Abstract Discussions will be held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, January 25 and Wednesday, January 26, in Ryan Gym

Batman and Robin
An Honor Council Joint Panel
Released Spring 2011

This abstract was not released in accordance with the timeline in the Constitution.
The confronting and confronted parties were given the opportunity to review this abstract prior to its release.
(The addition of this disclaimer began Fall 2010).

Introduction

At the annual Gala for Retiring Wayne Institute of Technology Sidekicks, a gala volunteer noticed that one sidekick, Robin, was lacking the requisite “Retiree” name badge. The volunteer was not comfortable approaching Robin, and so instead asked Batman, a staff member at Wayne Institute of Technology, to confront him about why he was there. The gala is organized each year specifically for retiring sidekicks and their guests, but many uninvited sidekicks often sneak in, so Batman was prepared to confront this particular sidekick. Upon confrontation, however, Robin refused to acknowledge his inappropriate behavior, initially ignoring Batman, and then feigning ignorance. Robin finally agreed to leave, but challenged Batman’s credibility, questioning his authority and salary. Ten minutes after leaving, Robin returned to the gala but remained just outside the entrance. Another volunteer informed Batman that Robin had come back, so Batman went outside to assist the volunteers in the case that Robin decided to try to re-enter the gala. When Robin did try to re-enter, Batman stopped him and asked that he leave. Robin continued to behave belligerently, calling one of the gala volunteers a “bitch,” then left the gala again.

Batman was concerned that Robin would try to sneak back into the gala, and took steps to keep him from coming into the gala through the side entrance. When Robin did try to reenter, he was frustrated by Batman’s presence at the side door, and repeatedly called him a “pussy.” Batman chose not to respond to the taunts, at which point Robin asked him why he was not allowed into the gala. When Batman explained that the gala was only for retiring sidekicks, Robin said he was planning on leaving the institute anyways, so it was like he was retiring. Batman did not respond, and Robin called him a “faggot.” Batman did not respond. Robin said again, “You’re a faggot.” At that time, Batman chose to inform Robin that he is, in fact, gay, at which point Robin left the premises, and Batman called Security.

Pre-Trial

Because the Gala for Retiring Sidekicks happens at the end of the year, the Honor Council Co-Chairs initially wanted to have a summer trial. However, the requisite number of Honor Council members would not be available for a summer trial, so the trial was logistically near impossible to arrange. Furthermore, because of the strength of the language used, the Co-Chairs and the Dean of the College were concerned that harassment might be a legitimate allegation. They therefore followed alternate harassment procedures, which allowed the Co-
Chairs, the Dean of the College, and an EEOC Officer to decide where the case would go. They consented to send the case to a Joint Panel as soon as possible. A Joint Panel is made up of two deans and six students, chaired by an Honor Council Co-Chair and a dean. In this panel, the Deans’ Office appointed an administrator of the college in the place of one of the deans.

Fact Finding

Batman read from the statement he had submitted to Honor Council, reiterating in detail the events of the evening, as stated above. Robin accepted Batman’s account of the incident, and said that his memory of the night of the gala was hazy, and Batman’s statement was probably more accurate. He said that he had heard about the gala only one night earlier and wanted to attend, but realized that he did not know a retiree who could accompany him. Instead, he and three friends asked someone to let them into the gala by the side door. At this point, Robin stated that he and his friends were “extremely intoxicated.” He said that Batman approached him after he had been at the gala for about an hour and a half, and that he had not been previously asked to leave. Robin stated that he remembered being “unpleasant and disrespectful,” but was vague on further details. Upon leaving the gala, Robin stated that he went to another gala and then to his room.

Batman clarified that that no gala volunteer had asked Robin to leave the party, and that the gala volunteer who had initially approached Batman had felt that Robin would not have listened to her, had she approached him. A juror asked how much Robin had had to drink, and Robin answered “too much.” He had been drinking hard alcohol for around three hours that night. Robin stated that, while he did remember calling Batman a “faggot,” he did not remember calling the gala volunteer a “bitch.”

Jury Deliberations

The jury began by rereading the Honor Code. All jurors felt a violation of the Honor Code had occurred; they were specifically concerned about sections of the Code dealing with respectful communication, constructive and engaging discussion, sense of acceptance, and a diverse student body. The jury felt that Batman had behaved appropriately in not immediately confronting Robin about his language and in limiting the initial confrontation to Robin’s presence at the gala. However, the jury felt that the primary issue was Robin’s choice of language. The jury discussed at length whether Robin’s language could be said to demean the entire community or only a portion, and decided that while the term “faggot” was offensive to the entire community, it targeted only a portion of the community. The jury consented on the following statement of violation, with no jurors standing outside.

