**Skepticism of the Predictive value of Cooperative Acts**

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Why do we cooperate with non-kin? As humans, we are attentive to our reputation. In fact, minimal cues of observation such as eyespots and ambient noises increase cooperative behaviour in experimental economic games. Accordingly, reputation may have played an important role in the evolution of cooperative behaviours. To acquire a good reputation, people advertise their qualities through costly signalling, which can lead to better access to cooperative relationships and greater cooperation within those relationships. As such, public generosity is a signal of cooperative intent. In fact, recent evidence suggests that people are more generous when competing over partners. These are circumstances where people have incentive to gain a good reputation and signal. The caveat is, however, that some individuals send false signals to gain access to these relationships and exploit cooperative individuals. Thus, it would be expected that when there is great potential to gain a good reputation, observers would become skeptical of the value of the signal to predict cooperative intent. Using cooperative economic games, I propose that people send stronger signals in situations where there is greater potential to gain a good reputation. Moreover, observers in these conditions may attune to reputation and increase their skepticism of the honesty of the signal accordingly. In this presentation, I propose several studies to empirically test these concepts.