

# Plagiarism

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# Academic Thievery



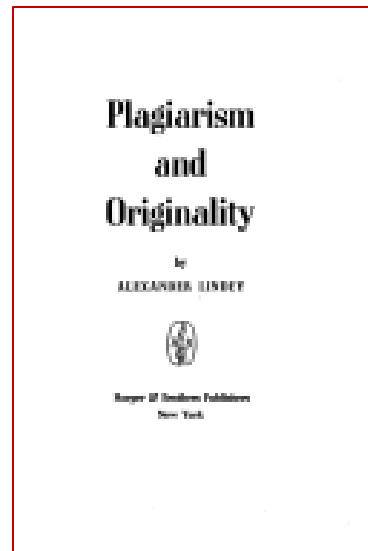
Latin *plagiarius*="kidnapper".

- According to the *Merriam-Webster OnLine Dictionary*, to “plagiarize” means
  - to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
  - to use (another's production) without crediting the source
  - to commit literary theft
  - to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source



Joseph Gibaldi

Alexander Lindey



Type of academic or professional cheating that contains *“the false assumption of authorship; the wrongful act of taking the product of another person’s mind and presenting it as one’s own”*

# Plagiarism

- expression of original ideas considered intellectual property, and is protected by copyright laws, just like original inventions
- Is an act of *fraud*
  - **Stealing**
  - **Lying**

# Plagiarism

## INVOLVES THE FOLLOWING

- turning in someone else's work as your own
- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not

# Attention!

Plagiarism is not always a black-and-white issue

e.g. plagiarism vs recycling??

Learning to recognize the various forms/types of plagiarism, especially the more ambiguous ones, is an important step to prevent it

# Forms of Plagiarism

## 1. SOURCES NOT CITED

**1.The Ghost Writer** : The writer turns in another's work, word-for-word, as his or her own.

**2. The Photocopy:** The writer copies significant portions of text straight from a single source, without alteration.

**3. The Potluck (cocktail) Paper:** The writer tries to disguise (mask) plagiarism by copying from several different sources, tweaking the sentences to make them fit together while retaining most of the original phrasing



- 4. The Poor Disguise:** Although the writer has retained the essential content of the source, he or she has altered the paper's appearance slightly by changing key words and phrases.
- 5. The Labor of Laziness:** The writer takes the time to paraphrase most of the paper from other sources and make it all fit together, instead of spending the same effort on original work.
- 6. The Self-Stealer:** The writer "borrows" generously from his or her previous work, violating policies concerning the expectation of originality adopted by most academic institutions (discuss??)

## 2. SOURCES CITED (but still plagiarized!)

- 1. The Forgotten Footnote:** The writer mentions an author's name for a source, but neglects to include information on the location of the material referenced. Cannot be traced!
- 2. The Misinformer:** The writer provides inaccurate information regarding the sources, making it impossible to find them.
- 3. The Too-Perfect Paraphrase:** The writer properly cites a source, but neglects to put in quotation marks text that has been copied word-for-word, or close to it.

**4. The Resourceful Citer:** The writer properly cites all sources, paraphrasing and using quotations appropriately.

The paper contains almost no original work! It is sometimes difficult to spot this form of plagiarism because it looks like any other well-researched document.

**5. The Perfect Crime:** In this case, the writer properly quotes and cites sources in some places, but goes on to paraphrase other arguments from those sources without citation. This way, the writer tries to pass off the paraphrased material as his or her own analysis of the cited material.

# Types of Plagiarism

## 1. Copy & Paste Plagiarism

When an entire sentence or significant phrase used intact from a source

## 2. Word Switch Plagiarism

When one takes a sentence from a source and change around a few words, it is still plagiarism.

- Changing the words of an original source is *not* sufficient to prevent plagiarism!
- If the words of an original source are changed, plagiarism is not necessarily prevented!
- Plagiarism is not sufficiently prevented by changing words of an original source!

## 3. Style Plagiarism

When a Source Article is followed sentence-by-sentence or paragraph-by-paragraph, it is plagiarism, even though none of your sentences are exactly like those in the source article or even in the same order.

What is copied in this case is the source author's reasoning style.

## **4. Metaphor Plagiarism**

- Metaphors are used either to make an idea clearer or give the reader an analogy that touches the senses or emotions better than a plain description of the object or process.
- Metaphors, then, are an important part of an author's creative style.

## **5. Idea Plagiarism**

- If the author of the source article expresses a creative idea or suggests a solution to a problem, the idea or solution must be clearly attributed to the author.
- We seem to have a hard time distinguishing author's ideas and/or solutions from public domain information.

# Motives behind plagiarism

- **Intentional**
  - Copying a friend's work
  - Buying or borrowing papers
  - Cutting and pasting blocks of text from electronic sources without documenting
  - Media “borrowing” without documentation
  - Web publishing without permissions of creators etc
- **Unintentional**
  - Careless paraphrasing
  - Occurs when a writer is not familiar or rather, does not find out the necessary information s/he needs to properly cite a source
  - One who thinks s/he is paraphrasing but using phrases that are identical to the source, e.g in a different order, structure, etc.
  - *forgetting* to put a parenthetical citation in the paper or in the Works Cited page.

