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WEBWORTHY

Pamela M. Rose

University of Buffalo, pmrose@acsu.buffalo.edu

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Plagiarism, Googling, and the Mouse: from page 36

velopment would preclude cheating and plagiarizing as inconsistent with one's identity. ... Third, we must encourage our students to perceive the dishonesty of their classmates as something that causes harm to the many students who play by the rules."²⁰

Certainly the positivist approach suggested by **Professor Hinman** is vital in the long run. But in the meantime, it is just as important to use the available legal and academic sanctions against student plagiarists when they get caught. Honor codes and school policies against plagiarism must be emphasized and enforced by both secondary and post-secondary institutions, and the discipline meted out should be publicly disclosed so that an example can be made of those who have violated the codes or policies.²¹ Where the academic institution has taken such disciplinary action, the accused plagiarist all too often turns to the courts of law in an attempt to avoid the loss of degree or, in the case of teachers, loss of job. Invariably, judges reject the plaintiff's effort to have the court second-guess the academic institution's procedures.²²

The publicity given to the numerous instances of famous or near-famous "adults" that have been found guilty of plagiarism is highly salutary, both because it shows that people do get caught and also because it shows what a devastating effect committing plagiarism can have on one's life and career. Here's a quick list:

- In late September of this year, **Lawrence**

Tribe, a distinguished **Harvard** law professor, admitted that he had copied without proper attribution portions of a 1974 book by **Henry Abraham** entitled *Justices and Presidents*.

- Notorious journalism scandals have recently come to the surface, such as the ones involving **Jayson Blair** (*New York Times*), **Jack Kelley** (*USA Today*), and **Richard Judd** (*Hartford Courant*).
- Historians **Stephen Ambrose** and **Doris Kearns Goodwin** used entire passages from other publications in their books without indicating from whence the material came.
- **Huang Zongying**, an associate professor of English at **Peking University**, was fired after a Chinese graduate student brought the misconduct to light.
- **Roger Sheperd**, an Arts Professor at **New School U.**, resigned after admitting plagiarism. Portions of **Meredith L. Clausen's** book, *Pietro Belluschi: Modern American Architect*, appeared in **Sheperd's** book, *Structures of Our Time: Thirty-one Buildings That Changed Modern Life* without attribution.
- In September 2004, **Mostafa Imam**, a Saudi Arabia-based researcher, was accused of plagiarizing photographs of various organisms previously published in micropaleontology articles by other authors. Shortly thereafter, **Imam** died of a fatal heart attack.
- Tony-nominated playwright **Bryon Lavery** has been accused of plagiarizing passages from a 1997 *New Yorker* article by **Malcolm Gladwell** about **Dr. Dorothy**

Otnow Lewis and her book *Guilty by Reason of Insanity*. **Lewis** and **Gladwell** say that a number of passages in **Lavery's** play "Frozen" are taken directly from their own work.

- In March of this year, the president of **Central Connecticut State University**, **Richard Judd**, was accused of plagiarizing materials for an op-ed piece that appeared in the *Hartford Current* the previous month. A few days later, he announced that he would retire at the end of the school year.

Importantly, there are various legal weapons available to academic institutions to fight plagiarism committed by the student or academician as well as the aiding and abetting of such misconduct by online term paper mills. With respect to the latter, for example, 14 states have enacted laws that prohibit and, in most cases, criminalize the sale of term papers, thesis, dissertation, or other written material where the writer knows or should reasonably have known that such written material is to be submitted by another person for academic credit at any institution of higher learning in the state.²³ Unfortunately, neither academic institutions nor prosecutors have proven interested in pressing such cases.

With respect to the plagiarists themselves, academic institutions seldom press for legal sanctions against the perpetrators other than internal disciplinary measures. Nevertheless, sanctions under various legal theories are in fact available.²⁴

In the end, teachers are the first line of defense in both detecting and deterring pla-

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Column Editor: **Pamela M. Rose, M.L.S.** (Web Services & Library Promotion Coordinator, Health Sciences Library, University at Buffalo; Phone: 716-829-3900 x129; Fax: 716-829-2211) <pmrose@buffalo.edu> wings.buffalo.edu/~pmrose

Webworthy has reviewed 330 Websites to date! Are you reading this intro? If so, we'd like to know if you find this column useful! Email the editor at <pmrose@buffalo.edu> with your comments and any suggestions for improvement!

