Makeup Youtubers: 
An Honor Council Academic Trial
Released Spring 2023

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: James Charles
Confronting party: Professor Tati Westbrook
Friend of the confronted party: Manny MUA
Co-Professor in this course: Professor Jeffree Star
Class: Cosmetology 150

Summary/Pre-Trial:
This case involved academic dishonesty on an exam when James Charles copied off of his friend, Manny MUA’s, paper. The class was split into two different sections, taught by two different professors. Professor Tati Westbrook was James Charles’s professor, while Professor Jeffree Star led the other section. Together, the professors were able to identify three areas in which James Charles copied off of Manny MUA’s exam. James Charles expressed that there were a number of extenuating personal circumstances that led to his academic dishonesty, and the jury kept this in mind. The jury deliberations were also complicated by James Charles re-taking the class prior to/during the trial.

Fact Finding:
In the fact finding meeting, James Charles admitted to copying off of the exam of a fellow student. He expressed that he was under a lot of stress from taking 5.5 credits and needing to travel a lot to visit family. His absences resulted in a lot of incomplete work for his cosmetology class – and this was stressful for him. While Professor Tati Westbrook had been helpful, James Charles felt like other teachers did not understand the stress of his absence and missed work. This stress and pressure from issues stemming from James Charles’ personal life made him anxious about this exam, which is why he copied a classmate’s work. He explained that in the time since the violation he had started to seek out support from a therapist, but he didn’t feel like he had fully recovered from the previous semester’s workload. When asked if he wanted to continue his cosmetology studies, James Charles said that he may decide to declare a
cosmetology major but he was unsure if he wanted to at that point. James Charles concluded by saying that he thought he and Professor Tati Westbrook were on good terms now, and that he was now retaking the class.

Professor Tati Westbrook said that before the incident she did not feel that James Charles was in a particularly bad place. She said that she regularly reaches out to students she thinks are struggling, but she had never placed James Charles in that category. This being said, Professor Tati Westbrook had met several times with James Charles in office hours, both alone and with friends. She mentioned that Professor Jeffree Star (the other professor in this course) was the first to realize that James Charles was copying off another student, which is how she found out about the incident, and she planned to work with both him and Honor Council in determining a grade change. The professors were able to find three instances on the exam in which James Charles copied off another student. They were therefore only able to confirm three instances of cheating, but they were not sure that these were the only ones. Professor Tati Westbrook stated that James Charles had admitted to copying, but had not stated explicitly on which questions he had cheated.

**Jury Deliberations I:**

A jury member began the discussion by stating that, despite their compassion for James Charles’s circumstances, they believed a violation had occurred. The jury went back and forth over whether a trial was necessary because many of the trial goals had already been met. There was confusion over how grade changes would work given that James Charles was retaking the class. Another juror was concerned about James Charles receiving adequate resources when retaking the course. At this point, the jury decided to take a break.

**Jury Deliberations II:**

Since the jury was split on the topic of the statement of (non)violations, the trial chair emailed James Charles between this meeting and the last to ask how he felt about the situation and how he would react to either a Statement of Violation or a Statement of Non-Violation. A Statement of Violation would result in resolutions (mandatory actions) whereas a Statement of Non-Violation would result in recommendations (non-mandatory actions). In his response, he seemed slightly confused at the practical difference between the two, so the jury unfortunately could not take his input into account in their deliberations. The jury resumed their discussion of how best to proceed. The primary opposition to a Statement of Violation was that it would prolong the process for James Charles and only result in further stress.

A juror asked if it would be possible to draft and consent to tentative resolutions immediately after a Statement of Violation. Several jury members voiced that they would feel uncomfortable consenting to resolutions without input from the parties. However, it seemed unlikely that James Charles would have much to add in a circumstantial meeting, since he had already discussed his family issues during Fact Finding. Additionally, the jury had already asked
both parties about potential resolutions. As a compromise, the jury agreed to come to a Statement of Violation, then discuss (but not consent to) a list of suggested resolutions. The jury spent some time wording the statement, and consented to the following. They wanted the statement to reflect that while there were extenuating circumstances, James Charles’s actions were still in violation of the Honor Code.

**Statement of Violation:**

*While the jury recognizes that [he] was under significant emotional distress at the time of this violation, [James Charles] violated the Honor Code by copying off another student’s final exam. (8 jurors consent, 2 stand outside in absentia)*

**Suggested Resolutions:**

After consenting on this statement of violation, the jury moved towards discussing a set of suggested resolutions. The jury discussed three that they would like to see. It felt important to acknowledge the fact that James Charles had proactively taken steps to move forward following this violation, so one resolution addressed that. One major area where restoration seemed lacking was between James Charles and Manny MUA, the student James Charles copied from, so the jury recommended a resolution to help mend their relationship. Several jurors expressed a desire to see a grade change in order to address accountability. However, the jury was unsure how a grade change would look considering that James Charles was currently retaking the course. They were also unsure whether James Charles was a domestic or international student, and were wary of recommending a grade change that would impact his visa status. For these reasons, they decided not to come up with a suggested phrasing for the grade change resolution, with the intention of wording it after getting feedback from the parties.

