



COLLOQUIUM

DEPARTAMENTO DE MATEMÁTICAS

UNIVERSIDAD CARLOS III DE MADRID

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Social sanctions and the social contract

Abstract:

Theoretical and empirical research highlights the role of punishment in promoting collaborative efforts. However, both the emergence and the stability of costly punishment are problematic issues. How can punishers invade a society of defectors by social learning or natural selection, and how can second-order exploiters (who contribute to the joint effort but not to the sanctions) be prevented from drifting into a coercion-based regime and subverting cooperation? This talk compares the prevailing model of peer-punishment with pool-punishment, which consists in committing resources, prior to the collaborative effort, to prepare sanctions against free-riders. Pool punishment facilitates the sanctioning of second-order exploiters, since these are exposed even if everyone contributes to the common good. In the absence of such second-order punishment, peer-punishers do better than pool-punishers, but with second-order punishment, the situation is reversed. Efficiency is traded for stability. Neither other-regarding tendencies or preferences for reciprocity and equity, nor group selection or prescriptions from higher authorities are necessary for the emergence and stability of rudimentary forms of sanctioning institutions regulating common pool resources and enforcing collaborative efforts.

Hora: 10:45

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