

own, willing to use her education to enhance the happiness and prestige of her family.

Perhaps the only Renaissance woman who had every legal right to speak publicly her intellectual attainments was Queen Elizabeth. Living proof (albeit female) of the powerful results of a classical education, Elizabeth succeeded in emulating the male models of literacy, mastering nearly a dozen languages, the classics, mathematics, and the sciences, making her learning subserve the ends of queenship. Indeed, she embodied the time-honored idea that exceptional accomplishment is required of those born to rule: Elizabeth empowered her impressive measure of literacy, had a critical consciousness (be it innate or learned), and by virtue of her personality was the first woman to empower the English throne. Renowned teacher Roger Ascham wrote that her mind had "no womanly weakness, her perseverance is equal to that of a man, and her memory long keeps what it has quickly picked up" (Neale 14). Her poetry was deemed to be assertively and expansively masculine; her speeches "full of princely resolution and more than feminine courage" (Neale 15). In her Spanish Armada speech, she offers herself as an androgynous model of kingly courage: "I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman," she said, "but I have the heart and stomach of a king" (Pringle 80). Despite her remarkable literacy and political prowess, the most powerful queen who ever lived could explain her empowerment only in male terms.

So what? What do these pretty stories tell us?

They tell us that the acquisition of literacy — of reading and writing skills, of Gradgrind's Facts, of Hirsch's lists — is in itself no guarantee of power, personal advancement, critical thought, or cultural modernization — not even for the elite, the dominant, the rich. In most cases, women — just like most men — have used their literacy to accommodate the social, educational, and political boundaries laid out for them. Only a few men, and even fewer women, have opposed or resisted, have become new thinkers, inventors, revolutionaries. Access to intellectual culture, to functional literacy, guarantees nothing. It never did in the past; it doesn't now. If literacy holds no guarantees for the rich and powerful and literate, what expectations can we have for the poor and marginalized and illiterate? If these stories have told us anything, it's that literacy is a noun for most students, even for the best and the brightest.

How can we as teachers activate the concept of literacy? How can we, in other words, make *literacy* a verb, a process? We can do that by creating a classroom atmosphere conducive to critical questioning. We can do that by demonstrating to our students how to question: how to question the assigned material, classroom discussions, comments, and lectures, and how to ask questions that slice to the fatty heart of all assumptions — including our own.

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EXPLORING PLAGIARISM IN THE COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

Gerry H. Brookes
University of Nebraska—Lincoln

The subject of plagiarism is most likely to appear in composition classrooms in the form of warnings or lessons in how to avoid it. I want to suggest that there are better approaches, one of which is to have students explore it through writing and through an informal collaborative research project. Investigating plagiarism in a writing classroom is justified by, and serves to test, a number of hypotheses about students, plagiarism, and learning. To begin with, the problem of getting students not to plagiarize or, to put it positively, to credit sources is much more complex than our usual advice makes it appear. The difficulties lie in two primary areas. First, the rules governing proper acknowledgement of sources are more complicated than may be thought and learning them is more difficult than it may seem. Second, students who violate these rules are not simply ignorant. They are usually following different rules, many of which spring from values they share within groups outside the classroom. These are matters worth exploring in a writing classroom.

Acknowledgement is a complex behavior, differing from discipline to discipline, learned — if ever learned — as part of initiation into a scholarly community or sub-community. A few simple principles, such as those found on syllabi or in handbooks, cannot touch the complex ethical decisions made routinely and quickly by experienced practitioners, decisions about how much can be taken for granted, whom to footnote, whom never to footnote, and so on. The rules of thumb and the thinly veiled threats that appear on syllabi in the guise of advice ("Plagiarism is stealing," for example) can only be considered "lore" as Stephen M. North defines it in *The Making of Knowledge in Composition*, as a non-rigorous, contradictory body of knowledge passed on by practitioners (23). Besides informing apprentices that this is a subject about which their mentors get crazy and upset, lore may serve one useful purpose, creating the kind of "metalinguistic awareness" useful in other learning of written language (see Hartwell 121-25). In general, however, the ability to make correct decisions in acknowledging sources is learned through practice and observation, by relatively willing apprentices.

