

Plagiarism: Defining & Avoiding

WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

Monmouth University's Student Handbook (Student Code of Conduct, Article 1) describes plagiarism as: "submitting written materials without proper acknowledgement of the source; deliberate attribution to, or citation of, a source from which the referenced material was not in fact obtained; submitting data which have been altered or contrived in such a way as to be deliberately misleading." The University's policy carries consequences that range from failure of the paper in question to failure of the course to expulsion. Learning how to avoid plagiarism, therefore, is necessary to succeed academically. Information specific to Monmouth University's policy on plagiarism can be found at http://www.monmouth.edu/student_handbook/default.asp

EXAMPLES OF PLAGIARISM & HOW TO FIX THEM

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Many issues of plagiarism occur when a writer **PARAPHRASES** what an author has already written but either fails to document the source or retains too many of the author's original words or phrases. An in-text citation (sometimes referred to as a parenthetical reference) shows the reader that the idea or writing belongs to another author. Also, quotation marks are necessary when borrowing phrases, as illustrated in the examples below. In-text citations can be formatted according to many style guides, but the most popular are MLA and APA.

ORIGINAL SOURCE:

In the 1970s, boys were far more likely to anticipate getting a college degree — with girls firmly entrenched in the cheerleader role. Today, girls' expectations are ballooning, while boys' are plummeting. There's even a sense, including among the most privileged families, that today's boys are a sort of payback generation — the one that has to compensate for the advantages given to males in the past.

PLAGIARISM INVOLVING PARAPHRASE:

The males of the 70s expected to graduate from college more often than females. Today, however, girls are assuming that expectation and the current generation of males is a payback generation.

CORRECTED PARAPHRASE:

According to Michelle Conlin, author of "The New Gender Gap," males expected to graduate from college more often than females. However, Conlin argues that today's girls are assuming that expectation and the current generation of males is a "payback generation" (178).

2. **DIRECT QUOTATIONS**, or word-for-word passages from an external source, must be enclosed in quotation marks. Even if there is an in-text citation, the lack of quotation marks indicates that the statement is a paraphrase, rather than what it is — a quotation. All quotations must be exact and word-for-word, with any additions enclosed in brackets and any deletions indicated by ellipses. They must also be followed by an in-text citation.

ORIGINAL SOURCE:

In the 1970s, boys were far more likely to anticipate getting a college degree — with girls firmly entrenched in the cheerleader role. Today, girls’ expectations are ballooning, while boys’ are plummeting. There’s even a sense, including among the most privileged families, that today’s boys are a sort of payback generation — the one that has to compensate for the advantages given to males in the past.

QUOTED PLAGIARISM:

According to Michelle Conlin, author of “The New Gender Gap,” boys were far more likely to anticipate getting a college degree — with girls firmly entrenched in the cheerleader role. Today, girls’ expectations are ballooning, while boys’ are plummeting.

CORRECTED QUOTATION:

According to Michelle Conlin, author of “The New Gender Gap,” “boys were far more likely to anticipate getting a college degree — with girls firmly entrenched in the cheerleader role. Today, girls’ expectations are ballooning, while boys’ are plummeting” (178).

3. **PLAGIARISM OF THE AUTHOR’S IDEA** occurs when student writers take another author’s original idea and incorporates that idea into their own writing using their own words. Most occurrences are the result of careless research habits; documenting sources immediately after reading them is one way to distinguish between original and borrowed ideas. However, that which is considered common knowledge (almost every reader knows beforehand), sayings, and facts that can be found in a variety of sources do not require documentation.

ORIGINAL SOURCE:

In the 1970s, boys were far more likely to anticipate getting a college degree — with girls firmly entrenched in the cheerleader role. Today, girls’ expectations are ballooning, while boys’ are plummeting. There’s even a sense, including among the most privileged families, that today’s boys are a sort of payback generation — the one that has to compensate for the advantages given to males in the past.

PLAGIARISM OF THE AUTHOR’S IDEA:

The girls of the 1970s didn’t seem to expect to get a college degree. Boys were more likely to anticipate getting a college degree. These generalized attitudes are different in the 2000s, however. In fact, there seems to be a reversal of roles: females are the ones anticipating college, while males are compensating for their gender’s previous advantages and attitudes.

CORRECTED IDEA:

Michelle Conlin, author of “The New Gender Gap,” argues that the girls of the 70s didn’t seem to expect to get a college degree and boys more often sought higher education. This is different in the 2000s; a role reversal seems to be developing: females are anticipating college while males are compensating for their gender’s previous advantages (178).

Note : While attributing the source to the author is helpful, further documentation is generally required in most academic and professional settings. Please see our handout, “Style and Formatting Guide for Direct Quotations” for additional information on this topic.

4. All **CHARTS, GRAPHS, DIAGRAMS, and PICTURES** taken from other documents must include in-text citations.

Please see the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed. (2009) or the *Publication Manual for the American Psychological Association (APA)*, 6th ed. (2009) for further information regarding the documentation of charts, graphs, diagrams, and pictures.

5. **INTERNET SOURCES** of all kinds must be documented in ways comparable to documentation for printed sources. While the Internet provides instant information at one's fingertips, **cutting and pasting from websites to create an instant paper is plagiarism**. Anything from the Internet is someone else's original work and therefore must be cited. It is best to avoid copying and pasting directly into your paper even when you intend to cite the source to prevent unintentional plagiarism.

6. All in-text citations must have a subsequent full citation on the **WORKS CITED** or **REFERENCE** page, depending on the style of documentation required.

WORKS CITED (MLA):

Conlon, Michelle. "The New Gender Gap: From Kindergarten to Grad School, Boys are Becoming the Second Sex." *Now and Then: Current Issues in Historical Context*. Ed. Judith Stanford. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2006. 170-79. Print.

REFERENCES (APA):

Conlon, M. (2006). The new gender gap: From kindergarten to grad school, boys are becoming the second sex. In Judith Stanford (Ed.), *Now and then: Current issues in historical context* (pp. 170-79). Boston: McGraw Hill.

Note : The examples presented in the "Examples of Plagiarism and How to Fix Them" section are formatted according to MLA guidelines.