

Did George Washington Ever Tell a Lie

We Americans like to say George Washington wouldn't tell lies because he was our first president. But you know he did. Everyone does.

Harriet Lerner writes, "Deception and con games are a way of life in all species and throughout nature. Organisms that do not improve their ability to deceive-and to detect deception-are less apt to survive."

That's some quote, isn't it?

What do you think about lying?

Is it "right" sometimes and "wrong" others? Are there white, black and gray lies?

What lie did you tell today? I lied when I said I would never again ride a bus more than twenty miles. I lied about my weight on my driver's license. (Shaved off four pounds)

Think of this: Through outwitting predators our species survived.

Survival is a basic instinct hard-wired into our brains. As our brains evolved, we developed cooperation. That involves trust and telling the truth. That, too, helped us survive: tribal teamwork.

A capitalistic economy is the natural result of these two instincts in our subconscious, primitive minds: competition and cooperation.

In any business both buyer and seller must trust each other and yet believe that he or she got, if not the best, at least an equal deal.

There's may be some shaving of the truth on either side but belief is what matters.

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I'm excited about current brain research applied to economics.

Using neuro-imaging, scientists are looking inside the mind to see why people buy, sell, save or trust. They see which part of the brain lights up during financial negotiations.

Researchers at MIT wired the brains of currency speculators. They plotted the biological indicators of stress, exuberance and tension against real time profit and loss. Such measures document how involuntary emotions affect the rise and fall of stocks.

Harvard economist David Lailson says, "Our emotional brain wants to max out the credit card even though our logical brain knows we should save for retirement."

But you know that. Advertisers know that every purchase is emotional, right out of the midbrain. When I recall how many times I bought something and then lied to my husband about its costs!

I'll stop confessing and wrap up with these:

- * George Washington lied because he was human
- * It may be normal to lie, but only momentarily profitable
- * It's normal to lie to ourselves, but always **un**profitable to do so.

And one more quote:

"The people who burned witches at the stake never for one moment thought of their act as violence; rather they thought of it as an act of divinely mandated righteousness. The same can be said of most of the violence we humans have ever committed." Gil Bailie

This can be paraphrased: The people who swindled others never for one moment thought of their actions as wrong; rather they thought of it as capitalistically mandated righteousness. The same can be said of most of the high stakes gambles corporations take.

It's called "white-collar crime". They lie to themselves saying, "Everyone does it, and we can get away with it."

Maybe George W did lie. It's human to lie, but "To thine own self, be true." When you are true to yourself and understand your motives, all of your lies will be white ones.

To tell you the truth, I want everyone to investigate all the ways to learn about subconscious motives.

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