

# Letters to the Editor

To the editor:

It is not the intention of this letter to undermine the stance taken by the Honor Court, in fact, we could not support their actions any more if we had decided it ourselves. The St. Andrews student body needs to realize that the Honor Code is not an empty formality, but a contract in which you give your word to live by an oath that promotes a community of mutual trust. However, out of something that started so positive and in the best interest of the St. Andrews community, it has developed into a situation that has caused us, as well as many others, much frustration. Somehow, one person has come to symbolize the entire situation, as can be confirmed by listening to people talk on campus, and what's more to our dislike, it is in apparent disregard for procedure and students with which the Dean of Students has chosen to act. One of the reasons that we chose to address this subject was because we felt so much of the case has come to center around the Vice-President of the Student Body, Abe VanWingerden. We have never had more respect for a friend than in the manner with which Abe has admitted his mistakes and backed the actions taken by the Honor Court. Personally, we have witnessed Abe struggle endlessly with this difficult situation, and attempt to reach a decision in the best interest of the school, students, and himself. Have not all of us made decisions that were unethical, in some way, at some point in our lives? Let us hope that we act with the same uprightness and effort to admit our mistake as Abe has done. He has put more time, work, and dedication into the office of Vice-President than anyone has a right to expect, and while everyone may or may not like his personality, there can be little doubt that he has done an incred-

ible job. Despite actions working to stir up additional problems, we as students need to work together to learn from this incident and move forward.

From our understanding of the situation we have reached several conclusions which we would like to pose as questions toward the Dean of Students and her handling of the problems. We as students find it rather disturbing that the Dean of Students should feel that she must impose her own stipulations to the adequate decision of the Honor Court. Dean Greer, does this not undermine the great strides that were made by the Honor Court? We could understand your position if it was done in an effort to further the learning experience of the students and campus, but to add further punishment to the more than adequate sentence serves to undermine the validity of the court. The Honor Court, through careful deliberation, arrived at a just punishment for the actions of the students. Why then has the Dean chosen to recommend further punishment instead of working to make this a positive learning process in which she supports both the Honor Court and helps those students found guilty to move forward? Is the purpose of the Honor Court to punish people or to help people in the learning process? St. Andrews is a unique community where one can mature under an open system that allows for mutual understanding; we invite the Dean of Students to join us in this growing process and to realize the special qualities that make this college so meaningful to us.

Scott Gregory  
Anton Whiley  
Jon Holloway  
Kevin Gullette

To the editor:

In the past, I have used this column to make some insensitive accusations about the Physical Plant. I later apologized, but did not really see why I was wrong until this year. As a Resident Assistant, I have worked closely with many people from the Physical Plant. I only have words of praise now.

Yes, I understood that there are still complaints: breaks appear awful long, sometimes, some things just never get fixed after a student has broken it for the fifth time, we have all heard or said something.

I came back early from Thanksgiving Break. It was surprising to see a great deal of water outside Wilmington, but like anyone else, I really did not think much of it. On my second trip past this new lake, there seemed to be water actually coming out of the ground. I decided to ask Paula if she had noticed it earlier. We found Security, who then called Juri Kirs.

We were lucky, you were lucky. The water main had broken. Two years ago, it broke twice between Wilmington and Granville. The pipes are older than the school, so it is understandable, but it is still upsetting when water has to be shut off for the entire Quad: Albe-marle, Concord, Granville, and Wilmington. Juri shut off the water as soon as he saw what was happening. This was all that Juri was required to do. He could have gone home and tried to solve the problem on Monday morning. He does not get overtime pay for this kind of work.

However, Juri called the people that work on our water lines. They got to St. Andrews at 10:30 p.m. on a Saturday night. They stayed here until the line was fixed. I do not know when they left, but they were still digging for that line when I fell asleep at 11:30. The next morning there was water. Rudi, on his vacation, came through the Quad making sure that all the toilets worked at 8 a.m. on a Sunday morning.

