



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

# “Trust, Truth, Status and Identity”

by

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**Abstract:** In an experiment involving a standard trust game and a costless signaling game, it is demonstrated that economically relevant norm-based behaviors (trust, reciprocity and truth-telling) vary with *social* identity.

The experimental procedure induced two trivial social identities. In one version, a status difference was induced. The results permitted a succinct description of identity effects: subjects held own-group members to a higher standard; and high status subjects held everyone, including themselves, to a higher standard. To illustrate the “high status/high standards” phenomenon, subjects’ “standards” were estimated from a simple identity model for a subset of the data.

**Friday, May 8, 2009**

**3:30 – 5:00 pm**

**Kelley Engineering Center, Room 1001**