

ACKNOWLEDGING THE WORK OF OTHERS

From The Code of Academic Integrity, Pages 17 – 24

Education at its best, whether conducted in seminar, laboratory, or lecture hall, is a dialogue between teacher and pupil in which questions and answers can be sought and evaluated. If this dialogue is to flourish, students who enter the University must assume certain responsibilities.

Among them is the responsibility to make clear what knowledge is theirs and what is someone else's. Teachers must know whose words they are reading or listening to, for no useful dialogue can occur between a teacher and an echo or ghost.

Students who submit written work in the University must, therefore, be the authors of their own papers. Students who use facts or ideas originating with others must plainly distinguish what is theirs from what is not. To misrepresent one's work knowingly is to commit an act of theft. To misrepresent one's work ignorantly is to show oneself unprepared to assume the responsibility presupposed by work on the college level. It should be obvious that none of this prohibits making use of the discoveries or ideas of others. What is prohibited is simply improper, unacknowledged use (commonly known as "plagiarism").

The computer program is a form of written work, and, although composed in a formal rather than a natural language, it possesses many of the attributes of the essay. The guidelines for acknowledging the help of others in written work should be used for acknowledging help in writing computer programs as well.

When writing a program assignment, a student may discuss general strategies to be employed and perhaps receive some help in learning how to test the program to find errors, but unless closer cooperation is expressly permitted on the assignment, the actual writing of the program and its detailed testing must be the work of the individual student. Any other assistance should be expressly acknowledged.

In the area of architecture and the arts, incorporating existing graphic images into one's work without acknowledging the source is also a form of plagiarism.

To acknowledge the work of others, observe the following conventions:

1) If you adopt someone else's language, provide quotation marks and a reference to the source, either in the text or in a footnote, as prescribed by such publications as *Format, The MLA Style Sheet*, or the manual of style recommended by the course instructor.

Footnote form varies from discipline to discipline. In some fields, writers group references to a number of sources under a single footnote number, which appears at the end of a sentence or even of a paragraph. In other fields, writers use a separate footnote for each reference, even if this means creating two or three footnotes for a single sentence. It seems pointless, indeed counterproductive, to make the mechanics of footnoting unnecessarily complicated. If in a short, informal paper you cite a passage from a work all the members of your class are reading in the same edition, it may be entirely sufficient simply to cite page numbers (and if necessary the title of the text) parenthetically within your own sentences: "Hobbes suggests that life outside civil society is likely to be 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short' (Leviathan, p.53)." To ascertain what form to follow in these matters, ask your instructor.

2) If you adopt someone else's ideas but you cannot place them between quotation marks because they are not reproduced verbatim, then not only provide a footnoted reference to the source but also insert in the text a phrase like one of the following: "I agree with Blank," "as Blank has argued," "according to some critics"; or embody in the footnote a statement of indebtedness, like one of these: "This explanation is a close paraphrase of Blank (pp. ____)," "I have used the examples discussed by Blank," "The main steps in my discussion were suggested by Blank's treatment of the problem," "Although the examples are my own, my categories are derived from Blank."

A simple footnote does no more than identify the source from which the writer has derived material. A footnote alone does not indicate whether the language, the arrangement of fact, the sequence of argument,

or the choice of examples is taken from the source. To indicate indebtedness to a source for such features as these, the writer must use quotation marks or provide an explanation in his or her text or in the footnote.

3) If some section of the paper is the product of a discussion, or if the line of argument adopted is such a product, and if acknowledgment within the text or footnote seems inappropriate, then furnish in a prefatory note or a footnote an appropriate acknowledgment of the exact nature of the assistance you have received. Scholarship is, after all, cumulative, and prefatory acknowledgments of assistance are common. For example: "I... wish to express my appreciation to Dr. Harlow Shapley of the Harvard Observatory, who read the original manuscript and made valuable suggestions and criticisms, with particular reference to the sections dealing with astronomy" (Lincoln Barnett, *The Universe and Dr. Einstein* [New York: the New American Library, 1958]).

A similar form of acknowledgment is appropriate when students confer about papers they are writing. It is often fruitful for students to assist each other with drafts of papers, and many instructors encourage such collaboration in class and out. All students need to do to avoid misunderstandings is to acknowledge such help explicitly, in a footnote.

The following examples and discussion of improper use of a source excerpted from a book by Harold C. Martin (*The Logic and Rhetoric of Exposition*, New York, Rinehart and Co., 1958, pp. 179-82) and reprinted with his permission, should answer most questions concerning the proper use of sources. For further advice, students should consult their instructors.

THE SOURCE

The importance of the *Second Treatise of Government* printed in this volume is such that without it we should miss some of the familiar features of our own government. It is safe to assert that the much criticized branch known as the Supreme Court obtained its being as a result of Locke's insistence upon the separation of powers; and that the combination of many powers in the hands of the executive under the New Deal has still to encounter opposition because it is contrary to the principles enunciated therein, the effect of which is not spent, though the relationship may not be consciously traced. Again we see the crystallizing force of Locke's writing. It renders explicit and adapts to the British politics of his day the trend and aim of writers from Languet and Bodin through Hooker and Grotius, to say nothing of the distant ancients, Aristotle and the Stoic school of natural law. It sums up magistrally the arguments used through the ages to attack authority vested in a single individual, but it does so from the particular point of view engendered by the Revolution of 1688 and is in harmony with the British scene and mental climate of the growing bourgeoisie of that age. Montesquieu and Rousseau, the framers of our own Declaration of Independence, and the statesmen (or should we say merchants and speculators?) who drew up the Constitution have re-echoed its claims for human liberty, for the separation of powers, for the sanctity of private property. In the hands of these it has been the quarry of liberal doctrines; and that it has served the Socialist theory of property based on labor is final proof of its breadth of view.