*Websites are chosen for uniqueness, depth of information, functionality and ease of access. Sites are organized by broad subject area and are visited just prior to publication. Please let the editor know of any broken links. Comments and suggestions welcome to **Pamela M. Rose**, Health Sciences Library, University at Buffalo, 3435 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14214-3002; 716-829-3900 x129; <pmrose@buffalo.edu>. Unless otherwise noted, Internet sites were also reviewed in *Science's NetWatch* column. — PR*

Computers

Are you helping in the search for ET? If you're not already using your desktop

computer's downtime to search for signs of alien life, **IBM** is recruiting volunteers to help crunch research problems which will aid society. The **World Community Grid** will begin with the **Human Proteome Folding Project**, and will move on to five or six projects a year. — <http://www.worldcommunitygrid.org>

Exhibits

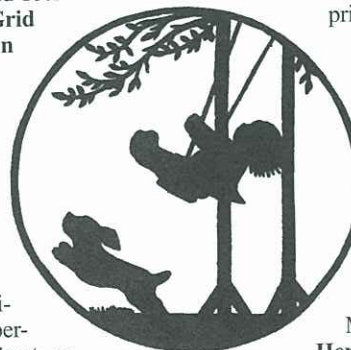
Learning about 87 eminent physicists who excelled in the field from 1900-1976 might seem like just another biographical excursion. Except these 87 persons are not named **Albert**, **Robert**, or **Hans**. Contributions of 20th Century Women to Physics profiles an international roster of scientists, including **Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin** who won the 1964 Nobel Prize in chemistry, and **S. Jocelyn Bell Burnell** who identified the first pulsars. Although the intro

page still states 83, the subdiscipline categories include a total of 87 names. There were other women contributors to the field prior to and after 1976; however this group had the most documentation available and have been thoroughly researched. Also included are a photo gallery, historical documents from 1891-2000, and a section titled "In her Own Words" with notable quotes from the subjects.


My favorite, made by **Hertha Marks Ayrton** (1912)

whose work on the electric arc was precursor to the field of plasma physics: "An error that ascribes to a man what was actually the work of a woman has more lives than a cat." — <http://cwp.library.ucla.edu/>

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giarism, and there is much good advice available on the Web about how to do just that. For example, an excellent set of guidelines on "Anti-Plagiarism Strategies for Research Papers," prepared by **Mr. Robert Harris** in 2002 is available at <http://www.virtualsalt.com/antiplag.htm>. The guidelines provide helpful and workable details on how to apply the general goal of "mak[ing] the assignment and requirements unique enough that an off-the-shelf paper or a paper written for another class or a friend's paper will not fulfill the requirements" so that only a newly written paper will suffice.²⁵


I do not know the extent to which your own academic institutions formally attempt to inculcate in their students, teachers, and researchers a deeper respect for book research versus online research as well as unfailing sense of academic honesty and integrity, nor do I know the extent to which your institutions consciously and intentionally include library professionals in either the broader challenge of teaching intellectual rigor or the process of detecting and deterring plagiarism. But if the institutions do not redouble their efforts to inspire academic honesty and if they do not include library professionals in these efforts, those institutions are leaving themselves on a collision course with the present trends towards lazy and dishonest scholarship. Addressing these issues is not a "luxury" that can be postponed until a better time, notes **Professor Lawrence Hinman**. "It is a short step from dishonesty in schools and colleges to dishonesty in business."²⁶ 

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Geology

Cold. Snow. Ice. Glaciers. Icebergs. Welcome to the cryosphere! If you live in Buffalo or Minnesota and want to know more about the world of cold, visit the **National Snow and Ice Data Center** out of Boulder, CO. View the curious formations sculpted by snow and ice, such as sastrugi (formed by wind) or ogvies (alternating bands of light and dark ice). Experts can dig into more than 400 data sets of snow depths or satellite images then follow the gradual crumbling of the **Larsen Ice Shelf** in Antarctica. — <http://nsidc.org/>

Paleontology

When your 10 year old begins to hunger for more information about T. Rex, turn to the **Paleobiology Database**, maintained by paleontologist **John Alroy** of the **U. of California Santa Barbara**. With more than 43,000 fossil collections' detailed data, the site offers a wealth of collective information which allows users to map collection sites, look at detailed profiles including lists of other remains, and ask "big-picture" questions like tallying the diversity of ferns since the demise of the dinosaurs. — <http://paleodb.org> 

