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Formalizing the Boundary Between Strategic and Nonstrategic Reasoning

It is common to distinguish between strategic behavior and other forms of intentional but "nonstrategic" behavior; cf. many prominent models in behavioral game theory. The literature gives no clear guidance on how computationally bounded non-strategic agents must be, instead singling out specific decision rules and asserting them to be nonstrategic. We propose a formal characterization of nonstrategic behavior, showing that: (1) it captures all "nonstrategic" decision rules of which we are aware; (2) it captures no strategic behavior, in a precise sense. Several computationally easy special cases of Nash equilibrium also satisfy our criterion.

Joint work with James Wright.