# Minimal Social Cues in the Dictator Game

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# Motivation

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- But there remain many questions about the nature of the relationship between giving and social factors
- Report results of an experiment manipulating an extremely weak social cue in the Dictator Game

# Social Distance & Social Cues Move Offers

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  - Giving behavior increases when Dictators have information on their counterpart – charity (Eckel & Grossman, 1996), personalized knowledge of a victim with a similar misfortune (Small & Simonsohn, 2005), family name (Charness & Gneezy, 2005), photo (Bohnet & Frey, 1999; Burnham, 2003)

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  - Giving behavior increases in presence of "stylized eye spots" (Haley & Fessler, 2005)

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H&F's "eye spots" are weaker but not all that weak:

- It's a very expressive face
- Looks pretty mean – cartoonish scowling eyebrows
- No visual stimuli for control – no face, no nothing

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If this moves behavior – esp. under d-b – then that is a strong result

# Face

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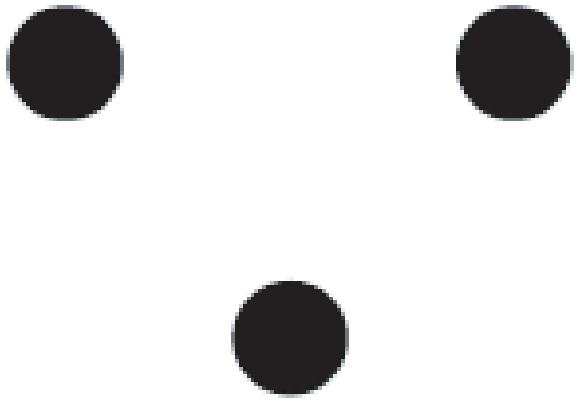

# Control

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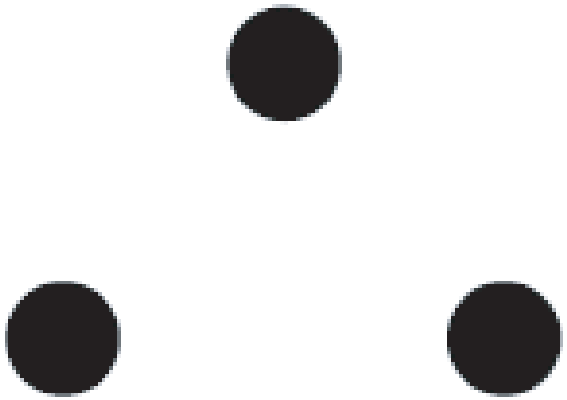

# Procedures

- UM undergraduates recruited for one hour experiment
- Each received $5 for showing up on time
- Generic instructions were read aloud to all participants (same room)
- Assigned role of Dictator/Recipient randomly via a bingo ball draw
- Seated in separate rooms while Dictators made decision
- Dictators decide how much of $10 each person in the pair is to receive
- Double-blind using randomly assigned codes
- All subjects completed demographic & procedural questionnaire
- Dictators filled out a picture-completion task

