Abstract discussion will be held on Wednesday, November 5 at 7:30 PM in Ryan Gym.

**GAME OF THRONES:**
An Honor Council Academic Trial
Released SEMESTER

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

**Key:**
**Confronted:** Arya Stark  
**Confronting:** Professor Brienne of Tarth  
**Class:** Second Year Swordfighting

**Summary/Pre-Trial:**

[Arya Stark] was a Bryn Mawr international student in [Professor Brienne of Tarth’s] course in [second year Swordfighting]. Students were given an assignment to write and present on a [swordfighting] topic of their choice. [Arya]’s earlier drafts included [sentences] from a book she’d read while studying [swordfighting] [at home in the North], and after being told to make a previous draft longer, she added more material she’d memorized during the same class, which was also almost identical to sentences from this book. [Professor Brienne] grew suspicious with the new draft, found three almost identical phrases on a web site, and confronted [Arya]. The case was sent to an Honor Council trial, where the resolutions focused primarily on education for [Arya], and possibilities for her to help Council educate the community.

**Fact Finding:**

The jury convened with [Arya] and [Arya]’s support person, the Bi-Co liaison, and [Professor Brienne] was Skyped in. The meeting began with [Arya] recounting her side of the story. She explained that she was assigned a three minute presentation and had to turn in an outline and two drafts in the process. She handed in her first draft earlier than her classmates did, before the deadline. She was told to correct various aspects and make the presentation longer. [Arya] handed in her second draft, also before the deadline of the second draft, and was told to make it longer and correct more minor
mistakes. At that point, because she had turned in the specified two drafts, she thought the assignment did not need to be turned in again until the final presentation. On the day that the second draft was formally due, [Brienne] asked [Arya] where her draft was. [Arya] did not realize that a third draft was expected of her, so she wrote it that night and turned it in the next day.

[Arya] explained that she included two sentences in all of her drafts that had been memorized from a [swordfighting] book she had read as part of class back in [the North]. She wasn’t told in drafts one and two that these sentences were not acceptable, so she kept them in, and by the third draft she didn’t have the time to rethink them. On the third draft, in an attempt to elongate her presentation, she included a passage on a [particular swordfighting sequence] that she had once memorized, believing that she had summarized it with her own words until the professor found similar phrasing from the original source on an outside website. She told the jury that she had thought about citing, but because it was a [presentation] draft and not a research paper she decided against it.

[Professor Brienne] explained that her instructions say students shouldn’t discuss [swordfighting techniques or moves] that they have not covered in class. She asked students to hand in a topic, an outline, and two drafts. She didn’t read the first draft, but her colleague read it and didn’t say anything. When [Professor Brienne] read it, she noticed immediately that the [swordfighting] topics discussed were beyond the level of the class. She typed keywords into Google and found the two replicated passages. On the same day she found out that two other students working independently had potentially violated the Code on the same project, and because this class section consisted of only these three students, she confronted them together.

When the jury asked about [Arya’s] experience with citation, she explained that it was never discussed in class since the professor thought they wouldn’t need to use citations. [Arya] also explained that she did not know how to cite in [Swordfighting]. A juror asked if [Arya] asked her professor why she wanted another draft, and [Arya] said she assumed the professor wanted her to make it longer and make the given corrections. [Professor Brienne] explained that she usually offers students feedback for [swordfighting] presentation projects. Students who do well come back with more drafts than the specified amount. She explained that she doesn’t have strict guidelines, rather if a student hands in the allotted number of drafts they receive the grade. [Arya] was given the grade for turning in two drafts, and drafts after that were additional feedback that did not directly affect the grade. [Brienne], when asked, said she does not explain this grading process to her students. She explained that even if her colleague grades the assignment, she gets them in the end.

[Professor Brienne] explained that she did not expect citations because at this basic level of [Swordfighting] the students have limited knowledge so she expected them to talk about their own ideas with that limited knowledge and didn’t feel the need to tell them how to cite. [Arya] clarified that for the final [presentation] project, she wrote a completely new [presentation]. The jury asked if [Arya] was in a higher level of [Swordfighting] back in [the North] and she said she doesn’t think so, but the [swordfighting content] of the sentences she had memorized were of a higher level than she was able to reproduce herself. She equated it to [Archery] and said just because you can watch and understand [someone else’s archery technique] doesn’t mean you can replicate it yourself. [Arya] described the
topic of her original [presentation]; she discussed [transmission of swordfighting techniques between Braavos and Westeros], which is something she is familiar with and learned about in [the North].