Robin violated the Honor Code in three regards: first, by displaying a lack of respect for a community member and his concerns; second, through his choice of language, demeaning members of our population and threatening the atmosphere of respect essential to the Haverford community; third, by responding in a manner inconsistent with the principles of confrontation.

Circumstantial Portion

Batman began the circumstantial portions by speaking about his feelings during his interactions with Robin at the gala. Batman said that the situation was “pretty scary” and that he had felt “intimidated, disrespected, belittled.” Batman said that he rarely felt scared, but Robin's
word choice was a signal that he was “attacking me.” Batman said that if he had thought Robin was overly drunk, he would have called Safety and Security, but he did not get that impression.

Robin said that he couldn't explain his intentions regarding his word choice, but that he didn't make a habit of using those words. He stressed that he was in no way prejudiced against gay people, had not been himself the entire night, and was “extremely ashamed” of harassing someone in that way and of his anger towards Batman that night. Robin said that he had been frustrated during his time at Haverford, was expressing pent-up frustration that night, and felt like nothing mattered. He thought Haverford was too small and wanted to leave, yet hadn't told others the whole year because he didn't want to disrupt his crime fighting team’s dynamic. From the very beginning, Robin had felt like he didn't belong: during Customs Week, when he mentioned he was part of the crime fighting team, he got looks from others. Robin acknowledged that he still could have had a better attitude, and that none of his frustration was a justification for his actions. In response to the jury's questions, Robin said that he drank moderately about twice a week, and didn't make a habit of drinking heavily. He said that his behavior, recklessness, and level of drunkenness were unique to the night of the gala.

Batman said that a few days before the trial started, he had found out that Robin was on campus and was uncomfortable that Robin was back on campus since Robin had been asked to leave campus the day after the gala. Batman acknowledged that he had no reason to fear that Robin would do anything to harm him, but he was still worried. Batman said that he had a right to a workplace environment free from discrimination. Batman said that he worried about what would have happened if Robin had run into another student that night and how Robin's words could have affected someone who was closeted. Batman said that he trusted Haverford students, but didn't know how to proceed in this case.

Batman said that he and Robin had not talked about the incident or seen each other face to face until now. Batman asked Robin why he didn't come the day after the gala to apologize. Robin said that he wasn't sure that Batman would have wanted to see him, and that the deans had told him that it would be best if he left campus. Robin inferred that Batman would have felt uncomfortable seeing him. Robin said that he had met with his crime fighting coach the morning after the gala, and that his coach was angry and disappointed. Robin sent a short apology email to Batman that morning, but he wasn't sure if he had sent it before or after speaking with his coach.

Robin acknowledged that he might have to go through a disciplinary process but that he had not looked at the issue from a more personal viewpoint until he had time to reflect. Robin left campus soon after the gala at the request of the deans. He said that the worst part of leaving early was missing the rest of the crime fighting season.

A juror asked the parties how they felt after the gala. Batman said that after Robin left, he called Safety and Security and asked them to be present, because he didn't feel safe. Batman said that he didn't know if he would have wanted to see Robin the next morning, but that it would have meant something if Robin had come to apologize. As Robin didn't approach him, Batman didn't feel that Robin deserved more of his time.

Robin said that when he got back to his room that night he felt flustered and was unsure of what to do. He said that he felt awful about what he had said, but also scared about what would happen to him. Robin was surprised when he was asked to leave campus, but he didn't think it was inappropriate. Robin reiterated that he didn't use that language often, though he had heard it in a locker room setting, with the connotation of “wimp.”
Robin said that the deans had told him that if he left campus permanently, there would be no official punishment. If he came back, he would face a disciplinary hearing and risked being separated. Robin said that when he first heard that, he thought there was no way he was coming back. However, he was rejected from Gotham Academy, his top choice for transferring, and while several other schools admitted him, the institutions were not of Haverford's caliber. Robin said that he then decided to return to Haverford and confront the situation. He then wrote a second, longer apology to Batman. He knew that he was taking a risk in choosing to come back, but thought that if he showed who he really was, he wouldn't be separated. A juror asked Robin why he had chosen Haverford in the first place. Robin said that he had gone to a small high school and thought he would do well at Haverford. He had made a good group of friends and enjoyed his classes, but he was worried that most of his friends were on the crime fighting team, and wanted to branch out more.

