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Truth or dare game

I've been thinking about what truth means lately. With almost no effort I can find contradictory articles, thoughts, perspectives, statements, and opinions on almost everything discussed today. I'm sure our election cycle is to reinforce this, but I see this in a lot of things I read about tech as well. As someone who sees independent critical thinking as extremely important, this dynamic is puzzling to me. A few months ago I wrote a post about TruthRank vs PageRank. It started me on a path where I began to separate types of truth. Specifically, I have begun to refer to your truth versus the truth. When I tell your truth I don't refer to opinions. I refer to your deeply held beliefs. Your truth is the set of ideas that form the basis of your view of the world. It takes a tremendous amount of wisdom and introspection for you to change your truth. To understand this better, I'd like to use a classic example from tech — to Steve Ballmer's view of the iPhone, and then his approach to the mobile business. Let's set the stage with a classic interview with Ballmer at the time the iPhone is announced in 2007. Now, let's look at Ballmer's reflections on this in 2014. As part of this arc, Ballmer's big resolve was to move Microsoft from a software only company to software + services and then software + devices. For many years, Microsoft was disdainful of Apple's tightly linked hardware + software business. In a final focus of reactionary behavior, Microsoft bought Nokia in 2014 for \$7.2 billion and then wrote off \$7.6 billion just over a year later. Ballmer had his truth. It was stronger than an opinion. It shaped his whole view of the world. He held on to it for seven years (or probably longer). And, at least when it comes to mobile, it was all wrong. That wasn't the truth. I see this in all aspects of the world. It's noisiest in politics right now, but it's common through all aspects of society. I drive into it constantly in business and technology — both at the macro level (about the industry) and a micro level (within a company). Similarly, it is different from an opinion (which may be wrong and/or invalidated over time), it is different from strategy. I always felt that a strategy was the framework for performing your truth. Strategies evolve and opinions change but your truth doesn't. And herein lies the problem. I see people clinging to their truth for far too long. They're holding on too tight. They turn an opinion into their truth. They extrapolate their truth from a small number of data points. It generalizes an experience to create its truth. They react emotionally to something they disagree with and anchor to their truth. They justify their behavior by holding on to their truth. In many of these situations, individual critical thinking goes out the window. The internal bias behavior of your truth dominates. You stop listening to other perspectives, to process them, to think about and to develop your opinion. Instead of deeply held beliefs, you end up with a superficial and self-righteous perspective that you cling to endlessly rather than thinking hard about what is actually happening. I embrace the idea of seeking the truth. I love the construction of deeply held beliefs as a framework for it. I challenge everyone to think harder about what the truth actually is, rather than just sticking to your truth to justify your perspective. Remember, the truth is out there. Originally published on Field Thoughts. Join Hacker Noon. Create your free account to unlock your personalized reading experience. You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. — Middle East Proverb You lie online. It can be a lie to sell something or a lie to make yourself feel better. You can lie to help someone else or maybe to make another feel worse. Maybe you're just exaggerating. You're bragging. That's not lying, is it? You just have to expand something to be more than it should be. There's no harm in that, is there? It would probably not be any harm if we didn't live such a nuanced life. A compulsive smile is just a glimpse away from a real grin. A really good product is just a few words away from a product that often fails to work. A cool link is a millisecond away from a link we share just because someone shared a link of our own. It's just nuance. The truth that lies within you does not arise as a blazing scepter for the world to see. It peeks out into wisps and glimmers through the shade of your everyday life. It flutters about the stream of clicks and characters you produce as you move around and share online. Have you seen it? Can you point to a conversation and say: Aha! It. That's my truth! or are you forced to rifle through your words and excuse yourself for not lying overtly? My sister often makes a joke that everyone drives faster online, referring to how people lie about things online. But if we allow the behavior of the masses to choose the way in which we share or sniff our truth, what happens? What happens to society made up of people who just pretend to like each other? Is it a tribe that will bring about real change in the world or will it end in a disappointing trail of tears? I fear for all communities that displace the truth in pursuit of short-term goals. I fear for every person who throws away their beliefs in the name of fame and glory. Can't we build real communities that trust each other or have we been sucked into an echo chamber that insists community is about the number of people who sign up and have nothing to do with the number that shows up? Are we so worn out as a people that we should always withhold good things from those who do not make an effort to lie to our faces with caramelized exaggeration? Will we continue to lie? Or should we take a look in the mirror and ask our reflection to show us some truth? If we can find that truth and hold it tight with unwavering palms, I think we will find the freedom from work, or pain, or tribulation. But freedom from the little guilt that gouge away at our joy. When we can look at our conversations and say, yes, there's my truth. I think we will discover more grin in our day and hands reaching out to catch us as we begin to fall. Picture: Giampolo Macarig And in the process, he and the show that has shaped him—reckons once again with the totalizing power of lies. Megan Garber April 15, 2019 Now I understand why you haven't immolated me. HBO This story contains spoilers through season 8, Episode 1 of Game of Thrones. It was Sam who shared the news. Reeling