[Arya] talked about the previous semester in which there was a similar [swordfighting] project in which many people used outside sources, so she did too. [Brienne] explained that some people use outside sources but that she always tells them to limit their use of [swordfighting techniques and maneuvers] that are beyond the content covered in the course to ensure that their classmates understand them. A juror asked [Arya] if she thought she had learned enough about [swordfighting] in the class to cover her topic, and [Arya] said that she did not. Another juror asked if [Arya] was aware that she was using memorized passages, and [Arya] said that she was. She knew she was copying them word for word and in the third draft she thought she was putting a rephrased version of a memorized [sequence] into her own permutation but it must have been too memorized because it turned out to be an exact replication. [Arya] provided the jury with a copy of her paper as well as the relevant passages from her book, and [Brienne] provided the sources that she found online with the same passage. [Arya] explained that the passage in the book came from a compilation of articles written by other [swordfighters], which explains why [Brienne] found it online in an essay contest. [Arya] showed [Brienne] the book during the confrontation, but [Brienne] had never seen it before, as it was written for students from [the North] learning [Swordfighting]. [Brienne] reiterated that the draft seemed beyond the scope of the class, which is what made her suspicious. A juror asked [Brienne] if she gave feedback about the topic or the outline, but [Brienne] said she waited until the first draft because the outline is so brief.

Once there were no more questions, both parties left and the Jury began deliberations.

**Jury Deliberations/Statement of Violation:**

One juror was unsure about whether a violation had occurred. She recognized [Arya] was copying, but the pattern (i.e. last semester, other people discussing [techniques] from outside the class, even though they were told not to) made her concerned as to the what the true expectations of the class were. [Brienne] kept stating it wasn’t a research paper and therefore there was no need to cite, and what [Arya] was handing in was considered a draft creating a grey area for citation. Another juror was concerned with the extent of [Arya’s] use of outside material, that she lifted a unique passage of rather than an isolated phrase. Other jurors wondered about what constitutes plagiarism in [weapons] education, where students learning a new [weapon] frequently learn by incorporating new [maneuvers and techniques] from outside of class. One juror recognized that [Arya] had thought about citing her sources but didn’t know how to cite in [Swordfighting]. Jurors agreed that there was fault on both the professor’s and [Arya’s] parts. But, it was pointed out that despite the lack of clarity in the professor’s assignment, [Arya] still committed an act of plagiarism. Multiple jurors were concerned with the question of drafts: is plagiarism in an early draft malicious or just sloppy, a mistake that would have been caught later? How does this change when the draft is being turned in? The jury retraced what they’d learned during fact-finding. [Arya] had turned in her second draft and was then asked to do a third
draft she didn’t know she had to do, but she wrote it overnight and didn’t have an opportunity to ask her professor for clarification. The passages she included in the third draft were the part she had unintentionally copied verbatim from memory, but she was aware of the two passages she had included in the first two drafts. A jury member resumed the discussion by drawing attention to the Honor Code: “It is each student’s responsibility to be conscious of his or her work habits and to find out exactly what each of his or her professors expects in terms of acknowledging sources of information on papers, exams, and assignments.” Others drew attention to [Arya’s] visible anxiety during the initial meetings and suggested that holding the proceeding in the first place would be enough to keep her conscious of her work habits in the future.

Students in the class hadn’t been graded for the content of their drafts, rather, the drafts had been an opportunity for feedback that received credit as long as they were handed in. The jury took into consideration that the content itself might not matter if the purpose of the assignment was to have people practice preparing a presentation and presenting, but decided that the use of [technique] that’s been learned so far matters. [Arya] had failed to do the assignment in that she was not demonstrating the [techniques] she had learned, but using ones that she already knew from prior education. Jurors thought that you should still cite in drafts of presentations, or at least state in the presentation where outside information is coming from, as representing someone else’s work as your own does constitute a violation of the Code. Based on the jury’s conversation’s with [Arya Stark] and [Professor Brienne] during fact-finding, the jury knew that in previous assignments, students had discussed [maneuvers and techniques] from outside sources, but concluded that copying entire passages on [specific sequences of maneuvers] was different. Instead of using her own thoughts and words, [Arya] didn’t follow the assignment by directly using outside sources.

