Our discussion about the desirability and practicality of practicing radical honesty got me thinking about who actually is radically honest. I would love to somehow get inside the brains of every person on campus and see if (as we hypothesized in class) there is a trend towards people with more privilege being more honest, since they can afford to do so. Not having this type of omniscient technology, I’ll have to settle for seeing how people self-report their honesty level. As I imagine it currently, my midterm project would consist of sending out a survey to the UChicago community where, along with recording their role on campus (Undergraduate Student, Graduate Student, Staff Member, Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Tenured Professor, etc.) and some demographic information, I ask them to estimate how many times per day they think they lie, and how they’d rate themselves on an honesty scale.

I would hope to use this data to find some sort of correlation between people’s level of social privilege (measured by their role on campus and some demographic data) and their own estimations of their lying activity. While this isn’t a perfect representation of how much someone lies in day-to-day life, I think it would be interesting to investigate nonetheless.

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What are the attitudes towards radical honesty between people of varying levels of privilege?

**Hypothesis**: Folks with more privilege (in certain contexts) are more open to being honest in those contexts

Come up with a bunch of different questions, asking things like:

* Is it okay to lie in X,Y,Z situations
* Give an example of a situation in which someone lies — Q: is this ok?
* Examples of lying:
  + Telling your professor that you have to miss class because of a job interview when in fact you’re just not doing okay and need to stay home
  + Overstating your accomplishments/skills on your resume
  + Telling someone you’ve had sex with fewer people than is true
  + Telling someone you’ve had sex with more people than is true
  + Telling a friend that they look good in a new outfit (that they really like?), when in fact they do not
  + When a friend asks if you’re doing okay, saying you’re fine, even when you are having a hard time
  + [ask friends for more?]
  + [look in lie logs?]

Radical honesty categories:

* Reason
  + Self-oriented:
    - Psychological reasons
      * **You’ve had a rough week and need to take a break and stay home for a day. Unfortunately, the class you have that morning assigns grades based on attendance, except for “excused absences.” Not knowing whether your mental health is an excused absence, you tell the professor that you have to miss class because of a job interview.**
      * **A friend of yours asks you if you got an offer from the company that you had been interviewing at. You got rejected, but instead tell them that you got an offer and turned it down.**
      * **Immediately before a tough midterm, your partner of two years unexpectedly breaks up with you. You manage to make it through the rest of your day in a haze. When you get home, you meet your roommate (and best friend) in the kitchen. They ask you how you’ve been and you say “Oh, it’s okay,” and then head into your room.**
    - Personal advantage
      * **You learned Mandarin in high school and haven’t spoken it consistently in years, but you say you are fluent in Mandarin on your resume.**
      * **Ostensibly in order to ask you on a date, someone asks for your phone number. Not wanting them to contact you, you purposefully give them the wrong number.**
      * **A telemarketer calls you and asks if it is your main phone number. Not wanting them to call you again, you say no, and give them the wrong number instead.**
      * **You tell a potential employer that you have other job offers you are considering, when in fact you do not.**
  + Other-oriented
    - (their) psychological reasons
      * **When asked by a potential romantic partner, you lie about the number of sexual partners you have had.**
      * **Your friend asks you if they look good in an outfit they just bought and are really excited about — you don’t think it looks great, but you say they look fantastic.**
      * **Your roommate bakes cookies and offers you some. After eating them, you tell the roommate they are very tasty, when in fact they’re pretty bland.**
      * **Your partner of one year is about to go into surgery. Although you are worried about serious complications, you tell them that there is nothing to worry about.**
      * **You sit in on a meeting between your boss and their boss. Your boss is giving a presentation — while not terrible, it is certainly subpar. After the meeting, when your boss asks you in private how you think the meeting went, you tell them they did a great job.**
      * **This morning you discovered that your partner of three years was cheating on you. Before lunch you got rejected from a job that you really wanted. As you’re waiting in line to get coffee you make eye contact with someone you vaguely know from Hum. They ask you how your day is going and you manage a smile and say “Fine!”**
    - (their) personal advantage
      * **While working on a group project, you offer to take on more responsibility for the work. When one the members in your group objects, you tell them “Don’t worry, I can do it” — even as you realize it might be too much for you to handle alone.**
      * **Your boss is heaping praise on a project that you did mostly on your own. As they compliment you, you tell them that your colleague did most of the work, so they deserve the praise.**

The following questions will lay out hypothetical situations in which you lie. The lies may be to benefit yourself or to benefit the person you are lying to. Please consider the situations separately and decide whether or not it is okay to lie in that context.

Demographic Questions:

* What year are you?
* What is your race?
* What is your gender?
* What is your sexual orientation?

Hi! I’m doing research for a class on lying and deception and would love it if y’all could fill out a short survey I’ve created. It shouldn’t take more than 2-3 minutes and is completely anonymous. Thanks!

<https://forms.gle/bbJadDFPyRLdrp626>