from the discovery that Daenerys had summarily executed his father and brother after they had refused to pledge their allegiance to her, Game of Thrones resident intellectuals find Jon in the crypt of Winterfell, where the bodies are buried and myths about the dead live on. Sam, his voice bursting with anger, conveys the political consequences of his family's tragedy: that the Queen who has portrayed herself as an agent of justice may also be the other way around. Had Jon been in Daenerys' position, Sam insists, pivoting to the reason he has sought Jon among the graves, Jon would have prioritized mercy over revenge. He's done that before, after all. I wasn't a king, Jon replies, rejecting Sam's assessment. But it was you, sam says. You always have been. I gave up my crown, Sam. I bent my knee. I'm not king of the north anymore. I'm not talking about the king of the north. I am talking about the king of the bloody Seven Kingdoms. If you, on your Game of Thrones final season prediction poll, had noticed In the very first episode during When Does Jon find out about his true parentage?, this was probably the point in Sunday's Season 8 premiere when you started doing your gloating. Sam, in the flickering light of the Stark family crypt, continues to explain what he knows to the man who is both and is not at all Jon Snow: the love between the children of the rival houses; the kidnapping that was not; the annulled marriage; the new marriage; the diary of the High Septon; the promise Ned made to her sister, as she lay dying; Bran, newly minted with magic, sees everything in a vision. Your mother was Lyanna Stark, Sam tells her friend. And your father—your real father—was Rhaegar Targaryen. You've never been a bastard. You are Aegon Targaryen, true heir to the Iron Throne. This is the kind of revisionist history that has the power to change the future. Jon is Jon, however, and so, with the complicating truth, he focuses on the complicated lie. My father was the most honorable man I've ever met, he tells Sam, glowering, his warm breath billowing against the cold of the crypt. You're saying he lied to me all my life? In a way, it's a strange reaction to the news that Jon is, you know, king of the Andals and the first men, sixth of his name, nephew of his brand new girlfriend, etc. For Jon, however, it is perfectly fitting. In a show that found found of its primary players after sweeping arcs and undergoing major transformations, Jon's circumstances have changed while his character, comparatively, hasn't. Jon was then, and is now, a good guy. He is telling the truth, even when the truth in question is uncomfortable, and this has not only been a reliable fact within an otherwise unstable universe, but also an extension of his relationship with Ned. (Tyrion to Jon last season, when the latter's blunt honesty almost jeopardizes the new allies' ability to build a coalition to fight the intrusive White Walkers: Have you ever thought about learning to lie, every now and then? Just a little? It's a callback to the brand of honesty that ended up costing Ned, several seasons ago, his life.) Sam's news, in that sense, is a plot point that serves as a crushing irony. Here is a character who has understood himself as a storyteller of truths, learning that his entire existence has, in some sense, a lie. And, as it does within an episode that is mostly a series of scene-settings for future battles—the destabilizing discovery offers its own kind of resolution. Game of Thrones, after all, has long been interested in lies: like architectural facts, which flaws that can upend the social order. Lies, here, change history. Joffrey, cruel and petty, lied about the attack on Mycah, and changed, with his selfishness, the path of everything that would follow. Cersei lied about joining the Alliance to fight the Night King, and about so much else. Tyrion lied. Littlefinger lied. Arya lied. The full consequences of these untruths—the macrocosmic results of the microcosmic manipulations—remain, as yet, unclear. But now, as the story approaches, here's another lie to add to the mix: Ned's lie about Jon. Ned told this lie as a matter of honor—to fulfill his promise to his sister, and to protect a child whose claim to the Iron Throne would put his life in mortal danger—but, as all lies come, changed the course of things irreparably. The lie Ned told allowed another inaccuracy to take root among the weirwood trees: the myth that Rhaegar Targaryen had kidnapped Lyanna Stark. It was a misunderstanding that instigated an Iliad-esque cascade of rivalry, which escalated into war and redeemed into the Great War that will soon be fought. The tragedy that lurks at the heart of the struggle that has steadily spread across the Known World is not only the way that lies can shift reality—which has been clear from the beginning—but also the idea that simple confusion, solidified as myth, can do the same. The history books were wrong. The truths themselves had lied. And here's Jon Snow, the living embodiment of the mistake. What's he going to do now? Will Jon—né-Aegon seek the throne that he never knew was his, and that he therefore never wanted to? Will those who do not want to make him even more worthy of power? Will Aegon Targaryen, sixth of his name, fire and ice at once, challenge promises to break chains, wheels, and systems of leadership can be, has the show repeatedly hinted, its own kind of lies? Or will the man who has lived like Jon Snow do what he has always done, honoring his own promises at all costs? What does gory mean at this time, now that the fuller truth has come to light? Game of Thrones is part of a moment that in itself is deeply concerned with those kinds of issues. The show, after all, is airing in an environment—its audience's own version of the famous world—which itself is steadily shaped by lies. The leader who misleads with impunity, weaponizing lies as a simple means of uneasy ends. The system that allows him to do so, because the illusions often fit the purposes of the powerful. The wheel which, refusing to break, spins on through lethargy inertia. The looming threat, totalizing and existential, is dismissed as a fantasy; the war against what will be fought with too few resources and insufficient conviction; the world that will be struck by its axis of untruths cast into myths. Jon Snow, during the beginning of the end of Game of Thrones, was told that he is the rightful heir to a similar situation. No wonder he understood that news as tragedy. Tragedy.

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