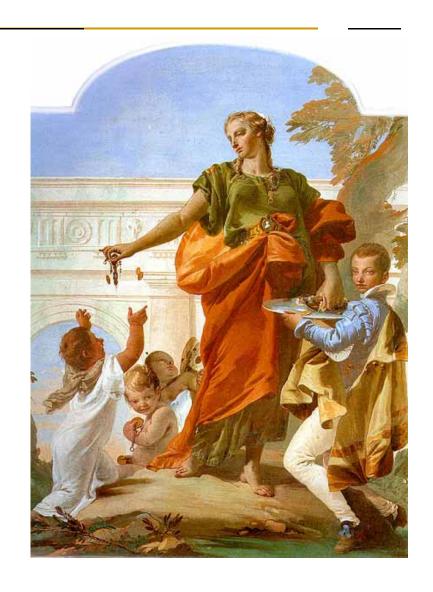# The Role of Reputations in Human Cooperation: Bridging Social and Biological Approaches

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Gilbert Roberts

Mark Van Vugt

Reputation as a mechanism

- Reputation is often suggested as *the* key mechanism for understanding the evolution of cooperation through indirect reciprocity.

- Reputation involves:

    Reputation management (on part of the "actor", self-presentation)

    Reputation assessment (on part of the "observer", attribution and judgment)

Reputation as a mechanism

Bridging:

      Social approaches: proximate mechanisms

      Biological approaches: ultimate explanations

      Theoretical benefits

      Methodological benefits ("logic of convergent operations")

What Social Psychology Has to Say

Emphasis on relatively automatic processes

     reputation management

     reputation assessment

People think in terms of categories (and less in terms of exemplars)

Reputation assessment may be product of implicit associations.

What Social Psychology Has to Say

Classic assumption:

The Person (e.g., social value orientation)
The Situation (e.g., noise)

Are essential to understanding "interpersonal mechanisms" (such as those underlying reputation).

The Person:

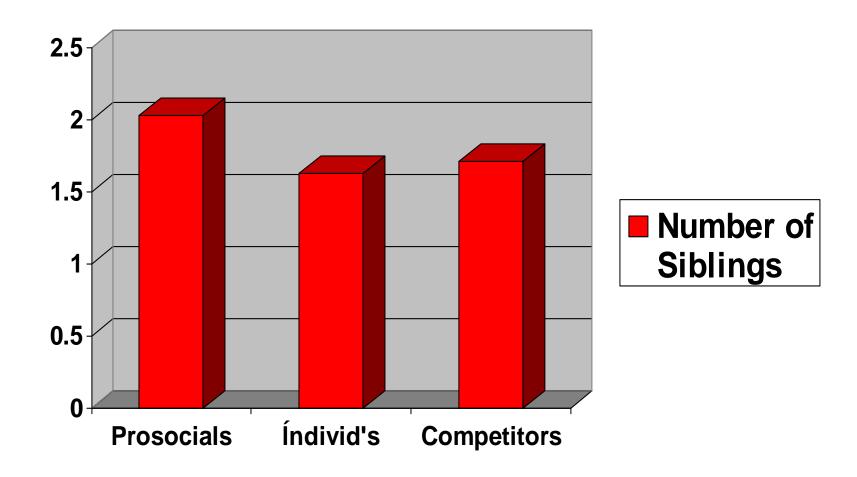Social value orientation as an illustration

