

Scientists study mistrustful relationships

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U.S. scientists say people often report mistrusting others who are different from them, but research doesn't support that contention.

Researchers at the University of Missouri-Columbia and the College of William and Mary found people's actions don't necessarily reflect their stated mistrust. The results of the study are contrary to findings of survey-based studies that have shown diversity hinders trust and cooperation.

"In most surveys, people have reported distrusting those who are different," said Associate Professor Jeffrey Milyo of the University of Missouri's Truman School of Public Affairs. "We wanted to find out if that was just talk, or if it impacted how people act.

"What we found was that differences did not significantly impact actions," he said. "Whatever people might say about trusting or not trusting others, their actions didn't reveal a difference."

Milyo and two colleagues from the College of William and Mary, Lisa Anderson and Jennifer Mellor, reported their research in the September issue of the journal *Experimental Economics*.

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