Abstract discussion will be held on DATE

Earthbound
An Honor Council Academic Trial
Released Fall 2016

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.

Key:
PK Powers 105: the course in which the violation took place
Ness: Student in PK Powers 105
Jeff: Student in PK Powers 105
Professor Paula: Co-professor of PK Powers 105
Professor Andonuts: Co-professor of PK Powers 105

Summary/Pre Trial:
This trial concerns Ness, a student in PK Powers 105, taught by Professor Paula and Professor Andonuts. Struggling with an exam, Ness decided to turn it in unfinished. However, while turning in his exam, Ness saw Jeff’s completed exam as well. He removed Jeff’s exam from the submission envelope and copied some of his work. Later, Ness saw that he had received an “incomplete” in the course. He decided to reach out to Jeff, then Professor Andonuts, and finally Honor Council, which determined that there should be a trial. Over the course of the trial, Ness was extremely contrite and cooperative, and both Professors indicated that they felt that Ness had taken significant steps to restore himself to the community. After deliberation, Honor Council consented to a set of resolutions that included a 0 on the exam. A key issue that was raised during the course of the trial was to what extent juries should take into account the attitude and cooperativeness of the confronted party when determining resolutions.

Fact Finding:
During fact finding, Ness described how he had spontaneously decided to copy Jeff’s answers. He said that he had given up on the final few questions and had decided to leave them undone. However, upon seeing Jeff’s exam, he was overcome by weakness and “made a stupid decision” to copy some of the work. He had then put it out of his mind, but once he saw that his grade for PK Powers 105 was incomplete, Ness knew that he had to do something. He told Jeff first, and then Professor Andonuts. Once he returned to campus, he talked to Professor Andonuts in person. He acknowledged that he had broken the trust of the community and wished to restore it.

Professor Andonuts confirmed that he had been suspicious of Ness and Jeff’s exams--hence the incomplete grade. Having talking to and met with Ness, he felt that Ness had demonstrated responsibility and already taken key steps towards restoring himself to the
community. Professor Paula corroborated both stories. She mentioned that she wished students were more willing to come talk to professors when dealing with personal distress.

**Jury Deliberations/Statement of Violation:**

The jury, without much argument, agreed to the following statement of violation:

_Ness violated the Honor Code by representing another student’s work as his own on a final where collaboration was not allowed._ (10 jurors consent)

**Circumstantial Portion:**

During circumstantial, Ness described how he realized that he had failed to live up to the standards of the college. He wanted to learn from this experience and be a better community member. He explained that he greatly respected Professor Paula; which is why he had been hesitant about speaking to her. However, after fact finding, he realized how committed she was to his restoration and looked forward to speaking with her.

In questioning, Ness elaborated on why he was so stressed during the period in which the violation took place. His family was going through an extremely difficult time, and one member in particular was regularly reaching out to him for advice and support, leaving Ness emotionally drained.

Ness also described the steps he had taken to improve his overall situation in the semester following the violation. He chose a less intense schedule, met with his dean, talked more with his friends about his emotional distress, and visited CAPS.

**Jury Deliberations and Tentative Resolutions:**

The extreme cooperativeness of Ness and the faith that Professor Andonuts and Professor Paula seem to have in him made the jury think that Ness was already on the path towards restoration. Because the exam was only a fraction of the grade for the overall course, the jury decided not to give him a 0 for the entire semester, just the exam itself. The jury also felt that Ness should rewrite the Honor Code essay and write a letter to the community, both so that he could better understand the Honor Code and to educate the rest of Haverford about his experience. For additional education, the jury decided that Ness should attend abstract discussions. To restore his relationships with Jeff, Professor Andonuts, and Professor Paula, he was encouraged to meet with them to discuss the violation. Although one juror questioned whether there was adequate accountability in the resolutions, the general feeling was that the steps Ness had taken made more accountability unnecessary. All ten jurors consented to the following resolutions:

1. _The jury recommends that Ness receive a grade of 0.0 on the exam._ (10 jurors consent)
2. _Ness will write a letter to the community to be included in the abstract by the end of [semester]._ (10 jurors consent)
3. _Ness will rewrite the Honor Code essay before the start of the [date] semester._ (10 jurors consent)
4. _Ness will attend two abstract discussions by the end of the [date] semester._ (10 jurors consent)
5. _Ness will meet with Professors Andonuts and Paula, if they are willing, before the end of the [date] semester._ (10 jurors consent)
6. _The jury supports Ness’s continued dialogue with Jeff._ (10 jurors consent)
7. The jury supports Ness’s suggestion that he visit the OAR to prepare for finals of the spring 2016 semester. (10 jurors consent)
8. The jury supports Ness’s continued use of CAPS. (10 jurors consent)

