

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY**

ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY¹

In its commitment to helping students refine their writing, research, and analytical skills, the faculty of the Portland State English Department places a high value on academic honesty.

Violations

When students submit research papers or essays, faculty members expect them to present their own work. Violations of this ethic occur when a student:

- presents an idea or argument from another source as if it is his or her own;
- copies wording verbatim from source materials as if it is his or her own phrasing;
- presents a slightly rearranged wording of source materials as if it is his or her own phrasing;
- submits a copy of a paper identical to or closely resembling that submitted by another student when collaboration is not authorized;
- submits a paper or significant part thereof already submitted for another class to another instructor; or
- submits a paper that was borrowed, stolen, or purchased from someone else.

These offenses are considered plagiarism. Defined in Webster's *Third New International Dictionary*, to plagiarize means "to steal and pass off as one's own the ideas or the words of another." This document is written to help you understand proper procedure for borrowing, quoting, and citing another author's words.

Proper Documentation

If you are uncertain about how to use source materials, please refer to the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Sixth Edition* by Joseph Gibaldi.

Below are basic guidelines for properly documenting a research paper:

- Use quotation marks to set off borrowed passages that are a few words to three lines long; cite the source (always include page numbers) of the quoted passage.
- Indent and double-space quoted passages of three or more lines; cite the source of the quoted passage.
- Cite the reference to any facts or information that are not common knowledge.

You must document your sources whenever you use the words or the ideas of others. It is not enough to provide a citation when you have left it unclear what specific ideas or phrasings in your paper derive from that source.

In a research paper, you should use the referencing system common to the subfield. In English, the most common format, MLA, uses the name-page (Woolf 27) system in the body of the paper, followed by a full reference in a Works Cited list at the end of your essay. For example, the full bibliographic citation for the in-text book reference above, and the general pattern, are:

Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs. Dalloway*. New York: Modern Library, 1928.

¹ Modified from the PSU Political Science Department's document of the same name, with references also drawn from "Guidelines for Essay Writing," Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Wilfrid Laurier University, 1996. The original document was adapted from "Regulations on Academic Integrity," Department of Political Science, University of Washington.

Last name, First name. *Title of Book*. Place of Publication: Name of Press, Year.

The full bibliographic citation for journal articles, and the general pattern, are:

Lamont, Elizabeth Clea. "Moving Tropes: New Modernist Travels with Virginia Woolf." *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics* 21 (2001): 161-181.

Last name, First name. "Article Title." *Name of Journal* Volume Number (Year): Inclusive Pages.

An article in an edited volume should be cited as follows:

Delphy, Christine. "Rethinking Sex and Gender." *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*. Ed. Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim. New York: Routledge, 2003. 57-67.

Last name, First name. "Article Title." *Title of Volume*. Ed. Editor(s) Name. Place of Publication: Name of Press, Year. Pages of Article.

Note that all but the first lines of each entry are indented. When assembling your Works Cited page, be sure to observe the proper use of punctuation, capitalization, and italicization as the above examples illustrate.

Penalties

English faculty considers plagiarism a serious offense. It may lead to failure of the course and disciplinary action by the Office of Student Affairs and the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Plagiarism is proscribed by the PSU Student Conduct Code.

If you have questions about writing a research paper or essay, please confer with your advisor about courses that teach research skills or talk with your instructor about proper documentation of source materials. You can also consult the Writing Center in Cramer Hall 188F.

THE USE OF SOURCES

Professors assume that you, the student, are the author of all work (quizzes, tests, papers, lab work, etc.) that you submit, whether for a grade or not. An act of academic dishonesty is a serious offense in a college community. Any ideas, data, or phrases borrowed from others should be fully identified and cited, as explained above. This handout is intended to help students in writing essays and other papers by giving basic information on the proper use and proper acknowledgment of source material in American academic writing. Scholarly work in every field requires the use of other people's published – and occasionally unpublished – material. Academic honesty requires that this use be frankly and completely identified and acknowledged. The failure to do this is plagiarism.

