The Great British Baking Show: An Honor Council Social Case 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 [DID NOT CONSENT] to the release of the abstract.

Key:
Confronted Party: Martha
Confronting Party: Paul Hollywood
Anonymous Note Leaver: Chetna

Summary:
Honor Council reviewed statements from both [Martha], a contestant, and [Paul Hollywood], a judge. Paul had been alerted by an anonymous note that Martha was an active drug dealer on campus. The note expressed concern in light of the fact that Martha was also an on-the-hall Customs team member and had been appointed by Paul to a position next year. Upon receiving the note and meeting with Martha, who admitted to the allegations, Paul removed Martha from both her positions immediately. Unsure if Martha’s drug dealing while in her position constituted an Honor Code violation, Paul asked that Martha report herself to Honor Council. Council deliberated over the course of two meetings, but ultimately decided that they were not suspicious of an Honor Code violation.

Council Deliberations:
What Honor Council focused mainly on was whether anyone had felt threatened or hurt as a result of Martha’s actions. Council almost unanimously agreed that Martha’s drug dealing could have resulted in a violation of the code if someone had been hurt as a result. However, most council members felt that they could not send a case to trial when no one seemed, nor claimed, to have been hurt or threatened.

Although Council did consider Chetna, the anonymous note leaver, as someone who could have been hurt, council ultimately decided that this possibility was slim. The main reason for this was based on the wording of the note. Not only was there no mention of a personal hurt, but the anonymous note leaver was not even sure if Martha was really a drug dealer, saying “I do not have any evidence of this [drug dealing].” This lack of specific information led Council to believe that Chetna had not been personally hurt by Martha’s [drug dealing], and that she was unlikely to have been a first year on Martha’s hall.

Moreover, most of Council was unsatisfied over the manner of “confrontation.” They believed that had Chetna been truly concerned about this issue, she should have personally confronted Martha before alerting the administration. The note also mentioned potential police
involvement in the future, which Council felt was unduly threatening. Some council members pointed out that there were other Customs team members who also dealt drugs or provided alcohol for first years.

Additionally, some council members expressed frustration for the way that Paul had confronted Martha over the issue. In Martha’s statement to Council, she asserted that Paul responded negatively to her desire to make amends with Chetna and told her to “grow up.” She explains that Paul’s actions left her upset and led her to believe that Paul “believes I don't deserve to be treated in a way that is dictated by the code.” Council was frustrated that they could not address this confrontation more directly because Paul was not a student, limiting their authority and options.

Council also considered how the illegality of drug dealing should affect their decision. Ultimately, they decided that the legality of the actions had no bearing on whether it was a violation of the social code. Many council members did not feel like this case warranted a trial, but they discussed whether a trial or a variation of a Student Facilitation Panel would be restorative for Martha. They decided that this was not the case.

Instead, Council consented to drop the case, offer a mediation for Paul and Martha, publish an abstract, and give Paul and Martha the opportunities to each write a letter for the abstract. Two stood outside on this decision, wishing that the case had been sent to a procedure of some sort. Both of these people believed that Chetna may have been one of Martha’s first years that was too hesitant to come out and directly confront Martha. As such, although the manner of confrontation was not ideal, it still represented a tangible and potential community issue that needed some sort of procedure.

Discussion Questions:
1. If you had been Chetna, how might you have approached the situation? Would you have done the same thing and left an anonymous note? Would you have confronted Martha directly? Or would you have done something else?
2. Should the legality, or lack thereof of drugs, been a factor in Council’s decision in whether or not to pursue the case?

Anonymous Note:
Dear [Paul],
I thought you might like to know that one of the [on-the-hall customs person]'s for the class of [year], [Martha], might be a drug dealer. I do not have evidence to back this up, however some students have directly told me that she is one. I would strongly encourage that someone investigate this matter to see if it is in fact true before allowing her to be a [on-the-hall customs person] for the class of [year]. I thought it would be best to notify the administration first before involving the police in case this is just hearsay.
Sincerely,
A concerned student