1. *The jury supports the steps James Charles is already taking to meet the trial goals of education, accountability, and restoration, such as retaking the class, going to CAPS, and talking to Professor Tati Westbrook.*
2. *(something about a grade change)*
3. *If both parties are willing, the jury recommends that James Charles and Manny MUA have a discussion about this situation mediated by a member of Honor Council.*

**Circumstantial Meeting and Finalizing Resolutions:**

The jury had a final meeting with James Charles and Professor Tati Westbrook to get their input on the suggested resolutions above. Professor Tati Westbrook felt that it was important to address a restoration of trust with the community, which she didn’t think was achieved by any of the current resolutions. To this end, she suggested a letter to the community or to future students in Makeup 150. James Charles was concerned about having Honor Council mediate his discussion with Manny MUA, since he wanted it to feel authentic and didn’t want Manny MUA to feel
forced into it. In response to this, the jury amended the third resolution to include a less structured discussion. Professor Tati Westbrook noted that although James Charles had reached out to her about scheduling a meeting, no time had yet been decided upon. To address this, the jury specified in the first resolution that James Charles would finalize a date and time for the meeting to take place.

Both James Charles and Professor Tati Westbrook felt that a grade of 0 on the final made sense, and James Charles was not concerned about the change in his course grade impacting his visa status. Professor Tati Westbrook provided some insight into how the jury might handle James Charles’s final grade in the course, saying that students aren’t typically allowed to retake a course that they got a passing grade in. The jury discussed several possible ways to proceed, but did not feel that they had enough information to make a solid recommendation. Instead, they decided to word the resolution in such a way that Professor Tati Westbrook could work out the final grade with James Charles’s dean. It was important to the jury that James Charles still get credit for retaking the course, since that was a large part of him proactively moving forward from this violation and they did not want that to be nullified.

**Final Resolutions:**

1. The jury supports the steps [James Charles] is already taking to meet the trial goals of education, accountability, and restoration, such as retaking the class, going to CAPS, and reaching out to [Professor Tati Westbrook]. [James Charles] will schedule a meeting with [Professor Tati Westbrook] by the end of the semester. (8 jurors consent, 2 stand outside in absentia)

2. The jury recommends that [James Charles] will receive a zero on the [redacted semester] final, in addition to whatever grade or course status changes are necessary in order for [him] to receive credit for the [redacted semester] class that [he’s] retaking. (8 jurors consent, 2 stand outside in absentia)

3. [James Charles] will reach out to [Manny MUA] about having a meeting. If [Manny MUA] is willing, the two will discuss this situation. (8 jurors consent, 2 stand outside in absentia)

4. [James Charles] will write a pseudonymized letter to be given to future students in [Cosmetology 150]. The letter will discuss this situation and how to avoid it. This letter will be completed by [redacted month]. (8 jurors consent, 2 stand outside in absentia)

**Resolutions as a Whole:** 8 jurors consent, 2 stand outside in absentia

**Statement on Reporting:**

The jury recommends that this case not be reported to other institutions of higher learning. (8 jurors consent, 2 stand outside in absentia)
Post-Trial:

Most of the resolutions were completed and followed up on. James Charles wrote a letter to the community which is attached at the end of this abstract. James Charles reached out to Manny MUA to schedule a conversation but Manny MUA never replied to the request. James Charles never followed up with Professor Tati Westbrook. No parties appealed the case.

Discussion Questions:

- Should there be a trial if there is mutual understanding between the confronted and confronting party? Are there other formats for resolving these situations?
- When two friends have a breach of trust as a part of an academic violation of the Honor Code, is it the jury’s place to compel those parties to resolve a social breach of the Code?
Reflection Letter

During [semester redacted], I took [Cosmetology 150]. During the summer break, my professor confronted me with an honor code violation concern on the final exam via email. During the exam, I was initially writing my own exam, but then I started to look at another student (who is a friend of mine)’s exam because I was nervous if my answers were not good enough, the other student was unaware. I subsequently changed some of my answers on the exams as I thought they were incorrect and copied answers from the other student. In [Professor Tati Westbrook’s] email, she said my answers on the exam were “strikingly similar” to the other student’s, which is accurate. I have violated the honor code by cheating on the final exam.

At this point, I’ve fully acknowledged my mistake. I am deeply ashamed of my dishonesty and the harm that I have brought to my professor and my friend, and the bi-co community. I have abused the privileges that the community has granted me by violating the honor code, and there is no excuse for such violation. I am grateful that my professor has alarmed me on how ridiculously wrong I was and pulled me away from a vision that deviated so much from our standards. I would like to take full responsibility for my actions and restore the trust with the community.

I apologized to the parties that were involuntarily involved in the incident. However, there is little that I can do to amend my mistake. In the end, the only thing I can do at this point is to take full responsibility of my mistake and always remind myself to be an honest person, both academically and socially.

Sincerely,

[James Charles]