Yet being an apprentice differs from being a practitioner. Expectations in performance are different, and rules are likely to be more rigidly enforced. In "A Dialogue on Plagiarism," A. E. Malloch suggests that the role-playing students do in learning about acknowledgement may be considered "impersonation," which, as he notes, may slip over into "disguise" (169-70). Becoming practitioners is further complicated by students' mental development, their partial understanding of subject matter, and their insecurity as experts. Dorothy S. Brown transcribes delightful conversation among perplexed students trying to figure out how to footnote and how not to plagiarize ("The Perils of Plagiarism"). In fact, it seems a tribute to the intelligence and character of some students that they actually learn how to credit sources and finally join the community of scholars.

Becoming a practitioner takes time. Students report that as their peers advance toward a degree and, in some cases, become graduate students, they understand acknowledgement more thoroughly and engage in plagiarism less. Cynical younger students will point out that their older peers also know that the consequences of plagiarism increase as they ascend the academic ladder. In an interview with an undergraduate, a graduate student said, "Plagiarism? Are you kidding? You don't pay \$2,000 per credit hour to be kicked out of graduate school. . . . It is also very risky to plagiarize when your professors have probably written or have read the sources of information you are using. Plagiarism is definitely a stage you outgrow. The thought of plagiarism as an easy way out of a project would never enter my mind, especially on my thesis." In general, older students, like this one, have not worked out a very definite view of plagiarism, which suggests that they learn to avoid it tacitly, by impersonation. Frank Smith speaks of learning to write as part of initiation into the club of writers (Smith 1983), and learning to use and credit sources is part of such a transition. We might note, however, that during initiation, one learns the ethics of any club, whatever they are, and if one's eyes are open, one may adopt a certain critical detachment.

Of course, some students do not wish to join a community of scholars in a discipline. They are unwilling apprentices. My colleague Robert Brooke, after Erving Goffman, has described "underlife" in composition classrooms, identifying apparently disruptive behavior as attempts on students' parts to affirm identities other than that of the traditional student. The realm of behavior described as "plagiarism" is full of a rich underlife, whereby students, consciously or unconsciously, define themselves apart from the role of willing student, usually as members of other communities. Some of their motives may be impossible to recover, but their intentions are often to do something other than plagiarize, for what they understand to be good reasons.

The conflicts in communal values can be seen best in the context of two general classroom strategies, which are meant to be used after students have already begun exploring plagiarism and which have evolved in response to their explorations. The first takes up, through open discussion or analysis of texts, a set of metaphors running through students' writing, textbooks, rules, and faculty talk. A central one is that of ideas as property. (Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* is helpful here.) This particular metaphor proves difficult for students, since ideas often do not have a very distinct form in their minds. But they can explore and get tangled usefully in a web of related metaphors involving ownership, money, exchange, work, and time. Intellectual work creates owned property. If someone has written a paper, she has an investment in it and will not give it up freely to another. She may, however, be generous and share it with a friend, which, since it is hers, she feels justified in doing. Faculty language concerning plagiarism is fraught with capitalist metaphors: We borrow ideas, we incur debts, and we give credit. Of course, some of these activities are not necessarily thought of as economic, but the language in which they are couched leaves that implication, especially for those who do not understand collaborative relationships among thinkers and who do not much appreciate obligations.

The economic edge of the metaphors is sharpened by student and faculty thinking about grading. Grades are exchange for work or other kinds of property, such as knowledge. Thus Jack Rawlins, in *The Writer's Way*, speaks of plagiarism as "scholarly stealing: taking someone else's data or words or thoughts and peddling them as your own" (348). The "peddling" is appar-

ently exchanging them for a grade or otherwise "taking credit" for them. One guesses that reflection on the marketplace metaphors, which imply that we act out of self-interest in a self-regulating market economy, leads Wayne C. Booth and Marshal W. Gregory to imagine a society in which all ideas are common and hence personal ownership of ideas disappears (*Harper and Row Rhetoric* 455). Such fantasy implies the connection of plagiarism with many of our deepest and most conflicting cultural values, which makes the attitudes that spring from them very resistant to change.

