

USING SOURCES and AVOIDING PLAGIARISM compiled by Lucia Shan McSpadden

“There are few intellectual offenses more serious than plagiarism in academic and professional contexts.”¹

Using someone else’s ideas or phrasing and representing those ideas or phrasing as our own, either on purpose or through carelessness, is a serious offense known as plagiarism....”Someone else” can mean a professional source, such as a published writer or critic in a book, magazine, encyclopedia, or journal; an electronic resource such as material we discover on the World Wide Web; another student at our school or anywhere else; a paper-writing “service” (online or otherwise)....²

(The following is taken from the PSR web pages “Writing at PSR” unless otherwise noted.)

Plagiarism is a serious matter in graduate school. “While some cultures may not insist so heavily on documenting sources of words, ideas, (and) images, American cultures does.”³ Unintentional plagiarism most often occurs when a student loses his or her own voice. The scenario goes something like this: the student finds a source with which he or she agrees and, making a few changes in wording, basically follows the structure of the source material. Even if citations are used, this is a recipe for plagiarism.

Recently a growing number of cases of “cyber-plagiarism” have surfaced at universities nationwide. Several reasons for this growth may be related to not just the growing accessibility and wealth of information on the internet, but also the tacit and erroneous assumption that if it is on the internet, then it is common knowledge. While we do support the general tenet that information that is common knowledge needs no citation or reference, we also maintain that simply because something is found on the internet does not necessarily make it common knowledge, and proper citation must be observed in such cases. The following are some commonsense suggestions to help you avoid unintentional plagiarism.

- Use your own voice. Put what you have to say in your own words. Don't hide behind the "experts."
- Summarize or paraphrase material using sentence structure that differs significantly from the source. (Changing a few words, but keeping the same basic sentence structure of the original is still plagiarism.)
- Provide a citation for all quoted, paraphrased or summarized material. When in doubt, provide a citation.

Following the original sources below are ways that the material has been used in an academic paper. Indicate whether or not the examples would be considered plagiarism or would be acceptable referencing.

¹ “Avoiding Plagiarism,” Purdue Online Writing Lab, <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/> (accessed April 15, 2010).

² “A Statement on Plagiarism,” Capital Community College, <http://www.ccc.commnet.edu/mla/plagiarism.shtml> (accessed April 15, 2010)

EXERCISE 1

Exercise 1 is taken and adapted directly from The Writing Center at Claremont School of Theology website, http://www.cst.edu/academic_resources/writing_center.php (accessed April 15, 2010).

Original Source #1:

Cheap grace means the justification of sin without the justification of the sinner. Grace alone does everything, they say, and so everything can remain as it was before.⁴

IA Yes_____ No_____

Cheap grace means the justification of sin but not the justification of the person who sinned. Some people say that grace alone does everything, so everything can remain the same.⁵

IB Yes_____ No_____

Cheap grace is taking care of sin without dealing with the one who sins. God's unmerited favor alone takes care of everything, some say; so the situation can stay as it was before.⁶

IC Yes_____ No_____

According to Bonhoeffer, cheap grace refers to the theological position that a sinner can be justified before God without changing his or her behavior. According to this theological position, one does not need to change to receive justification for it is provided by grace alone.⁷

⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1963), 42.

⁵ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1963), 42.

⁶ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1963), 42.

⁷ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1963), 42.

EXERCISE 2

Original Source #2:

Salvation is the concept that God saves persons from spiritual death or eternal damnation by providing for them an eternal life.... The world's religions agree that humanity needs salvation from its present condition. However, they hold irreconcilable positions on *what it means* ... to become saved, *the actual way* to get saved, and *the resources needed* to attain salvation.

The three largest monotheistic religions of the world – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – associate salvation with freedom from the bondage of sin and the reestablishment of personal communication with the creator. There are some basic differences among those monotheistic religions on how sin is to be overcome by humans, on the identity of Jesus Christ and the role he plays in salvation, and what one's attitude toward him should be.⁸

2A Yes _____ No _____

Salvation, the freedom from the bondage of sin, brings people into personal communication with the creator and provides for them an eternal life. For the Christian Jesus Christ plays the central role in salvation.

