to some secular statement—similar to a professional oath—that would remind us of our commitment to honesty. Would a simple oath make a difference, in the way that we saw the Ten Commandments make a difference? We needed to find out—hence our next experiment.

Once again we assembled our participants. In this study, the first group of participants took our matrix math test and handed in their answers to the experimenter in the front of the room (who counted how many questions they answered correctly and paid them accordingly). The second group also took the test, but the members of this group were told to fold their answer sheet, keep it in their possession, and tell the experimenter in the front of the room how many of the problems they got right. The experimenter paid them accordingly, and they were on their way.

The novel aspect of this experiment had to do with the third group. Before these participants began, each was asked to sign the following statement on the answer sheet: "I understand that this study falls under the MIT honor system." After signing this statement, they continued with the task. When the time had elapsed they pocketed their answer sheets, walked to the front of the room, told the experimenter how many problems they had correctly solved, and were paid accordingly.

What were the results? In the control condition, in which cheating was not possible, participants solved on average three problems (out of 20). In the second condition, in which the participants could pocket their answers, they claimed to have solved on average 5.5 problems. What was remarkable was the third situation—in which the participants pocketed their answer sheets, but had also signed the honor code statement. In this case they claimed to have solved, on average, three problems—exactly the same number as the control