Abstract discussions will be held on Wednesday, January 30, 2013 and Thursday, January 31, 2013 at 7:00 PM in Ryan Gym.

**Woody and Professor Buzz Lightyear: An Honor Council Modified Student Panel**

**Released Spring 2013**

This abstract was not released in accordance to the timeline specified by the Students’ Association Constitution. Both the confronted and confronted parties consented to the release of this abstract. (The addition of this disclaimer began in Spring 2010).

**Summary**

Woody, a former student in Professor Buzz Lightyear’s class “Potato Head Construction 101,” and an Honor Council Co-Chair at the time, turned himself in to Honor Council for lying about his completion of several graded assignments. Honor Council reviewed the case and sent it to an academic trial. However, due to certain complications regarding the trial’s timing and Woody’s position as Honor Council Co-Chair, the trial proceeded as a modified student panel consisting of six student community jurors and a dean chair. The trial resulted in several resolutions, among which were that both Professor Lightyear and Woody would write letters to the community highlighting their experiences with the trial process, and a controversial recommendation that Woody step down as Honor Council Co-Chair. The trial process and post-trial events are further detailed in the remainder of the abstract.

**Fact Finding**

Fact-finding began with statements from both Professor Lightyear and Woody regarding the homework assignments in Potato Head Construction 101. The course covered eight chapters, each with their own homework assignment. All of the homework was submitted electronically. However, the online submission system malfunctioned; in response, Professor Lightyear emailed the students to ask which assignments each student had completed. In his reply, Woody indicated that he had completed all eight assignments, when in fact he had only completed one or two. Both parties’ statements were consistent in their description of these facts.

**Statement of Violation**

The jury quickly consented that a violation of the Honor Code had occurred, and unanimously consented on the following statement of violation:
Woody violated the Honor Code and the academic standards of the community by falsely reporting to his professor that he had completed homework assignments in order to receive credit.

Circumstantial Portion

To begin the Circumstantial Portion, one juror asked Woody to explain what motivated him to turn himself in to Honor Council. He responded that following his election as Honor Council Co-Chair, he became aware of his desire to do the right thing. He felt that Honor Council Co-Chairs must be held to a high standard of academic integrity. Woody also mentioned that his knowledge of another Honor Council case had forced him to critically reflect on his own actions. This introspective process was intensified by Woody’s attendance of Quaker Meeting. Thus, after an extended period of deliberation, which left him overcome with guilt, Woody decided to report his actions to Honor Council. Another juror followed up by asking Woody why he waited so long to turn himself in to Honor Council, as the violation had occurred over six months prior. Woody said that he admired the Honor Council Co-Chairs that had preceded him, whom he considered close friends, and he might lose their respect if he told them about his transgression.

When another juror asked Woody what he was thinking when he replied to Professor Lightyear’s email, he replied that he does not clearly remember what led him to lie in his email, and assumed that he was not thinking. Professor Lightyear then asked Woody whether he thought his grading and teaching style was too informal, and whether that was why he had lied about completing his assignments. Woody responded that his violation was in no way Professor Lightyear’s fault; however, he likely would not have lied to a professor of whom he was afraid. Next, a juror asked Woody why he did not originally complete the homework assignments. He responded that the assignments were long and tedious, and while he had intended to complete the assignments, he never got around to the task. Woody further commented that when he saw Professor Lightyear’s email requesting a report on his completed homework assignments, he sent his reply email almost immediately and without much thought.

Once these discussions had run their course, the group moved on to discuss proposed resolutions. Woody began by noting his desire to write a letter to the community reflecting on his violation of the Honor Code. He also recommended that his homework grade change to reflect the assignments that he failed to complete. In addition, Woody also suggested that there ought to be some “additional cost” for the violation, though he did not present concrete options. One juror asked if Woody would consider signing his real name on his letter to the community; Woody said that could be a possibility.

