

# Teaching for Integrity: Academic Integrity as a Pedagogical Challenge

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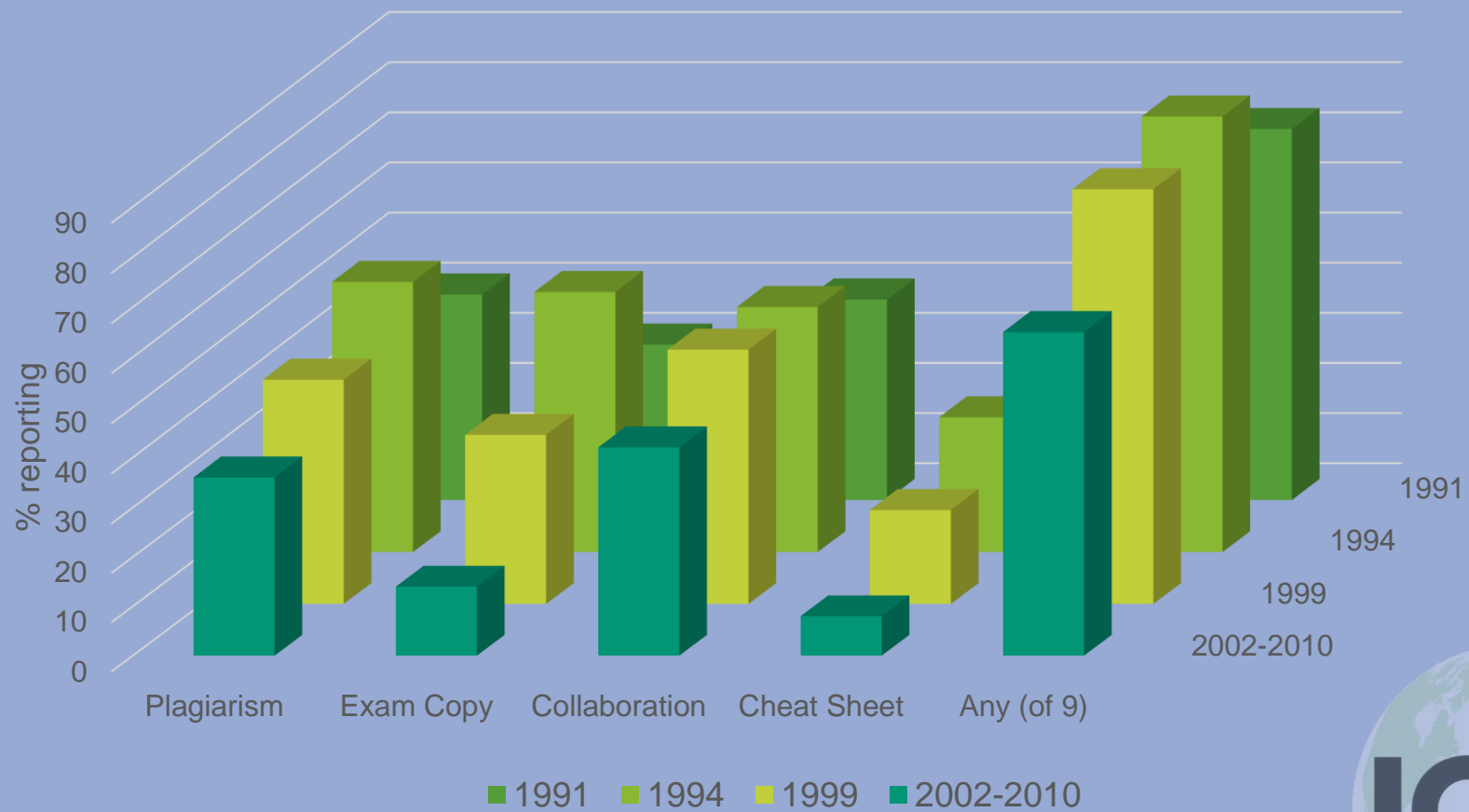
International Center for Academic Integrity

# Why Students Cheat: Some Behavioral Science Answers

Dr. David Rettinger



# Cheating at 4 Year Colleges/Universities



# Cheating is the Tip of the Iceberg

- Cheating in school is associated with:
  - Cheating in relationships
  - Cheating in social settings
  - Cheating in sports and games
  - Cheating at work
  - Lying to customers
  - Inflation of insurance claims



# Psychology of Academic Integrity

- Everyone is prone to cheat a little
  - Dan Ariely – Self-concept maintenance
- Moral Decisions are intuitive
  - Jonathan Haidt – Moral intuition
- Students' attitudes, outlook and motivations matter
  - Anderman– Motivation
  - Rettinger & Jordan – Beliefs about school and peers
  - Murdock – Self-Efficacy



