Under the Radar: Determinants of Honesty in an Online Labor Market

[Work in progress: Do Not Cite]

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Honesty in AMT

- Expected (or at least desired) of workers
- Expected of requesters
- But when do people deviate from honest behavior?
- Will vary
  - What can be gained by cheating
  - How many lies one must tell for that gain

Experimental Paradigm

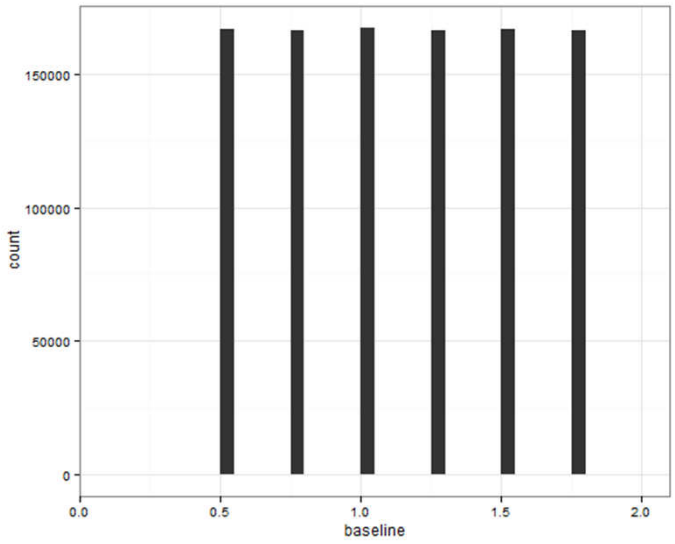
- Recruit turkers. Same base pay to avoid selection
- Ask participants about demographics
  - Sex, Age, Country, Income, Education
- Ask participants to **privately** roll a die (or dice) and report outcome to determine payout

** borrowed from Fischbacher & Heusi*

Three studies

1. Baseline: comparison with prior work
   - One die, $0.25 + $0.25 / pip
   - [$0.50, $1.75], E=$1.125
   - Average cheater gain would be $.63 (max cheater, that is)
   - N=176 (93 US, 83 India)

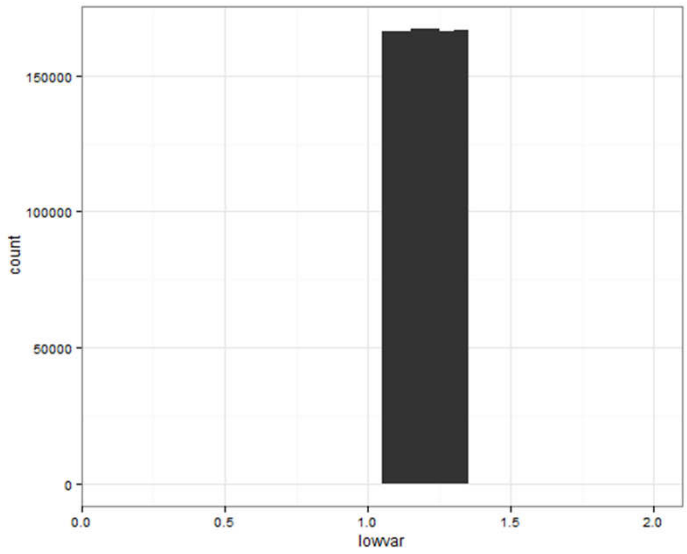
Honest Baseline Payouts



Three studies

1. Low Variance: less to be gained by dishonesty
   - One die, $1.00 + $0.05 / pip
   - [$1.05, $1.30], E=$1.175
   - Average cheater gain would be $.13
   - N=267 (140 US, 127 India)

