

wager members were connected only to the intermediate-wager (w_2) member. This alignment of wagers with chain nodes introduces an aspect of the opinion distribution into the network structure but, as similarity often drives tie formation, such alignment is often a property of natural groups. Subjects were randomly assigned into complete or chain networks subject to the requirement to populate groups by policy side and disagreement level. Members of complete network groups sent and received messages from all others by default. The center node in the chain had the option of sending messages to only one or both of the other members (in practice the latter option was much more frequently used). The end nodes in the chain could only communicate with the center node.

Discussion Procedure. Discussions were unstructured except for the requirement for each individual to make a final wager at the end. Subjects could change their wager but not their team choice. Group discussion took place online using a text-based chat system. Upon logging in, participants were presented with a series of four brief instruction screens that: (1) informed them they would be engaged in a discussion concerning the upcoming game in which they could earn money for charity; (2) described the structure of their communication network including a pictorial representation showing which node they occupied; (3) told them that all the members of the group had chosen the same team and presented the wagering options; and (4) gave instructions on how to use the chat interface and when and how to make final wagers. Participants were required to discuss the topic for a minimum of 20 minutes before they could finalize their wagers although the discussion could continue up to 30 minutes. For five of the games, no requirement for consensus was imposed and subjects could make different final wagers. In one game (Week 19), consensus was required. The topic, rules, and wagering options were accessible during the discussion through a help button. After registering their choices participants were directed to