

Mine



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

“ Our acceptance of lies becomes a cultural cancer that eventually shrouds and reorders reality until moral garbage becomes as invisible to us as water is to a fish. ” – Stephanie Ericsson I know a friend whose biggest pet peeve is lying. And I had to ask him, “ Do you think honest is always the best policy? ” His response: “ I try to be as honest as possible.

Very rarely do I think lying’s the best [for any situation]. ” But what if he knew how lying is inevitable in our everyday lives and how they could be of use in certain situations, like Ericsson’s Vietnam veteran example? In “ The Ways We Lie”, Ericsson covers on the many ways we lie in our daily lives, besides the typical deceptive statements. Some include the notorious ‘ white lies’, omission, delusion, facades, and groupthink scenarios. Lies are mostly devices for selfish motives or self-promotion (though I think anything is rarely selfless), but is it really necessary to call these lies “ moral garbage”? Granted, Ericsson does acknowledge that some of these lies can be honorable or functional for living. For instance, if we all kept in mind the perils that are rife in this world, I doubt we could ever want to carry out any part of our lives beyond one step. So we use delusion to tell ourselves that everything’ll be okay.

Or how about the white lie? A former sergeant during the Vietnam War (the veteran as mentioned before) knew that one of his men was killed during a mission. However, he listed him as missing in action so that his family would receive a larger compensation than if he listed him as killed in action. Or. . .

hat if you lived during the Third Reich movement in Germany and you knew where your Jewish neighbors were hiding out? Would you rat them out even

if you were worried about them? Then in “ The Insufficiency of Honesty” by Stephen Carter, he states that honesty can actually be used quite selfishly. In fact, there are key differences between honesty and integrity: “ Honesty is most laudable when we risk harm to ourselves; it becomes a good deal less so if we instead risk harm to others when there is no gain to anyone other than ourselves. Integrity may counsel keeping our secrets in order to spare the feelings of others. Sometimes, as in the example of the wayward husband, the reason we want to tell what we know is precisely to shift our pain onto somebody else - a course of action dictated less by integrity than by self-interest.

” Some of his examples where complete honesty is uncalled for includes a man on his deathbed confessing to his wife about his affair, the confidentiality between a lawyer and his/her client, and a Catholic priest’s excommunication if he reveals people’s confessions. In addition, a person can be honest about their beliefs and their intentions but can also neglect his/her responsibilities. Maybe as an employer, a teacher, a parent, or a spouse to name a few. For instance, a manager was taught his whole life that women aren’t as smart as men. So he gives his female employees tasks that he believes they’ll be more apt to apply themselves.

Although he’s being true to his beliefs, he fails to take responsibility as an equitable manager and as a representative of his company. Before I’ve read the two essays, I made a conclusion similar to Carter’s: absolving one’s self can be done out of self-interest. Have you noticed why people confess to loved one about how they’ve wronged them? Most of the time, the apparent reason is to rid the burden of guilt. Could that in itself be seen as selfish? In

the end, we can agree that both telling a lie and the truth has the potential of causing harm in this world of self-interest. Furthermore, the perceptions of deception, honesty, and how both tie into integrity depends on individual interpretations.

Or it could be just a matter of word choice. . . Sources: -“ The Ways We Lie”:  
[http://classroom.quixoticpedagogue.org/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=.](http://classroom.quixoticpedagogue.org/index.php?option=com_docman&task=)

.. -“ The Insufficiency of Honesty”:  
<http://www.csun.edu/~hfmgt001/honesty.doc>