When Professor Lightyear spoke, he expressed that his concern was not as much Woody’s grade in his class as it was his desire to complete the trial process, so that he might learn more about how he could grow as a professor and prevent similar incidents in the future. He shared that by the time of the trial, he had already changed his grading system such that he checked all of the homework himself.
Another juror asked Woody if he thought that he could still serve as Honor Council Co-Chair. Woody thought that he could continue in his position; the trial process had strengthened his understanding of the Honor Code and its commitment to restorative justice, which would both inform his role as a community leader. Professor Lightyear advocated that Woody should not have to resign from Honor Council because he could set a positive example for other students, as a prominent community member who made the right decision to redress his breach of trust with the community. Woody also clearly expressed that he wished for all resolutions composed by the jury to be finite in their scope rather than recommendations. He explained that he wished for the jury to make a decision on whether or not he could continue as Honor Council Co-Chair rather than leave the decision to his discretion. As a follow-up, another juror asked Woody whether, should he remain Honor Council Co-Chair, he would come forward and tell other members about this trial. Woody was unsure. Another juror asked if Woody would admit to the previous Honor Council Co-Chairs what he had done. Woody said that it would be difficult for him, but that it was something he had thought about doing.

Finally, one juror asked Woody what he hoped to gain from the trial process. Woody replied that he wanted a conversation with Professor Lightyear, and to resolve the grading issue with him. At this point, Professor Lightyear agreed that the conversation that emerged from the trial had been helpful and matched what he had hoped to achieve from the process. He also added that he hoped that more community outreach to students and faculty concerning academic integrity would result from this trial.

**Deliberations and Tentative Resolutions**

After meeting with both parties, the jury discussed the proposed resolutions raised during circumstantial portion and thought about some additional resolutions. To begin, during the circumstantial portion both parties had agreed that Woody should not get credit for the work he did not complete, though Professor Lightyear noted that he would not take away any additional credit, as he felt that would be punitive. The jury discussed this resolution and decided that what the parties recommended was appropriate. In addition, the jury felt that it was important for the community to hear from both parties regarding their experiences with the trial. From Woody, the jury discussed having a letter written that would address the “why” aspect of the incident, as during the trial he was unable to explain his motivations for lying; this kind of self-examination would be instructive for both Woody and the community at large. From Professor Lightyear, the jury felt that it would be beneficial for members of the community to hear from a faculty member about how his experience had changed his beliefs about the Honor Code. During the circumstantial portion, Professor Lightyear had also suggested a survey of both faculty and students to gain a broad understanding of their respective views on the academic Honor Code. The jury decided to incorporate this recommendation into tentative resolutions by asking Woody to conduct surveys among faculty and students related to academic misconduct and the Honor Code—if Haverford was to prevent further academic violations, it needed a better understanding of how the community itself felt about the Honor Code and academic misconduct.
Finally, the jury spent a significant period of time discussing a resolution, which requested that Woody resign from his position as Honor Council Co-Chair. The jury discussed whether asking Woody to resign was a punitive measure, and whether it would impact his ability to learn and grow from the trial process. The jury ultimately decided to include the resolution, basing their decision on the following arguments:

1) Resigning from Honor Council would provide Woody time away from administering the code, giving him the space he needed to reflect on his actions. While his resignation might hurt initially, the jury felt that over time the measure would prove valuable for Woody’s restoration to the community.

2) Time away from Honor Council could provide Woody time to come to terms with why he originally chose to lie to Professor Lightyear, which the jury felt was a crucial aspect of Woody’s restoration to the community.

3) Woody had ample opportunity to come forward prior to his election as Honor Council Co-Chair, but had neglected to do so. That conduct (both cheating and failing to confront the issue) was unbecoming of an Honor Council Co-Chair, and was especially disconcerting given that Woody had knowingly run for Honor Council Co-Chair with this issue unresolved.

