

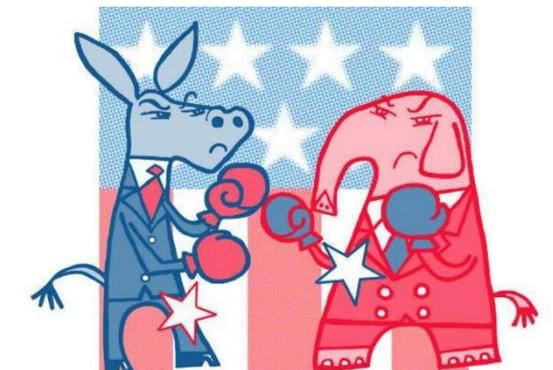
# Social Identity and Group Contests

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# What are we doing?

- Applications for group contests range from warfare, to research and from political campaigns, to rent-seeking activities.
  - Examples: racial conflict, conflict relating to language, religion or culture, political competition, collective rent-seeking...
- Group identity as one of the major components in initiating and escalating conflict.
  - We study the effect of the salience of types of identities and its interaction with group size on group conflict.



# Why are we doing it?

## Identity among the main ingredients of the cause for conflict.

- Theory: Salience of Identity can cause conflict (Sen, 2007).
- Experiment: Revealing racial composition increases contest effort (Chowdhury et al., 2006).



## Gender as Identity

- Gender as one of the groups through which we define ourselves in daily life (Sen 2007).
- Gender identity categorisation avoids problem of identification.



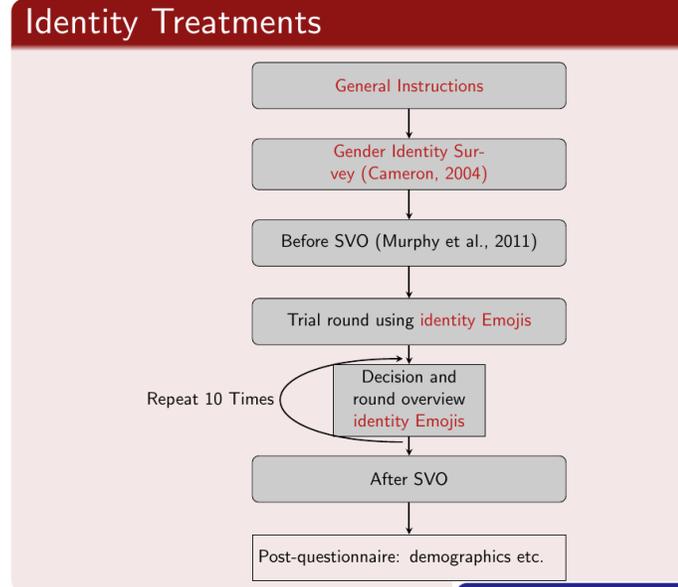
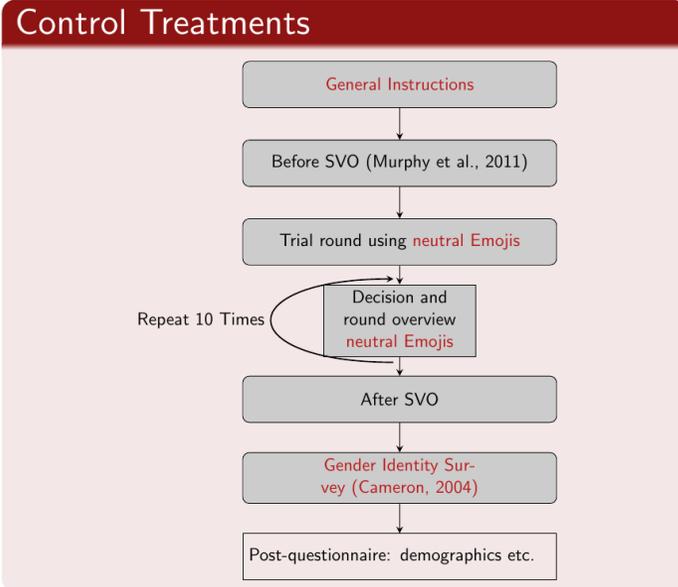
## Competitive Environments

- In experiments: Female participants usually contribute more to the contest (Price and Sheremeta, 2015; Chowdhury et al., 2016; Heine and Sefton, 2018;...).
- Other Situations: Males more aggressive and competitive when conflict is physical and can sustain physical harm (Hyde, 2005).