# Self-Concept Maintenance

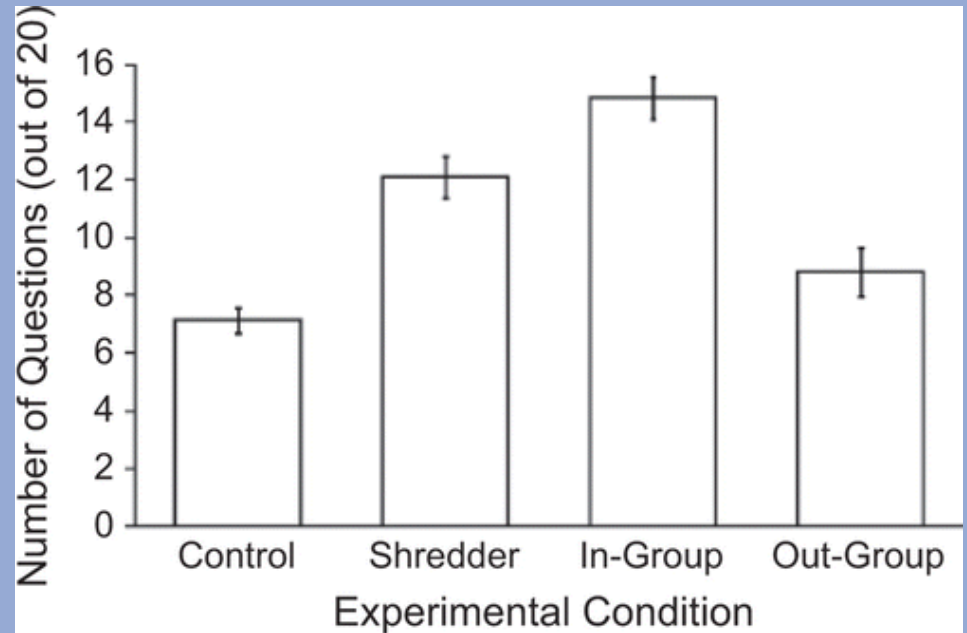
- Everyone wants to see themselves as honest
- People will cheat as long as it doesn't interfere with their self-concept
- Sensitive to
  - Severity and frequency of cheating
  - Framing of behavior (category malleability)
  - Social norms
  - Salience of their own values

Mazar, N., Amir, O., & Ariely, D. (2008)



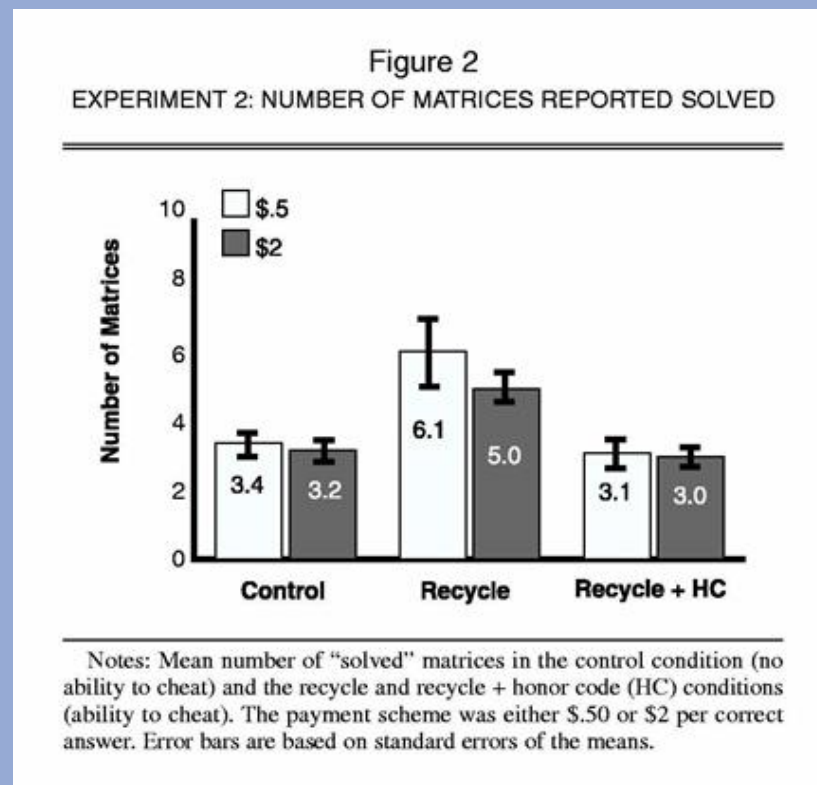
# Self-Concept Maintenance

- When a student in the out-group cheats, cheating decreases
- When a student in the in-group cheats, cheating increases



