



# Interpersonal Deception

aka...Your Cheating Heart

## Interpersonal Deception

Buller & Burgoon



Many researchers have studied liars and lying. David Buller and Judee Burgoon are among the best known with their Interpersonal Deception Theory (IDT). They assert that people commonly use three strategies to deceive:

- Falsification — creating a story to cover the truth
- Concealment — hiding the facts
- Equivocation — dodging or evading the issue

While most people believe they can detect a lie, IDT says otherwise. Few people are able to identify a lie more than 50% of the time. One of the reasons we are wrong so often—or fail to believe that the cheating heart is close to us—is our persistent belief that most people are honest. We have a **truth bias**.

Do you think this bias toward believing in others is helpful or harmful?

## *The look of love?*



Buller and Burgoon found that nonverbal cues are not necessarily reliable indicators of deception outside a laboratory. Other communications researchers, such as Zuckerman and Driver, have studied how our body reveals when we are being deceptive. Their “leakage hierarchy” of which body parts give us away doesn’t always apply to interpersonal communications within the family. Whether or not the deceiver succeeds often depends on how suspicious or how trusting the other person is. IDT claims that truth tellers often act like liars when confronted with suspicions.

**Trust makes us both confident in detecting deception and vulnerable to being deceived.**