In general when writing papers for college classes use quotes and paraphrases to present another's argument as a point of reference in the process of making your own argument. In most essays and term papers you will be asked to do some original thinking, synthesizing materials from a number of sources, and incorporating your own ideas. You should not paraphrase or quote the work of someone else to present your own point.

Plagiarism: An Explanation

Although plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional on the part of the writer, the university regards plagiarism as a form of academic misconduct, the scholarly counterpart of the bank embezzler and of the manufacturer who mislabels a product. It is therefore the writer's responsibility to become familiar with proper citation formats and to develop the research writing skills (summary, paraphrase, and quotation)

involved in writing at the college level. Ignorance of these methods and protocols is never an excuse for plagiarism.

Plagiarism takes many forms that can be divided into four basic types:

- word-for-word copying of another's writing without enclosing the copied passage in quotation marks and identifying it in a footnote, or identifying it in the text (Woolf 27) followed by a full reference in an attached bibliography;
- patching together strings of directly borrowed words and phrases into a new paragraph. (Taking careless notes and then relying on them for your essay can cause this sort of plagiarism.) In the resulting mosaic of other people's ideas and words, the writer's sole contribution is the cement to hold the pieces together;
- paraphrasing a source by creating an abbreviated (and skillfully prepared) restatement of someone else's analysis or conclusion, without acknowledgment that another person's text has been the basis for the statement;
- presenting an idea from another source as if it is the writer's own – even when the phrasing of the source has been entirely rewritten.

The examples given below should make clear the dishonest and the proper use of source material. If you are unsure in a particular instance whether or not to reference something, play it safe and acknowledge your sources.

THE SOURCE

This is the original text used in the following examples of plagiarism:

The 1932 Micheaux film *Ten Minutes To Live* problematized the location of black heterosexual pleasure within a rigid color caste system that makes the desired object the body most resembling whiteness. In a series of narrative reversals challenging assumptions that whiteness/light skin should be interpreted as signifying innocence, the question of who is good or bad is rendered far more complex than the issue of color. Calling into question the Western metaphysical dualism which associates whiteness with purity and blackness with taint, the subtext of Micheaux's seemingly simple melodrama interrogates internalized racism and the color caste system.

hooks, bell. *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. Boston: South End Press, 1992.

WORD-FOR-WORD PLAGIARIZING

In word-for-word plagiarism the writer borrows source material without acknowledging the original in any way, implicitly claiming authorship of the text. An example of word-for-word plagiarism (printed in italics) of the source text printed above follows:

Yet, in *the 1932 Micheaux film Ten Minutes To Live* problematized the location of black heterosexual pleasure within a rigid color caste system that makes the desired object the body most resembling whiteness. In a series of narrative reversals challenging assumptions that whiteness/light skin should be interpreted as signifying innocence, the question of who is good or bad is rendered far more complex than the issue of color. Calling into question the Western metaphysical dualism which associates whiteness with purity and blackness with taint, the subtext of Micheaux's seemingly simple melodrama interrogates internalized racism and the color caste system. Indeed, the simplicity of the film only underscores what Micheaux is calling into question.

In this example, after composing half of a first sentence, the writer copies exactly what is in the original text, omitting the citation (hooks 135). The last sentence is also the writer's own. By enclosing all the copied text in quotation marks and referencing the source, the writer would have avoided the charge of

plagiarism. A reader might justifiably have felt, however, that the writer had not made a very significant personal contribution to the discussion.

THE MOSAIC

In “mosaic” plagiarism, also known as “skip-quoting,” the writer borrows words and phrases verbatim from the original text, moving them into new patterns. Phrases in italics are direct unacknowledged quotes from the source.

Yet, in *the 1932 Micheaux film Ten Minutes To Live* we see *the location of black heterosexual pleasure within a rigid color caste system challenging assumptions that whiteness/light skin should be interpreted as signifying innocence*. This means that *the question of who is good or bad is rendered far more complex than the issue of color and the subtext of Micheaux’s seemingly simple melodrama interrogates internalized racism and the color caste system*. This makes us *question the Western metaphysical dualism which associates whiteness with purity and blackness with taint*.

