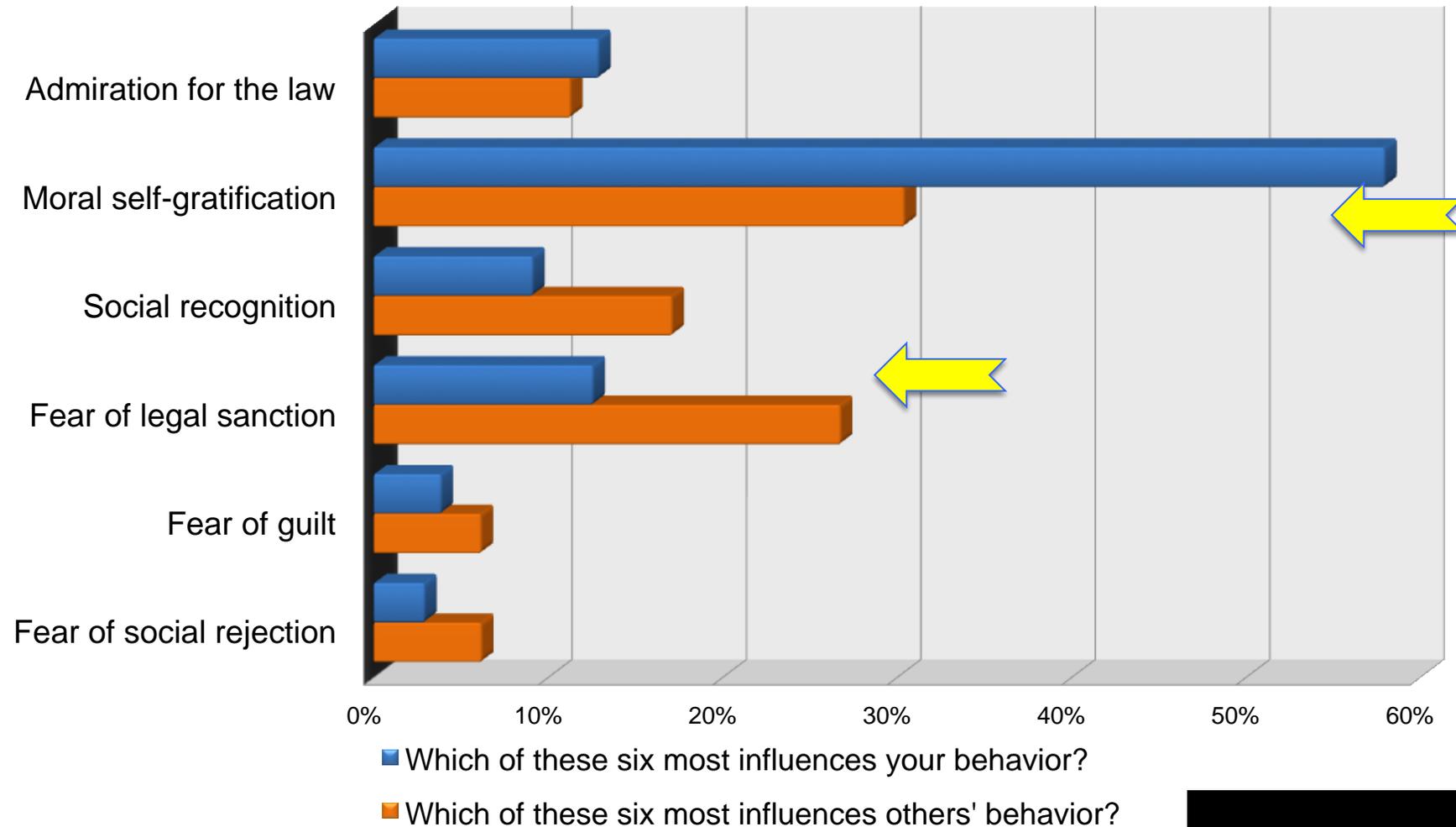


Traffic-related deaths in Bogotá and Colombia 1991 - 2012 (rate per 100 000 inhabitants)



An asymmetry in attribution of motives

Regulatory systems: Legal, Moral, Social
Average across surveys in 35 Colombian cities (2008 - 2011)



Bo Rothstein – Anti-corruption, the indirect 'big bang' approach

- ▶ Argument: corruption isn't a principal-agent problem, it's a collective action problem ("social trap").
- ▶ Consider the role of:
 - ▶ Non-incremental change
 - ▶ Informal institutions
- ▶ "The disadvantage with the incentive-based principal-agent approach is that it **just forces the problem to what has been called 'a second-level' collective action problem.**"

Bo Rothstein – Anti-corruption, the indirect 'big bang' approach

- ▶ All the agents may well understand that they would stand to gain from erasing corruption, but because they cannot trust that most other agents will refrain from corrupt practices, they have no reason to refrain.
- ▶ The only reason they would do so is if institutions could be established that would make them trust that most other agents would refrain from taking part in corrupt behavior.”
- ▶ “From this institutional perspective, the problem with corruption is that it is **a self-reinforcing phenomenon.**”

Bo Rothstein – Anti-corruption, the indirect 'big bang' approach

- ▶ Evidence: “ordinary people in severely corrupt systems usually **do not internalize** corrupt practices as morally legitimate acts. Instead, they usually condemn corruption as morally wrong and **put the blame on ‘the system’** for forcing them to take part in corruption, thus understanding that they are in a ‘social trap’.”
- ▶ How do different societies end up in different equilibria?
 - ▶ Can this be changed?
- ▶ **Interactive rationality**: the strategic situation is incomplete without specifying the social context.