Charles L. Sherman, "Introduction" to John Locke, *Treatise of Civil Government and A Letter Concerning Toleration*.

EXAMPLE 1: WORD-FOR-WORD PLAGIARIZING

It is not hard to see the importance of the *Second Treatise of Government* to our own democracy. Without it we should miss some of the most familiar features of our own government. It is safe to assert that the much criticized branch known as the Supreme Court obtained its being as a result of Locke's insistence upon the separation of powers; and that the combination of many powers in the hands of the executive under the New

Deal has still to encounter opposition because it is contrary to the principles enunciated therein, the effect of which is not spent, though the relationship may not be consciously traced. The framers of our own Declaration of Independence and the statesmen who drew up the Constitution have re-echoed its claims for human liberty, for the separation of powers, for the sanctity of private property. All these are marks of the influence of Locke's *Second Treatise* on our own way of life.

In this example, after composing half of a first sentence, the writer copies exactly what is in the original text, leaving out the center section of the paragraph and omitting the names of Montesquieu and Rousseau where he [or she] takes up the text again. The last sentence is also the writer's own.

If the writer had enclosed all the copied text in quotation marks and had identified the source in a footnote, he [or she] would not have been liable to the charge of plagiarism; a reader might justifiably have felt that the writer's personal contribution to the discussion was not very significant, however.

EXAMPLE 2: THE MOSAIC

The crystallizing force of Locke's writing may be seen in the effect his *Second Treatise of Government* had in shaping some of the familiar features of our own government. That much criticized branch known as the Supreme Court and the combination of many powers in the hands of the executive under the New Deal are modern examples. But even the foundations of our state - the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution - have re-echoed its claims for human liberty, for the separation of powers, for the sanctity of private property. True, the influence of others is also marked in our Constitution - from the trend and aim of writers like Languet and Bodin, Hooker and Grotius, to say nothing of Aristotle and the Stoic school of natural law; but the fundamental influence is Locke's *Treatise*, the very quarry of liberal doctrines.

Note how the following phrases have been lifted out of the original text and moved into new patterns:

crystallizing force of Locke's writing

some of the familiar features of our own government

much criticized branch known as the Supreme Court

combination of many powers in the hands of the executive under the New Deal

have re-echoed its claims for human liberty ... property

from the trend and aim ... Grotius

to say nothing of Aristotle and ... natural law

quarry of liberal doctrines

As in the first example, there is really no way of legitimizing such a procedure. To put every stolen phrase within quotation marks would produce an almost unreadable, and quite worthless, text.

EXAMPLE 3: THE PARAPHRASE

PARAPHRASE: One can safely say that the oft-censured

ORIGINAL: It is safe to assert that the much criticized

Supreme Court really owes its existence to the Lockeian

...Court obtained its being as a result of Locke's

demand that powers in government be kept separate;

insistence upon the separation of powers;

equally one can say that the allocation of varied and and

that the combination of many

widespread authority to the President during the era of powers

in the hands of the executive under

the New Deal has still to encounter opposition because the

New Deal has still to encounter opposition because

it is contrary to the principles enunciated therein.

it is contrary to the principles enunciated therein...

Once more it is possible to note the way in which Again

we see

Locke's writing clarified existing opinion. the

crystallizing force of Locke's writing.

The foregoing interlinear presentation shows clearly how the writer has simply traveled along with the original text, substituting approximately equivalent terms except where his [or her] understanding fails him [or her], as it does with "crystallizing," or where the ambiguity of the original is too great a tax on his [or her] ingenuity for him [or her] to proceed, as it is with "to encounter opposition...consciously traced" in the original.

Such a procedure as the one shown in this example has its uses; it is valuable for the student's own understanding of the passage, for one thing; and it may be valuable for the reader as well. How, then, may it properly be used? The procedure is simple. The writer might begin the second sentence with: "As Sherman notes in the introduction to his edition of the *Treatise*, one can safely say..." and conclude the paraphrased passage with a footnote giving the additional identification necessary. Or he [or she] might indicate directly the exact nature of what he [or she] is doing, in this fashion: "To paraphrase Sherman's comment..." and conclude that also with a footnote indicator.

In point of fact, the source here used does not particularly lend itself to honest paraphrase, with the exception of that one sentence which the paraphraser above copied without change except for abridgment. The purpose of paraphrase should be to simplify or to throw a new and significant light on a text; it requires much skill if it is to be honestly used and should rarely be resorted to by the student except for the purpose, as was suggested above, of his [or her] personal enlightenment.

EXAMPLE 4: THE "APT" TERM

The *Second Treatise of Government* is a veritable quarry of liberal doctrines. In it the crystallizing force of Locke's writing is markedly apparent. The cause of human liberty, the principle of separation of powers, and the inviolability of private property - all three, major dogmas of American constitutionalism - owe their presence in our Constitution in large part to the remarkable *Treatise* which first appeared around 1685 and was destined to spark, within three years, a revolution in the land of its author's birth and, ninety years later, another revolution against the land.

Here the writer has not been able to resist the appropriation of two striking terms - "quarry of liberal doctrines" and "crystallizing force"; a perfectly proper use of the terms would have required only the addition of a phrase: "*The Second Treatise of Government* is, to use Sherman's suggestive expression, a

'quarry of liberal doctrines.' In it the 'crystallizing force' - the term again is Sherman's - of Locke's writing is markedly apparent..."

Other phrases in the text above - "the cause of human liberty," "the principle of separation of powers," "the inviolability of private property" - are clearly drawn directly from the original source but are so much matters in the public domain, so to speak, that no one could reasonably object to their reuse in this fashion.