Batman told Robin that some of Robin's teammates had apologized to Batman on Robin's behalf. Batman then asked Robin how he could trust him not to do something similar in the future. Robin said that he generally considered himself a nice person, and wouldn't act that way again, but the first step was to not get that drunk again. Robin said that his behavior would not have been acceptable among his friends. He said that he didn't like to think of himself as a crime fighter, that was just a small part of him. Robin said that he had to realize he wasn't special, just another student at Haverford, and that he had to trust others more. He said that he had spent the last year enclosed in a group where he didn't trust or want to get to know others, but this year he would try to get away from that and build more relationships.

Robin said that when Batman told him he was gay, Robin “woke up” and realized he was talking to a person and he needed to get out of there. The next morning, he started to try to understand what had happened and what had prompted him to act the way he did. Robin said that in order to repair his breach of trust with the community, he would be open to apologizing to anyone he had offended. He said that he would work to be more conscientious in his interactions.

A juror asked Robin if he felt “residual resentment” towards Haverford for making him go through the trial process and for his rejection from Gotham Academy. Robin said he had been surprised when he didn't get into Gotham Academy, as the crime fighting coach there had assured him that the incident wouldn't affect his chances. Robin was upset when he didn't get in, but said that he was trying to move past that, and now understood that the incident was ugly enough that Gotham Academy did not want him. When he started worrying about other schools, the situation became more logistical and therefore depersonalized, and he got away from the main issue of what had happened. However, Robin said that hearing Batman speak made him reflect more on that night. Robin said that he felt “terrible, very sorry that I used that language to offend,” and he reiterated that he had not been threatening Batman and was not upset at Batman for bringing this issue forward. Robin said that he had learned a lot from the incident.

A juror asked why, if Gotham Academy didn't want Robin, Haverford should take him back. Robin said that Haverford had taken him before, and although he had made a serious mistake, he believed the incident was out of character for him, and thought Haverford might give him a second chance. He said that he could provide positive things for the community, and proposed volunteering with the Quaker Bouncers as part of his resolutions. A juror asked Robin if he felt added pressure to drink because he lived with his friends. Robin said there was no added pressure, and some of them didn't drink often.

Batman said that it would be important for him and Robin to talk through what had
happened, but he wondered what he personally and the community would get out of that interaction. There was no concrete response from the jury.

A juror asked Robin how he felt about the Haverford community. Robin said that he appreciated the trial process, and he knew it wouldn't happen in the same way anywhere else. He said that he was trying to learn from the situation, and understood that he had made a serious mistake.

Proposed Resolutions

Batman asked to brainstorm resolutions, a suggestion the jury welcomed, and he emphasized that he wasn’t sure whether they were good ideas. He first suggested that Robin not live with his friends and perhaps move to substance-free housing. Robin objected to this idea, saying that he believed living with people he liked would make him a happier person. Batman next proposed that Robin be removed from the crime fighting team. He stated that such teams may encourage groupthink, and that not fighting could encourage Robin to branch out and redefine who he is at Haverford. Robin responded that he liked teamwork, but did not particularly care for crime fighting: if he were not allowed to fight crime, he would simply train to do something else.

Finally, Batman proposed that Robin be separated for a year. He said that he was concerned about this incident happening to a student, particularly a closeted student. Robin responded that he could have gone to “some other college,” but that he had chosen to be a part of the Haverford community. He acknowledged, “Maybe this is too unforgivable. [But I] chose to return because I thought I could move past this. This is what I’ve been thinking about for three months. I’ve chosen to come back; I hope that’s enough of a commitment.”

Batman asked if Robin felt he needed more time to show the community who he could be, and if time away could allow him to do that. Robin responded that there were several things he had in mind to do while at Haverford to demonstrate his growth, such as volunteering with the Quaker Bouncers or helping out other campus organizations. He said that he wasn’t sure what he could do in a year away that could help that relationship. Robin said further that he would be open to alcohol counseling as part of his resolutions, and hoped that he could do something positive to give back to the community, such as being a crime fighting mentor at a local school. He said that, having missed the crime fighting competition, having been asked to leave, and having had a summer apart from the community, he thought it would be best if he could do things that would be helpful to the Haverford community.

