

## **Abstract**

In many strategic settings with private information, optimality requires people to make hypothetical inferences about the information content of others' actions. We conduct an experiment under one such setting, a voting environment under private information, where optimality requires voters to extract information about others' information under the hypothetical event that their own vote is pivotal. We test for strategic behavior by means of an experimental design that distinguishes the mistake of failing to account for others' information from other mistakes that are natural in the process of drawing inferences from the pivotal event. Depending on the treatment, between 50% and 80% of our subjects fail to vote strategically. We find this mistake to be robust to experience and hints about pivotality, and to be mainly driven by the failure to make inferences from hypothetical, rather than actual, events.