2B Yes _____ No _____

The three monotheistic religions of the world – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – all have an understanding of salvation as God saving humans from their present condition, a condition which leads to spiritual death or eternal damnation. Not surprisingly, these different faiths hold irreconcilable positions on what it means to become saved, the actual way to get saved, and the resources needed to attain salvation. (“Salvation,” Wikipedia)

2C Yes _____ No _____

Although present in all the three monotheistic religions, salvation as a theological concept is not understood in the same way. There are sharp disagreements about why we need salvation and what salvation really means in the beliefs and the daily lives of people. For example, why do humans need to be saved? Are we all sinners and, if so, how can that be if we are all created by a loving God? Would salvation mean that we are in a “more personal communication with the creator?”⁹ What role does Jesus play in salvation? Surely this would be different for Christians than for Muslims or Jews.

2D Yes _____ No _____

As Christians we look to God to save us from “spiritual death or eternal damnation” by providing for us an eternal life. This is what is meant by salvation. Jews and Muslims also look for

⁸ “Salvation,” Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvation> (accessed April 15, 2010)

⁹ “Salvation,” Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvation> (accessed April 15, 2010)

salvation, however, they have different understandings regarding the identity of Jesus Christ and the role he plays in salvation, and, in fact, what our attitude toward him should be.¹⁰

¹⁰ “Salvation,” Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvation> (accessed April 15, 2010)

EXERCISE 3

Exercise 3 is taken and adapted directly from:

Ida Jones and Judith Scott, “Cyber-Plagiarism: Is Copying and Pasting Cheating?” Paper presented at the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Annual Meeting, [city], 2007.

Original Source #3:

Andrea Yates, serving a life sentence for drowning her five children – ages 6 months to 7 years – mostly stares out the window of her cell these days. But it’s unclear what she sees. During a recent visit from her mother, the 40-year-old asked plaintively, “Who’s babysitting the kids?” “She’s a lost woman,” says Wendell Odom, part of her legal team, who recounted the visit. A jury in 2002 decided she was sane enough to know right from wrong, and sent her to prison instead of a hospital. But a Texas appeals court last week ruled that Yates should get a new trial.

Legal experts say a re-trial would be risky for both sides, besides being a huge undertaking that would once more evoke the unspeakable images of the drowning, one after the next. Yates, who had earlier been diagnosed with psychosis and postpartum depression, told police she was acting on instructions from Satan. It was the only way to save them, she explained, because she was a ‘bad mother.’¹¹

3A Yes_____ No_____

Andrea Yates, serving a life sentence for drowning her five children – ages 6 months to 7 years – mostly stares out the window of her cell these days. But it’s unclear what she sees. During a recent visit from her mother, the 40-year-old asked plaintively, “Who’s babysitting the kids?”

3B Yes_____ No_____

Even though Yates has been diagnosed with severe mental illness, legal experts say a re-trial would be risky for both sides, besides being a huge undertaking that would once more evoke the unspeakable images of the drowning, one after the next.¹²

3C Yes_____ No_____

Andrea Yates was found guilty in 2002 by a jury of her peers. The jury decided that she was sane enough to know “right from wrong” and sent her to prison instead of a mental hospital.¹³

¹¹ Dirk Johnson and Carol Rust, “Who’s Babysitting the Kids? A strange turn in the Andrea Yates saga.” *Newsweek*, January 17, 2005, 37.

¹² Dirk Johnson and Carol Rust, “Who’s Babysitting the Kids? A strange turn in the Andrea Yates saga.” *Newsweek*, January 17, 2005, 37.

¹³ Dirk Johnson and Carol Rust, “Who’s Babysitting the Kids? A strange turn in the Andrea Yates saga.” *Newsweek*, January 17, 2005, 37.

3D Yes_____ No_____

Andrea Yates is serving life in prison for drowning her children. Yates was diagnosed as psychotic with postpartum depression. She claims she received instructions from Satan to kill her kids because this was the only way to save them.¹⁴

3E Yes_____ No_____

Andrea Yates sits in a jail cell after being found guilty four years ago. A jury claimed she knew what she was doing when she took the lives of her children. Yates claimed the reason she killed her children was because she was instructed to do so by Satan. In other words, Andrea Yates believed she was saving her children by killing them.¹⁵

¹⁴ Dirk Johnson and Carol Rust, "Who's Babysitting the Kids? A strange turn in the Andrea Yates saga." *Newsweek*, January 17, 2005, 37.

