Abstract discussion will be held on Wednesday, November 4th at 7 PM in the MCC (Stokes 106).

Annie:
An Honor Council Academic Trial
Released Fall 2015

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 parties consented to the release of the abstract.

Key:
Confronting Party: Professor Oliver Warbucks
Confronted Party: Annie
Confronted Party: Molly
Class: Optimism 100
Online Studying Tool: The Radio

Summary/Pre-Trial:
This case concerns [Annie] and [Molly], students in [Professor Warbucks]'s [Optimism 100] class. While grading a quiz, Professor Warbucks noticed distinct similarities between Annie’s and Molly’s quizzes, particularly that both students had the same unique wrong answers on multiple questions. Because he suspected one of them may have cheated off the other, Professor Warbucks confronted the two students separately. Both maintained they had not cheated, but did agree the similarities looked suspicious. Professor Warbucks felt that an Honor Code violation may have occurred and brought the case to Honor Council. After reviewing statements from all parties, Council consented to a suspicion of violation and sent the case to an academic trial. During the subsequent trial, both Annie and Molly asserted they had not cheated. Although the jury shared some of Professor Warbucks’ suspicions, it was ultimately decided that there was not enough evidence to come to a statement of violation. Therefore, the jury consented to a statement of non-violation and a few suggested resolutions which it felt would help restore any breach of trust between the parties.

Fact Finding Part 1:
One juror was absent for this fact-finding meeting. Professor Warbucks began by expressing
his concerns. He said that while he was looking at the quizzes, three wrong answers were uniquely similar in addition to similar erasure marks across the two quizzes. He consulted with a colleague who also agreed the quizzes were suspicious. He said that he was particularly suspicious because Annie and Molly had left the same sections blank on a test the week before. He stated that in the quiz, some answers had been changed from right to wrong in the same way, and one had similar wrong extra information. When Professor Warbucks confronted Annie and Molly, they were both surprised at this but agreed the quizzes did look odd.

Molly then offered her statement. She said that there were two different sections on the quiz, one for [methods of smiling] and one for [ways to be optimistic]. She said she wasn’t as comfortable with the [smiling methods], and that is why she changed her answers and didn’t do as well on that section. She said that the day after taking the quiz she was confronted by Professor Warbucks. She agreed the two quizzes were similar but did not know why. Annie reiterated much of what Molly said. She also had studied for the quiz the night before, and her wrong answers were due to her being unable to make up her mind.

The trial chair asked the jurors if they had any questions for the parties. A juror asked how common the errors were, to which the professor said that no one else in the class made them, but they were all within the realm of possibility for a wrong answer. Jurors also asked Molly and Annie if they were friends. They replied that they were friendly, but only saw each other occasionally and sat next to each other in class; they also said that they did not study together. The jury also asked the professor how often these types of quizzes were given; Professor Warbucks responded that there were several quizzes given over the semester, with the lowest quiz grade dropped.

The jury requested to speak to each of the parties alone, with Professor Warbucks being first. The jury asked him about his thoughts on the the situation based on what had been said so far. Professor Warbucks responded that he felt that copying had occurred, and it was more likely one student in particular had copied off the other. There were a few reasons for this: the desks were better oriented for that student to copy, that student had replaced a correct answer with a wrong one (which was the same wrong answer the other student had written) and the other student was the stronger student in the class. A juror asked if either student had gotten a poor grade recently, to which Professor Warbucks said their previous test grade was lower than both wanted, but both were doing fine in the class.

The jury then talked to Annie alone, with her support person present. Annie explained that she had a ‘love/hate’ relationship with [Optimism], and that she had prepared strenuously for this quiz and used [the radio], an online study tool, to help study for the quizzes. Annie then spoke about the process she went through for each wrong answer she came to. After Annie finished speaking, her support person asked if she could share a few words, and said she had watched Annie study for the test for quite a long time and would be surprised if she were not prepared to take the quiz on her own.

Following this conversation, the jury spoke to Molly alone. Molly stated she had studied by
making worksheets for [ways to be optimistic], and used [the radio] for [smiling methods]. Molly also explained the process she went through to come to each wrong answer on her quiz. A juror asked about the configuration of desks between Annie and Molly, and Molly said they were practically touching. Molly did not feel Annie looked at her quiz at all and felt that the similar wrong answers were all within the realm of possibility.