A second classroom strategy that both reveals and explores relevant and conflicting communal values involves posing cases of plagiarism for evaluation. The exercise is based on a footnote in Erving Goffman's *Relations in Public* (102-03), where he discusses the interest officials have in determining what has actually happened when a law has been broken. He cites numerous ways of accounting for running a red light, some of which transform it into something other than a crime, just as students transform, consciously or unconsciously, what we understand to be plagiarism into another, often perfectly legitimate activity. I posit a group of students who have plagiarized, that is, who have handed in someone else's work as their own. But the students in question seek to transform what they are doing. For example, one argues that he was not plagiarizing but was simply putting on his mother, who is the instructor in the class. More recently, I've complicated this exercise by invoking irreconcilable conceptions of justice, taken from Chaim Perelman's *The Idea of Justice and the Problem of Argument* (6-11). The hypothetical plagiarizers make claims on our sense that we should grant, for example: to each the same thing; to each according to rank; to each according to needs; to each according to works; to each according to merits.

The other hypothetical cases begin to look like this:

1. The student is very wealthy. Her family includes a member of the Board of Regents, a trustee of a large local bank, a state senator who is a member of the legislative appropriations committee. This student assumed that no one would object to her action.
 2. The student was from a poor family, had borrowed the money to finish his or her last semester and was in danger of flunking out of school if he or she failed this course.
 3. The student was part of an experiment being conducted by the student newspaper to find out how able teachers are to discover cheating.
 4. The student has worked very hard for good grades, has been involved in various campus organizations, including one for handicapped students, and a campus blood drive. The student needed a good grade in order to go on to graduate school in social work, and she or he did not have the free time to prepare his or her own paper.
 5. The student grew up with a close friend. They helped each other with homework, played in the band, went to the shopping mall together, and swore to be friends through thick and thin. The friend asked for help in getting through one course. The student could not turn the friend down and helped plagiarize a paper.
 6. The student thinks that attending the university is a game. He or she took a chance on getting by in this case. The student thinks that if nothing is ventured, nothing is gained.
 7. The student claims to cheat often, never to have been caught before, and not to be able to help it.
- The last item has been added at the request of students, who want a shot at the perpetual plagiarist. Working on these cases

produces a range of individual responses. A few students say, "Cheating is cheating," and vote the same punishment for everyone. The first student, who plagiarized out of a superior sense of invulnerability, usually gets hanged. There is an array of disagreements about the rest, except for the last, which I have not tried, although an informal poll favors severe punishment. Some students will go light on the impoverished student, on the one who does good works, or on the one helping a friend. They like to see the gamester as having lost this time.

Because of their assumptions about the special relationship between them and students, faculty may be alarmed to find that students are prone to excuse the student who has participated in a test of the instructor's ability to detect plagiarism. Faculty think of any form of plagiarism as a violation of the trust that ought to exist between student and teacher. In a paper, "Why is Plagiarism Wrong?" read at the 1987 CCCO Convention in Atlanta, Barry Kroll said that the strongest argument against plagiarism was its destructive effect on trust in the academic community, and one of Malloch's two voices says that the student who plagiarizes "is repudiating the mutual relation between himself and the instructor which any course demands" (173-74). Students' perceptions of this relationship, within the community of "any course," are often very different from their instructors'. Admittedly, the case of the student experimenting on the instructor is hypothetical and disguised as a pseudo-scientific experiment, but it takes a long discussion and perhaps some prodding before a student will suggest tentatively that the experiment violates a relationship between teacher and student. For many students, trust is simply not a consideration in their relationship with instructors, and experience tells some not to trust, unless trust is earned. In discussing handling plagiarism in the classroom, a new Teaching Assistant reported the (for her) bitter irony of being falsely accused of plagiarism by an instructor for whom she had nothing but contempt. She had been making a living writing others' papers for his class and had, naturally, written the one in question herself.

I have described two means of exploring attitudes and values impinging on plagiarism, in order to argue that plagiarism is a complex matter and hence a rich topic for an informal collaborative research project. This subject has advantages over some other controversial ones. While it may produce genuine disagreement among students, their prejudices are not tied explicitly to obvious political or religious positions, so that no one is likely to feel that his or her group ideology is being attacked. (The exceptions may be members of fraternities and sororities, about which more later.) The subject is not binary, not divisive in a neat way, and students will take a wide range of attitudes, especially if the classroom allows a certain amount of what James Britton, a while ago in *Language, the Learner and the School*, called "talking to learn," the apparently disorderly conversation that allows students to express ideas and to try them out (80-115). In addition, once they see the attitudes, through writing and discussion, the community of students may move toward self-regulation. I do not mean that they begin doling out punishments and making rules, but that they discover the conflicts and move toward a common sense of justice. This movement itself is part of initiation into an academic community, however partial the initiation and however fraught with contradictions that community may be.

