


# Dishonest Behaviour


  
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## Dishonest Behaviour in Online Bridge Tournaments during the COVID-19 Pandemic Analysis of Self-Confessions

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## Explaining dishonest behavior: SMORC

- Simple model of rational crime (SMORC)
- Economic model of rational and selfish human behavior (homo economicus)
- Individual rational calculations of costs and benefits of the potential crime
  - What are the benefits?
  - What is the likelihood that we might get caught?
  - What punishment might be if we are caught?
- Is it worth it?



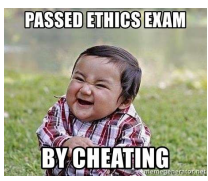
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## Explaining dishonest behavior: Morality

- People want to view themselves as honest & honorable
- People generally believe they have high moral standards
- If we cheat by only a little bit, can we benefit from cheating and still view ourselves as honest human beings?
- What is the amount of cheating we feel comfortable with?
- Boundaries of our ethics are flexible



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## Explaining dishonest behavior: Psychological perspective

- Internal rewards/penalties
- Guilt & shame
- Protecting self-image:
  - Psychological distance between a dishonest act and its consequences
  - The size of the reward
  - Rationalization of our actions
  - Accessibility of moral standards
  - Shifting guilt to those who discovered

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### EUROPEAN BRIDGE LEAGUE

A ZONAL CONFERENCE OF THE WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION  
International Sport Federation (IF) recognized by the International Olympic Committee

COMPETITOR'S COMMITMENT

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Family name: \_\_\_\_\_


Address: \_\_\_\_\_

NBO and EBL Code No: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

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## What happened during the lockdown?


Shift to online bridge  
 Recreational → Serious

- More tournaments
- More players
- Formal/official tournaments
- Better organization
- More money involved

ONLINE CHEATING		
Opportunities	Motives	Rationalizations
- Self-kibitzing - Collusive - Impression of invisibility	- Self-promotion - Self-confidence - Money - „Monkey see monkey do“	- Easiness - Unreal life - Lack of control - Epidemic

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## What happened during the lockdown?

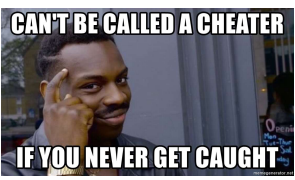
Summer 2020

**Resources**

- Statistics
- Available boards
- Log-ins data
- Volunteers


**Reactions**

- Lack of reaction from the governing bodies
- Ad-hoc formed bodies and committees
- Public reactions:
  - Disbelief, rage and condemnation
  - Understanding and rationalization
- General suspicion and mistrust



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## Case study: confessions

Sources:

- Andrew Sobell (June 22, 2020)
  - 421 comments
- Michal Nowosadzki (July 13, 2020)
  - 973 comments
- Sylvia Shi (July 23, 2020)
  - 1813 comments
- Cedric Lorenzini (November 6, 2020)
  - 116 comments
- Curtis Cheek (March 18, 2021)
  - 453 comments




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## Cost-Benefit

- I could **gain so little by doing that and lose so much** (and I probably will) that it made no sense at all. (...) you are risking your good name and maybe your career for what?! (M.N.)
- It was **not done for any monetary gain** whatsoever, it was done out of stupidity (A.S.)
- I didn't do it for money, glory, results, victories, some sort of fulfillment, or masterpoints. I did it because it was so, so easy, and so tempting. (S.S.)
- As time went by, we started to face what I felt were **unfair losses on an increasingly regular basis**. (C.L.)



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## Self-concept

- I was always thinking of myself as a **good guy**. (M.N.)
- I just cannot keep it inside me anymore. I want to sleep at night again. Even if I got hammered here, which I deserve. I am **ashamed** and deeply regret my actions (M.N.)
- I was so **ashamed** as I really did not think of myself as a cheater, but looking at the boards it is clear that cheating was exactly what I had been doing. (S.S.)
- (...) and is a regretful episode in my otherwise **honest life**. I am **ashamed** and it will never happen again. (A.S.)
- Many of you know me well and consider me a **person of the highest integrity** (C.L.)
- I deeply apologize for my actions, which **do not represent who I am**. (C.C.)


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## Creating psychological distance from live bridge

- I and we **never cheated** anyone in live bridge. (M.N.)
- I have **never cheated** or been tempted to cheat **in person** or in any collusive way online. I have never cheated in any of the ACBL online SYC games, regional games, or club games, or any other games, that I have played in. (S.S.)
- I rationalized, "I'm not a cheater, this **isn't something I would do in 'real' bridge**. I'll just see the cards sometimes, it will all be over when we get back to face to face bridge in a few months." (S.S.)
- I didn't take these games very seriously. It was social bridge, for fun. Most of the time we played against unknown opponents. (C.L.)
- I **didn't think this was a big deal** but it was ethically wrong as not knowing the score of your match is part of the game. (C.L.)



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## Summary

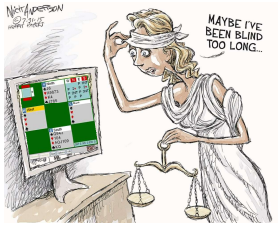
- All players stated that they did wrong. Some of them referred to „cheating“ other used „poor judgement“ or similar;
- All players apologized;
- All players blamed online bridge and it's context, and most stressed the difference from live tournaments;
- Some players mentioned others who were doing the same thing;
- All players stated that they didn't see themselves as cheaters, and distanced themselves from cheating to preserve self-image of honorable people;

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### Final Remarks

- Bridge is incredible vulnerable
- Was gentlemen's game description of the game or instruction for use?
- Personal involvement of many players around the globe
- We need not only prevention but inoculation
- Moral standards should be accessible
- What other situations can „blur“ the border between cheating and not-cheating?
  - e.g. Not real EC but „only“ qualifier
- Who is to decide what to do with online cheaters?
- Is there correlation between online and in person cheating?




Adapted from: [https://www.ruthdig.com/author/rick\\_anderson/](https://www.ruthdig.com/author/rick_anderson/)



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## Thank you!



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