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In, a managerato Studies reveal that college students tell about two fibs each day

By MICHAEL SCHAUB Staff writer

eborah Kashy, assistant professor of psychology at Texas A&M, tells a story about her favorite lie.

A young woman told her current boyfriend oing all the right she broke up with her previous boyfriend after who will play H she caught him lying. The only problem was, she was lying about the

dhe is excited to whole thing. The reason: so she could emphasize her new beau the importance of honesty. It is an ironic example of what has become r really come out an everyday fact. People lie, and that seems to e the truth.

Kashy co-wrote a paper on lying in everyday fe for the Journal of Personality and Social ychology.

"We interviewed 77 University of Virginia stuents and 70 people from the community," ashy said. "They had to fill out a questionnaire fter interacting with someone. If they intenonally tried to deceive somebody, they had to cord what lie they told and how serious it was. The study revealed that lying was universal, but

nore common among certain demographics. "College students lie more," Kashy said. "College idents tended to tell about two lies a day, while e community members told about one a day."

While college students were more dishonest an their townie counterparts, the reasons for eir lies were similar, Kashy said. "When you lie in everyday life, you're saving

ce, [or] saving somebody else's face," Kashy aid. "Everyday lies aren't 'I had an affair' lies, but nore like 'You look really great' or 'I did well on

People avoid "little white lies" in their relationships with close friends and family, Kashy said.

When people tell really serious lies, those tend to be very much told to the closest people in their lives," she said. "People tend to tell every-

"Everyday lies aren't 'I had an affair' lies, but more like 'You look really great' or 'I did well on that test' lies."

DEBORAH KASHY

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

day lies to people they're not close to — to acquaintances and strangers.'

However, Kashy said that is not always the case. With the exception of mothers, people lie to mothers a lot" she said. "One student reported that he told his mom he didn't drink beer at college. We classified that as an 'outright lie.'

Although women and men seem to lie the same amount, research has shown people tend to lie to women more casually than they lie to men, Kashy said.

"When people lie to women, they tend to plan it less seriously," she said. "They're less afraid of getting caught. They're more likely to think that women believe them.'

And lovers, take note: People are more likely to lie to their boyfriend or girlfriend than they are to their spouse, Kashy said.

But lying tends to become less common as people get older.

"Older people do tend to lie less," Kashy said. The older you get, I guess, the less you care. They figure they earned it."

Kashy said although serious lies can have serious ramifications everyday lies are not necessarily destructive.

"Lying in everyday life is not a moral issue; it's a fact of everyday interaction," Kashy said. "It's a matter of keeping social interaction going smoothly. I'm not trying to say it's good or bad or whatever, but when we lie in everyday life, it's to make life a little more pleasant.'

The Rev. Michael Sis of St. Mary's Catholic Church said lying can spiritually harm people.

"On one hand, it erodes their self-image, their trust in their integrity, their relationships," Sis said. 'Spiritually, it violates the commandment, 'Thou shalt not bear false witness to thy neighbor."

Lying also has some practical drawbacks,

"It just gets you in trouble," he said. "It makes you work too hard. You always have to be thinking of ways to cover up your lies.

Anne Wichman, a junior psychology major, said she agrees.

"It tears down your integrity," Wichman said. "Small lies add up to where you don't trust anyone or even yourself."

Sis said he frequently counsels people who have a problem with their own deception. "People view truth-telling as part of their selfdignity," Sis said. "It's part of the ongoing project

of maintaining self-esteem." Sis said he agrees with Kashy that everyday lies may not be as bad as more serious falsehoods.

"Some lies are worse, definitely," he said. "Not all lies are created equal."

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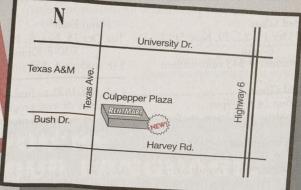
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