White Collar:  
An Honor Council Academic Trial

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

Key

*Confronting Party*: Nick Halden  
*Confronted Party*: Neil Caffrey

Summary

In this case, Nick Halden believed that Neil Caffrey cheated off of his quiz in their FBI and Society 100 class. Nick confronted Neil, and Neil responded that he did not cheat on the quiz. The case was brought to Honor Council, who reviewed the statements of both parties, consented to a suspicion of violation of the Honor Code, and sent the case to an academic trial. During fact-finding, the jury concluded there was not enough evidence of a violation of the Honor Code and came to a statement of non-violation.

Fact-Finding Portion of the Trial

Nick began by explaining that, during a quiz in FBI and Society 100, he noticed Neil’s head turn towards him in his peripheral vision. He knew Neil and didn’t think much of the situation. However, after the quiz, two students in the class approached Nick and informed him that they thought that they saw Neil looking at his paper. After consulting with a mutual friend, Nick decided to confront Neil. In response Neil explained that he habitually daydreams and that his eyes wander, but that he did not cheat. Neil emphasized that he studied for the quiz individually and that he reached all his answers on his own. Neil felt apologetic for making Nick feel uncomfortable, and said that he learned from this incident that he needs to sit in the front corner of a classroom when taking quizzes so that there are no misunderstandings. As evidence that he did not cheat, Neil noted that he had done poorly on the quiz, and Nick said that he had done well.
Nick clarified that in the time that had passed since he had confronted Neil, he no longer felt confident that Neil had cheated. Nick said he was not hoping for a particular outcome in the trial but rather was carrying out his obligation under the Honor Code to report what he had seen. Nick and Neil both stated that their friendship was still strong and didn't depend on the outcome of the case.

**Jury Deliberations**

The jury decided that both accounts seemed honest and that no breach of the Honor Code had taken place. The jury felt that cheating was implausible because the answers did not correlate. It seemed that Neil and Nick had resolved the situation well on their own, and there was no need to further intervene to solve any remaining breaches of trust.

*Statement of Non-Violation:* Neil Caffrey did not violate the Honor Code.

**Discussion Questions:**
1. How should a jury deal with the passage of time in between an initial confrontation and a trial?
2. Did the students who approached Nick after the class have an obligation to confront Neil themselves? Was it appropriate for them to share their suspicions with Nick?
3. What should a professor’s involvement be in an academic trial between two students?