There are many ways to organize the kind of informal collaborative research project that I propose. I would like to outline one general procedure and to comment on some of the results. The most important elements of the procedure lead to two

papers, the last of which has two parts. The first is a report on data about plagiarism collected primarily through interviews. The second is, first, a relatively informal piece of writing stating the students' views on the matter, taking into account the data collected, that is, the interviews, class discussions, bits of writing, and so on that everyone has had access to, and, second (and perhaps optional), a more formal piece of writing aimed at getting something done about an aspect of the problem.

A good place to begin is with local campus rules. Initiating the topic is difficult. Students groan and shift in their chairs, since they assume that I am after them, that I think they have been plagiarizing. They are also uncomfortable about having the taboo subject broached, perhaps because of their previous experiences in classrooms. On the other hand, they are interested in the origins of the rules and to a lesser extent in the underlying assumptions about an academic community. Of course, as is true throughout this project, they discover rules to break and new ways of doing so. On our campus, for example, it is illegal to change a grade on a test or paper, so that the student cannot then present the paper to the instructor and claim she has made a mistake in calculating or recording. Most students have not thought of this form of academic dishonesty. At this point the writing instructor must remember Milton, who reminds us that we learn good by evil.

The first formal assignment is to find out something new about the subject, to gather some data. There are a number of possibilities. They may choose to interview persons who deal with plagiarism directly, such as faculty, members of our judicial review board, or administrators. They are more likely to encounter conflicts if they are required to interview at least two different people. (I give them instructions about doing so considerately and efficiently.) Such interviews serve as powerful communal data when they are shared in the classroom. Faculty and others are surprisingly eloquent on this topic, and their voices, on paper, open up another world of discourse to the students. A professor in the sciences, for example, spoke of the obligation to a task, of carrying it through in its own terms, rather than turning to someone else's work. This idea was new to me as well as to the class.

An alternative is to interview a variety of people, looking for different attitudes, gathering a set of field notes. Testimony is easy to find. An older student once complained about the topic over dinner, and her guest confessed compulsively to an episode of plagiarism years before. Students who go home find a family of anecdotes. The range of feelings in individuals, from shamelessness to profound guilt, makes interviewing easy. The confessions led me to encourage interviews of persons who have actually participated in plagiarism, who prove easy to find and to get to talk. Jesse found one:

The most interesting responses came from a guy that claimed that anything was OK if it got you what you wanted. He appeared intelligent and sane, except that he looked me unflinchingly in the eye and told me that he exercised any means necessary to get what he wanted. I asked him if that included murder, and he said, of course, although he hadn't found that to be necessary just yet. Just then I heard a sound I could swear sounded like an ice-cold wind blowing through an empty cavity that was supposed to contain a soul, and I excused myself.

This student belongs to the community of self-seekers. A wide range of more normal voices is also available, including those of

parents and other graduates who can testify about how little things have changed over time.

Whichever alternative they choose, students are to write up their results in summary fashion, quoting the most salient points. They usually need to be urged to let their interviewees speak directly, rather than slip into indirect discourse and to tell us what they think themselves. Here they face directly a crucial problem in acknowledgement, of putting forward someone else's words and ideas, rather than merging everything read or heard into one's own. (Sharing interviews in print is important for the same reason, since print is harder to distort into what one wants to hear than is speech.) Recognizing the sources of one's ideas and information requires effort, and they have little practice in doing so. If ideas could be dyed, then we could watch how they move about the room, blending in various minds. The closest I've come to an accurate and fairly minute tracing device is having students look for specific words and phrases that they have picked up from someone else or from some specific context. We stumbled on this strategy in the midst of an argument in which students insisted that the University did not change them, that they did not get any of their ideas from their classes. Randy, who was adamant that the University had had no influence on him, had before us his paper using the phrase "it is a commonplace that," which he had lifted directly from the assignment sheet and had never used before in his life. We discovered quickly that many of us could trace specific words and phrases directly to courses, people, or books.