Therefore, the jury consented to the following tentative resolutions, with no juror standing outside of consensus:

1. The jury suggests that Professor Lightyear remove credit from Woody’s final grade for the work he did not complete in the course.
2. In order to better educate the community, the jury respectfully requests that Professor Lightyear write a letter to the community explaining his evolving relationship with the code, both inside and outside of the trial.
3. The jury recommends that Woody immediately step down from his position as Honor Council Co-Chair.
4. Woody will write a letter to the community in which he will discuss the events and emotional states that led to the violation, the restorative value of the trial, and the obligations of each member of the community to uphold standards.
5. Woody will conduct two surveys, to be completed by (date TBD). The first should be directed toward the student body, gauging their knowledge and understanding of the honor code regarding academic misconduct. The second survey should be direct toward members of the faculty, regarding their perceptions of and experiences with the Honor Code.

**Finalizing Resolutions**

Both Woody and Professor Lightyear attended the Finalizing Resolutions portion of the trial, where they discussed the tentative resolutions presented above. To begin discussion, Woody explained that he thought the third resolution (which recommended his resignation from Honor Council) was punitive and not restorative. He said that if he resigned then he would not be
able to conduct the surveys that the jury had asked of him, and that it would cause him to distance himself from the public aspects of the Honor Code. Woody said that if he resigned as Honor Council Co-Chair, he did not believe he would ever be elected for an Honor Council position again. He also added that he was afraid that if he was not Honor Council Chair he wouldn’t be able to restore that trust with the group and that this unique situation deserved a unique resolution (he could work to restore himself in the community through his leadership position on Honor Council). Professor Lightyear supported Woody and expressed that he thought his removal from Honor Council would be seriously damaging. Professor Lightyear reiterated that he felt that the job of a jury was to formulate resolutions that matched the severity of the Honor Code violation that took place, and that in this case, asking Woody to resign would outweigh his violation of the Honor Code. Professor Lightyear and Woody both agreed that Woody’s position as Honor Council Co-Chair placed him in a position of higher expectation. At the same time, Professor Lightyear expressed to the jury that he felt that Woody could be an even stronger leader in light of this incident, and that taking away Woody’s position as Honor Council Co-Chair would be detrimental.

Woody asked the jury to explain the restorative value in his resignation from Honor Council. A juror responded to this question by suggesting that resigning from Honor Council would provide him time away from administering the code, providing space to reflect on it. Another juror pointed out that time away from Honor Council could provide him time to understand why he lied in the first place. That same juror felt that it was problematic that Woody did not know why he lied, and felt that time to reflect was necessary in ensuring that it did not happen again. Another juror expressed to Woody that he did not need to be Honor Council Co-Chair to bring about positive change based on this process, and that all Haverford students, not just those in leadership positions, have the opportunity to influence the community. Finally, a juror expressed concern that Woody had waited until he felt absolutely guilt-ridden to turn himself into Honor Council, warranting his resignation. This juror was worried that Woody was more concerned with his position on Honor Council than he was with bearing responsibility for his actions. Professor Lightyear voiced another concerns with this resolution. He pointed out that Woody came to Honor Council completely on his own, a symbol of trust in the system, which could be negatively affected by a jury recommendation to resign from Honor Council.

After long and thoughtful deliberations, most of which concerned Resolution #3, the jury decided that the resolutions would stand as previously listed, with the addition of one further resolution:

6. Each member of the jury will write an anonymous letter to Woody explaining his or her reasoning behind consenting to Resolution #3.

This resolution was added so that Woody would be able to hear directly from the jurors about why they each consented to the resolution recommending his resignation from Honor Council. The jury felt this would be a way to help Woody see the resolution as restorative and to further reflect on his actions.
**Final Resolutions**
The jury consented to the following final resolutions, with no juror standing outside consensus:
1. The jury suggests that Professor Lightyear remove credit from Woody's final grade for the work he did not complete in the course.
2. In order to better educate the community, the jury respectfully requests that Professor Lightyear write a letter to the community explaining his evolving relationship with the code, both inside and outside of the trial.
3. The jury recommends that Woody immediately step down from his position as Honor Council Co-Chair.
4. Woody will write a letter to the community in which he will discuss the events and emotional states that led to the violation, the restorative value of the trial, and the obligations of each member of the community to uphold standards.
5. Woody will conduct two surveys, to be conducted, completed, and analyzed by April 2012. The first should be directed toward the student body, gauging their knowledge and understanding of the Honor Code regarding academic misconduct. The second survey should be directed toward members of the faculty, regarding their perceptions of and experiences with the Honor Code. The raw data and a summary report should be given to the Dean of the College.
6. Each member of the jury will write an anonymous letter to Woody explaining his or her reasoning behind consenting to resolution # 3.

