



Today's critics' picks

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# Features

Time Out New York / Issue 649 : Mar 5-11, 2008

## Secret lives

### How to: Lead a secret life

These tips will make you seem just as normal on the surface.



#### CREATE A FOOLPROOF ALIBI

Helen Tracy, a spokesperson for the Alibi Network ([alibinetwork.com](http://alibinetwork.com)), a company in the business of creating airtight cover stories, has a few tips. First: "Own your alibi. Get to the point where you almost believe it." Second: "Make sure you cover all of your bases." On a DIY level, that would mean asking your buddy to swear that you were with him last weekend. But if you need more professional ass-covering, companies

like Alibi will actually create a fake hotel receptionist to answer a fabricated number that you can give to any suspicious parties (its services start at \$75).



#### EAVESDROP WITHOUT BEING NOTICED

"The simplest way is to let your cell phone do the dirty work," says Duane Swierczynski, coauthor of *The Spy's Guide: Office Espionage*. "Either have it set up to speed-dial an answering machine that will record all incoming messages, or use the phone's own voice-memo function. That way you can be completely disinterested—even walk away for a Diet Coke—and know that your phone is sucking up every syllable. And

everyone forgets their cell phone, so you can walk by and pull the old, 'Oh, *there* it is' trick."



#### HOLD CONVERSATIONS AS IF YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT

"The key is to read the other person," says Greg Hartley, coauthor of *How to Spot a Liar*. "For example, if you're talking to an IT person, don't talk about IT. With a semi-antisocial computer geek, talk about how annoying people can be. By seeming sympathetic and keying in to their suffering, they'll start to like you, and won't realize you don't know what

you're talking about."



#### LIE CONVINCINGLY

"A person who is being deceptive won't use words like *I* or *our* because they are trying to unconsciously distance themselves," says David J. Lieberman, author of *Never Be Lied to Again*. "Ask someone if they like your dress—if they're lying, they're more likely to say, 'It's nice,' rather than, 'I like it.'" On the flip side, people who are feigning truth will be gregarious and use their hands a lot more. "When you're trying to

pretend anything, you engage in impression management, and nine times out of ten people go overboard."

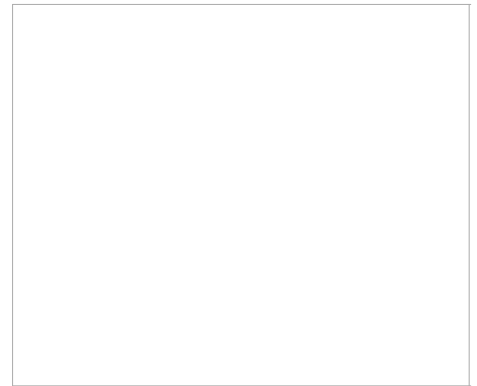


#### DISAPPEAR INTO A CROWD

"First, try to make your appearance unmemorable. Second, don't stay in the crowd for too long," instructs former NYPD detective investigator Thomas Ruskin. Finally, "duck into a place that has two or three ways out—a subway station is great, because it's usually crowded and there are several exits." Big department stores work well too. Swierczynski has another method: "Walk backward, slowly, into an oncoming crowd. The

people walking past merely think you're walking slowly. And anyone scanning the crowd for you will be looking for the back of a head, not the front."

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**Blogs**

## The *TONY* Blog

### Girl Talk at Terminal 5

*Published at 6:10pm*

Last night at the Girl Talk show, I had a few of those inevitable moments that occur after you interview someone, the kind where you say to yourself, Damn, I wish I had asked him this or that...

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## The Feed

### Last night at Dumplings & Dynasties

*Published on 11/14/08*

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