At this point, some jurors felt that a formal statement of violation and additional meetings seemed like blunter measures than were truly necessary in this case, but seeing as the trial was already convened and the room agreed that some sort of minor violation had occurred, the resolutions that would follow a statement of violation could be an effective form of education for [Arya] and the community. The jury was particularly concerned with the role of plagiarism in oral presentations, drafts, and in situations where students come from cultural and education backgrounds where memorization is a prominent tool of instruction. While some on the jury wondered if the situation could have been resolved between the student and the professor without involving Honor Council, they decided to proceed, as they felt the next steps of a trial could be educational for both.

The Bi-Co liaison commented that while [Arya] represented another person’s work as her own, which is a violation of the Code, she agreed that the context was pretty fuzzy. As a [weapons] student in [the North], she had memorized passages on [certain sequences of maneuvers] from books, and while obviously the situation was different she felt that the line is blurry. She approved of moving forward with a statement of violation but, like the jury, expressed reservations.

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1 Section 3.08.1
All jurors consented to the following statement of violation:

SOV: [Arya] violated the Honor Code by committing an act of plagiarism as defined on p.53 of the faculty handbook in that she “represent[ed] another person’s ideas or scholarship as her own.” (10 jurors consented, 0 jurors stood outside).

Circumstantial Portion:

[Brienne] proposed the following resolutions by email and did not attend the circumstantial portion:

1) [Arya] should take a tutorial session or some type of course to learn about the Honor Code (especially about plagiarism).
2) [Arya] will not earn any points for the presentation project, which is 5% of total course grade.

The jury and [Arya] met for the circumstantial portion, and [Arya] began by describing the circumstances. She explained that she only had one night to write the third draft, and at the time she didn’t think writing down memorized information was okay but didn’t have enough time to fix it. In her freshmen year E-sem (similar to Haverford’s freshman writing seminars, but not exclusively focused on writing) she was not taught about citation and plagiarism and she didn’t realize it was an act of dishonesty. If she knew that, she claimed, she wouldn’t have done it. The Bi-Co Liaison explained that E-sems are offered by different professors in different subjects but the focus is always on writing. [Arya] had heard about Bryn Mawr’s Honor Code during Customs Week but she never really read the Code sentence by sentence.

A juror asked if [Brienne] ever talked about methods for learning [swordfighting] and the difference in methods between here and [the North], and [Arya] responded that she did not. Another juror asked if it felt like an adjustment to go between memorization to the way class is taught now. [Arya] responded that the two styles of learning don’t conflict, she believes memorization is a good way to learn [swordfighting techniques], but she told the jury that she will not use memorized information in her written work again. She explained that she often forgets what she writes down. She is aware of the difference between the information she has memorized and the information that is in her own words, so this was not an accident, and she reiterated that she will not use memorized phrases again.

It became apparent that [Arya] had not had any other plagiarism education. A juror asked the Bi-Co Liaison if the writing center at BMC does plagiarism workshops like Haverford does, and the Liaison said they do not, but they will meet with individuals. [Arya] explained that she has had course specific plagiarism education, for example in her English class she was told to read a packet about Chicago-style citation and feels she now has a good grasp on how to do that.

A juror asked [Arya] if she was aware that by taking classes at Haverford she is under Haverford’s honor code, and [Arya] said that she was.

[Arya] explained that in the [Swordfighting] course, she had other assignments such as problem
sets in which she was asked to write down [descriptions of swordfighting sequences] directly from the textbook, which affected this assignment a little in that there was a precedent in the class for using un-cited passages. A juror asked how classes in [the North] were different from classes here, and [Arya] said memorization is the distinguishing factor. She was essentially asked to memorize the whole textbook in addition to regular assignments.

