Abstract discussion will be held on Wednesday 4/13 at 7 PM in the Hurford Center (Stokes 102).

The Force Awakens:
An Honor Council Academic Trial
Released Spring 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 did not consent to the release of the abstract.

Key:
Confronted Party: Rey
Confronting Party: Professor Finn
Class: Lightsabers 220

Summary/Pre-Trial:
In [Lightsabers 220], taught by [Professor Finn], students were required to produce a number of written assignments throughout the semester. While grading the final batch, Professor Finn noticed that large sections of [Rey]’s work seemed to have been taken from online sources. Professor Finn confronted Rey, a Bryn Mawr student, for violating the academic Honor Code. However, Rey failed to contact the Honor Council as required. The Honor Council repeatedly attempted to reach Rey, but all efforts, even those through her dean at Bryn Mawr, failed. It was only during the following semester that Honor Council was able to obtain a response. They were able to do so by warning Rey that if she failed to provide a statement about the case, she would no longer be able to attend classes at Haverford, of which she was enrolled in several. During the trial, the issues of blatant and extensive plagiarism, lack of respect for the Honor Code, and the benefits and disadvantages of separation were raised. Eventually, the jury recommended two semesters of separation from both Haverford and Bryn Mawr, alongside an extensive list of resolutions designed to educate Rey about the Honor Code and restore the trust of the community.

Fact Finding Part I:
The first fact finding meeting occurred without Rey, and with Professor Finn attending via Skype. Professor Finn explained that although the class was already full, Rey had personally
asked to be allowed to attend. Rey participated well enough in class, but turned in the first set of written assignments at the last possible date. She did the same for the second set of written assignments, turning them in the last day of classes. While grading this second set of short papers, Professor Finn realized that much of the writing seemed oddly familiar. He searched online and discovered that much of all three papers had been taken from outside sources. Professor Finn then went back and looked at the first pair of assignments Rey had turned in, and discovered that they had been largely copied as well. In addition, Professor Finn told the jury that he had never received Rey’s final project for the class. Finally, Professor Finn mentioned that Rey had told him that she had been involved with an Honor Board trial in the past. Although the chair told the jury to disregard this knowledge for the time being, the revelation may have colored the perceptions of the jury. After hearing from Professor Finn, the first fact finding meeting adjourned.

Rey participated in the second fact finding meeting via Skype. One juror could not attend. Rey explained that Lightsabers 220 was a different type of class than she normally took, and was not familiar with the skills required. This, combined with her busy schedule, meant that the course was not a high priority for her. She left the writing assignments until the last possible moment, completing them only on the day they were due. Rey explained the copied text as a result of her note-taking methods for the class, which involved copying sections from supplemental online sources that she found herself into her notes, which she then accidentally put into her paper, not realizing the work was not her own. The jury was largely skeptical of this explanation, as the details seemed to change when Rey was questioned and the premise itself of a student doing extra readings in a class they had admitted was a low priority seemed suspect.

Rey then answered the jury’s questions regarding the confrontation and subsequent lack of communication with Honor Council. Rey said that, as she was travelling abroad when confronted, she had sporadic access to email and could not communicate regularly. She also said that she had turned in her final assignment for Lightsabers 220, which confused the jury, as Professor Finn had mentioned that he had never received a final project from Rey. Rey said that she had not responded to Honor Council’s emails over the summer and for most of the semester because she was busy, unsure of how to respond, and trying to avoid thinking about the problem because she was scared.

**Jury Deliberations/Statement of Violation:**

The jury quickly agreed that a violation of the Honor Code occurred when Rey copied outside sources in her paper. The jury also felt that her lack of engagement with the Honor Council was in and of itself a violation. They came to the following statement of violation:

[Rey] repeatedly violated the Honor Code by plagiarizing the vast majority of all five response papers for the class. Additionally, [Rey] violated the Honor Code through her lack of respect for and engagement with the Honor Council process over an extended period of time. (9 jurors
Circumstantial Portion:

During circumstantial, Rey explained that she had been under severe time pressure the semester in which the violation occurred. In addition to four classes, she had a time-intensive off-campus commitment. She also was dealing with personal issues, which she did not wish to discuss in detail with the jury. Rey said that she felt she had been well-educated about plagiarism in high school, at Bryn Mawr, and at Haverford.