Robin acknowledged that he could not imagine being in Batman’s position, and stated that he would welcome any attempt to make things right. Batman asked that Robin think about him and about the positive aspects of his proposed resolutions. He reiterated that Haverford is his place of employment. Robin recognized that his separation from the community would allow Batman to not have to think about the incident.

A juror asked that Robin leave the room, so the jury could ask Batman questions. Once Robin was outside, the juror asked whether Batman would feel safe having Robin on campus. Batman said that separation for a year seemed arbitrary: his primary concern was for the safety of the community, and he was not sure that he could trust Robin. However, Batman recognized that Robin’s separation would not necessarily make him feel safer. Instead, he wanted Robin to prove that he could be a part of the community.

The jury asked Robin to step back in, and a juror asked him to clarify once more his exposure to and use of the terms he had employed the night of the gala. He stated that he had
used the term “pussy” casually and that, while he heard the term “faggot” used casually, he normally tried to stay away from using it. He said that he had some friends who are gay, and that he has never used either term with the intent of offending someone. He said that it was hard to confront someone for using either term, but that he would be more prone to doing so after seeing the effects firsthand.

Batman said that it was hard to propose resolutions because the parties viewed the situation from entirely different perspectives. Robin responded that he tried to propose resolutions that would provide something for the community and help both parties come to terms with the incident. He thought that talking to Batman would be the best way for him to learn from the incident, and he felt that it would be helpful to begin those conversations soon. The jury had no more questions for Robin, and he had no more comments, so they asked Robin to leave so they could speak to Batman alone.

Once Robin left, Batman expressed his mistrust of Robin and his doubt that Robin really understood the severity of his actions. Batman said further that Robin’s tone had been rude, clearly aimed at offending. He said that he had felt unsafe when he was alone with Robin, but that when Robin realized he was gay, he had immediately backed down. He said that it felt “weird” to see Robin on campus, and that he was concerned about how Robin would treat other people. He stated that he was comforted by the thought that Robin probably would not harass him again, and recognized that restorative justice can take different forms – but that it did not necessarily entail a return to campus. Based on the resolutions proposed by Robin, Batman did not feel that Robin wanted to engage in the process of restoration. He also mentioned that a student had complained to him about Robin’s behavior at another party, and he was worried that this behavior would continue.

One juror stated that it was unlikely that Robin would, in fact, have been able to attend another school in the fall, given his disciplinary record, and another pointed to inconsistencies in Robin’s statement. The jury asked Batman again whether he felt he would be able to do his job with Robin on campus. Batman stated that he was uncomfortable with Robin coming back to campus without having resolved these issues, and that he felt there had been no resolution to date. Batman had no final comments, and the jury had no further questions.

Jury Deliberations

One of the jurors mentioned that they had outside information about Robin, but was not sure if it would be appropriate to share. The Co-Chair allowed the jury to discuss the appropriateness of outside information. The juror clarified that the information was not hearsay but firsthand knowledge. One juror stated that he was uncomfortable having more information shared without giving Robin the opportunity to defend himself. The rest of the jury acknowledged this point, but consented upon hearing the information, with two members of the jury standing outside of consensus. The juror stated that he had witnessed Robin drinking three or more times per week, and often immoderately, which contradicted what Robin had said about his drinking habits, but he didn’t feel that he could comment in more detail.

A juror said that if separation was one of the resolutions, the jury should suggest productive activities that could prove Robin’s readiness to return to the community, and other jurors agreed. The jury quickly agreed that alcohol education would be beneficial. A juror commented that there was evidence that Robin had not been completely honest with the jury, and may have only apologized in order to fight crime. He may not have been able to fight crime elsewhere, and the timeline of events indicated that he may have written to Batman only after his
coach instructed him to. Most members of the jury felt that a separation of one semester would not jeopardize Robin’s academic career, and some jurors felt that he should be given a chance to prove that he could be a part of the community, while outside of it.

One juror worried that Robin had not recognized the magnitude of his actions, but another juror stated that the proceeding had the potential to be a turning point for Robin. A third juror stated that separation would give Robin the opportunity to grow and to deal with the reality of the situation. One juror was uncomfortable with the idea of separating Robin for even a semester, while another felt uncomfortable with the idea of bringing Robin back to campus at all, and thus did not feel they could consent to separation for a semester.

