

When Should the Jurors Talk?

Andrei Gomberg ¹, Alexander Elbittar ², Diego Aycinena ³, Lucas Rentschler ⁴ ¹ ITAM

² CIDE

³ Universidad Francisco Marroqun

⁴ Universidad Francisco Marroqun

Resumo/Abstract:

We consider the problem of how timing of communication affects information-acquisition incentives of jury members. Early information sharing has a potential of strengthening juror beliefs of guilt/innocence to an extent that further information is not going to be acquired. In contrast, a promise of late information sharing creates additional incentives for individual information acquisition, since any amount of information acquired may turn out to be important for the decision when combined with the additional information to be revealed. In a series of lab experiments designed to test this theoretical prediction we show that promise of future "free" information induces subjects to acquire more information as compared to an environment in which the same amount of information is provided early. However, individual subjects' judgement quality is not affected by the timing of information provision, since the quantity of additional information acquired is (consistently with our theoretical predictions) insufficient to affect the individual decision, irrespective of the signal realisation. In contrast, delay in information provision improves the quality of group decisions by creating complementarities between individual discovery efforts.