The jury then asked Rey about how she felt the violation had affected her relationship with Professor Finn and the community as a whole. Many on the jury were concerned because Rey did not seem to realize that her actions damaged the trust with the community. Rey said that she was sure she would act differently if a similar situation arose in the future.

The jury and Rey then officially discussed Rey’s previous Honor Code violation and Bryn Mawr Honor Board hearing, which had been related to plagiarism. The jury worried that that trial’s resolutions (0.0 for the class, education on the plagiarism) had not only failed to prevent this case of plagiarism, but also soured Rey on the trial process as a whole.

Next, the jury asked Rey if she had any suggestions for resolutions. Rey suggested meeting with professors at the beginning of future semesters and further education about the Honor Codes of both Bryn Mawr and Haverford. When a juror asked about separation, Rey responded that she did not think it would be beneficial. At this point, Rey exited and the first round of deliberations began.

Jury Deliberations and Tentative Resolutions:

The first session of jury deliberations occurred directly after circumstantial and was very brief. The jury mostly put forth topics which they wanted to see addressed, including separation, lots of education, the intentionality of the violation, and the lack of awareness of damage to the community.

At the second session, the jury quickly moved to the topic of separation. Almost all jurors felt that separation was necessary in this case, in order to get Rey away from the high-pressure environment of college so that she could reflect and educate herself, provide accountability, and give the community time away from Rey -- several jurors stated that they simply would not feel comfortable being in the same class as her. The jury also decided that Rey should be separated from both colleges, as it would be unfair to Bryn Mawr students to allow Rey to continue to take classes there when Haverford students would not want to be in class with her. Although some jurors were concerned about separation because Rey had said it would not be beneficial, the weight of the room felt that Rey had not given concrete reasons that this was the case. They also noted that almost all confronted parties initially say separation would not be beneficial and that separation was still the best option.
There was a great deal of discussion over how long this separation should be. One group of jurors felt that due to the extent of the violation, Rey needed two semesters away from college to reflect and restore her trust with the community. The other group felt that one semester would suffice, and that a two semester separation ran the risk of driving Rey away from the Bi-Co permanently. Unable to reach consensus at the time, the jury decided to move on to what Rey should do during this period of separation.

The jury felt that Rey should complete some sort of Honor Code-related task. While some initially wanted to tie it to Rey’s major, this idea was discarded in favor of the creation of an educational resource for Bryn Mawr students facing a Haverford Honor Council trial. This way, Rey could learn about the Haverford Honor Code while also doing something that she knew was useful and would help her peers. The jury felt that if Rey had had this kind of resource, she would have been less afraid and more engaged in the process. The next idea was to have Rey read past Honor Council abstracts. This way, she could both understand the extent of her violation while also placing these resolutions in context; others have been separated in the past, and for many it was beneficial.

The jury felt that both a written reflection and a letter to Professor Finn would be beneficial, aiding in Rey’s education and rebuilding the trust damaged by the violation. The jury also felt that a series of smaller reflections throughout her separation would help her through this time away from college. To that end, regular phone conversations with a member of the jury were also suggested. The jury was very concerned that Rey would feel isolated and abandoned during separation; regular communication would keep her connected to the community and remind her that the Bi-Co cares about her. The jury was too tired to hash out the specific details at this meeting, so they adjourned.