# Excuses

*It's okay if  
I don't get caught!*

Everyone does it!

The work  
was BORING!

*I was too busy to  
Meet the deadline ...*

*If I don't publish  
I perish...*

*Literature was scarce...*

*My institution  
expects  
a lot from me!*

*"But their words  
are better"*



WOW... DOES THIS  
HAPPEN OFTEN?





# South Africa: Institutes of Higher “Cheating”

- University of South Africa ; plagiarism cases Masters and Doctoral students, with a number of thesis rejected
- Stellenbosch University (2006: 17 cases, 3 post graduates)
- University of the free state (2006: 7 cases)
- University of Pretoria (2006: 22 cases, 2 post graduates)

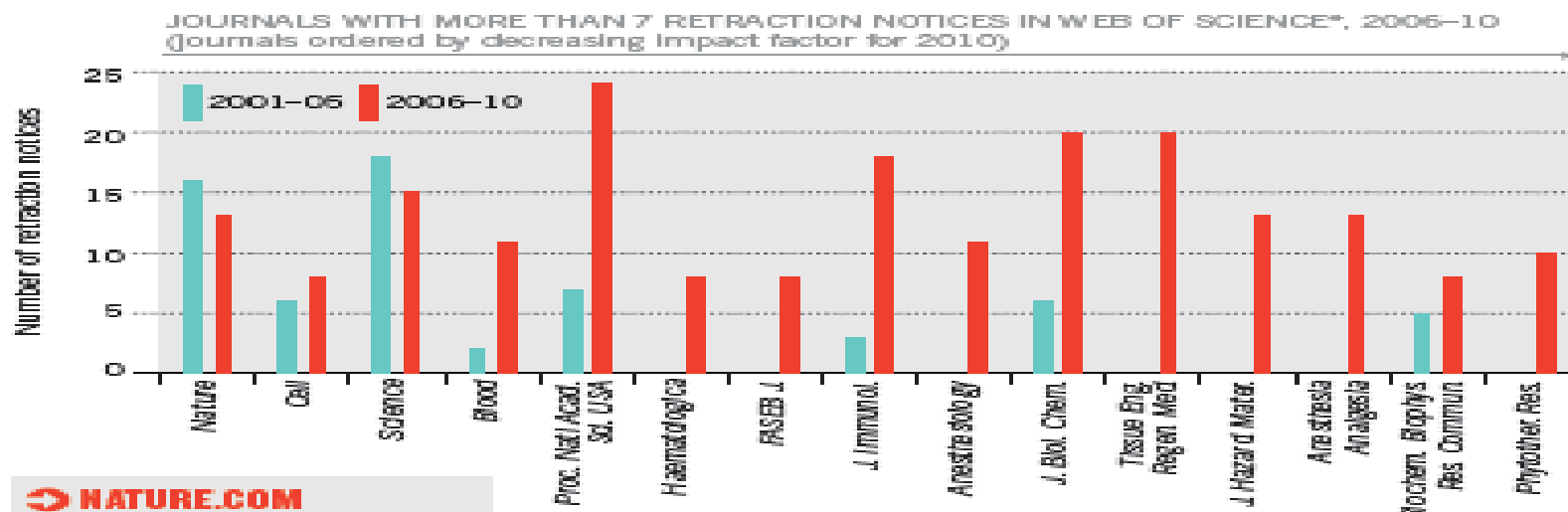
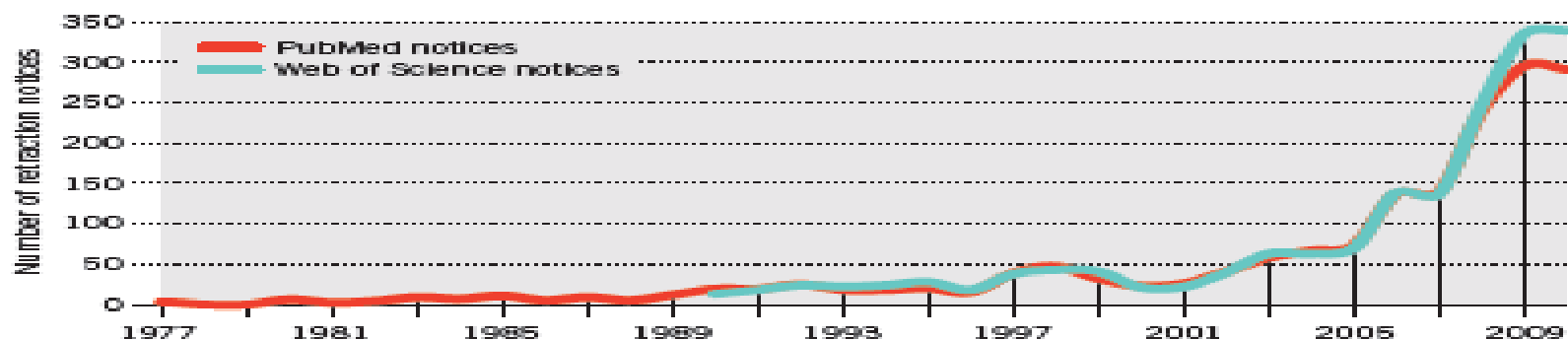
(Sunday times, June 10<sup>th</sup> 2007)

*Professor A. Dhai – Director : Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics*

Not representative  
Rest of Africa, possibly a great deal of under reporting

# RISE OF THE RETRACTIONS

In the past decade, the number of retraction notices has shot up 10-fold (top), even as the literature has expanded by only 44%. It is likely that only about half of all retractions are for researcher misconduct (middle). Higher-impact journals have logged more retraction notices over the past decade, but much of the increase during 2006–10 came from lower-impact journals (bottom).