You may not realize just how extraordinary this is. Most people would have just left to come back to fix the problem on Monday morning. Over 250 students would have come back to no water. We are lucky to have people like Juri to help us in times of need.

Many people only see the jobs that do not get done. Physical Plant employees and housekeepers are human, sometimes the little things do not get done. Sometimes, they are dependent on other people to do the job and those people will not respond the way Juri does. I think Orange can appreciate that point.

Take a minute some day, and look at what does get done around here. Please remember that these people that clean and repair our campus are humans and treat them as such. Kindness takes very little energy and is well worth it. The days that St. Andrews runs smoothly far outnumber those that glitches show.

This is a special thank you, especially to Juri Kirs, but also to the many others that keep St. Andrews going.

Sincerely and gratefully,  
Jo Frost

To the editor:

I am writing this letter to the entire St. Andrews community, but especially to my fellow students who have elected me to represent them as a whole. This letter is in reference to my recent unethical conduct which I feel has been a detriment not only to my character, but also to the St. Andrews community as a whole. The reason for this letter is not to dwell on how or why people violate college policy, but rather to extend my thoughts regarding my behavior and responsibility as a student leader.

We at St. Andrews pride ourselves in being a community where we support and trust each other in all contexts of life. When a friend has a difficult experience, we support and nurture that person through caring and sharing that difficulty with them until their stability is restored. In the same context, when a fellow student has a good experience, we celebrate with that person to acknowledge his or her accomplishment. This type of activity brings us closer together and breaks down the barriers of class, race, sex, and all other types of prejudice that are so evident in our society today. But with this comes a responsibility of trust among each other that we must obey and implement in our lives and at St. Andrews this is

called our Honor Code. When this responsibility is violated by members of the community, it only facilitates in building and fortifying those barriers that have taken so long to break down.

As Vice-President of the Student Body, I have an additional responsibility to uphold that trust because I am expected to represent the ethos of this institution. What I did is in direct violation of this ethos, and I am truly sorry and I do not expect any kind of sympathy. As a student leader, it is incumbent upon me to always contemplate my actions before they are executed, but in this situation, I made a stupid and unwise decision. I absolutely do not encourage this type of behavior, and I am trying everything in my power to reverse the negative effects of my actions. Student Government must continually establish its legitimacy to be successful, and my actions have only worked to minimize that legitimacy.

This situation has taken an extreme mental and physical toll on many of my fellow students, and I am sorry for this and by no means did I intend for this to occur. I would like to publically thank all of those people who have supported and uplifted me through this situation, and I hope that we can take this negative action and turn it into a positive reaffirmation that St. Andrews survives

and advances by our participation in an Honor system. If we let this behavior pass without some type of statement, then we are facilitating the negative effects of this action. That is why I am extremely supportive of the actions of the Student Senate regarding this situation and I hope that we can now put the focus of attention on the larger issue at hand which is the reestablishment of what St. Andrews is all about. I love this school and the effect it has on people, and I would hate to see that diminished through this situation.

I do not expect forgiveness, but rather I hope to be given the opportunity to repay St. Andrews by continuing to work for the protection of our autonomy and the continuing of our sense of community. I am truly sorry for my actions and I hope that you will understand that this was only a stumble in my character, and not a developing and disturbing trend. I will work even harder now to correct that unwise stumble and continue to preserve the values that St. Andrews teaches us all.

With deepest sincerity,  
Abraham VanWingerden  
SGA Vice-President

To the editor:

Last Sunday (Dec. 2), I informed our SGA President Bill Cox, of my resignation from the position of Student Defense Counsel. My decision was based on personal reasons, not because of the results of last Saturday's hearings. I wish to inform our community of the reasons behind my decision, as well as propose some questions we may wish to discuss as a community.

I resigned primarily for stress-related reasons. I found my academic performance and personal life both adversely affected as a result of my participation in the judicial system. I am a student first and foremost. In hindsight, an additional reason for my resignation is my inappropriate focus of concern. I was more concerned with truth and justice, and less concerned with procedural questions. In hindsight, I see that the Student Defense Counsel should strive to balance these two goals. I did not resign because I disagree with the events that transpired last Saturday. My resignation is not a protest, it is a decision made on the basis of what I felt I needed to do.