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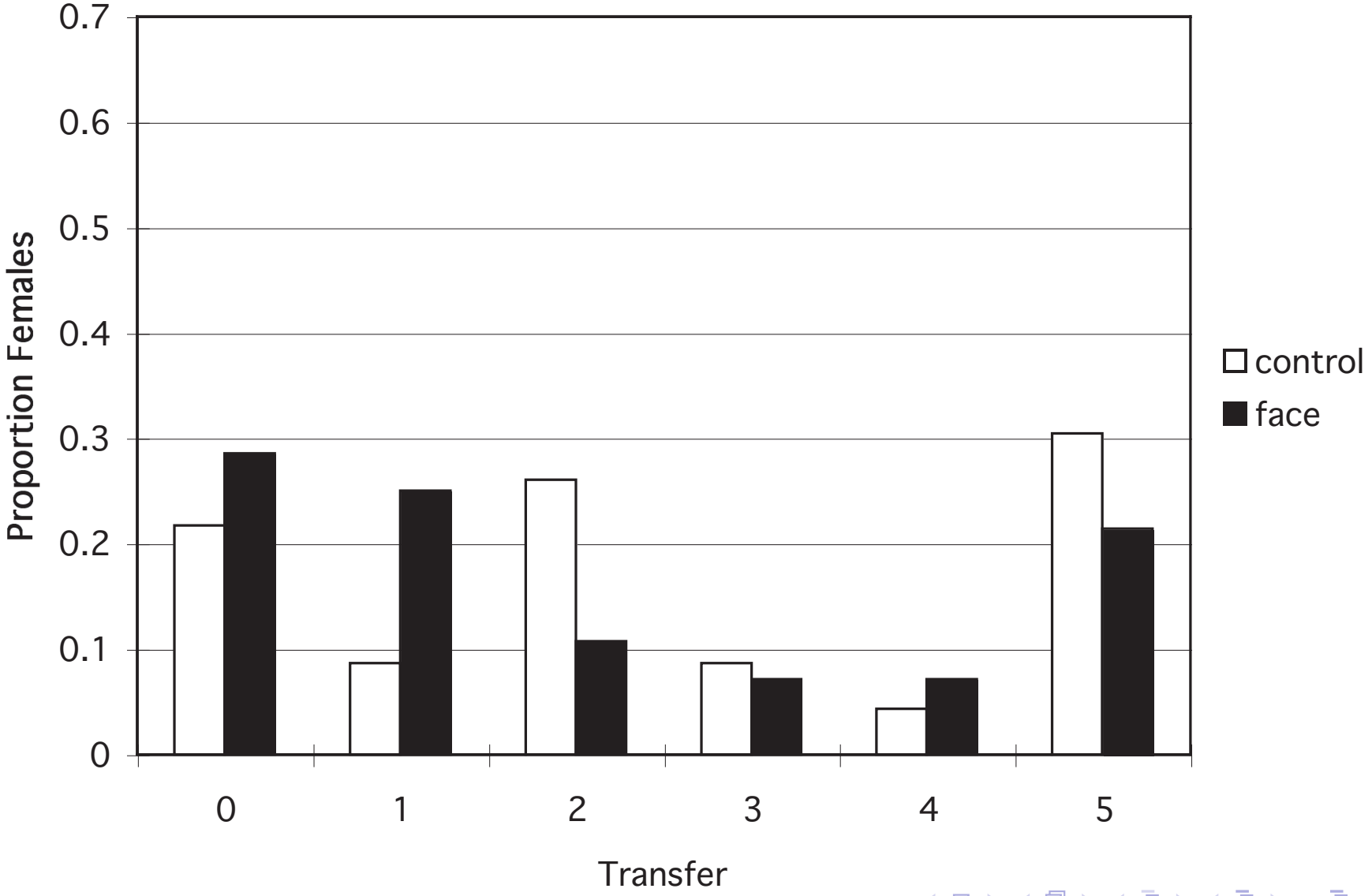
## Sending \$1 or more

- 59% in Control and 73% in Face ($p = 0.2493$)

