**Background**

Deception deprives people of two of the most principal instruments for interpersonal action—trust and belief.  

—Sir Francis Bacon

- Philosophers and scholars assume that deception is immoral, deception harms trust, and honesty is essential to moral character.
- Scholars have confused deception with self-interest in nearly all investigations of deception.
- As a result, we do not know what deception per se does.
- In this research, we examine:
  1) Does deception, per se, harm trust?
  2) How do people value honesty and benevolence when they conflict?

**Studies 1 and 2: Prosocial lying and trusting behavior**

- Study 1: Mturk, N= 125; experience deception
- Study 2: Behavioral Lab, N = 257; observe deception

**Design:**
- Participants play (observe) a deception game in which their partner (a target) either tells a prosocial lie or is selfishly honest.
- **Prosocial Lie:** Lie about the outcome of a coin flip in order to generate $1.75 for partner, $1 for self
- **Selfish Truth:** Accurately report the outcome of a coin flip in order to generate $0 for partner, $2 for self
- Participants play a trust game with the partner (target)

**Study 3:**

Disentangling prosocial intentions from deception

Study 3: Mturk, N = 974

**Design:**
- 2(Choice set: altruistic lie-selfish truth vs. selfish lie-altruistic truth) x 3(Intentions: altruistic, selfish, no information)
- Participants learn about a deception game that was played by a confederate (in which lying was either selfish or altruistic), and then learn that the confederate either made the selfish decision (which was honest or deceptive), the altruistic decision (which was honest or deceptive), or they do not learn the confederate's decision. Then, they play a trust game with the confederate.

**Main findings:**
- Prosocial decisions (regardless of whether or not they are deceptive) increase trust (relative to no information).
- Perceived benevolence matters very much in the trust game; perceived honesty does not matter at all.

**Study 4:**

What about different types of trust?

The trust game captures benevolence-based trust, which characterizes some of our most important trust decisions (e.g., Kim et al., 2006), such as the decision to loan money or property to another person or the decision to rely on someone for emotional support. Some trust decisions, however, reflect perceptions of integrity rather than benevolence. In Study 4, we introduce a new trust game, to capture integrity-based trust: the Rely-Or-Verify game.

**Payoffs in the Rely-or-Verify game** are structured such that:
- For Player 1: providing inaccurate information is risky.
- For Player 2: verification is costly, but minimizes risk.

**Conclusions**

- Deception can increase trust.
- Identical decisions can have divergent effects on different types of trust (benevolence-based trust versus integrity-based trust).
- The trust game only captures one type of trust. We introduce a new tool to measure integrity-based trust.
- Future research should distinguish between different types of trust and disentangle the importance of benevolence and integrity for different decisions and relationships.