I believe in the Honor Code. I believe in the judicial system. I think that

To the editor:

We, the feminist theory class, have become aware of certain misunderstandings on this campus concerning the concept of feminist thought. We feel that this can be largely attributed to a lack of awareness of what it really means to be a feminist theorist. In an attempt to dispel harmful stereotypes, we would like to share some of what we, as feminists, believe.

Perhaps the best place to start is to state what we are not. We are not only females. Our class consists of nine males and fourteen females (this includes a professor, a student aid, and an auditing student who are all females). We are not male-haters; we are opposed to the oppression caused by the social structure of patriarchy, not to the male gender. Our path is not a destructive one; rather, our goal is to build a nurturing environment that allows all people to reach their full potential as thoughtful, caring, and loving human beings. Our vision is not to replace the power of patriarchy with the power of matriarchy; rather, we re-envision power as empowerment of all, not as power over

as a community, we should discuss our Honor Code and the judicial system. Do we want an Honor Code? How should it be enforced? How should the Honor Code inform our relationships with other members of the community? How should the Honor Code inform our moral choices? Do we wish to revise the judicial system or do we just want to make some minor adjustments? As a community we have been divided by what transpired last Saturday. It is time for the healing process to begin. We should take this controversy and use it to inspire constructive communication. I urge all the members of this community who are concerned with the Honor Code to find ways to discuss these questions and others.

On a personal note, I would like to commend my colleagues in student government. I would also like to commend all those who have worked with such dedication in the judicial system this year. Additionally, I would like to thank those members of our community: students, faculty, and administration for their support, encouragement, and understanding.

Sincerely,  
Jay Bumgarner

others. Feminist theory is not merely a political construct; it is an all-encompassing worldview that touches all aspect of life and non-life.

As feminist theorists, we celebrate plurality, multiplicity of gender, emotionality, and connectedness to one another, our environment, nature, and the sacred. We see plurality both as a way to broaden our understanding of who we may be and as a way to open our minds to the differences of others. Consequently, we do not view gender dualistically. Instead, we want to allow for a multiplicity of ways of being gendered. While dualism tends to denigrate the body and elevate the soul, feminist theory wishes to honor the body with the soul, rejoicing in their unity. Feminist theorists attempt to weave the world into a web of interconnectedness. We acknowledge that we do not exist alone without relation to others. Therefore, as feminist theorists, we are not haters; we are lovers: lovers of nature, of men and women, of the sacred, and of constructive change and infinite possibilities.

The Feminist Theory Class

To the editor:

In a recent incident, many students were involved in altering registration cards in a selfish attempt to gain entry into preferred courses. Such behaviour represents a willful subversion of the registration process and a blatant violation of the Honor Code of our campus community.

The assignment of randomized numbers to students is an earnest attempt to bring fairness to the process of course registration. The modification of these numbers and the manufacture of phony labels are examples of how many students sabotaged pre-registration for the upcoming spring semester. These self-serving activities prevented other students from getting into courses of their choice.

As freshmen, all St. Andrews students are made aware of the Honor Code and even speak it aloud at convocation. How, then, can so many students participate in such an act of fraud that is an obvious undermining of community integrity? It is quite disconcerting to me that some St. Andrews students are quite willing to lie, cheat, and steal to gain certain ends.

However, I am even more disappointed in our judicial system that dealt out community service hours as the only punishment for these Honor Code offenders. The Saltire clearly states on page 44 that "any student found guilty of a Honor Code violation is ineligible to participate in major extracurricular activities for twelve months following sanctioning." Perhaps members of the Honor Court were swayed by the fact that more than a few offenders are officers in student government and members of athletic teams. Is it possible that these individuals are being shielded from proper punishment? It seems to me that our judicial system is not interested in justice at all, but in campus politics.

Without doubt, we are all witnessing the death of the Honor Code at St. Andrews.

Todd Spradlin