Case Study: Diplomatic Parking Tickets

Raymond Fisman

Columbia University and National Bureau of Economic Research

Edward Miguel

University of California, Berkeley and National Bureau of Economic Research

We study cultural norms and legal enforcement in controlling corruption by analyzing the parking behavior of United Nations officials in Manhattan. Until 2002, diplomatic immunity protected UN diplomats from parking enforcement actions, so diplomats' actions were constrained by cultural norms alone. We find a strong effect of corruption norms: diplomats from high-corruption countries (on the basis of existing survey-based indices) accumulated significantly more unpaid parking violations. In 2002, enforcement authorities acquired the right to confiscate diplomatic license plates of violators. Unpaid violations dropped sharply in response. Cultural norms and (particularly in this context) legal enforcement are both important determinants of corruption.

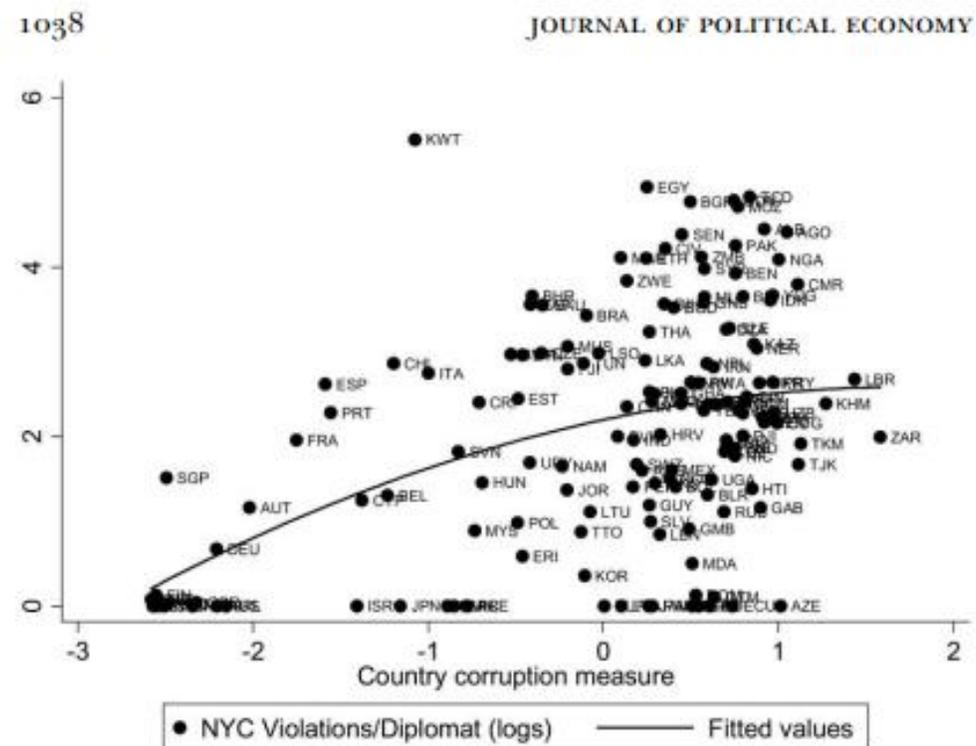


FIG. 2.—Country corruption and unpaid New York City parking violations per diplomat (in logs), pre-enforcement (November 1997 to November 2002). Country abbreviations are presented in table 1. The line is the quadratic regression fit. The y-axis is $\log(1 + \text{Annual NYC Parking Violations/Diplomat})$.

Bo Rothstein – Anti-corruption, the indirect 'big bang' approach

- ▶ We carry our reference group with us, even to new places.
 - ▶ Example: diplomats' parking tickets at the UN.
- ▶ “..corruption and similar practices are rooted in deeply held beliefs about the proper order of exchange in a society – personal-particularistic versus impersonal universalistic.”
- ▶ “The implication is that to effectively curb corruption and establish ‘good governance’, **the whole political culture has to move** from the ‘limited access’ or ‘particularistic’ equilibrium to the very different equilibrium characterized by ‘impersonal’ and/or ‘universal’ forms of exchange.”
 - ▶ “for everything to stay the same, everything must change.”

Bo Rothstein – Anti-corruption, the indirect 'big bang' approach

- ▶ “The implication so far of this analysis is quite negative. First, corruption is driven by the workings of a large set of historically rooted formal and informal institutions in a society.”
- ▶ “Secondly, neither the formal nor the informal institutions are easily changed since they constitute ‘self-reinforcing’ equilibria. If an agent tries to reform a single or a small set of the institutions in a corrupt–particularistic–limited access political culture, it will in all likelihood backfire since the new institutions will be overtaken by the corrupt networks and dominated by such practices that, in its turn, will increase cynicism among the population and serve to delegitimize future efforts to increase the quality of government institutions.”