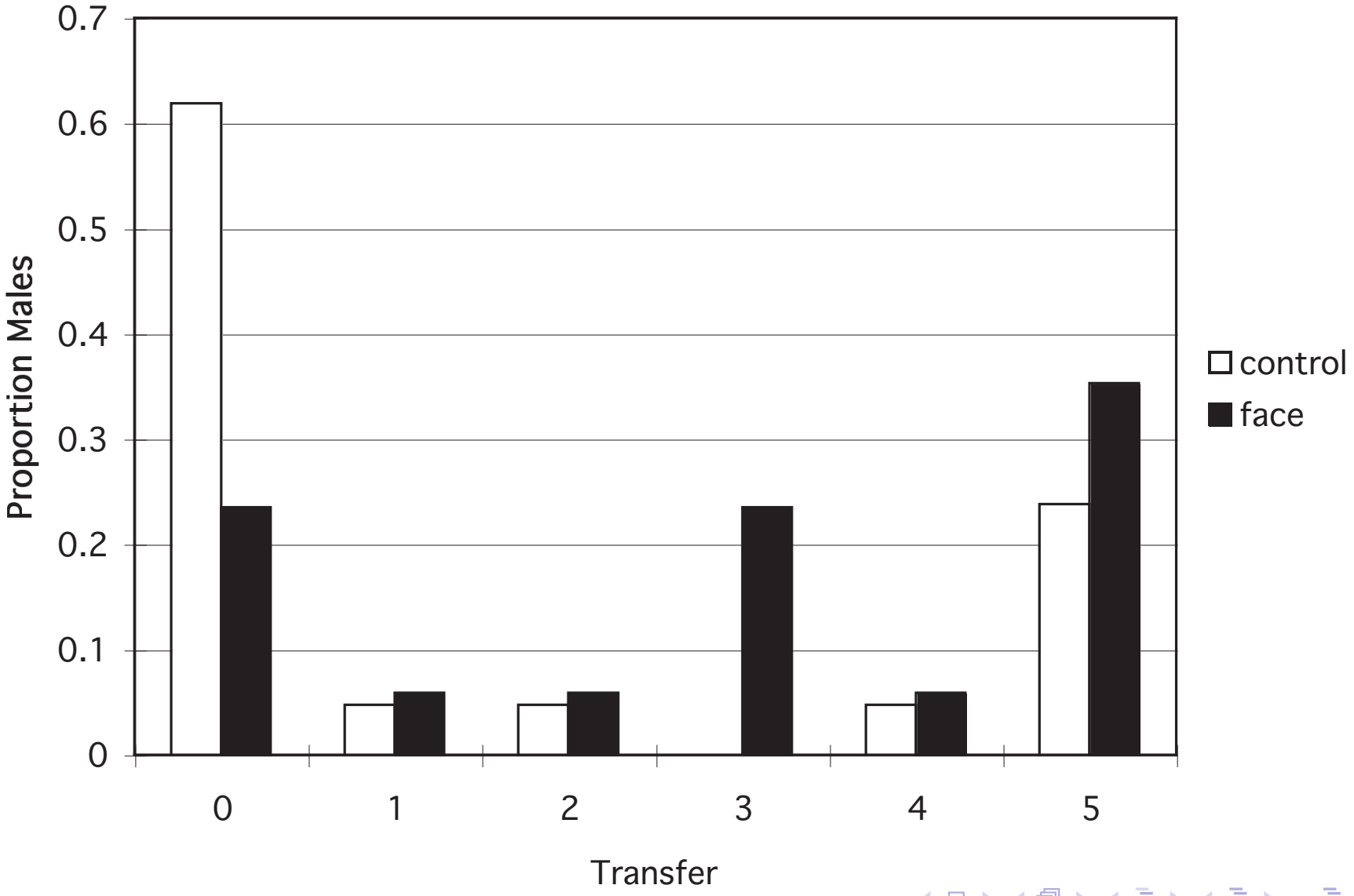
# Descriptive Statistics by Gender

| $\text{Treatment}_{\text{gender}}$ | N | Avg. Transfer ($) | $1 or more (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| $\text{Control}_{♀}$ | 23 | 2.56<br>(1.95) | 78.26 |
| $\text{Face}_{♀}$ | 28 | 2.04<br>(1.95) | 71.43 |
| $\text{Control}_{♂}$ | 21 | 1.52<br>(2.21) | 38.10 |
| $\text{Face}_{♂}$ | 20 | 2.88<br>(2.03) | 76.47 |

# Distribution of Transfers by Female Dictators



# Distribution of Transfers by Male Dictators



# Logit Analysis – Gender Influences on Transfers in Control

$$DONATE_i = \alpha + \beta \times GENDER_i$$

$$DONATE_i = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } TRANSFER_i > \$0 \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

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In Control Females are 5.85 times more likely than males to give \$1 or more ($p < 0.05$). This result is consistent with the gender differences Eckel & Grossman (1998) and Andreoni & Vesterlund (2001) report in a d-b baseline.

# Logit Analysis – Gender Influences on Transfers in Face

$$AMOUNT_i = \alpha + \beta \times GENDER_i$$

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In Face males are 3.33 times more likely than females to out-give the average ($p < 0.05$)

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- In Control females transfer at higher rates than males (but not fair division on average)
- Males – but not females – are sensitive to the subtle social cue manipulation in Face

# Future Work

- Environment with earned-property right
- Cross-cultural comparison – Japanese study underway
- Responder behavior in Ultimatum Game
- Effect on ex-post punishment in games?