¹⁵ Dirk Johnson and Carol Rust, "Who's Babysitting the Kids? A strange turn in the Andrea Yates saga." *Newsweek*, January 17, 2005, 37.

EXERCISE 4

Exercise 4 is taken and adapted directly from The Writing Center at Claremont School of Theology website accessed April 15, 2010,
http://www.cst.edu/academic_resources/writing_center.php

Original Source #4:

As Christianity spread, and the Church became more secularized, this realization of the costliness of grace gradually faded. The world was Christianized, and grace became its common property. It was to be had at low cost. Yet the Church of Rome did not altogether lose its earlier vision. It is highly significant that the Church was astute enough to find room for the monastic movement, and to prevent it from lapsing into schism.¹⁶

4A Yes_____ No_____

Bonhoeffer argues that monasticism within the Church is evidence that the concept of costly grace was not completely lost after Christianity became the state religion. Nonetheless, the Church was largely secularized during this period; and for most, grace "was to be had at low cost."¹⁷

4B Yes_____ No_____

According to Bonhoeffer, Christianity spread throughout the Empire but at the same it became more worldly; thus "the realization of the costliness of grace gradually faded." As the Empire embraced Christianity, grace became its common property. Nonetheless, the Church of Rome did not completely lose its earlier vision. It is highly significant that the Church was "astute enough to find room for the monastic movement," and to prevent it from "lapsing into schism."¹⁸

4C Yes_____ No_____

Christianity spread throughout the Empire but at the same time it became worldlier; thus the realization of the costliness of grace gradually faded away. As the Empire embraced Christianity, grace became its common property and was available cheaply. Nonetheless, the Church of Rome did not completely lose its earlier vision. That the Church was smart enough to make room for the monastic movement and to keep it from dividing from the Church is highly significant.

¹⁶ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (London: SCM Press, 2001), 6.

¹⁷ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (London: SCM Press, 2001), 6.

¹⁸ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (London: SCM Press, 2001), 6.

EXERCISE 5

Exercise 5 is taken and adapted directly from Purdue Online Writing Lab website accessed April 15, 2010, <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/resource/589/04>

Original Source #5:

[From Martin Luther King's "Letter from the Birmingham Jail"]

You deplore the demonstrations taking place in Birmingham. But your statement, I am sorry to say, fails to express a similar concern for the conditions that brought about the demonstrations. I am sure that none of you would want to rest content with the superficial kind of social analysis that deals merely with effects and does not grapple with underlying causes. It is unfortunate that demonstrations are taking place in Birmingham, but it is even more unfortunate that the city's white power structure left the Negro community with no alternative.¹⁹

5A Yes _____ No _____

Martin Luther King was certain that nobody would want to be contented with a surface type of social analysis that concerns itself only with effects and doesn't deal with root causes.

5B Yes _____ No _____

Martin Luther King wrote that the city of Birmingham's "white power structure" left African-Americans there "no alternative" but to demonstrate.²⁰

5C Yes _____ No _____

In "Letter from the Birmingham Jail," King writes to fellow clergy saying that although they "deplore the demonstrations taking place in Birmingham, your statement fails to express a similar concern for the conditions that brought about the demonstrations."²¹

¹⁹ Martin Luther King, Jr. "Letter from Birmingham Jail," *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Nellie Y. McKay (New York: Norton, 1997), 1856.

²⁰ Martin Luther King, Jr. "Letter from Birmingham Jail," *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Nellie Y. McKay (New York: Norton, 1997), 1856.

²¹ Martin Luther King, Jr. "Letter from Birmingham Jail," *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Nellie Y. McKay (New York: Norton, 1997), 1856.

EXERCISE 6

Exercise 6 is taken and adapted directly from “A Statement on Plagiarism,” the Capital Community College website accessed April 15, 2010, <http://www.ccc.commnet.edu/mla/plagiarism.shtml>

Original Source #6:

Because women's wages often continue to reflect the fiction that men earn the family wage, single mothers rarely earn enough to support themselves and their children adequately. And because work is still organized around the assumption that mothers stay home with children, even though few mothers can afford to do so, child-care facilities in the United States remain woefully inadequate.²²

6A Yes _____ No _____

Since women's wages often continue to reflect the mistaken notion that men are the main wage earners in the family, single mothers rarely make enough to support themselves and their children very well. Also, because work is still based on the assumption that mothers stay home with children, facilities for child care remain woefully inadequate in the United States.