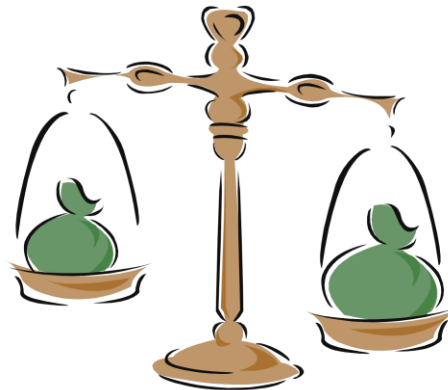


**NATURE.COM**  
Read more about retractions:  
[go.nature.com/2uweek](http://go.nature.com/2uweek)

\*Not shown: Acta Crystallographica E saw 81 retractions during 2006–10.

# Consequences

Is it worth  
the risk?



# Real life consequences

- Damaged the reputation of two prominent historians, Stephen Ambrose and Doris Kearns Goodwin,
  - Kearns left television position and stepped down as Pulitzer Prize judge for “lifting” 50 passages for her 1987 book *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys* (Lewis)
- Senator **Joseph Biden** dropped his 1987 campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination
  - Copied in law school and borrowed from campaign speeches of Robert Kennedy
- Boston Globe journalist Mike Barnicle forced to resign for plagiarism in his columns (“Boston Columnist . . .”)

# Consequences (cont'd)

- *New York Times* senior reporter Jayson Blair forced to resign after being accused of plagiarism and fraud.
  - “The newspaper said at least 36 of the 73 articles he had written had problems with accuracy, calling the deception a “low point” in the newspaper's history.”

“New York Times Exposes Fraud of Own Reporter.” *ABC News Online*. 12 May, 2003. [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/newshour\\_index.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/newshour_index.html)

# Consequences of Plagiarism

- Termination of Employment
- Blacklisted in the scientific community
- Danger to human and animal subjects
- Possible jail time
- Possible monetary fines
- Banned from future research or publication
- Banned from requesting or receiving grant funds



# Common Knowledge

Beware of 'common knowledge'

You don't have to cite "common knowledge,"  
BUT the fact must really be commonly known

e.g.

1. Nelson Mandela was the first president of SA
2. That water boils at 100C is common knowledge;

# PREVENTING plagiarism

The internet has made plagiarism easier with access to term paper mills, search engines, encyclopedias, etc. In response, websites have been developed which help teachers analyze papers and develop strategies to prevent plagiarism.

Some sites are:

<http://www.turnitin.com/>

<http://www.millikin.edu/wcenter/plagiarism3.html>



# You can “borrow” from the works of others in your own work!

Use these three strategies,

- Quoting
- Paraphrasing
- Summarizing

*To blend source materials in with your own,  
**making sure your own voice is heard!***

# Case Study 1

A professor is in the process of applying for a grant, however the deadline is approaching faster than he realized. To save time and get the proposal in on time, he copies a few sentences from a previous journal. The sentences which he copies are for the most part common knowledge, and not new ideas from the author of the article. The professor includes a brief sentence in his proposal summarizing the journal article that he took the sentences from and cites the journal as a reference.

## Case Study Discussion Questions

- Does copying a few sentences from another journal constitute plagiarism?
- When the professor cites the journal that he got the sentences from, is he properly giving credit?

## Case Study Suggestions\*

- Although the professor attempts to give credit to the original author, it is not complete unless he places the sentences in quotation marks. Although they are common ideas, because the professor used the same wording, quotations are necessary.
- This is “research misconduct (plagiarism)” because it violates scientific standards.
- The professor must also take into account that the sentences used might not accurately depict what his proposal is about.

# Case study 2

Changing the words of an original source is *not* sufficient to prevent plagiarism!

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Plagiarism is not sufficiently prevented by changing words of an original source!



*The measure of a man's character is what he would do if  
he knew he never would be found out.*

*(-Thomas Babington Macaulay, 1800 – 1859)*

Shamella Cromartie, North Carolina Central University

# Recommended Resources

- <http://www.hamilton.edu/academic/Resource/WC/AvoidingPlagiarism.html>
- <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html>
- <http://www.virtualsalt.com/antiplag.htm>
- <http://alexia.lis.uiuc.edu/~janicke/plagiary.htm>

# Sources Cited

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<<http://www.madison.tec.wi.us/is/writingcenter/plagarism.htm>>
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- Plagiarism.org. 8 August 2001. <[www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org)>