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Evidence of Bose-Einstein Condensation in an Atomic Gas with Attractive Interactions [Phys. Rev. Lett. 75, 1687 (1995)]

C. C. Bradley, C. A. Sackett, J. J. Tollett, and R. G. Hulet

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In our Letter, we interpreted our observation of halolike distortions in absorption images of ultracold ⁷Li clouds as evidence for Bose-Einstein condensation (BEC). The lens used to produce the images was thought to be nearly diffraction limited. We subsequently determined that the lens actually suffered from substantial spherical aberration, which played a significant role in the formation of the halos. A new analysis of the original data is presented in Ref. [1], and later experiments with an improved imaging system are described in Ref. [2]. Because of the aberration, the estimate of the number of condensate atoms in the Letter was inaccurate. While we stated that the images were consistent with as many as 2×10^5 condensate atoms, it is now clear that only about 10^3 condensate atoms were present. Nevertheless, the conclusion of the Letter that the halos were indicative of BEC does not change in light of these later results.

[2] C.C. Bradley, C.A. Sackett, and R.G. Hulet, Phys. Rev. Lett. 78, 985 (1997).

^[1] C.C. Bradley, C.A. Sackett, and R.G. Hulet, Phys. Rev. A 55, 3951 (1997).