Decomposed Game

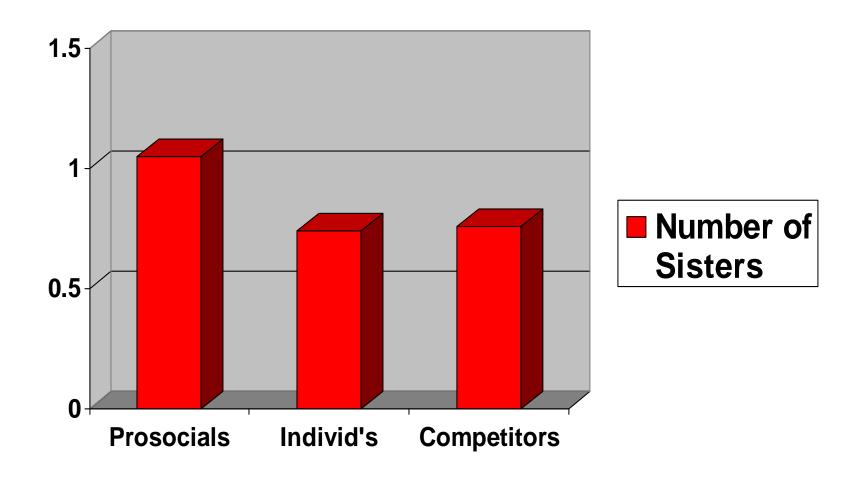|	A	B	C
You get	480	540	480
Other gets	80	280	480

Note: "Other" is hypothetical.
Points are valuable to both self and other.
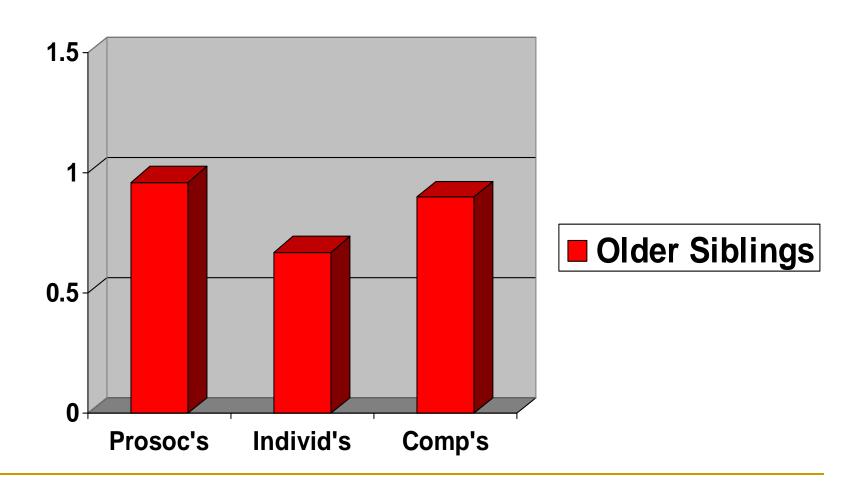
Social Value Orientations:

(1) prosocial orientation (50-60%)
   maximizing joint outcomes and
   equality in outcomes

(2) individualistic orientation (20-30%)
   maximizing own outcomes

(3) competitive orientation (10-15%)
   maximizing relative advantage

How many sisters do you have?

Individualists are more likely to the first-born

Relative to individualists and competitors, prosocials:

... Adopt a stronger morality scheme in evaluating other's actions

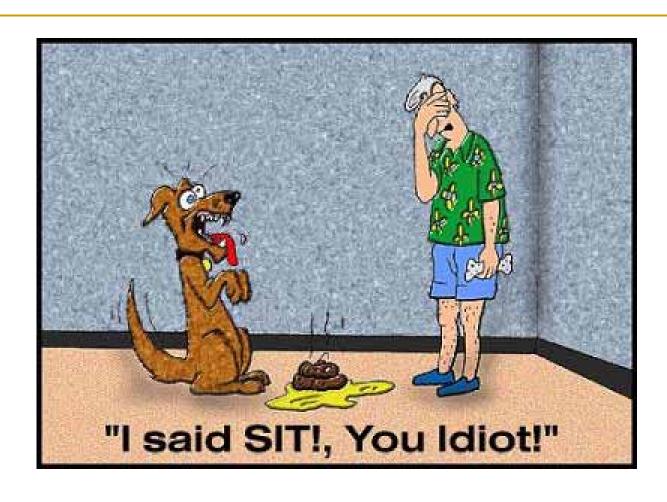... Are more likely to give *new* others the benefit of the doubt

... But do adhere to Tit-For-Tat logic (they are no walk-overs).