The jury felt that Batman and Robin should meet in person to talk through what happened, and that this would be best accomplished through mediation. The jury wanted to consider statements from Batman and from the mediator about Robin’s progress when deciding whether to allow him to return to Haverford.

One juror suggested that Robin complete an educational project concerning the history of homophobia in an attempt to give some weight to his use of the term “faggot.” Not all of the jury thought that this would be productive, but no juror felt it would be harmful, and they thought the resolution worth including. The jury initially spoke about having Robin write an essay, but instead decided that a reflection on the play *The Laramie Project* might be more productive. Finally, the jury felt that Robin should write a final essay that would be used in determining whether he could come back to campus.

The jury consented to the spirit of the following tentative resolutions:

1. Robin will be separated from Haverford for a minimum of one semester. His readmission will be based off of his satisfactory completion of the following resolutions, and will be consented on by Honor Council near the end of this semester. (Two jurors stood outside of consensus)
2. Robin will complete an alcohol education class. (All jurors consented)
3. Robin and Batman will meet for mediated discussions a minimum of two times, with times scheduled at their and the mediator's discretion. Mediations will continue until Robin, Batman, and the mediator consent that they are no longer necessary and/or productive. Letters from Batman and the mediator will be considered as part of Robin's readmission to Haverford. (All jurors consented)
4. Robin will read "The Laramie Project" and write a response to the play. The response will be a minimum of four pages double spaced, standard font and margins. (All jurors consented)
5. Robin will write a reflection discussing the circumstances that led to him being separated from the community, the insight he has gained from his time away and from fulfilling the above conditions, and why he feels he is ready to return to Haverford. (All jurors consented)

**Finalizing Resolutions**

Robin said that he had prepared a statement to read at the meeting, and the jury invited him to read it. He responded to most of the resolutions in turn, saying that he felt his voice had not been heard and elaborating on how communication with the Deans' Office had given him the impression that he would not be separated. Robin was most uncomfortable with the fourth resolution, concerning a reflection on *The Laramie Project*, because he felt that the resolution
characterized him as a “bigot.” In the statement he elaborated on how that characterization was inconsistent with who he was as a person. He became very emotional while reading his response to the fourth resolution.

Batman said that he was seeing a different person in Robin today than he had seen previously, and asked why Robin hadn’t been more forthcoming before. Robin said that he knew it was his responsibility to talk to Batman, but he thought that Batman was so offended that he wouldn't want to see him, and that he thought he waited an appropriate length of time to apologize. Batman said that Robin’s first email to him had been “a slap in the face,” because it contained no actual apology and little thought, and that Robin hadn't thought to ask how Batman had felt, or to ask if they could talk. Robin responded, saying that he “didn't grasp fully how much I had hurt Batman until the last few days.”

A juror explained that separation for a semester was intended as a fresh start. Robin said that he didn't feel that leaving for a semester would be good for him or for the community. He said that he wanted to prove that he was ready to return now and become a positive member of the community. Batman asked Robin how the community could learn from this experience, and how Robin could have apologized. He said that the other parts of the incident were largely being ignored: the trial had focused on the use of the term “faggot,” but the rest of Robin’s behavior that night was also problematic. Robin said that he couldn't reasonably explain to Batman why he had said what he did.

Robin reiterated that he didn't know what he would do for a semester, and that separation would be counterproductive. A jury member said that being separated could help an individual reflect on his actions, and for the jury to see that he had clearly understood the situation. Robin said that being home would be “kind of devastating.” He said that it wouldn't be productive. He said that he had friends from high school who sat around at home and didn't do anything, and he found that environment depressing and didn't want to be in it. Robin suggested that he could remain on campus but be on probation as a compromise. After hearing final statements from both parties, the jury excused them to begin deliberations.

Jury Deliberations Round I

Opinions of the jury members were more divided than at previous meeting, largely due to the nature of Robin’s statement. A jury member said that although they still only had Robin’s word, it now seemed much more genuine. The jury was concerned that living in an environment with his friends could jeopardize how much Robin was able to branch out and deal with his drinking habits, but also acknowledged that Robin had said he didn't like being identified as a crime fighter. A juror member said that because he still had doubts about Robin remaining on campus, he had a professional responsibility as a dean not to consent to Robin staying on campus.

