

# The Art of Deception

Ethics. Integrity. Morals. What do those words mean to you? What would you do if you were caught in a situation where the only "easy" escape may be a little dishonesty?

When it comes to education, 64 percent of the 300,000 students interviewed said that they have cheated on a test and one-third of them said that they did it more than once.

Nearly half of the 30,000 teens said that they lie to save money and 83 percent said that they lied about something important to their parents.

## Academic Fraud Abroad

According to the Education Testing Service, academic cheating is defined as naming another individual's work as your own. Nobody likes to admit it, but students cheat. One way or another, one can bet readers of all stages of life have at least thought about cheating. Whether looking for the right answer on a difficult test or an easy way out of a tedious assignment, most students have thought about it. So what compels students to cheat?

"I used to copy all of my friend's math assignments in 8th grade because I just didn't feel like doing [the assignments]," senior Lira Carol said. A sense of laziness and procrastination often litters the foundation of cheating. Ironically, a desire to overachieve can lead students to cheat in school. In fact, more emphasis on a grade rather than the learning process teaches kids to just earn the grade, no matter what the cost. Today, between 75 to 98 percent of college students admit to cheating at some point in high school, according to the Education Testing Service. An intense feel for competition can also motivate students to cheat—if a peer is cheating and getting a higher grade, they will feel like that is the right choice to make because it is giving the grade they deserve.

"I hear about cheating all the time: in my social science class [almost] all of us texted each other answers just before a quiz," an anonymous senior said. And not everyone feels obligated to make a fuss when they catch someone looking over at their paper. As a result, it continues to happen.

It is not condemned among friends so why should anyone feel any more obligated when teachers warn not to? That kind of attitude stems from the idea that students will not get punished if they are caught at all. Students feel that the consequences are not intimidating, especially in middle and high school, and that it is so easy to get away with that there is hardly a reason not to be academically dishonest.

But there is. Spending however many minutes or hours someone takes to memorize answers to a test or copy an assignment word for word can easily be translated into working on actual studying. Not only will that not leave a gaping hole in one's dignity, but it will help to absorb the information much better. Students will actually learn. Teachers reiterate it all the time, but it holds tremendous value: Cheating in school only cheats the student themselves.

By: Astrid Tovar StaffWriter

## Dishonesty as a Policy

Growing up nearly everyone has heard the sing-song rhyme "Liar, liar, pants on fire, hanging from a telephone wire." It is a simple chant that ridicules one for telling a lie but it also symbolizes how in the earlier stages of adolescence, telling anything, but the truth was a terrible crime. Thus, people may begin to wonder how teenagers can feel so comfortable with lying when they were raised with the mindset that dishonesty was so bad that it equaled public humiliation.

Circumstances that provoke lying come up fairly often for teenagers. According to a survey of 30,000 teens by the Josephson Institute, a majority of the youth have been dishonest. Almost half of those surveyed admitted to concealing the truth for money-saving issues and 83 percent revealed that they hide an important fact from their parent.

Now, what are the circumstances that bait teens into being this dishonest? Students will sometimes experience undesirable pressure in a situation where they feel like they are the center of attention. Naturally, they would start to sweat and try to come up with every possible solution to get out of that predicament. The circumstances can vary from being asked an embarrassing question by peers that will define their social standing to being pushed into doing a deed that they do not desire in order to protect a person's feelings.

Being in high school, these incidents are more than likely to occur depending on how social the student is. In the beginning, pupils may be less willing to tell the truth because they are afraid. If they lie, they may be able to get away from the situation easily.

By telling a small fib, one can be saved from possibly having to go to the school dance with an unwanted date whose feelings one wishes to leave unharmed. All the person simply has to say is, "I can't go because I'm grounded for the weekend, sorry," and the problem is gone. The recipient does not feel the pain of rejection and the other can avoid an awkward situation.

However, a white lie can backfire fairly easily, causing more problems than actually telling the truth. What if people who were rejected found out they were deceived? Wouldn't they be more offended than if they were just told 'no'? Most of the time, white lies are used to protect someone, or oneself, but generally more harm is done by saying these than there is in saying the truth.

By: Sarah Takhar Staff-Writer

## Stealing Integrity

Stealing is very common. Most thieves are witnesses or the felons themselves. Adolescents are constantly faced with challenges that ultimately boil down to ethics. What causes stealing?

What are the consequences that make everything okay?

How often do people steal?

When asked why people steal, students offer compelling possibilities.

"They feel the need to possess the item [because] they have no other way to obtain it or [maybe it can result from] peer pressure; but I've never stolen anything in my life," junior Henry Chen said.

One out of eleven people have stolen an item, according to the National Learning and Resource Center. Reasons can vary and shoplifters are not common with just one gender; it can be anyone. "People steal because they want something without the hassle of paying for it. I've stolen one thing before, not knowingly though. That was the only time," sophomore Danielle Giberti said.

According to the National Learning and Resource Center, about 25 percent of shoplifters are kids and 55 percent of adult shoplifters say they started shoplifting in their teens. Some teens don't completely know the consequences of shoplifting. The consequences are far greater than people merely risking themselves getting caught and destroying their integrity.

Shoplifting actually overburdens the police, costs consumers more for goods and causes communities to lose dollars in sales taxes which negatively impacts families.

It's not worth it. According to an LA Times article, shoplifting can even indicate deeper emotional problems, such as trouble with feeling in control and impulsiveness. Self-worth and ethical values are constant reminders to keep stealing at bay.

By: Michelle Paulino StaffWriter

In a survey of 30,000 teens, statistics reveal that one out of every four teens have stolen something from a parent and one out of every five teens have taken something from a friend.

MOORgraphics by: Sharon Trang

"Reputation and character are two different things. Character is doing the right thing when nobody's looking. There are too many people who think that the only thing that's right is to get by, and the only thing that's wrong is to get caught."  
-J. C. Watts



Cartoons By: Mikaela Chu

"Character is like a tree and reputation like a shadow. The shadow is what you think of it; the tree is the real thing."  
-Abraham Lincoln