The Situation:

"Noise" as an illustration

(Noise = unintended errors that affect interaction outcomes)

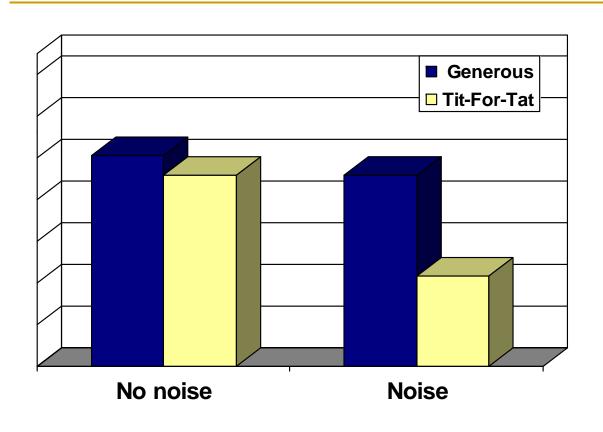Outcomes for the other are certainly
Less good than intended: negative noise

Benefits of Generosity

When there is negative noise:

Generous > Tit-For-Tat in social dilemmas

- Greater cooperation

- Greater reputation (impressions, trust, judgments of morality)

Pattern of prior studies

- Cooperation
- Pos. Impressions
- Pos. Thoughts
- Pos. Feelings

Klapwijk & Van Lange, 2007; Van Lange, Ouwerkerk, & Tazelaar, 2002

Some questions for future research

- Does a partner's generosity generalize to strangers? (Our research suggests that it does not). How about a partner's stinginess? We do not know yet.

- How about if there is an association between "partner" and stranger… What is the role of implicit associations (e.g., When the stranger shares some category-based features with the partner with whom we interacted).

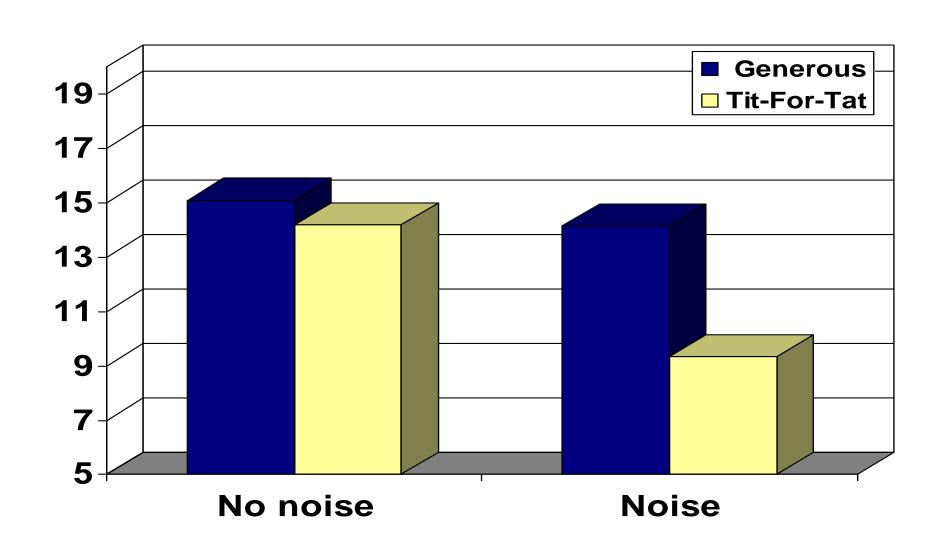Does this type of research have implications?

Did you know that:

(1)   Being Dutch = a category
(2)   And that category is associated (by some) with stinginess?

So, the Dutch should be especially careful with maintaing an good reputation – especially when in Belgium.

Donation of money

- After interaction had ended, we offered pp extra money.
- How much do you want to give to another PP in the lab?
- PPs could choose between donating: 0, 50, 100 or 150 cents
- Money was doubled for the receiver by experimenter.

- Manipulation of recipient:
  - Other pp was either 'known' (interaction partner) or 'stranger' (random other pp in the lab)

Cooperation (9 rounds)