

**Looking for the Keys under the Lamppost:  
Insights from Economics into Standards for Unilateral  
Conduct**

By

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I haven't done a scientific survey, but I am confident that the most frequently told economics joke is the one about assuming a can opener. I won't repeat it here. I suspect, albeit somewhat less confidently, that there are two candidates for runner-up and they both involve lampposts. There is the one about using data the way a drunk uses a lamppost – for support rather than illumination. And then there is the one about the woman who happens upon a man on his hands and knees under a lamppost outside a tunnel. What is he doing? Looking for his keys. Is that where he lost them? No, he lost them inside the tunnel. Why isn't he looking there? It's dark in there; it's light under the lamppost. I will argue that this last joke comes close to characterizing the state of the economics literature with respect to unilateral conduct. For the analogy to hold, however, I need to embellish the story a bit. Imagine that the man on his knees had a set of keys on a key ring, that the key ring became unattached, and that the keys fell off, but in different places – some inside the tunnel and some underneath the lamppost. In my extended version, looking under the lamppost is not a useless exercise, but it is not sufficient for finding all the keys that we need to formulate sensible antitrust standards for unilateral conduct. Let me add one further embellishment. There is more than one lamppost outside the tunnel, and another one might be casting a brighter light.

At a broad level, I don't think there is much controversy about what we would like to know. Of course, as I might be wrong about the lack of controversy, I should stress that this is just

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remain inside the dark tunnel. Also lying some

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As I know we want to leave time for discussion, I will end my comments here.

Thank you.

