

# SECRET THOUGHTS

BY DWAYNE GODWIN AND JORGE CHAM

HOW DID WE EVOLVE TO TELL LIES?

a sabertooth tiger!      where!?

IT'S NOT HARD TO IMAGINE AN EVOLUTIONARY ADVANTAGE TO LYING...

BUT IF IT CAME TOO EASILY, HOW LONG WOULD CIVILIZED SOCIETY LAST?

you lying cheater!      i lied?? you lied!!

DECEPTION IN NATURE IS NOT UNUSUAL...

ooh, pretty...

heads or tails?

...BUT THE ABILITY TO KNOWINGLY OBSCURE THE TRUTH FOR A SPECIFIC GOAL ("TACTICAL DECEPTION") IS RELATIVELY NEW: IT ONLY OCCURS AMONG HUMANS AND CLOSE PRIMATES.

he did it.

SCIENTISTS HAVE PIN-POINTED SPECIFIC AREAS IN THE BRAIN THAT LIGHT UP WHEN WE LIE.

brain scanner

i am not uncomfortable.

LIE!

THESE AREAS ARE MOSTLY IN THE PRE-FRONTAL CORTEX (THE FRONT OF THE BRAIN) AND ARE THE SAME AREAS THAT GOVERN OUR HIGHER BRAIN FUNCTIONS.

"no, honey, you don't look fat."

IN OTHER WORDS, LYING IS A HIGH-LEVEL ACTIVITY THAT REQUIRES US TO FORCIBLY OVERRIDE NORMAL BEHAVIOR.

uh...

WHICH IS WHY SOME PEOPLE ARE BETTER LIARS THAN OTHERS. FOR EXAMPLE, PATHOLOGICAL LIARS HAVE A PRE-FRONTAL CORTEX THAT IS UP TO 26% LARGER THAN IN NORMAL PEOPLE!

is that why politicians always have big heads?

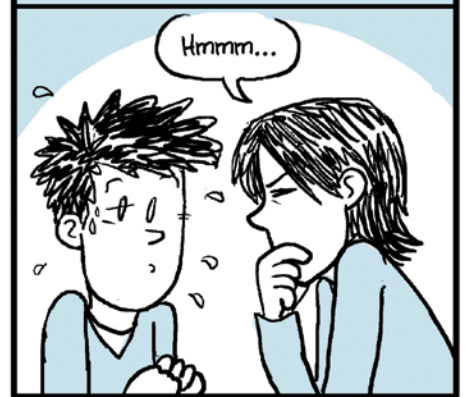
WHAT PEOPLE KNOW AS "TRUTH SERUM" (STILL IN USE TODAY) IS SIMPLY A DRUG THAT DISRUPTS HIGHER BRAIN FUNCTION AND LOWERS YOUR INHIBITIONS. IT DOESN'T ACTUALLY MAKE YOU TELL THE TRUTH.



PEOPLE FEEL A CERTAIN "PERFORMANCE ANXIETY" WHEN LYING, PRECISELY BECAUSE IT REQUIRES EXTRA COGNITIVE EFFORT.



INVOLUNTARY MOVEMENTS OR CHANGES IN HEARTBEAT OR VOICE PITCH CAN ALERT OTHERS THAT YOU ARE TRYING TO GET AWAY WITH SOMETHING.



AND SOME PEOPLE ARE BETTER THAN OTHERS AT NOTICING THESE NON-VERBAL CUES.



STUDENTS OF HUMAN NATURE CAN BECOME EXPERTS AT DETECTING EVEN THE SLIGHTEST TELLTALE GESTURES.

OF COURSE, THE MOST DANGEROUS LIES ARE THE LIES WE TELL OURSELVES.



MOST OF US CAN TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE IMAGINED AND THE REAL, BUT PATIENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA PROCESS IMAGINARY EVENTS THROUGH THE SAME BRAIN AREAS THAT PROCESS SENSORY EVENTS, FOOLING THE BRAIN INTO THINKING IT ACTUALLY HAPPENED.



A COMMON (AND SCIENTIFICALLY ESTABLISHED) MISTAKE IS TO LET PRE-JUDGEMENTS ABOUT A PERSON'S PERCEIVED "TRUSTWORTHINESS" CLOUD WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE LYING TO YOU...



...DESPITE ALL EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY.



FOR EXAMPLE, DID YOU STOP TO THINK WHETHER ANYTHING WE'VE SAID IS ACTUALLY TRUE...