The trial chair asked [Arya] if she had thought of any proposed resolutions, and [Arya] said she will make sure to talk to the professor if she is using outside sources to make sure it is okay. She also said it would be helpful if [Brienne]’s instructions read “do not use outside sources” instead of “use only what you’ve learned in class” as they do now.

The jury had no more questions and [Arya] was dismissed.

**Jury Deliberations and Tentative Resolutions:**

The jury agreed that separation was not necessary in this case, but that a zero on the assignment should be considered to ensure that [Arya] would be held accountable. They also discussed the master guide on academic integrity that Council was compiling, and whether [Arya] should contribute to a guide for international students entering a different academic environment, or for students learning [weapons] at Haverford. The jury agreed that [Arya] would benefit from a general education on Haverford’s Honor Code. The jury also agreed that [Arya] would benefit from a more general education on plagiarism given that her previous plagiarism education was very limited and specific. The jury was concerned with what recommendation to make about a potential grade change for the assignment given that the [presentation] that [Arya] ended up giving was completely rewritten and free of plagiarism. But even though [Arya] did change her final [presentation], this was only because she had been confronted. Ultimately, it was decided that [Arya] should lose credit for only the portions of the project which she had plagiarized. One juror pointed out that whatever recommendation was made, the project was only 5% of the final grade, and probably wouldn’t have a significant impact on [Arya’s] overall grade for the class.

The jury agreed that [Brienne] should also be held accountable, she should have more of a dialogue with her students. One juror in particular was concerned with an apparent lack of communication between [Brienne] and the other [Swordfighting] instructor working with the class. The jury contemplated including a resolution suggesting that [Brienne] herself look over drafts to avoid future confusion among her students about what is and is not acceptable. The conversation moved to a discussion about the relationship between the two instructors in [weapons] classes, and how the communication between the two affects the students. The professor’s confrontation of three people at one time was also discussed, and the jury wanted to make clear its opinion that confronting parties should keep individual confrontations separate unless they’re related cases. They also thought of writing a guide to students, faculty, and staff about confrontation, but were made aware that efforts were already in place to do so.
Tentative Resolutions:

1. [Arya] will complete the Academic Integrity Tutorial on Moodle. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

2. [Arya] will read both Haverford’s and Bryn Mawr’s Honor Codes. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

3. [Arya] will write a letter to the community reflecting upon this experience in light of what she learned in resolutions 1 and 2. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

4. [Arya] will write a guide on how to properly cite and incorporate memorized information into assignments. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

5. The jury recommends that [Arya] use the Writing Center or talk to her professor if she has questions about future assignments. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

6. The jury recommends that the plagiarized portion of the assignment receive a grade of 0.0 (i.e. outline and drafts, 2% of the total grade in the class). The jury also recommends that grade of the re-written [presentation] not be changed (i.e. oral presentation, 3% of the total grade in the class). (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

7. [Arya] will not be separated from Haverford College. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

8. The jury recommends that this violation not be reported to institutions of higher learning. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

9. The jury recommends that [Brienne] explicitly state when outside sources may or may not be used on assignments. If outside sources are permitted in the future, the jury recommends [Brienne] discuss appropriate methods of citation with the whole class. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

10. The jury recommends that [Brienne] review section V, part X of the faculty handbook, “The Honor Code,” in order to inform proper confrontation. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

11. The jury would like to remind students, faculty, and staff that “as confrontation is often a matter between two individuals or parties, it is advisable to exercise discretion and respect privacy accordingly when initiating a dialogue” (Section 3.06 of the Honor Code). Multiple parties with separate violations should therefore be confronted separately. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

12. The jury recommends that the head of Bryn Mawr’s Honor Board notify the Bryn Mawr
community of this abstract’s release and invite all students to attend the abstract discussions. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

All jurors present consent to resolutions as a whole (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves).

Finalizing Resolutions:

The jury met fifteen minutes before the finalizing portion to review the resolutions, and consented to keep them the same.

The Bi-Co Liaison and [Professor Brienne] were not present at the meeting, but [Arya] joined the jury for finalizing resolutions. The trial chair sent the finalized resolutions to the Bi-Co Liaison so that she could approve or disapprove of them.