The informal research, presented in a relatively formal paper, and the accompanying discussion and other activities, all lead to a final piece of writing in which students try to write out, first, their own beliefs about plagiarism, in an exploratory essay. Then, if their attitudes and feelings are strong, they are urged to write something more public, such as part of a pamphlet for entering students, an open letter to faculty—if they think faculty are not living up to some responsibility—or to some other group, or a letter, an editorial, or article for the campus paper. In order to sharpen their focus, as well as to take up a thread running through the course, I ask them in their personal essays to speculate about the causes of plagiarism. Their responses, again, cover a predictable range and produce engaging encounters among them. They may blame faculty, themselves, human nature or some human natures, the institution, their previous schooling, or the conditions of modern life. Doing so also helps them to see what public piece of writing might be appropriate.

I am not certain that exploring this topic changes behavior, which is a legitimate goal, but the personal essays indicate some movement. One young woman wrote: "I admit to plagiarizing on occasion, looking at other people's answers on tests, not entire papers. I know and feel it is wrong, but I still do it. The strangest thing happens when people try to look at my paper. It makes me angry. If someone tries to see my answers, I think it is absolutely intolerable and stupid of them. I'll admit my feelings are selfish. I let myself do it, but I don't like people cheating off of me. I don't feel sorry for others at all." She has at least come to some self-knowledge and may be ready to change her ways, even if she has not done so yet.

The whole procedure outlined here moves from telling and retelling to generalization. "For," as Martha C. Nussbaum remarks in *The Fragility of Goodness*, "as Aristotle stresses (and as Socrates showed before him), most people, when asked to generalize make claims that are false to the complexity and the content of their actual beliefs. They need to learn what they really think" (10). Students may have difficulty discovering what they

really think about plagiarism, even in the presence of the testimony and anecdotes of others, but they are likely to generalize more accurately at the end of the process than at the beginning. This procedure is not, of course, a careful model of how to teach collaborative research, although it moves in that direction.

There are, of course, many other classroom strategies that can accompany a project like this, including an informal first response—what Toby Fulwiler would call a "journal write" (Fulwiler 17-18)—which can be used as a basis of discussion and later as a measure of changed minds, and including work on drafts in small groups or in the whole class, which provides more common materials for everyone. A panel discussion helps to get matters before the class, especially if the panelists are varied in age and experience. What students will say in such a context is quite surprising, as are the questions they ask. Someone will always try to get everyone to admit having plagiarized at some time. But many other matters of substance will also come out, including a different view of faculty. One student reported having her paper ripped away from her by an athletic young man, when she refused to let him copy it. He had allowed her to sit next to him, in the only remaining seat in the large lecture hall, on condition that she let him copy from her. Needing the seat, she hadn't said no. She grabbed the paper back when he was, apparently, thinking. All the while the instructor was at the front of the room. Another student chased down her instructor and told him that groups of students were copying answers in the classroom he had abandoned. The instructor refused to take any action, and she concluded that he was simply afraid. Other students testify that they never plagiarize and give compelling, sometimes quite moving reasons. Still others are quite willing to say that they do so often and somewhat selectively. The culture of midwestern classrooms like mine works in favor of candor in such a setting, since it does not permit much direct confrontation. Still, the effect on some students of hearing other views is quite visible. One was shocked to find that others were made angry by plagiarism. A few were surprised to find that it was going on all around them.

Amidst the welter of attitudes that emerge, a few are worth remarking because they are so clearly linked with other communal values and may call for special approaches. For example, one student wrote, "Deep down, I really feel that if a student wants to really enjoy his college career, he has to reduce some of his academic study time and spend that time doing fun things." He is going back to farming, to hard work he has known all his life, and plagiarizing creates free time. As classroom discussion may discover, he is at the conflux of traditional, communal ideas: first, that one should have fun before settling down to work and, second, that time and grades are commodities that can be bought illegally, so long as you are not caught. His attitude is not uncommon.

