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Gazes and Numbers: An Experiment on Strategic Sophistication and Gender Biases
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Seminario Teoría e Historia Económica Date: May 27, 2019. Time: 10:30 Room: E26 (Facultad Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales) Speaker: Santiago Sánchez-Pages (King's College London). Title: Gazes and Numbers: An Experiment on Strategic Sophistication and Gender Biases

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Abstract: This paper explores how the strategic sophistication of men and women varies with the way in which their interaction is framed. On the one hand, there is plenty of experimental evidence showing that individuals display varying levels of strategic sophistication, and that their depth of strategic reasoning is endogenous (e.g. Alaoui and Penta, 2016). On the other hand, there is evidence showing that women are better in guessing what others feel and think (e.g. Baron-Cohen, 2002). The paper combines these two ideas by studying whether the perceived gender-bias of a strategic interaction affects differently the level of strategic sophistication of men and women. The paper presents the results of two laboratory experiments. One is a two-player beauty contest (Nagel, 1995) in which strategies are numbers and where participants must compute and guess the average response within their group (pair). We find that in this dominance-solvable game men are more likely to identify the dominant strategy but that their distribution of earnings is a mean-preserving spread of the earnings distribution of females. In the second experiment, players

play another dominance-solvable game in which they have to correctly associate photographs of eye gazes to their underlying emotions in order to pick the best players in a tournament against another participant. This game is perceived by subjects as strongly female-biased despite the performance of males and females is similar. In this case, we find no gender differences in the likelihood of identifying the dominant strategy.