It was agreed upon that the guide should distinguish between memorization in general (i.e. for exams) and using material memorized prior to the current course.

Grade clarification: [Professor Brienne]’s response to the tentative resolutions was that she was not comfortable giving different grades to the three students who she confronted. She suggested that the juries of the three trials recommend the same grade to all three students. The jury took this concern into account; however, they wanted to remind the professor that we treat each case individually, and because the grade change was simply a recommendation they were not worried.

Finalized Resolutions:

1. [Arya] will complete the Academic Integrity Tutorial on Moodle before this semester’s final exam period. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

2. [Arya] will read both Haverford’s and Bryn Mawr’s Honor Codes before this semester’s final exam period. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

3. [Arya] will write a guide on how to properly cite and incorporate memorized information into assignments by the end of fall break [year omitted]. She will work together with one member of the jury and one member of the fall [year omitted] Honor Council. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

4. [Arya] will write a letter to the community reflecting upon this experience in light of what she learned in resolutions 1, 2, and 3 by the end of fall break [year omitted]. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)
5. The jury recommends that [Arya] use the Writing Center or talk to her professor if she has questions about future assignments. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

6. The jury recommends that the plagiarized portion of the assignment receive a grade of 0.0 (i.e. outline and drafts, 2% of the total grade in the class). The jury also recommends that the grade of the re-written [presentation] not be changed (i.e. oral presentation, 3% of the total grade in the class). (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

7. [Arya] will not be separated from Haverford College. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

8. The jury recommends that this violation not be reported to institutions of higher learning. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

9. The jury recommends that [Brienne] explicitly state when outside sources may or may not be used on assignments. If outside sources are permitted in the future, the jury recommends [Brienne] discuss appropriate methods of citation with the whole class. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

10. The jury recommends that [Brienne] review section V, part X of the faculty handbook, “The Honor Code,” in order to inform proper confrontation. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

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12. The jury recommends that the head of Bryn Mawr’s Honor Board notify the Bryn Mawr community of this abstract’s release and invite all students to attend the abstract discussions. (9 jurors consent, 1 juror stood outside due to absence, the Bi-Co Liaison approves)

Nine jurors consented to the resolutions as a whole, with one juror standing outside due to absence.

Post-Trial:
The trial resolutions were not appealed.

Letter to the Community:
Dear Haverford and Bryn mawr college communities,

The honor code of the Bi-co communities is, as it is written on the website, “a bond of trust...
and mutual respect”. It is essential to the Bi-co community, and we are all obligated to comply with it. However, as you can see above in the abstract, I have violated the code because of my ignorance.

I learned a lot from the trial and the resolutions the council offered me, and I really wish I could have done the reading of the Honor Code sooner, probably in the first semester of my freshmen year. I am glad that now I am truly aware of the significance and function of the entire honor code system. This is important to the rest years I am going to spend in the Bi-co community. This trial experience will serve as a reminder that will keep me from making the same mistake in the future. Here I would like to share several points I have learned from taking the Academic Integrity Tutorial and reading the honor codes of Haverford and Bryn mawr.

First, as long as we include thoughts that are not our own in our assignments, even if the phrases are memorized, they need to be cited. Remembering the phrases does not make the idea our own. Treating sources with respect is a crucial part of academic integrity. Second, all kinds of assignments should be treated equally. Whether it is a blog post, a speech draft, or an in-class quiz, these assignments all deserve to be taken as seriously as a research paper. Third, whenever we have questions about instructions of our assignments, we should not hesitate to reach out to our professors and instructors. They are important resources for us to consult with, and it is always a good idea to understand our circumstance before we start our assignments. I would not have made such horrible mistake if I chose to talk to my professor and ask her for suggestions and instructions on use of outside sources of class and the way citation for [swordfighting].

Discussion Questions:

1. At what point is it necessary for Council to get involved in cases that seem to stem from gaps in plagiarism education? Ideally, how much can or should be resolved between the student and the professor?
2. Since memorization can be an important part of learning, when does memorization become inappropriate? How can professors be more clear about their expectations?
3. When is group confrontation appropriate? In such cases, how should it be handled?