**Jury Deliberations Part 1:**

A member of the jury said that both Molly and Annie had different reasons for their wrong answers, and felt that all of those reasons were quite understandable. Another juror mentioned that Professor Warbucks’ colleague was also suspicious. The jurors also examined the two quizzes, and shared some of Professor Warbucks’ concerns. Overall, many jurors were suspicious of a few aspects of the quiz, and found it especially odd that Annie and Molly were the only ones to make even one of these multiple mistakes. Still, jurors were far too unsure to say that a violation occurred. At this point, before moving forward, jurors wanted to speak to Annie again in order to ask some more questions.

**Fact Finding Part 2:**

The jury reconvened with Annie present. Annie agreed that it was possible based on the facts that a violation had occurred, but did not know whether or not that was the case. She didn’t know if Molly had looked at her quiz as she hadn’t noticed anything, but was unsure if she would have noticed anyway. Another juror asked how she felt about the Council process thus far and Annie responded by saying she wished this could have happened at a better time, but the process was part of Haverford’s charm.

**Jury Deliberations Part 2/Statement of Non-Violation:**

After talking to Annie, the jury still did not feel that it had enough evidence to say that cheating had occurred. Further, even supposing that cheating had occurred, they could not say whether it was more likely that Annie had copied off of Molly’s quiz, or vice versa. Overall, the jury was in the middle: some were leaning toward violation and some toward non-violation, but no one was completely sure. While the jury felt the odds were some sort of cheating happened, they also felt that they had to trust Molly and Annie given the spirit of the Honor Code and because they had no other evidence to go on. Jurors felt it was more productive to come to a statement of non-violation while suggesting resolutions, rather than potentially getting it wrong and moving forward with the trial.

In crafting the statement of non-violation, the jurors decided to quote the section of Constitution concerning “beyond a reasonable doubt”, as the jurors felt the presence of a reasonable doubt in this case was the reason they decided to come to a statement of non-violation. They also borrowed some wording from the Planets abstract (another case which ended with a statement of non-violation). The jury consented to the following statement:
While we acknowledge Professor [Warbucks]’s suspicions regarding the degree of similarity between [Molly] and [Annie]’s quizzes, we the jury do not believe “beyond a reasonable doubt” (Student’s Constitution Section 7.2) that a violation occurred. Nevertheless, we wish to suggest resolutions to help restore trust between the parties and the community. (10 jurors consent)

The jury also wished to suggest resolutions they hoped would restore the breach of trust between Annie, Molly, and Professor Warbucks. They suggested the following:

1. The jury suggests that Professor [Warbucks] drop [Molly] and [Annie]’s grades for the quiz in question. (10 jurors consent)
2. The jury suggests that [Molly] and [Annie] write a letter to the community (to be included in the abstract) reflecting on their experiences with the trial process. (10 jurors consent)
3. The jury suggests that [Molly] and [Annie] each individually meet with Professor [Warbucks] to restore any potential breach of trust. (10 jurors consent)

Resolutions as a whole: (10 jurors consent)

Post-Trial:

The resolutions were not appealed. No letter has been received from Molly.

Annie’s Letter to the Community:

My experience with the honor code trial process was an overall positive one. The ‘fact finding’ portion of the trial was much more laid back and comfortable than I had expected and I felt as though the jurors did a great job of treating all members in question equally. I would have appreciated it if the trial had not taken place during midterms week however, I understand that the committee really had no control over when everyone was available to meet. The only point of surprise was when Professor [Warbucks] introduced several more instances of suspicious similarities between [Molly] and my work which I had not been aware of. I felt that this should have been discussed during my initial meeting with him prior to the trial. Other than that, I think that all aspects of the situation were fully addressed during the trial and that the final verdict was an appropriate conclusion to the trial.

Discussion Questions:

1. Is “beyond a reasonable doubt” an appropriate standard for an Honor Council trial?
2. Is it appropriate for a jury to suggest resolutions after coming to a statement of non-violation?