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## Linguistic signaling, emojis, and skin tone in trust games

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### ABSTRACT

This paper reports the results of an experiment involving text-messaging and emojis in laboratory trust games executed on mobile devices. Decomposing chat logs, I find that trust increases dramatically with the introduction of emojis to one-shot games, while reciprocation increases only modestly. Skin tones embedded in emojis impact sharing and resulting gains – to the benefit of some and detriment to others. Both light and dark skin players trust less on receipt of a dark skin tone emoji – suggestive of statistical discrimination. In this way, computer-mediated communication leads to reduced gains for dark-skinned persons. These results highlight the complex social judgment that motivates trust in an anonymous counterpart.

### ATTACHMENTS

[EmojiBabinSupplemental.pdf](#)



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