Only complete rewriting will save this paragraph. Even if a citation followed the passage, the reader would be uncertain whether it referred to the last few sentences or the entire paragraph. As in the first example, putting every stolen phrase within quotation marks would reveal how little of the thought belonged to the writer.

THE PARAPHRASE

Unacknowledged paraphrasing of another writer’s ideas also counts as plagiarism. The original and the paraphrased passage have been printed in tandem in the example below:

Original:

The 1932 Micheaux film *Ten Minutes To Live* problematized the location of black heterosexual pleasure within a rigid color caste system that makes the desired object the body most resembling whiteness. In a series of narrative reversals challenging assumptions that whiteness/light skin should be interpreted as signifying innocence, the question of who is good or bad is rendered far more complex than the issue of color. Calling into question the Western metaphysical dualism which associates whiteness with purity and blackness with taint, the subtext of Micheaux’s seemingly simple melodrama interrogates internalized racism and the color caste system.

Paraphrase:

The 1932 Micheaux film Ten Minutes To Live raises the problem of black heterosexual pleasure, as it exists within a racial hierarchy that privileges whiteness. The movie’s plot twists ask us to question which characters are good or bad, showing that this is a much more complex issue than the simple idea that white skin is a symbol of innocence. In this way the film questions the idea of blackness as a taint and, within the seemingly convention-laden genre of melodrama, interrogates internalized racism and the color caste system.

Original: The 1932 Micheaux film *Ten Minutes To Live* problematized the location of black heterosexual pleasure within a rigid color caste system that makes the desired object the body most resembling whiteness.

Paraphrase: The 1932 Micheaux film Ten Minutes To Live raises the problem of black heterosexual pleasure, as it exists within a racial hierarchy that privileges whiteness.

Original: In a series of narrative reversals challenging assumptions that whiteness/light skin should be interpreted as signifying innocence, the question of who is good or bad is rendered far more complex than the issue of color.

Paraphrase: The movie’s plot twists ask us to question which characters are good or bad, showing that this is a much more complex issue than the simple idea that white skin is a symbol of innocence.

Original: Calling into question the Western metaphysical dualism which associates whiteness with purity and blackness with taint, the subtext of Micheaux's seemingly simple melodrama interrogates internalized racism and the color caste system.

Paraphrase: In this way the film questions the idea of blackness as a taint and, within the seemingly convention-laden genre of melodrama, interrogates internalized racism and the color caste system.

When paraphrasing, the writer substitutes approximately equivalent terms for those in the original. If properly referenced, paraphrasing does not count as plagiarism. For example, if the writer began the paragraph with: "As hooks says in *Black Looks*,..." and concluded the paraphrased passage with a reference giving the additional identification necessary, the form would be correct. Similarly, the writer could have indicated the paraphrase directly, starting, "To paraphrase hook's idea..." and concluding with a reference. Honesty about the source material is vital.

APPROPRIATING IDEAS

Original:

The 1932 Micheaux film *Ten Minutes To Live* problematized the location of black heterosexual pleasure within a rigid color caste system that makes the desired object the body most resembling whiteness. In a series of narrative reversals challenging assumptions that whiteness/light skin should be interpreted as signifying innocence, the question of who is good or bad is rendered far more complex than the issue of color. Calling into question the Western metaphysical dualism which associates whiteness with purity and blackness with taint, the subtext of Micheaux's seemingly simple melodrama interrogates internalized racism and the color caste system.

Plagiarized version:

Micheaux's Ten Minutes to Live questions standard cultural associations between whiteness, beauty, and virtue. It is never clear which characters are good or bad, and therefore skin color is not a reliable index to moral worth. Through undermining the audience's narrative expectations, the film problematizes the idea that the ideal object for black male desire is the light-skinned woman.