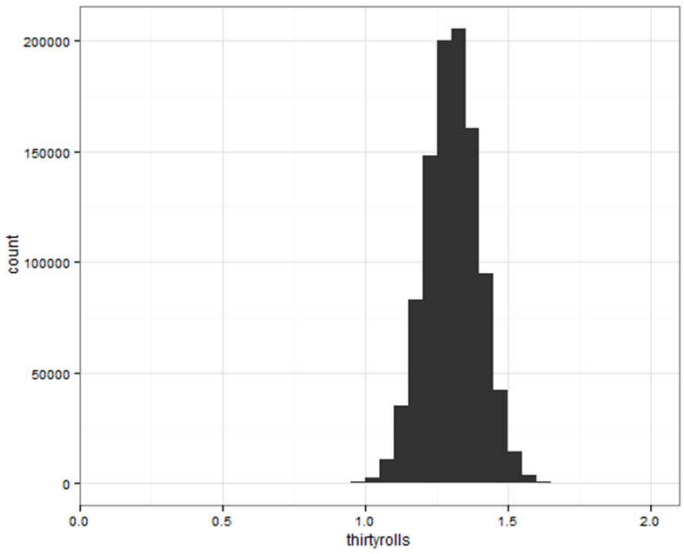
Honest Low Variance Payouts

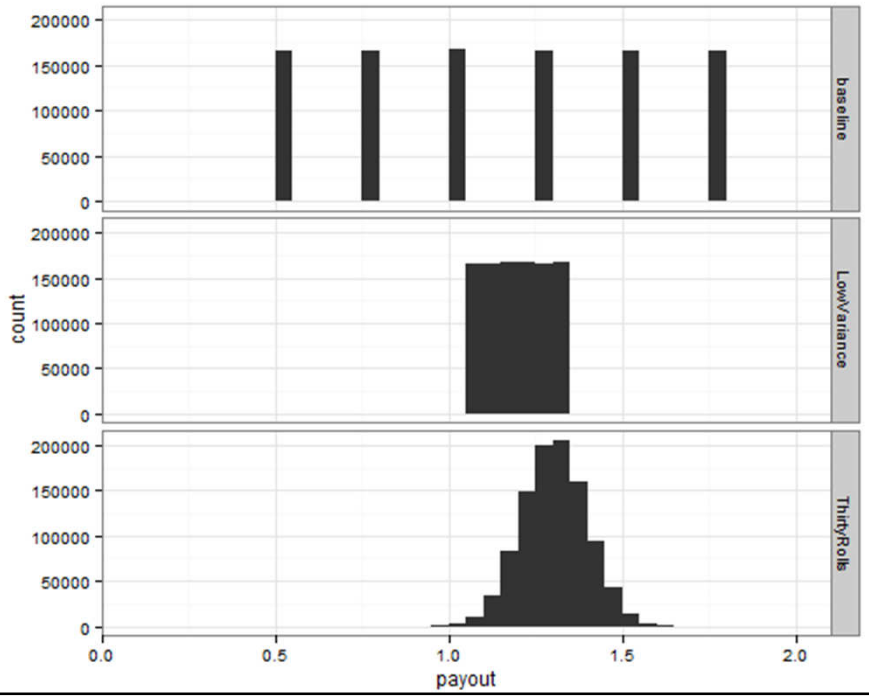


Three studies

3. Thirty rolls: more chances to lie (and be caught)
   - Thirty dice, $0.25 + $0.01 / pip
   - [$0.55, $2.05], E=$1.30
   - Average cheater gain would be $.75
   - N=233 (108 US, 125 India)

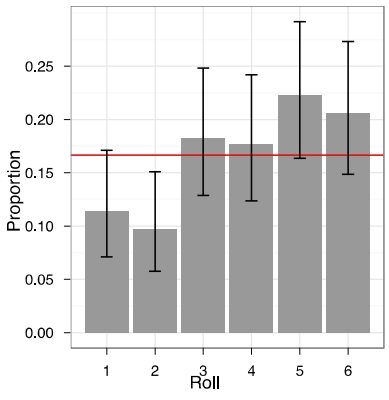
Honest Thirty Roll Payouts





Baseline

- Average reported roll significantly higher than expected
  - M = 3.91, $p < 0.0005$
- Similar to Fischbacher & Huesi

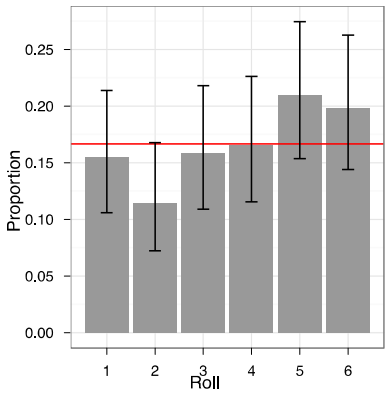


Conclusion thus far

- People are cheating when they can make as much as $.63 on average by doing so.

Low Variance

- Average reported roll significantly higher than expected
  - M = 3.77, $p < 0.01$
- Same (no sig difference in distribution) as before

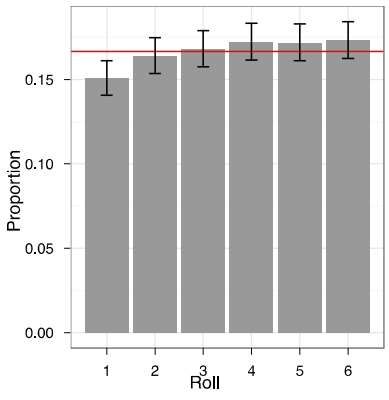


Conclusion thus far

- People cheat just as much when they can only make $.13 on average by doing so

Thirty rolls

- Average reported roll much closer to expected (still sig. diff)
  - M = 3.57, $p < 0.0005$



Thirty rolls

- Overall, much less dishonesty
- Only 3 of 232 participants reported significantly unlikely outcomes
- Only 1 participant was fully income maximizing (all sixes)

