Abstract discussion will be held on Wednesday (3/25) at 8:00PM in the MCC (Stokes).

The Sound of Music
An Honor Council Academic Trial
Released Spring 2015

This abstract was not released in accordance to the timeline specified by the Students’ Association Constitution. The confronting party did not consent to the release of the abstract. The confronted party did not consent to the release of the abstract. (The addition of this disclaimer began in Spring 2010).

Note: Some information has been lost due to the fact that the chair’s report for this case was not completed in a timely manner.

Key:
Course: Singing 305
Confronting Party: Professor Maria Rainer
Confronted Party: Liesl von Trapp

Summary:
This case concerns Liesl von Trapp, a Bryn Mawr student in Professor Maria Rainer’s 300-level singing class, who plagiarized a large portion of her final paper. Unfortunately, due to a variety of circumstances, Honor Council does not have complete records of this case. However, in order to keep the community as well-informed as possible, Council put together an abbreviated abstract containing all available information concerning the case.

Pre-Trial:
The trial chair was an experienced member of Honor Council but was not a co-chair. The trial did not start immediately due to a number of scheduling difficulties. In the preliminary meeting, the jurors learned that, due to the impact of a serious mental health condition, Liesl would not be attending the trial meetings in person.

Fact Finding:
Professor Maria was present at fact finding, but Liesl felt that attending the meeting would be too stressful for her and so was not present. The jury read the paper, provided by the professor, with
the plagiarized portion highlighted. Given the extent of the plagiarism, which amounted to nearly half the paper, the jury quickly decided that plagiarism had occurred and the Honor Code had been violated.

**Jury Deliberations/Statement of Violation:**
The jury came to a statement of violation, and the trial continued. The exact phrasing of the statement is unknown.

**Circumstantial Portion:**
Liesl did not come to circumstantial portion. The trial chair talked with her by phone.

**Jury Deliberations:**
The jury was split on whether or not to report the case to graduate schools. After much discussion, they consented to each write a letter to the Dean of the College. All but one juror complied with this resolution.

**Finalizing Resolutions:**
The jury consented to the following resolutions:

1. *The jury recommends that [Liesl] receive a 0.0 on her final paper. (all consent)*
2. *The jury strongly recommends that [Liesl] write a letter to the Haverford College community, to be published with the abstract, discussing what she has learned and what she hopes others will learn from her trial. (all consent)*
3. *The jury asks that [Liesl] meet with Professor [Maria] to restore trust between them. (all consent)*
4. *[Liesl] will not be separated from the Haverford College community. (2 jurors stood outside)*
5. *The jury does not have a unified recommendation regarding reporting this incident to institutions of higher learning. (all consent)*

**Post-Trial:**
The resolutions were not appealed. No letter from Liesl was ever received.

For reasons unknown to Honor Council of Spring 2015, this case slipped through the cracks some number of years ago and the trial resolutions were not tracked. As a result, we have no letter to the community from Liesl, and have not verified that she completed her resolutions before graduating. We are deeply troubled by this, and hope that this abstract will serve as a reminder for posterity to make sure that we have systems in place to account for the completion of trial resolutions, and the timely production of abstracts. We believe we have already preempted this from happening again with more thorough record keeping. In addition, at Spring
Plenary 2013 we introduced the position of the Honor Council Staff Support Person – a paid employee outside of Honor Council whose duties include following up on resolutions from old trials. We are confident that this kind of oversight will not happen again.

Discussion Questions:

1. When such a significant amount of information from a case is lost, is it still beneficial for Honor Council to release an abbreviated abstract with the information it has?
2. How might the jury process be affected by a confronted party who feels that they can’t be in the room during the trial, and therefore not being able to be physically present?
3. The jury could not come to a unified decision on reporting to institutions of higher learning. Should a jury have to come to a single decision on this matter? How should it be handled when they can not?