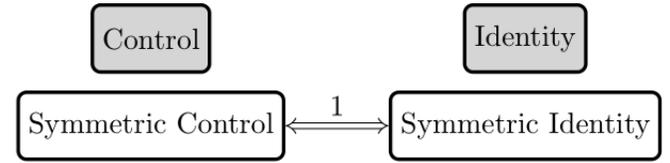


# How are we doing it?

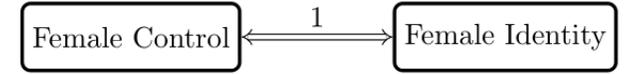
## Repeated play in partner matching



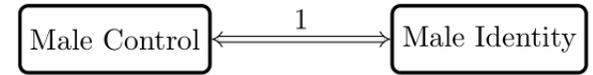
Symmetric  
 $F = 3$  vs.  $M = 3$



Asymmetric Female  
 $F = 5$  vs.  $M = 3$

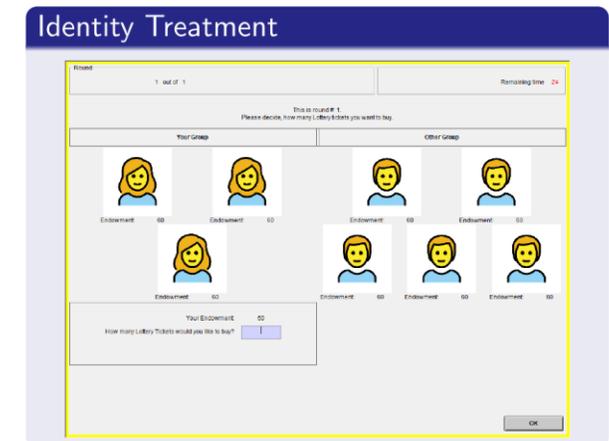
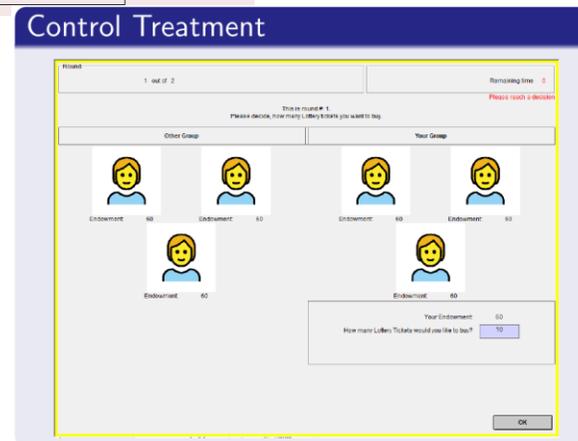


Asymmetric Male  
 $F = 3$  vs.  $M = 5$

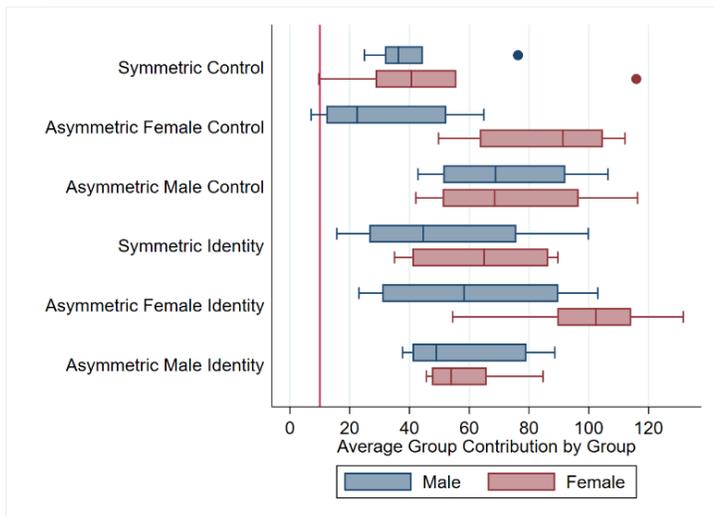


3 × 2 design to investigate how (salience of) identity and asymmetry affect conflict levels

