Kirby: An Honor Council Academic Trial
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Key:
Waddle Dee - Confronted/Confronting Party
Professor Kirby - Professor of [Absorbing Powers 100]
Absorbing Powers 100 - Class in which violation occurred

Summary/Pre-Trial:
[Waddle Dee], a student at Haverford College, reported himself to Honor Council regarding a violation of the Academic Honor Code. In [Absorbing Powers 100], he used outside sources on a take-home quiz. Afterwards, he realized that this violated the Honor Code, told his professor, [Professor Kirby], and contacted Honor Council. Honor Council decided to send the case to an academic trial. The jurors determined a violation of the Honor Code had occurred, however they felt that Waddle Dee had already made significant steps in the restorative process, as indicated by his decision to confront himself and his independent actions to restore Professor Kirby’s trust in him. As a result, the jury’s resolutions were primarily designed to educate Waddle Dee and the community as a whole on the Honor Code.

Fact Finding:
Waddle Dee told the jury that, on the weekend prior to the quiz, he needed to return home in order to support his family in a difficult time. He asked Professor Kirby if he could take the quiz late and Professor Kirby agreed. Waddle Dee returned to Haverford and immediately began studying for the quiz. Once he felt he was prepared, he began to take it. He then discovered that he had not studied the correct content for the quiz. In what he described as a moment of panic, Waddle Dee opened his notes and used them to answer the questions. After several days of reflection, Waddle Dee decided that he needed to tell Professor Kirby about the violation. They met in person a week after the violation and discussed the quiz. Waddle Dee said that the discussion was a productive one. Professor Kirby said that Waddle Dee should remain in the class and Waddle Dee promised to substantially increase his participation and engagement with the course material. Waddle Dee finished his account by saying that he was glad the case was
being brought to Honor Council because he felt that a breach of trust with the community still existed.

Professor Kirby generally agreed with Waddle Dee’s account. He provided clarification on the dates of the quiz, but verified that his meeting with Waddle Dee went as Waddle Dee described. Professor Kirby said that Waddle Dee’s participation in class had increased noticeably since the violation.

**Jury Deliberations/Statement of Violation:**

The jury quickly came to agreement that a violation of the academic Honor Code had occurred because Waddle Dee used forbidden resources on a quiz. They came to the following statement of violation:

*Waddle Dee violated the Honor Code by using resources he knew to be prohibited on a quiz. (10 jurors consent)*

**Circumstantial Portion:**

During this portion of the trial, Waddle Dee once again went over the circumstances of the violation described above. He said this quiz was particularly panic-inducing because he thought he was well-prepared, but then discovered that he was not. Waddle Dee said that he felt that this incident had actually strengthened his relationship with Professor Kirby. Waddle Dee suggested that, for resolutions, he receive a zero on the quiz and write something about the Honor Code to demonstrate his understanding of the violation. Professor Kirby was not present for the circumstantial portion, but via email said that he believed Waddle Dee should receive a zero on the quiz and additionally should retake the quiz until he showed he understood the material.

**Jury Deliberations and Tentative Resolutions:**

The jury felt that the trial goal of accountability could be met by the grade change suggested by both Waddle Dee and Professor Kirby and by Waddle Dee retaking the quiz. The jury felt that Waddle Dee’s relationship with Professor Kirby and with the community had already been restored by Waddle Dee’s own actions. The jury believed Waddle Dee should write a letter discussing, among other things, his decision to confront himself, as it would be educational both for himself and for the community. The jury also decided that having Waddle Dee attend Honor Council abstract discussions would be very helpful for the purpose of further education about the Honor Code. There was some discussion over what would be an appropriate number of discussions to attend, with some jurors concerned about placing an undue burden on Waddle Dee. However, the weight of the room was in favor of at least two abstract discussions so that Waddle Dee could be exposed to a variety of cases.