The jury also discussed the objectives of separation, saying that it would give Robin time to reflect and show remorse, but other jurors said that he had already done so. One juror said that since Robin had no history of violence, it would be okay to keep him on campus. The jury ended unable to come to a decision. The weight of the group appeared to be leaning towards allowing Robin to stay on campus, but three jurors said they would not feel comfortable consenting to that decision. However, for the consensus process to go forward, only two jurors could stand outside. Feeling that they wouldn't get anywhere, the jury decided to adjourn.

Jury Deliberations Round II

One of the chairs began by clarifying that no member of the jury was specifically
responsible for Robin's actions should he return to campus, and that a juror’s sole responsibility
was to do what he or she thought was right. At this point, the Co-Chair asked the jurors to go
around the circle and express how they were feeling after having had a night to think. The
opinions of the group tended to have been influenced by the most recent meeting with Robin, yet
there was not a strong thread of consensus on how to treat the issue.

One juror said that she did not like Robin’s proposed idea of probation, because it would
be counterintuitive to trusting him in allowing him to stay. Another juror echoed this sentiment
saying that the jury had to let him back in. Another juror questioned whether it was time for him
to come back, but another juror said, “if he hasn't reached realization yet, he won't [while being
away].” A juror asked the third juror in the circle whether moving Robin away from his friends
would make them feel more comfortable about allowing him to stay on campus. The third juror
in the circle said that the move would make them feel comfortable consenting to allow Robin to
stay on campus. Jurors discussed the idea, speaking to the general belief that such a move would
not hurt Robin and would potentially remove him from a locker room culture in his living space.
At the same time, jurors questioned whether or not they felt comfortable assuming that his living
situation and participation in athletics was part of the problem and mandating his move. After
hearing everyone speak, most members of the jury said they felt comfortable with the resolution
and were willing to consent. After consenting to the resolution concerning housing, the jury
consented to Robin being able to stay on campus with two jurors standing outside. The jury
preserved the majority of the tentative resolutions, but replaced the tentative resolution
concerning a reflection on _The Laramie Project_ with a resolution that aimed to educate the
broader community, the specific subject of which would be decided on by Batman and Robin.
Finally, the jury consented that Honor Council should evaluate Robin's progress at the end of the
semester, based off of his successful completion of the rest of the resolutions. The jury left this
statement intentionally vague, leaving any potential actions up to Honor Council.

The jury consented on these final resolutions:

1. **Robin will move up-campus for at least one semester, at the discretion of the Housing
   Office and the Dean of the College. A member of the jury will meet with Robin to explain
   the jury's reasoning.** (One juror stood outside of consensus)
2. **Robin will complete an alcohol education class approved by the Haverford Substance
   Abuse Educator.** (All jurors consented)
3. **Robin and Batman will meet for mediated discussions with times scheduled at their and
   the mediator's discretion. Mediations will continue until Robin, Batman, and the
   mediator consent that they are no longer necessary and/or productive. At the end of the
   mediations and/or the semester, whichever comes first, letters from Batman and the
   mediator should be submitted to Honor Council.** (All jurors consented)
4. **Robin and Batman will work together to determine a suitable project, which Robin will
   complete with the aim of educating the broader community.** (All jurors consented)
5. **Robin will write a reflection discussing the circumstances that led to the convening of
   this panel, the insight he has gained from this experience, and the insight he has gained
   about the Haverford community and its relationship to the Honor Code. This letter will
   be submitted to Honor Council.** (All jurors consented)
6. **Robin will write a letter to the community to be released with the abstract for this case.
   This letter can be based off of the reflection discussed in the above resolution.** (All jurors
   consented)
7. *Honor Council will evaluate Robin’s progress at the end of the semester. (All jurors consented)*

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Do you think Robin should have been separated from the community?
2. To what extent should a confronting party’s sense of safety influence the decision to separate a confronted party?
3. How important is the intention behind hateful words and speech?
4. The jury focused on Robin’s use of the term faggot even though Robin used other hateful terms. Should this distinction have been made?
5. To what extent do teams encourage groupthink and should this have been considered in the resolutions?
6. Was the tentative resolution considering *The Laramie Project* appropriate?
7. Should juries make decisions that affect a student’s personal life, such as housing?
8. In a situation like this, how can the breach of trust with the wider community be addressed?
Letter to the Community

Dear Haverford Community,

As the perpetrator of the violations stated in the abstract, I feel I have much to apologize for. First, if anyone was present the night the violations occurred, I apologize for any way my actions affected you, and for subjecting you to such disgusting behavior. Second, I want to apologize to every other member of the community: there is no action in this community, positive or negative, that doesn’t affect the other members of the community if we are the type of community we say we are. If one person chooses to violate the code, he violates the trust of everyone else who has entered into the agreement with him. I didn’t realize this until the trial, when a jury of my peers and others involved in the community made it clear to me that my behavior absolutely affected them: who is to say that they couldn’t have been the person that I verbally abused that night?