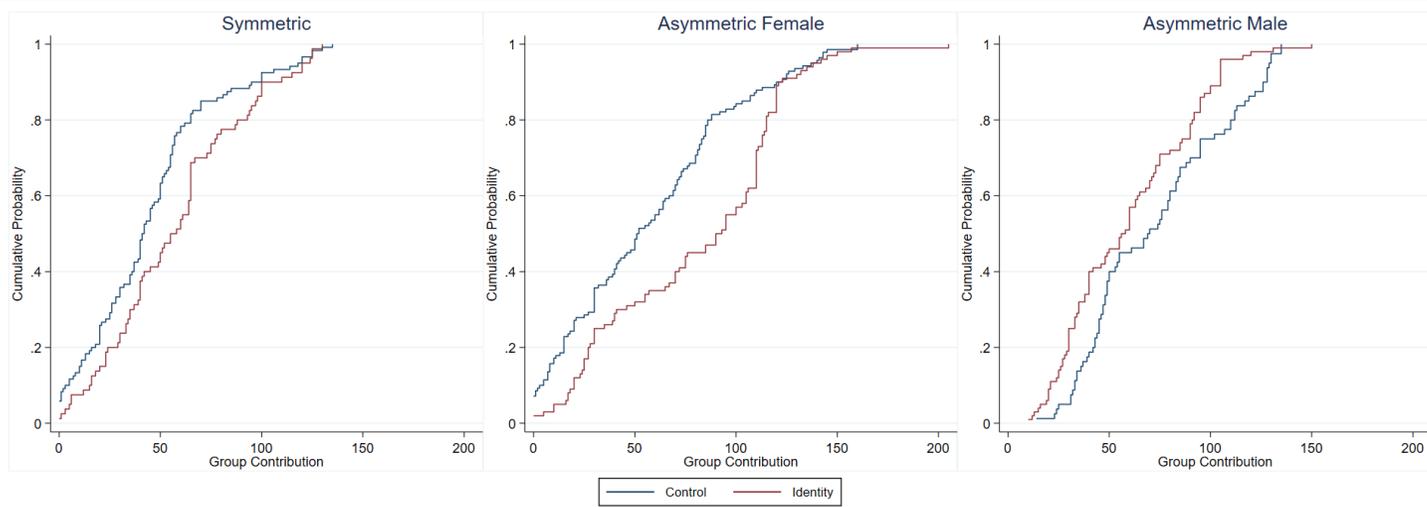
- Groups of three or five
- Individual per-period endowment of  $T = 60$  pts.
  - Individual prize if winning: 40 points.



# What do we find?



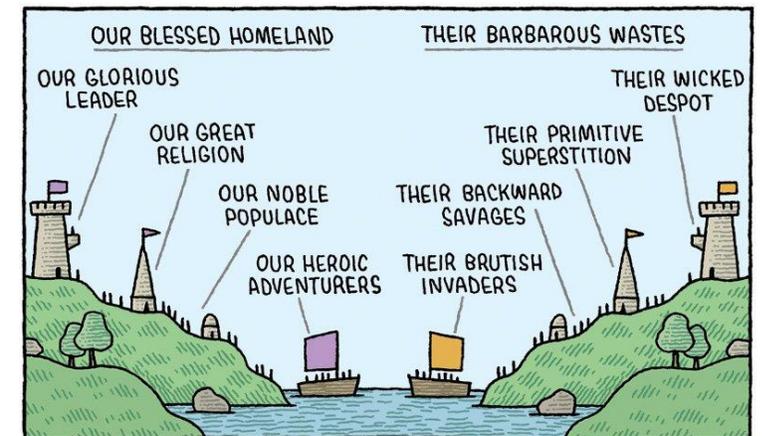
- Group contribution in all treatments significantly exceeds equilibrium prediction.
- Female participants contribute more to the contest when in a large group.
  - This is true whether or not the gender identity is revealed.



- Contribution is distributed over a wide effort range.
- Identity seems to mostly stochastically dominate Control.
  - Except for the Asymmetric Male Treatments.

# Why are the results important?

- Female participants seem to invest more resources for the group.
  - First study to systematically investigate gender effect in contest game.
  - Effect especially pronounced when female participants are in dominant group.
- Social Identity does not seem to influence contest spending.
  - Contradicting earlier findings from very similar experiment designs (i.e., Chowdhury et al., 2006).
- No presence of group size paradox.
  - Earlier studies often employ one steady group prize.
  - By contrast, our design leaves the equilibrium prediction unchanged.



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