6B Yes _____ No _____

As Elaine Tyler May points out, "women's wages often continue to reflect the fiction that men earn the family wage."²³ Thus many single mothers cannot support themselves and their children adequately. Furthermore, since work is based on the assumption that mothers stay home with children, facilities for day care in this country are still "woefully inadequate."²⁴

6C Yes _____ No _____

By and large, our economy still operates on the mistaken notion that men are the main breadwinners in the family. Thus, women continue to earn lower wages than men. This means, in effect, that many single mothers cannot earn a decent living. Furthermore, adequate day care is not available in the United States because of the mistaken assumption that mothers remain at home with their children.

6D Yes _____ No _____

Women today still earn less than men — so much less that many single mothers and their children live near or below the poverty line. Elaine Tyler May argues that this situation stems in

²² Elaine Tyler May, “Myths and Realities of the American Family,” *A History of Private Life: Riddles of Identity in Modern Times*, eds. Antoine Prost et al., vol. 5 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 588-589.

²³ Elaine Tyler May, “Myths and Realities of the American Family,” *A History of Private Life: Riddles of Identity in Modern Times*, eds. Antoine Prost et al., vol. 5 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 588.

²⁴ Elaine Tyler May, “Myths and Realities of the American Family,” *A History of Private Life: Riddles of Identity in Modern Times*, eds. Antoine Prost et al., vol. 5 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 589.

part from "the fiction that men earn the family wage."²⁵ May further suggests that the American workplace still operates on the assumption that mothers with children stay home to care for them.²⁶

This assumption, in my opinion, does not have the force it once did. More and more businesses offer in-house day-care facilities. . . .

²⁵ Elaine Tyler May, "Myths and Realities of the American Family," *A History of Private Life: Riddles of Identity in Modern Times*, eds. Antoine Prost et al., vol. 5 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 588.

²⁶ Elaine Tyler May, "Myths and Realities of the American Family," *A History of Private Life: Riddles of Identity in Modern Times*, eds. Antoine Prost et al., vol. 5 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 589.

EXERCISE 7

Exercise 7 is taken and adapted directly from Diane Hacker, *A Pocket Style Manual*. (Boston: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 172.

Original Source:

Toward a more gender-inclusive theology of God, the Marian tradition offers its powerful maternal and other female images of the Divine. Through this process of integration, the figure of Mary no longer has to bear the burden of keeping alive female imagery of the Divine, and the figure of God becomes our loving Mother to whom we entrust our needs. Again, for some, it may be difficult to image the male face of God as a loving provider, but the Marian image is not meant to replace but to enhance the personhood of God.²⁷

7A Yes _____ No _____

According to Jeanette Rodriguez, the figure of Mary no longer has to bear the burden of keeping alive female imagery of the Divine, and the figure of God becomes our loving Mother to whom we entrust our needs.

7B Yes _____ No _____

According to Jeanette Rodriguez, "...the figure of Mary no longer has to bear the burden of keeping alive female imagery of the Divine, and the figure of God becomes our loving Mother to whom we entrust our needs."²⁸

7C Yes _____ No _____

Rodriguez asserts that if one wishes to develop a more gender-inclusive theology, the tradition of Mary offers a powerful maternal image of the Divine. Through an integrative process, Mary has no longer to maintain the burden of keeping female imagery of the Divine alive.

7D Yes _____ No _____

For many people the personified image of God is masculine. Mary has traditionally carried a separate female image of the Divine. Rodriguez's approach asserts that if one understands God as neither male nor female, the Marian tradition allows us to see a loving God as both Mother and Father thus "(enhancing) the personhood of God."²⁹

²⁷ Jeanette Rodriguez, *Our Lady of Guadalupe: Faith and Empowerment among Mexican-American Women*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994) 154.

²⁸ Jeanette Rodriguez, *Our Lady of Guadalupe: Faith and Empowerment among Mexican-American Women*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994) 154.

²⁹ Jeanette Rodriguez, *Our Lady of Guadalupe: Faith and Empowerment among Mexican-American Women*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994) 154.