Endnotes

1. **Bill** is a partner in the Chicago-based law firm, **Schiff Hardin LLP**, and has been a frequent speaker over the years at the **Charleston Conference**. He is an Adjunct Professor at **Chicago-Kent College of Law** and the author of numerous books and articles on legal topics.
2. See **Carol Power**, "US students let **Google** do their homework," *The Irish Times*, July 23, 2004, at 53.
3. *Id.*
4. A case in point is reported in the *Boston Globe* for March 3, 2000, at B1 (sixty-three students in introductory computer science class at **Dartmouth** were charged with plagiarism on homework assignment).
5. "These days, stressed-out perfectionists and lazy no-goods alike can **Google** their way to an astounding array of plagiarism Web sites." **Suzy Hansen**, "Dear Plagiarists: You Get What You Pay For," *New York Times*, August 22, 2004, Sec. 7, Col. 1, at 11 (reviewing samples of essays from on-line paper mills).
6. The report featured the results of an ABC News poll about the attitudes of kids toward cheating in school. http://abcnews.go.com/sections/primetime/US/cheating_poll_040429.html
7. **University of Georgia** associate professor **Barry Hollander**, quoted in *V. Whitehouse & J. Nicholls*, "Inside these hallowed halls: how journalism schools are confronting student plagiarism," *The Quill*, August 1, 2004, No. 6, Vol. 92; Pg. 14.
8. *Id.*
9. Related in Theresa Winslow, "The Cheat Is On," *The Maryland Gazette*, June 5, 2004, at C1.
10. **Robert Hauptman**, "Dishonesty in the Academy," *Academe*, <http://www.aaup.org/publications/Academe/2002/02nd/02ndhau.htm>.
11. The same search for "free term papers" on **Google** came up with 5,090,000 hits. By contrast, a search for "plagiarism detection" came up with only 36,000 hits on **Google** and a mere 7,107 hits on **AOL**.
12. **Dane S. Claussen**, director of the journalism and mass communication graduate program at **Point Park University** in Pittsburgh, quoted in *V. Whitehouse & J. Nicholls*, "Inside these hallowed halls: how journalism schools are confronting student plagiarism," *The Quill*, August 1, 2004, No. 6, Vol. 92; Pg. 14.
13. One article makes the disturbing suggestion that some term paper mills "have ties to plagiarism detection software companies." For example, detection software companies, **PlagiServe** (<http://www.plagiserve.com>) and **EduTie** (<http://www.edutie.com>) have connections to term paper sites like **MightyStudents.com** (<http://www.mightystudents.com>), **Essaymill.com** (<http://www.essaymill.com>), **EssaysOnFile.com** (<http://www.essaysonfile.com>) and **TopEssays.com** (<http://www.topessays.com>).
14. See *The Irish Times*, July 23, 2004, at 53.
15. *Id.*
16. **Jordan Muhlestein**, "New technology harbors new era of cheating," *The Daily Universe*, Brigham Young University, May 11, 2004.
17. Quoted in *Chicago Sun-Times*, July 25, 2004 at 16.
18. See <http://www.plagiarized.com/index.shtml>.
19. See *The Irish Times*, July 23, 2004, at 53.
20. **Lawrence M. Hinman**, "How to Fight College Cheating," Editorial, *Washington Post*, September 3, 2004, at A19.
21. It would be surprising if any educational institution did not have such a code or policy. A quick Web search turned up numerous examples on line. It also turned up the curious anomaly of one state university library Website that included both the school's honor code as well as an extensive list of hyperlinks to fee-based and "free" term paper mills. One wonders about the wisdom of providing such information. As one legal commentator observed when encountering a similar situation on another university library's Website, "[w]hile such information is not difficult to find, I consider it unethical to provide links to businesses that are explicitly violating the law." **Ronald B. Standler**, "Plagiarism in Colleges in USA" (2000), available at <http://www.rbs2.com/plag.htm>.
22. See *Chandamuri v. Georgetown Univ.*, 274 F. Supp. 2d 71 (D.D.C. 2003), where an American student of Indian descent sued Georgetown, alleging unlawful discrimination on the basis of national origin and retaliation after the university sanctioned him for plagiarism. The court dismissed the complaint, concluding that plaintiff offered no evidence that the disciplinary hearing was not conducted in accordance with the procedures published in the university's honor code. Moreover, the honor code clearly set forth the definition of plagiarism, and the hearing board's decision not to exercise its discretionary power to adjust the sanction was not a violation of the sanctioning guidelines.
23. See California Education Code §§ 66400 – 66405. Accord, Colorado § 23-4-101-106; Connecticut § 53-392a-e; Florida § 877.17; Illinois ch. 110, § 5/0.01 – 5/1; Maine 17-A § 705; Massachusetts ch. 271, § 50; Nevada 207.320; New Jersey 18A:2-3; New York Education Law § 213-b; North Carolina § 14-118.2; Pennsylvania title 18, § 7324; Virginia § 18.2-505; Washington 28B.10.580 – 584.
24. See **Stuart P. Green**, "Plagiarism, norms, and the limits of theft law: Some observations on the use of criminal sanctions in enforcing intellectual property rights," 54 *Hastings L.J.* 167 (2002); **Ronald B. Standler**, "Plagiarism in Colleges in USA" (2000), available at <http://www.rbs2.com/plag.htm>.
25. One section of **Mr. Harris'** guidelines gives practical details on how to detect plagiarism. Rule number one is to "[l]ook for the clues." As you read the papers, he advises, look for internal evidence that may indicate plagiarism, such as mixed citation styles, lack of references or quotations, unusual formatting, off topic discussion, signs of datedness, anachronisms, anomalies of diction, anomalies of style, and smoking gun blunders.
26. "How to Fight College Cheating," Editorial, *Washington Post*, September 3, 2004, at A19.