Among the most intransigent sets of arguments I have encountered are those embedded in the activities of a fraternity, where community composition is carried to extremes. One of my students explained that the members of his fraternity work together with pride to maintain a high collective grade point average, all committed to the common good of the group. If his brothers were around, he would ask them for their help, but if they weren't, then he had their files of old papers as a substitute. Thus the group and the individual will profit by getting better grades, which, as he says, everyone wants. The very stable complex of ideas here calls for the kind of reflective analysis that writing permits. In addition, the response of non-fraternity classmates, who are upset about the presence of resources and a

supportive community to which they don't have access, presents a challenge that may help to change a way of thinking deeply rooted in this student's perceptions and in the community most important to him.

Such a fraternity presents an extreme example of a closed community whose values may counter those of the academy. Yet nearly all students have a community of peers who seek to help each other. Once, as students handed in their final papers on plagiarism, I asked them to jot down how much help they had gotten with it, venturing into the realm of unacknowledged tutoring. One student had simply walked around his fraternity asking about the topic and could identify a different hand in virtually every sentence. Subsequently I asked whether the help students get in dorms and fraternities constitutes plagiarism. A very bright senior in Teachers College said, emphatically, "No, that's education!" She is certainly right, and steering one's way through the ethical complexities of unacknowledged (and in some settings virtually unacknowledgeable) collaborative learning on the one hand and full participation in a scholarly community on the other is difficult, to say the least. Still, students' conduct in such matters is ethical, bound by sets of rules that they can elaborate and test, which implies that they are perfectly capable of learning the practices of attribution in a scholarly community. Of course, they have to be invited into that community first and to be willing to join.

The reasons for writing and talking with students about plagiarism, I have tried to suggest, are serious. The values that govern acts of plagiarism are continuous with values and feelings students display in their living, such as, the value of friendship or of getting ahead, loyalty to the interests of a group, fear of shame at performing inadequately, distrust of faculty, obligations to work and play. Students can be helped to understand themselves and their various communities better by writing in an exploratory and collaborative environment.

Faculty, for their part, may gain some appreciation of the various possibilities involved when they see that particular car go through that red light. Kroll's CCCC paper was based on a survey of what composition texts say about plagiarism, and he concluded that students are given mistaken and misleading advice. Faculty need to be educated or reeducated because their responsibility is great. In dealing with cases of plagiarism, an instructor acts as plaintiff, prosecuting attorney, judge, jury, jailer, appeals court, and sometimes defense attorney as well. Of course, some of us manage to dispense true justice, tempered with charity, but students will testify that we do not do so all of the time. In fact, they will testify that faculty dodge responsibility, seldom explain the rules they judge by, rarely discuss the topic at all, accuse falsely, and fail to see much that goes on under their very noses.

If they are allowed, students can educate faculty. Both groups can also move into the classroom a lot of the collaboration that takes place in dorm rooms or over the telephone. Further, faculty can demonstrate their own ways of giving "credit where credit is due" (an aphorism, a bit of lore, that has considerable power), of conscientious collaboration with others, of discussing the problems of attribution quite openly, rather than waiting to pounce on some unsuspecting mark. We have an opportunity to encourage the acknowledging of help, in a generous and not exclusively economic spirit. Still, when I encourage students to write a note acknowledging help they have received from other students, I usually flinch and warn them that they had better inquire before they do so in their other classes. Booth and Gregory say that while careers have been ruined for plagiarizing, none has been

ruined for acknowledging sources (28). Yet I imagine a forthright student's honesty met with cruelty, with a scrawled remark like, "Why didn't you do it yourself?" and a suitable deduction from the grade. Experience has taught me, like my students, to be cautious in trusting my colleagues to deal fairly with apprentices. If, on the other hand, we show students we can be fair and trustworthy within our own classrooms, and if we allow them to investigate and write about plagiarism for themselves, then we may improve their conduct and ours, their thinking and ours. The more fully we help them participate in a scholarly community as they learn, the better the chance that they will join it.

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A RETURN TO THE "TREASURE-HOUSE OF INVENTION": MEMORY IN THE COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

Rick Cypert
Nebraska Wesleyan University

Despite the fact that most "rhetoric" textbooks ignore it, that many English teachers don't teach how to use it, and that only a few theorists are talking about it,¹ a consideration of the ways in which memory contributes to a writer's developing capacity for self-expression proves both pedagogically helpful and enlight-