

What Is Plagiarism?

SO JUST WHAT IS PLAGIARISM, ANYWAY? The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines plagiarism as "the wrongful appropriation or purloining, and publication as one's own, of the ideas, or the expression of the ideas . . . of another." It is derived from the Latin *plagiarius*, meaning "one who abducts the child or slave of another." The word was first used in its current sense by the Roman poet Martial, in the first century AD, as a sarcastic put-down of another writer who had cribbed some of Martial's verse.

Outright copying of someone else's writing is only the most clear-cut form of plagiarism. The Modern Language Association provides a succinct but sweeping catalog of varieties of plagiarism in its *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*: "A writer who fails to give appropriate acknowledgment when repeating another's wording or particularly apt term, paraphrasing another's argument, or presenting another's line of thinking is guilty of plagiarism."

The term "plagiarism" applies to "the imitation of structure, research, and organization," notes Laurie Stearns, a copyright lawyer in "Copy Wrong: Plagiarism, Process, Property, and the Law," an essay appearing in the *California Law Review* in 1992. "Even facts or quotations can be plagiarized," writes Ms. Stearns, "through the trick of citing to a quotation from a primary source rather than to the secondary source in which the plagiarist found it in order to conceal reliance on the secondary source." In the sciences, "accusations of plagiarism may center on the content of discoveries or the interpretation of data rather than on specific phraseology."

Defining just where influence ends and plagiarism begins can be a difficult question. Ralph Waldo Emerson, who wanted the American scholar to live in a state of radical originality, ended up conceding that "all my best ideas were stolen by the ancients."

Even when an offender is caught red-handed, plagiarism itself is not a matter for the courts. Strictly speaking, plagiarism, as such, is not illegal—although copyright infringement is. Some forms of plagiarism also count as copyright infringement. Yet the terms are far from identical.

The *OED* defines plagiarism as the expropriation of either "the ideas, or the expression of the ideas . . . of another." As Ms. Stearns notes in her law-review article, copyright statutes make a clear distinction "between 'expression,' which the law protects against

Def.

GENEALOGY

ACK. SOURCES

THE LAW of COPYRIGHT

Influence v. PLAGIR.

↓ Key

HONESTY VIGILANCE

International Agenda-Setting

reason of a structural position from which one could compel attention to a particular definition of a problem.

new examples show the role of access points in agenda-setting. Actors are not equal upon the existence of access points to defining their issue systematically. Actors within political systems—create these points. This process operates in national politics as well. The rise of the ozone layer issue, for example, is tied to activities of the UNEP staff, to an activist scientific community, and to U.S. and other members of the "Toronto Group" of states which pressed this issue (Benedick, 1991). The UNEP, the forum for global environmental policy, was created in 1972 as an almost continuous series of international meetings on the topic; a 1984-1986 consensus (emerging in 1984-1986; Benedick, 1991:48) established a process to launch vigorous warnings from an authoritative, shared knowledge; and the UNEP then launched a series of bilateral talks in the early 1980s, directly manipulating its agenda. Each of these efforts involved utilizing access points from which global action, problem definition, and preferred solution (limit chlorofluorocarbons) was linked to create a new agenda item.

It indicates important, though not exhaustive, dimensions of international relations with generic access points that arise from them. Knowledge refers to a consensual understanding which "serve as a guide to public policy" (Hass, 1987). Communication channels, transnational communication patterns, institutional-making, arenas where an issue may be legitimately raised and discussed, and diplomatic arenas, shared understandings of the legitimate role of formal interstate behavior.

It must evoke and utilize existing access points to press favored agenda items. The practices of international relations at any one time situate actors in regard to these points. Actors may possess or be favorably located to these points, enabling or strengthening their agenda-setting abilities. Or they may lack such points; they may lack or oppose dominant knowledges, appropriate diplomatic arenas, and so forth. The former set of access points is structurally in agenda politics. The latter set face deep constraints. Lack of suitable access points suggests not only an inability to achieve influence, but an accountability to control the issue definition and alternative specification process.

TABLE 1. Agenda access points

International process	Generic access point
agenda channels	(1) sites of global knowledge production (2) supportive (completable) consensual knowledge
fact	(1) formal or informal position in critical IO or region (2) organizationally dependent capabilities (Kashwan and Nye, 1989:10)
arena	(1) legitimated "action-forcing" events (summits, conferences, etc.) (2) non-dependent access (coalitional arenas, differentiated status of great powers, "special relationships," etc.) (3) appropriate (completable) general norms (law, reciprocity, etc.)

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International crisis communication patterns between states. The analysis focuses on American and European linkages in transnational networks. What methods in crisis politics do the Europeans use in order to influence American policy? International level of decision-making refers to bilateral arenas where an issue may be raised. (This diplomacy requires that actors possess certain shared understandings on how to conduct policy.)

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agenda
channels
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