Resolutions as a whole: (10 jurors consent)

Feeling conflicted due to the severity of the violation and the desire to give Ness a second chance, the jury consented upon the following statement regarding reporting to graduate schools:

We acknowledge that copying an exam is a serious violation, and at other schools this would be considered disciplinary. However, we believe that the dean of the college should take into account the circumstances surrounding the violation and the considerable steps Ness has taken to restore himself to the community. (10 jurors consent)

Finalizing Resolutions:

The first part of finalizing resolutions was uneventful, with neither party raising any concerns.

But during the final deliberations period, one juror felt uncomfortable with how the trial had been handled. This juror worried that the cooperativeness of Ness and the attitude of the professors had led the jury to overlook the severity of the offense: Ness cheated on a major assignment and jeopardized Jeff’s academic standing. This juror feared that Ness would not truly learn from this experience. Furthermore, the community might suffer due to the lack of accountability. Because another juror agreed, and a different juror was unable to attend the meeting, the jury was initially unable to consent to the resolutions.

After a period of discussion, the jurors agreed; even if the tone of the earlier discussion had not been so favorable towards Ness, the resolutions would be the same. Some further resolutions to address accountability were suggested, but subsequently discarded as they were viewed as lacking in substance. This debate reassured the jurors who previously stood outside that the jury had weighed the issues seriously, and all nine jurors present were able to consent to the final resolutions.

Final Resolutions:

1. The jury recommends that Ness receive a grade of 0.0 on the exam. (9 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia)
2. Ness will write a letter to the community to be included in the abstract by the end of the [date] semester. (9 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia)
3. Ness will rewrite the Honor Code essay before the start of the [date] semester. (9 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia)
4. Ness will attend two abstract discussions by the end of the [date] semester. (9 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia)
5. Ness will meet with Professors Andonuts and Paula, if they are willing, before the end of the [date] semester. (9 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia)
6. The jury supports Ness’s continued dialogue with Jeff. (9 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia)
7. The jury supports Ness’s suggestion that he visit the OAR to prepare for finals of the [date] semester. (9 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia)
8. The jury supports Ness’s continued use of CAPS. (9 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia)

Resolutions as a whole: 9 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia.

The jury also consented to the statement on reporting to other institutions without any changes:

We acknowledge that copying an exam is a serious violation, and at other schools this would be considered disciplinary. However, we believe that the dean of the college should take into account the circumstances surrounding the violation and the considerable steps Ness has taken to restore himself to the community. (9 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia)

Post-Trial:
The resolutions of this trial were not appealed.

[Ness]’s Letter:
Dear Haverford Community,

In the fall semester of 2015, I broke the honor code by representing someone else’s work as my own. I am incredibly ashamed of the poor, immature judgement I had made. I sincerely apologize to the Haverford community and for letting down professors.

I was handed the take-home exam a week before the final exam week. With three other exams happening on the following week, I decided to procrastinate on completing the take-home portion of the exam. Near the end of the week, however, I received a call regarding my family situation, which led me to extreme emotional and mental stress. Instead of asking for assistance, I convinced myself to cheat in completing the exam.

Reflecting on my wrongdoings, I hugely regret not reaching out to the Haverford resources, including the CAPS and OAR. I strongly encourage students who are struggling in a similar situation to reach out to available resources at Haverford Community.

Making a mistake that I will forever regret led me to realize some important lessons. It is important to take responsibility, own up to the mistakes, and learn not to make the same mistake again. I would like to end this statement by thanking the Honor Council and the two professors for kindly listening to my side of the story and supporting me throughout this process.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Sincerely,

[Ness]
Discussion Questions:
1. How heavily should juries weigh professors’ opinions on whether resolutions are appropriate? Is there a difference between professors believing resolutions to be too severe and too lenient?
2. Should juries’ first priority be to tailor the resolutions to help restore the confronted party in particular, or maintain the norms of the community as a whole?
3. Should cooperativeness and attitude of the confronted party be considered when jurors form resolutions addressing accountability?