The next meeting began with the jurors working out the details of Rey’s separation tasks. They decided that 8-10 abstracts was a reasonable number, and decided that the Honor Council Librarian could choose ones they felt would be particularly educational. The jury decided that Maud McInerney’s plagiarism essay would be helpful, not because Rey did not know what plagiarism was, but because she did not seem to understand why it was harmful. Regular reflections would help Rey understand her breach of trust, and a final letter to the community could help mend that breach. The jury also believed that Rey should meet with Professor Finn to mend the breach of trust between the two of them; Professor Finn seemed particularly affected by the experience. Because the jury wanted Rey to improve her study and time-management skills, the Bi-Co Liaison suggested a resolution for Rey to attend Bryn Mawr’s LILAC (Leadership, Innovation, and Liberal Arts Center) workshops, which are similar to the resources the OAR at Haverford provides. The jury also felt that a mandated meeting with the Dean of the College at Haverford would give Rey a connection to someone who could help her out if she felt stressed and overworked in the future. They felt that Rey’s relationship with her Bryn Mawr dean wasn’t very good, and that since she was taking so many classes at Haverford it would be good to have a contact at Haverford. Once Rey returned to the college, the jury felt that her own
suggested resolution of meeting with her professors at the beginning of the new semester would be helpful in avoiding the kind of situation that led to the violation from recurring. The jury also felt that having Rey regularly meet with a member of the jury would provide her with an additional resource if she were to feel stressed or uncomfortable.

The jury then spent a great deal of time discussing whether the separation from the community should be one semester plus the summer, or two whole semesters. The arguments were generally those mentioned above restated many times. Eventually, the weight of the room felt that a full year of separation was necessary, and that the added benefits of more time for Rey to reflect and hold herself accountable outweighed the concerns of being too punitive or driving her away from the community. The jurors who felt that one semester plus the summer was better either felt able to get behind this reasoning, or chose to let the group move forward without them.

**Tentative Resolutions:**

1. [Rey] will be separated from the Haverford community for two semesters. The jury strongly recommends that [Rey] be separated from the Bryn Mawr community for two semesters. (9 jurors consent, 1 stands outside, Bi-Co liaison supports)
2. During the period of separation [Rey] will complete the following tasks:
   - In the first six months, [Rey] will read 8-10 abstracts chosen by the Honor Council Librarian. Four of these must be read within the first three months.
   - In the following five months, [Rey] will complete monthly personal reflections. One of these will pertain to the abstracts she has read. These can be presented in any form, and are expected to be one written paragraph or the time equivalent thereof.
   - By the end of her separation, [Rey] will create an informative resource for Bryn Mawr students regarding the nature and process of Haverford’s Honor Council trials.
   - In the final month of her separation, [Rey] will write a reflective letter to the Bi-Co community.
   - Throughout her separation, [Rey] will have six check-in conversations with the trial chair at regularly scheduled times of her choosing.
   - Before [Rey] returns to the community, she will take the Academic Integrity Tutorial and read Maud McInerney’s essay ‘Plagiarism And How To Avoid It’.
   - [Rey] will write a letter to Professor [Finn]. If Professor [Finn] is willing, [Rey] will have a dialogue with her at a time convenient to both parties. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)
3. During [semester], [Rey] will attend at least one LILAC workshop concerning time management or community membership. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)
4. During the [semester], [Rey] will meet with the Bryn Mawr Academic Support and
Learning Resources Specialist to discuss time management and note taking strategies. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

5. [Rey] will meet with the professors of each of her classes within the first two weeks of the [semester]. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

6. [Rey] will meet with Dean Denney during the first month of the [semester]. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

7. [Rey] will meet once a month with a member of the jury during the [semester]. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

8. The jury supports [Rey]'s final grade of 0.0 in the class. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

9. The jury supports [Rey]'s efforts to seek personal support. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

Resolutions as a whole: 10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports

The jury quickly decided without too much debate that this proceeding should be considered disciplinary for the purposes of reporting to other institutions of higher learning.