# Self-Concept Maintenance

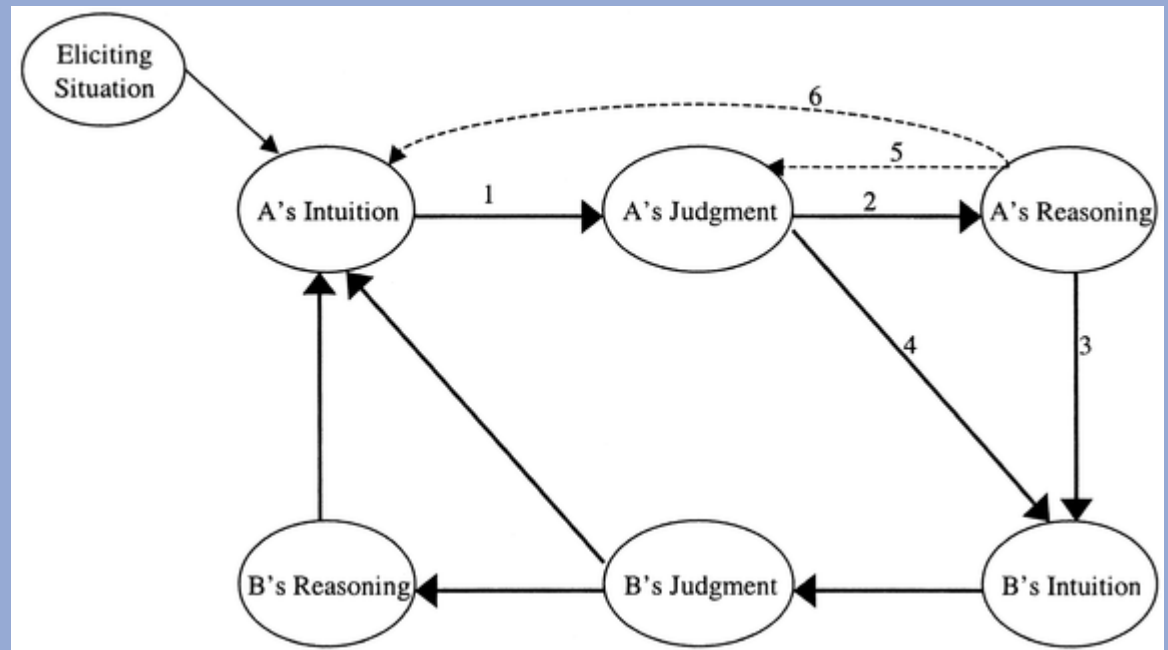
- Value of incentive has a small impact on cheating rates
- Honor Code reminders reduce cheating to control levels





# Moral Intuitions

- Haidt argues that moral judgment is fundamentally intuitive
- Moral reasoning is post hoc and often social in nature



Haidt (2001)

# Beliefs & Attitudes

- Motivational approach to school
- Moral valence of cheating
- Neutralizing attitudes
- Beliefs about others' cheating
- Beliefs about getting caught
- Beliefs about need to cheat



# Intrinsic/Extrinsic Motivation

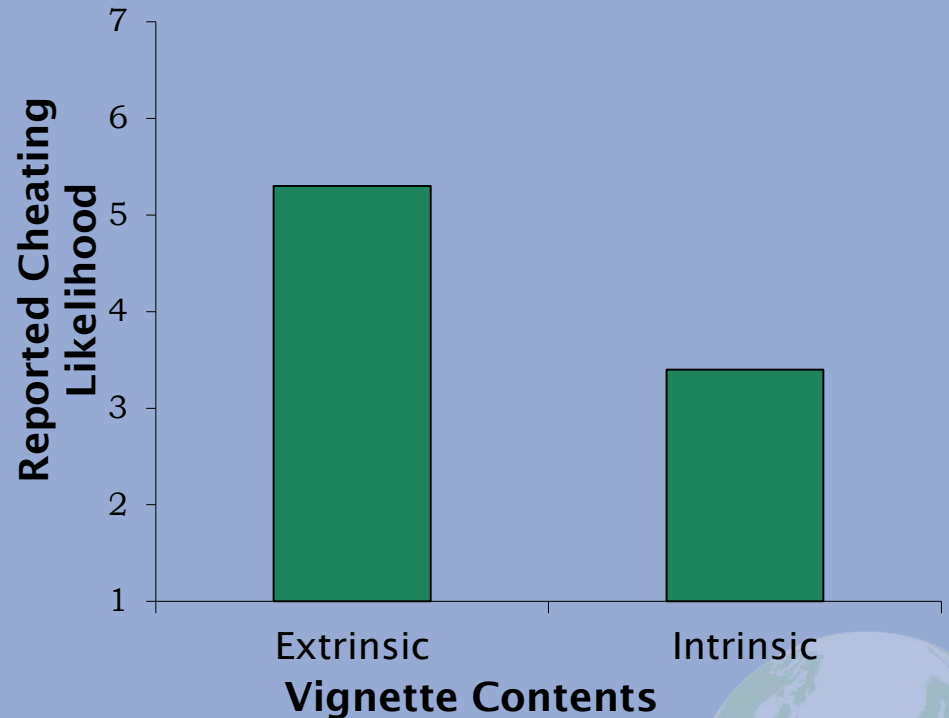
- Reflects students' attitude toward school
  - *Intrinsic* - Values learning for its own sake
  - *Extrinsic* - Values learning for what it can provide (e.g. good grades, jobs, etc.)

