

## **Abstract**

This paper introduces a triadic game structure for conducting trust and reciprocity experiments. A large literature on single-game trust and reciprocity experiments is based on the assumption that subjects' utility payoffs are the same as their own monetary payoffs in the experiments. Such designs test compound hypotheses that include the hypothesis that other-regarding preferences do not affect behavior. In contrast, the experiments with game triads do discriminate between transfers resulting from trust or reciprocity and transfers resulting from other-regarding preferences. Alternative treatments vary the environment of the experiments from a weak to a strong social context. The observations in two social contexts of decisions motivated by other-regarding preferences, trust, and/or reciprocity are central to obtaining empirical information that can guide the process of formulating a theory of utility that can increase the empirical validity of game theory. Data from experiments with the triadic design are used to evaluate recent extensions of theory that incorporate concern for fairness of monetary payoffs and perceptions of others' intentions into agents' utilities.