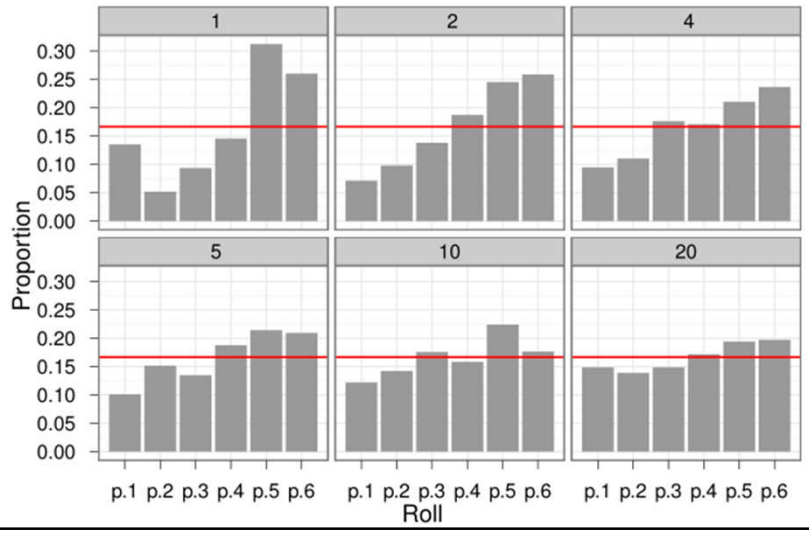
Conclusion thus far

- People don't cheat very often when given multiple opportunities

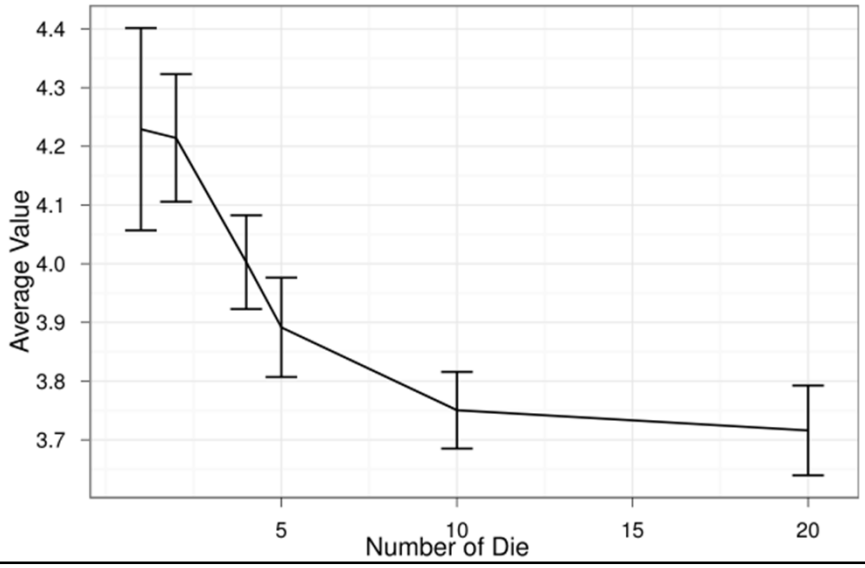
How does dishonesty decrease as a function of opportunities to cheat

- Random assignment to roll 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, or 20 times (n=100 per condition)
- Average, min, max payout the same in all conds:
  - 1 roll condition, 20 cents per pip
  - 2 roll condition, 10 cents per pip
  - 4 roll condition, 5 cents per pip
  - 5 roll condition, 4 cents per pip
  - 10 roll condition, 2 cents per pip
  - 20 roll condition, 1 cent per pip

Distribution of rolls as number of rolls increases



Average roll as a function of rolls



Conclusion thus far

- People lie a relatively high proportion of the time when they have few opportunities, but a lower proportion when they have more opportunities
- A simple way to get the average response "more honest" is to break it over many tasks within one participant
  - Average roll is 4.2 in 1 roll condition vs.
  - 3.57 in 30 roll condition

Moderators

Fear of detection and punishment

- Making Turkers very aware that their work would be accepted no matter what increased dishonesty (one roll mean 4.2-4.3 here, 3.9 in previous study)

Honesty and Qualifications

- In 30-roll study, work was broken in to 10 HITs
  - 5 qualification levels
  - India & U.S.
- No significant differences across means

Qualification	U.S.A.	India
0-89%	3.71	3.48
90-94%	3.57	3.56
95-97%	3.60	3.65
98-99%	3.63	3.55
100%	3.46	3.54

Honesty and Qualifications

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  - India & U.S.
- No significant differences across means
- Only two differed from fair mean

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98-99%	3.63	3.55
100%	3.46	3.54

Honesty and Demographics

- Fit model using all collected demographics to predict average roll in baseline study and 30-roll study
- Looked at education, race, income, age, sex
- No demographic difference significantly predicted deviation from fair outcome

Ongoing work

- Why does honesty increase with the number of rolls?
  - Afraid of detection & punishment
  - Telling multiple lies feels worse

Thank you!