While I am deeply sorry for the way I acted that night, and always will be, I also feel that the incident and what has followed from it have granted me unique perspective. I don’t think I would ever want anyone to have to go through a trial like I did, and I felt pretty sorry for myself all summer leading up to the trial, but after the trial I felt a lot more sorry for the members of the community who were directly and indirectly affected. I also feel that this event has allowed me to recognize that no one’s personal agenda is more important than the community’s, nor is it more important than any individual community member’s personal feelings or agenda. I want to assure everyone that I have entered this year with an entirely different attitude: I am aware that the effects of alcohol are not all good, that they are in fact mostly bad. I am aware that I must make a genuine effort to be as friendly and careful with my words as I possibly can be. I am aware that I must respect every member of the community, regardless of the circumstances.

I hope that anyone who reads this letter can learn some of these lessons before having to learn them the hard way. No matter how drunk you are, or no matter how nice or mean of a person you have been in the past, you will and you must be held accountable for your actions. Your actions, after all, are what make up who you are, and if a person is not careful, their perception of themselves can end up being different from everyone else’s.

Robin

At the request of Batman and Robin the following letter was emailed out with the abstract

Dear Haverford community,

It is usual practice for honor council to send an email notifying the community of an abstract’s release and the discussion of that abstract. However, as the parties involved in the incident that you will read about, we felt compelled to address the community personally and hope that you will contribute to an important discussion on either Tuesday, January 25th or Wednesday, January 26th at 7 PM in Ryan Gym. Though the discussion will largely depend upon what you, as community members, want to discuss as it pertains to this incident/trial/abstract, we hope that you’ll think about how we as a community can prevent incidents such as this one from happening again. For this reason, we encourage everyone to attend one of these discussions.
In the attached abstract, you’ll read about Robin, who rudely introduced himself to Batman the night of the incident with a series of insults including the use of derogatory and offensive language often used in hate speech and concerning sexual orientation. You’ll also learn about Batman, who was unexpectedly subjected to this string of verbal harassment, which was not only an impediment to Batman’s professional duties, but was also personally offensive and even frightening.

After the incident, we put our trust in Honor Council to help provide a resolution. Over the course of the trial, it was very hard for either of us to look across the room and see past a terrible first impression. But by the end of the trial, we were both able to see beyond the incident and begin to see each other as members of the same community rather than adversaries.

During the last five months, we’ve continued the process of getting to know each other on a deeper level. We literally broke bread, having breakfasts and lunches together in the dining center, taking time to talk as friends do. We thought that getting to know each other personally was very important in order to be able to live in the same community and to work to move beyond the incident.

I, Robin, have learned more than I ever could have expected from this incident and its ramifications. In getting to know Batman, I have learned that he is in fact a generous, forgiving, energetic and sincere person, and someone concerned not with getting in the way of my personal fun, but rather with the community’s collective safety and interests. I’ve learned that respect is a currency that can be used in far more places than the blatant disrespect and disregard for other people that I was bargaining with on the night of the incident. I’ve learned that speech with hateful connotations cannot be used with anyone, because you never know just exactly what that person is going through or how that language could potentially affect them. I can honestly say that while I am not glad that this incident happened, I am extremely glad that this incident has allowed me to learn so much not only about Batman, but also about how restorative justice genuinely can work.

I, Batman, see Robin as a young man with great potential: he’s a fine crime fighter with the ability to help carry his crime fighting team far; he’s a bright student and a diligent individual, who will surely excel in his course work and go far in life and his career; and he’s someone who has opened his mind and made himself vulnerable in such a way that he will always carry with him this story and the duty and responsibility that decidedly comes with it. I’m also happy to call Robin a friend.

With all of this, we hope that our community will grow, learn, and become stronger from this incident.

Respectfully,

Batman and Robin