The jury strongly opposed reporting this incident to graduate schools, because Waddle Dee had taken the step of confronting himself and because the violation was on such a minor
The jury consented to the following tentative resolutions:

1. The jury recommends that [Waddle Dee] receive a grade of 0.0 on the quiz. (10 jurors consent)
2. Before the end of the semester, [Waddle Dee] will retake the quiz until he reaches [Professor Kirby]'s standard of mastery. He will not receive a grade. (10 jurors consent)
3. Before [date], [Waddle Dee] will write a letter to the community, which could address his decision to confront himself. (10 jurors consent)
4. [Waddle Dee] will attend at least 2 abstract discussions during the remainder of the current semester. (9 jurors consent, 1 stands outside)

Resolutions as a whole: all jurors consent (10 jurors consent)

The jury also consented to the following statement on reporting to other institutions of higher learning:

*The jury recommends that this proceeding not be considered disciplinary for the purpose of reporting to other institutions of higher learning, particularly because Waddle Dee chose to hold himself accountable in front of his professor and his community.* (10 jurors consent)

**Finalizing Resolutions:**

Professor Kirby agreed to all the resolutions via email. Waddle Dee wondered whether the letter to the community and the attendance of abstract discussions might be redundant. A juror explained that the former was primarily to educate the community, while the latter was to educate Waddle Dee himself, and Waddle Dee said that this made sense to him. The jury asked if two abstract discussions would be an undue burden. Waddle Dee said that it would not.

The jury agreed that no changes needed to be made to the resolutions. The juror who had previously stood outside consensus on the abstract discussion attendance resolution now felt comfortable consenting.

The jury consented to the following resolutions:

1. The jury recommends that [Waddle Dee] receive a grade of 0.0 on the quiz. (10 jurors consent)
2. Before the end of the semester, [Waddle Dee] will retake the quiz until he reaches [Professor Kirby]'s standard of mastery. He will not receive a grade. (10 jurors consent)
3. Before [date], Waddle Dee will write a letter to the community, which could address his decision to confront himself. (10 jurors consent)
4. [Waddle Dee] will attend at least 2 abstract discussions during the remainder of the current semester. (10 jurors consent)
Resolutions as a whole: 10 jurors consent

Statement on reporting:
*The jury recommends that this proceeding not be considered disciplinary for the purpose of reporting to other institutions of higher learning, particularly because Waddle Dee chose to hold himself accountable in front of his professor and his community.* (10 jurors consent)

Post-Trial:
The resolutions were not appealed.

Waddle Dee’s Letter to the Community:

To the Haverford Community,

When I was in eighth grade, my physics teacher gave my class a speech about the “integrity ball.” The integrity ball is metaphorical ball of clay that represents one’s moral uprightness. As my teacher put it, some of our actions result in minor subtractions from the ball. For example, not holding the door for someone when you probably could have, or lying to your mom when you said you cleaned your room. The ball remains essentially the same size despite these minor deductions. Other actions, however, result in more substantive losses of integrity clay. Being unfaithful to a girlfriend, or using a racial slur, for example. Transgressions such as these leave the ball noticeably smaller, with less capacity to sustain further moral error.

When I cheated on Professor [Kirby]’s quiz, I immediately recognized a sizable removal of clay from my integrity ball. I had strived to keep that ball whole my entire life, and this reconstruction of it was something I simply could not abide. So I informed Professor [Kirby] of my actions, and then we informed the Honor Council, and now I’m informing the community. And through these actions (as well as the other resolutions implemented by myself and the Honor Council), I feel as though my integrity ball is whole once more.

I’d like whoever reads this to take it as reminder not to take your integrity for granted – it is a malleable and fragile ball of clay that can be subtracted from just as easily as it can be added to. Seek always to keep it in the forefront of your mind as you progress through your college careers and your lives, and if it experiences a loss, take the necessary steps to rectify it.

Sincerely,
[Waddle-Dee]
Discussion Questions:
1. How should a party’s decision to confront themselves affect how the jury handles the trial?
2. Should there be another way for Honor Council to handle cases where the goals of a trial have almost been met already?
3. What are other ways someone could take the initiative to educate themselves more about the Honor Code?