Due to the scale and the repeated nature of the violations, the jury recommends that this proceeding be considered disciplinary for the purposes of reporting to other institutions of higher learning. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

Finalizing Resolutions:

The jury met with Rey to discuss the tentative resolutions. Professor Finn had not emailed the trial chair back before this meeting, so his thoughts were not able to be taken into account. Rey said that she felt that two semesters away from the college would be very difficult for her; she did not think she would be able to find an internship and she did not know what she would do during that year. Then the jury explained the reasoning behind separation, as well as the reasoning behind the other resolutions about restoring the trust of the community and accountability. Rey said that she understood those resolutions, although she still felt that their goals could be met while still in the Bi-co.

The jury then discussed the final resolutions. They decided that a personal letter to future Bryn Mawr students involved in the Haverford Honor Council process would be more fruitful than having Rey create a formal resource. Finally, the jury discussed the length of the separation. Those jurors initially uncomfortable with two full semesters agreed that, while it would not be their first choice, they understood the reasoning of the rest of the jury and would consent to a full two semesters of separation.

The jury then consented to the following final resolutions:
1. [Rey] will be separated from the Haverford community for two semesters. The jury strongly recommends that [Rey] be separated from the Bryn Mawr community for two semesters. Each individual juror will have the option to write a letter to [Rey] explaining their thoughts about her separation. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

2. During the period of separation [Rey] will complete the following tasks:
   - In the first six months, [Rey] will read 8-10 abstracts chosen by the Honor Council Librarian. Four of these must be read within the first three months.
   - In the following five months, [Rey] will complete monthly personal reflections. One of these will pertain to the abstracts she has read. These can be presented in any form, and are expected to be one written paragraph or the time equivalent thereof.
   - By the end of her separation, [Rey] will write an open letter to Bryn Mawr students involved in Haverford’s Honor Council trials, reflecting on her personal experience and giving advice on how to handle the process.
   - In the final month of her separation, [Rey] will write a reflective letter to the Bi-Co community.
   - Throughout her separation, [Rey] will have six check-in conversations with the trial chair at regularly scheduled times of her choosing.
   - Before [Rey] returns to the community, she will take the Academic Integrity Tutorial and read Maud McInerney’s essay ‘Plagiarism And How To Avoid It’. [Rey] will write a letter to Professor [Finn]. If Professor [Finn] is willing, [Rey] will have a dialogue with her at a time convenient to both parties. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

3. During the [semester], [Rey] will attend at least one LILAC workshop concerning time management or community membership. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

4. During the [semester], [Rey] will meet with the Bryn Mawr Academic Support and Learning Resources Specialist to discuss time management and note taking strategies. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

5. [Rey] will meet with the professors of each of her classes within the first two weeks of the [semester]. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

6. [Rey] will meet with Dean Denney during the first month of the [semester]. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

7. [Rey] will meet once a month with a member of the jury during the [semester]. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

8. The jury supports [Rey]’s final grade of 0.0 in the class. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

9. The jury supports [Rey]’s efforts to seek personal support. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)
Resolutions as a whole: 10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports

The jury consented to an unchanged statement regarding reporting to grad schools:

Due to the scale and the repeated nature of the violations, the jury recommends that this proceeding be considered disciplinary for the purposes of reporting to other institutions of higher learning. (10 jurors consent, Bi-Co liaison supports)

Post-Trial:

After receiving the final resolutions, Rey emailed the trial chair stating that she intended to appeal the trial. The trial chair, the Dean of the College, and the President attempted to get in touch with Rey over the weeks following the trial to encourage her to schedule an appeal meeting with the President. However, Rey never scheduled this meeting, so the trial chair along with the Deans of Haverford and Bryn Mawr decided after a few weeks that her opportunity to appeal had passed. The Bryn Mawr Honor Board upheld Rey’s separation from Bryn Mawr for two semesters.

Discussion Questions:

1. Should juries create extensive and detailed lists of resolutions, or does it place an unnecessary burden on the confronted parties?
2. Should juries take into account that resolutions might drive confronted parties away from the Bi-co community?
3. How much weight should juries place on previous violations?