1. Without regularly scheduled exams I would not learn and remember very much. (*E*)
2. I am more concerned about seeing which questions I missed than I am with finding out my test grade. (*I*)
3. Written assignments that are not graded are waste of a student's time. (*E*)
4. I find the process of learning new material fun. (*I*)



# Intrinsic/Extrinsic Motivation

Students rated intrinsically motivated peers as less likely to cheat than those extrinsically motivated.



Rettinger & Jordan, 2004



# Mean Motivation Levels

	Non-cheaters in all courses	Cheaters in courses when not cheating	Cheaters in courses when cheating
Intrinsic	3.92	3.96	3.64
Extrinsic	2.74	2.79	3.00

Using survey methods (Jordan, 1998)

# Classroom Motivation Structures Matter

Table 3  
*Logistic Regressions Predicting Student Engagement in and Beliefs About Cheating*

Measure	Cheating behaviors			Beliefs in the acceptability of cheating		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	Odds ratio ( $e^b$ )	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	Odds ratio ( $e^b$ )
Personal extrinsic	—	—	—	0.43**	0.16	1.54
Classroom extrinsic	0.26*	0.11	1.30	0.22*	0.11	1.25
School performance	0.49**	0.18	1.63	0.31	0.18	1.36
School mastery	—	—	—	-0.43	0.23	1.54
School worry	0.46**	0.16	1.58	—	—	—
Self-handicapping	0.45**	0.17	1.57	0.49**	0.19	1.63
Deep-level strategy use	-0.86***	0.21	2.36	-0.68***	0.21	1.97
Constant	-1.50	0.80	—	0.85	1.14	—

*Note.* Dashes indicate that the measure was not included in that final analysis.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

# Attitude Change Model

- Valence Attitudes
  - Attitudes toward cheating behavior
  - Range from strongly opposed to strongly in favor
- Neutralizing Attitudes
  - Ability to rationalize behaviors that violate one's ethical code



# Attitudes & Cheating

- Self-reported cheating is associated with:
  - Neutralizing Attitudes
  - Belief that peers are cheating
  - Belief that cheating is wrong (negatively)

Variable	Correlation with Self-Reported Cheating
Neutralizing Attitudes	.52**
Cheating Valence	.53**
Belief in Peer Cheating	.23*

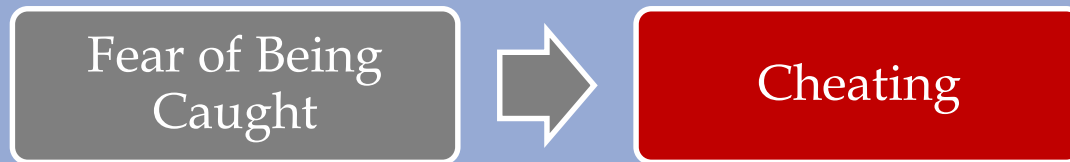
\* $p < .05$   
\*\* $p < .01$  (two-tailed;  $df = 153$ )





# Beliefs about Enforcement

- Students less likely to cheat when they think they will be caught
- Severity of punishment isn't associated with self-reported cheating



$$r(206) = .24, p < .001$$



$$r(206) = -.092, ns$$



# Self-Efficacy

- Students tend to cheat when they don't believe they can do the work (to their satisfaction)
- This effect intensifies as grades go down
- Is associated with learning motivation

Bell & Kozlowski (2002)

Murdock, Hale, & Weber, 2010



# Conclusion

- Individual Differences
- Course-level Factors
- Institutional Factors
- Cultural Norms



# Thank you.

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