**Post-Trial:**
After the trial, Woody stepped down as Honor Council Co-Chair. He eventually received four of the six anonymous letters from the jury outlined in the sixth resolution. Of these four letters, Woody received one in the weeks following the conclusion of the trial, and the other three nearly a year after the fact. The release of the abstract was delayed because the chair’s report was not completed in a timely manner. In his letter to the community, Woody made the decision to break his confidentiality. Professor Lightyear declined to write a letter to the community and instead left an explanation of his refusal.

**Professor Lightyear’s Statement:** Professor Lightyear declined to write a letter to the community, but allowed for the publication of the following message:

“I will not be writing this letter because I was very unhappy with the results of the trial. Both the student and my input were entirely disregarded, and I found the punishment to be over the top, a clear sign of a zero-tolerance culture that frankly turned me off from the Honor Code trial process. I was very disappointed. I thought the trial was supposed to be a learning experience, where the group could come to an agreement. As far as I know, it is rare that both the student and the professor end up on the same page. I forgave the student, but clearly, I was the only one. I regretted many times agreeing to the trial, and still think of it as a mistake. You are welcome to use these words on an anonymous basis.”
Woody’s Letter to the Community:

One of the things I value most in the world is integrity. I do my best to act in a way that is, on a fundamental level, based in truth. I believe in maintaining a fundamental accordance between the way I am and the way I seem to be.

Of course, as you have already read the abstract, you see the contradiction. If I believe so strongly in integrity, why did I allow myself to lie, and then to ignore this lie for so long? By ignoring the lie, I created a second lie, a lie that I believe the jury recognized immediately, even if they did not spell it out explicitly. There is an implicit assumption that members of Honor Council are right with the Code, because the idea behind the Code is that by not obeying it, you remove yourself from Haverford community. To apply the system that Honor Council trials are based on—this system I love, of education, accountability and restoration—the jury must be made up of people who, if they have violated the Code, have been restored to the community. For more than a semester, I was not fully a member of the Haverford community—and yet I worked to restore others to that community. By serving on Honor Council, I was lying to the community as a whole—especially once I was elected Co-Chair. It is here that I think I violated the Code most egregiously.

Again, why? Why did I lie to my professor, and again to the community? There is no simple answer, no easy reply to this question. It is one that I wrestled with before and during the trial, and one that I continue to wrestle with to this day.

The first lie, I think, was a matter of convenience and fear—a split-second decision to do what was easy, rather than what was right. It was a victory of laziness over morality. It points to a part of me that I don’t like, and that I don’t particularly want to acknowledge—which is probably the reason I said that I ‘didn’t know’ why I had lied when I was asked during the trial. I think everyone has that part of themselves—the part which will, if given the chance, do what is easy before what is right—and that I was trying to deny that part of me existed, a clearly ineffective strategy. Time has allowed me to reflect on and acknowledge—and by doing so control—that part of me.

The second lie—the lie that I was a full member of the Haverford community, the lie I told by serving on Honor Council and by serving (for however short of a time) as Honor Council Co-Chair, was not one I began intentionally. When I was first elected to Honor Council, my Honor Code violation wasn’t something I thought about very much. When I did think about, I didn’t consider it to be a violation—it was certainly wrong, but I didn’t see it as a violation. Over the course of the semester, I came to the realization that it had been a violation—I certainly knew I had violated the Code by the time I was elected to the position of Honor Council Co-Chair. So why didn’t I come forward once I made that realization? At least partially, it was out of shame—I had come to deeply respect and look up to the rest of Honor Council, and revealing this lie seemed, at the time, to be too embarrassing. I didn’t want to expose that lazy, shortcut-
seeking side of myself to these people I wanted to impress. I realize now that by not coming forward, I was letting them and myself down even more. It was also certainly a lie of convenience. It was much easier to ignore the problem than to confront it head-on. Finally, it was good old procrastination. Without a firm deadline, why not come forward later, when I wasn’t busy with that test/paper/reading/party? I did my best not to think about the whole situation—I felt too guilty whenever I did.

