

# Intuition and Cooperative Decision Making Focus of APS Registered Replication Report Project

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Editors of *Perspectives on Psychological Science* are now accepting proposals from researchers who would like to participate in a new Registered Replication Report (RRR) designed to replicate a 2012 experiment on cooperation and selfishness in economic decision making. The experiment, conducted by David G. Rand, Joshua D. Greene, and Martin A. Nowak, explored the hypothesis that people will be more likely to cooperate when they have to make quick, intuitive decisions.

In a one-shot, anonymous economic decision like that used in the original study, “rational” decision makers should not cooperate, because there are no personal benefits to cooperation and other players will have no opportunity to retaliate. According to the “social heuristic hypothesis,” though, when people have to make quick, intuitive decisions, they may rely on their more typical daily experience with non-anonymous interactions as the basis for their decision, leading them to cooperate.

In Studies 6 and 7 of their 2012 paper, Rand and colleagues measured how cooperative or self-interested participants were when they made this kind of one-shot decision. Specifically, they examined whether requiring participants to respond quickly (or slowly) affected their level of cooperation. Half of the participants were asked to decide how much money they would contribute to the whole group in less than 10 seconds. The other half were told to wait *at least* 10 seconds before deciding. In keeping with the social heuristic hypothesis, participants contributed more to the group, on average, when they were under time pressure than when they were given time to deliberate.

In the 3 years since the paper was published, a number of direct and conceptual replications have confirmed the positive relationship between intuitive judgments and cooperation, but others have not found the effect. In some cases, the measured size of the effect was substantially smaller than that observed in the 2012 studies.

Rand and colleagues have suggested that experience with one-shot economic games—through repeated participation in studies on MTurk, for example—might reduce or eliminate this intuitive-cooperation

effect.

“We thought a registered replication project would be a good way to determine the size of the intuitive-cooperation effect and whether experience moderates the effect,” says psychological scientist Peter Verkoeijen, who proposed the RRR along with colleague Samantha Bouwmeester. “We can let the data speak.”

This RRR will assess the size and variability of the intuitive-cooperation effect originally reported by Rand et al (2012) in Study 7, using naïve college-student participants in a laboratory setting.

“I am glad to see that there is widespread interest in exploring the cognitive underpinnings of human cooperation,” says Rand. “Convergent evidence exists for a positive link between intuition and cooperation, across numerous methods of experimentally manipulating the use of intuition versus deliberation. This registered replication report will be useful for further assessing the effectiveness of time pressure/delay as a manipulation in the context of cooperation.”

The replication project was developed by Verkoeijen and Bouwmeester using the original study materials provided by Rand. The comprehensive protocol includes step-by-step instructions, the program scripts needed to collect the data, and the questions used to assess participants’ prior research experiences. The protocol and all materials are available on the OSF website: <https://osf.io/scu2f/>

Researchers interested in participating in this replication project are encouraged to complete and submit a [Secondary Replication Proposal Form](#). Participation in the project will require running the experiment in an individual lab and analyzing the data, following [the detailed protocol](#). More information about how to participate can be found on the [OSF website](#).

All participating labs that follow the approved protocol will be included as authors on the comprehensive report that will be published in *Perspectives on Psychological Science*. As for all RRR projects, the results of all completed studies will be published regardless of their outcome.

The deadline to submit applications for participation in the RRR is **July 6, 2015**, and data collection must be completed by **May 1, 2016**. Note that if the editors receive a large number of applications before the **July 6** deadline, the submission process may be closed early.

## References

Rand, D. G., Greene, J. D., & Nowak, M. A. (2012). Spontaneous giving and calculated greed. *Nature*, 489, 427–430.