A Collapse of Kindness?
Repetition Effects in Laboratory Experiments.

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Social-scientific lab experiments often follow similar patterns
Introduction

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- Subjects typically recruited via subject pools (In Leipzig: http://lex.sozphil.uni-leipzig.de/)
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Research question: Does the behaviour of subjects that participate repeatedly in experiments in one lab change over time? ➔ repetition effects
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Research question: Does the behaviour of subjects that participate repeatedly in experiments in one lab change over time? → repetition effects

If yes, how can we explain this change in behaviour?
State of Research

- Early non-systematic results listed in Camerer (2003), Ledyard (1995)
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  - Typically only short delays between two sessions, participants were informed before experiment
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  - Typically only short delays between two sessions, participants were informed before experiment
  - Increasingly "rational" behaviour in symmetric games with pure equilibria (similar to iterated games)
State of Research

- Berger (2015) shows that complex procedures and descriptions may lead to subjects "acting save".
- Subjects participated twice in a PD with complex anonymization procedures; behaviour changed radically (much closer to Nash equilibrium)
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- Berger & Baumeister (2017):
  1. cognitive learning processes between two experimental sessions, even if they are months apart
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- Berger & Baumeister (2017):
  1. cognitive learning processes between two experimental sessions, even if they are months apart
  2. strong evidence for "social learning" of conditional cooperators: bad experiences turn cooperators to defectors in a PD, but ...
... a sizeable amount of cooperators "turn heel" without having experienced defection by alter.

This effect seems to occur in addition to cognitive and/or social learning processes,

A change of preferences occurs.
... a sizeable amount of cooperators "turn heel" without having experienced defection by alter.

This effect seems to occur in addition to cognitive and/or social learning processes,

A change of preferences occurs.

We term this effect the "Collapse of Kindness"

Can we reproduce this effect?
## Design and Treatment

To avoid selection bias: subjects of both groups were randomly selected from the same sample that participated in sessions during May/June 2016.

Anonymity treatment in 4 Levels: low, typical, high, online.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>May/June 2016</th>
<th>October/November 2016</th>
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A Collapse of Kindness?
Design and Treatment

Setting
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- Experiment comprises 5 oneshot decision situations: DG, UG-A, UG-B, TG-A, TG-B
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- **Focus on Dictator Game**
  - "Beliefs" and strategic considerations are irrelevant, game is as simple as it gets
  - Equilibrium: A ("Dictator") makes smallest possible offer
  - Suitable as a direct measurement of "Kindness"
  - Showup-Fee: 2.50 Euro, Endowment of Dictator: 10 Euro
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Order of played games was randomized, as was the game and role to be payed off

Concluding questionnaire: demographics, motivation, trust scale, risk scale, patience, etc.
• Teilnehmer A erhält 10,00 Euro von der Studienleitung.
• Teilnehmer A teilt diesen Betrag zwischen sich und Teilnehmer B auf.
• Dabei kann Teilnehmer A dem Teilnehmer B einen Betrag zwischen 0,00 und 10,00 Euro zuteilen.
• Teilnehmer B erhält den zuteilten Betrag.
• Teilnehmer A erhält den Rest.

Hier ein Beispielvideo:

Sie bearbeiten diese Aufgabe als Teilnehmer A.
Ihnen wird dabei ein Studententeilnehmer anonym zugelost.
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- Teilnehmer B erhält den zugeteilten Betrag.
- Teilnehmer A erhält den Rest.

Hier ein Beispielvideo:

Sie bearbeiten diese Aufgabe als Teilnehmer A. Ihnen wird dabei ein Studententeilnehmer anonym zugelost.

Sie sind Teilnehmer A.
Bitte teilen Sie die 10,00 Euro auf.

Welchen Betrag teilen Sie Teilnehmer B zu?

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Who returned?

- In $O_1$: 484 subjects
- $G_1$, $O_2$: 116
- $G_2$, $O_2$: 106
- 46% of all subjects returned, relatively even split into both groups
Logit, DV: Returned to repeated experiment (yes, no)

Additional controls: payoff game & role, first game played, field of study
Selection Effects: Miscellanea...

- No influence: risk attitude, scientific/monetary motivation, test score, total time needed, further demographics, experimental decisions during O1, experimenter (fortunately!)
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- field of study: stem-students return more often, aspiring social scientists less often
OLS, DV: Difference in Decisions between both Observations

Additional controls: payoff game & role in O1, field of study
Repetition Effects: Miscellanea...

- No influence: risk attitude, scientific motivation, field of study, test score, total time needed (difference), further demographics, experimenter (fortunately!)
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- Less "irrational" subjects in repeated experiments (between and within!, holds true for bonus observation $O_3$)
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- No influence: risk attitude, scientific motivation, field of study, test score, total time needed (difference), further demographics, experimenter (fortunately!)
- Less "irrational" subjects in repeated experiments (between and within!, holds true for bonus observation $O_3$)
- Total time needed decreases from initially 13 min to about 9-10 min after one repetition (no further reduction in $O_3$)
"Collapse of Kindness" exists!

- Contributions in a DG decrease significantly by about 14% from first to second observation (time between observations does not matter)
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Conclusion & Discussion

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- Control for "game rats"
Thank you for your attention!
UG: Offer by Proposer

- Low
- Typical
- High
- Online

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UG: MAO of Responder

- Low
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TG: Transfer by Trustor

- Low
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- High
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TG: Return by Trustee

- Low
- Typical
- High
- Online
UG: Offer by Proposer

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A Collapse of Kindness?
TG: Transfer by Trustor

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70%

5m 8m 5m 8m 5m 8m 3m 8m

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UG: MAO of Responder

[Graph showing data for UG: MAO of Responder with different time intervals (5m, 8m, 3m, 8m) and percentage values (0%, 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%).]

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TG: Return by Trustee

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A Collapse of Kindness?
DG: Offer by Dictator (8m)