I finally allowed myself to fully consider the situation at a Quaker conference over the summer, and I realized there, sitting in the silence, that I couldn’t allow this situation to continue: my actions and my beliefs were deeply out of sync. I was not who I appeared to be. The trial was an opportunity to bring appearance and reality together, and to repair the breach of trust with the community. For that reason, I am glad that I came forward. There has never been a moment in which I wished that I had not done so. That being said, the trial itself was not a positive experience. I don’t think it ever is for the person in my position, but there were a few things that really bothered me during the course of the trial.

When the trial began, I was not expecting to be asked to step down as Co-Chair. When that resolution was proposed, I felt attacked by the jury. It seemed to me that the restorative value of what I was being asked to do was zero, if not negative. A year later, I don’t think I was being attacked, but I still think that the value of my resignation was small. However, it was certainly not negative, and I have moved on from that frustration. (Incidentally, I deeply regret saying that I would move further from the Code if asked to step down. I was trying to say that it would be deeply frustrating watching someone else do what I had been elected to do, and I would try to avoid that sensation, but I don’t think I was able to convey that point.) Beyond the disappointment and hurt I felt for being asked to resign, I had asked the jury during the preliminary resolutions meeting specifically to mandate that I resign rather than request my resignation, and their refusal to do so—to respect that one request—felt like adding insult to injury. In my view, an Honor Council Co-Chair who has been asked to resign by a jury has lost all legitimacy and is, within the context of the Code, under a moral obligation to resign. I felt that all requesting my resignation as opposed to mandating it did was to obfuscate what had happened, making it seem as if I had had a choice in the matter. As I see it, had I continued, I would have felt deeply dishonest, I would have immediately lost the trust of the administration, and, with the release of the abstract, deeply damaged community (especially faculty) trust in Honor Council and the Honor Code. If a Co-Chair doesn’t abide by a resolution, why would anyone?

Finally, one of the resolutions was for each member of the jury to write me a letter explaining their decision to ask me to resign. I received one letter within a few weeks of the trial (which I appreciated, and appreciate, very much), and three in the past few weeks, a year after the trial—after Honor Council prodded the jurors. I don’t expect to receive the last two at this point. To be frank, I am fairly insulted by this. I took their resolutions seriously, with the expectation that they would do the same.
I was looking forward to receiving their letters in the weeks and months after the trial, and to using them to understand the decision made by the jurors. Instead, as I worked to complete all of my resolutions, there was a constant source of frustration that the jurors weren’t doing the same. The timing (as well as the content of some of the letters), and the fact that it took the trial chair a full year to write the chair’s report (which is required within three weeks of the end of the trial), combine to leave me with the feeling that most of the jurors didn’t take this process seriously—a feeling which, to be blunt, sucks.

Though I would have relished the opportunity to serve the community this past year and I do have some frustrations with the process, I am happy with the most important outcome of the trial: the way I am and the way I seem to be are once again the same. I feel myself to once again be a full member of the Haverford community.

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Discussion Questions:
1. Should Honor Council members or Co-Chairs be held to higher standards than other community members in regards to the Honor Code?
2. Should the jury have recommended that Woody step down as Honor Council Co-Chair?
3. Should the jury’s treatment of a case be different if a student brings themselves to Honor Council rather than if another party confronts them?
4. In this case, the confronting and confronted party agreed on certain proposed resolutions, which the jury disagreed with in forming its final resolutions. If both parties agree on a certain resolution, should the jury place more emphasis on accommodating the proposal?