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Plagiarism lines blur for students in digital age

New York Times ReprintsAugust 1, 2010Plagiarism line blur for students in digital age TRIP GABRIELAT Rhode Island College, a freshman copied and pasted from the site frequently asked questions page about homelessness - and didn't think he needed a credit source in his appointment because the page had no author's information. At DePaul University, the tip to copying one student was a shade of several paragraphs he raised from the internet, when his mentor sent him, he wasn't defensive — he just wanted to know how to change the purple text black. And at the University of Maryland, a student was reprimanded for copying a Wikipedia in a newspaper about the Great Depression he said he considered her allurings - inconsistent and collectively written - not to be baptized because they counted, in fact, as common knowledge. Professors are used to dealing with plagiarism, imposing students to get credit to others and following style guidance for quotes, and pretty has a lot left it at that. But these cases - typical, according to tutors and teachers responsible for discipline in three schools that attributed plagiarism - suggest that many students simply did not fuming that the use of words they did not write was serious misconduct. It's a disconnect that's growing in the internet era, as the notions of intellectual property, copyright and originality are under assault in the rampant sharing of online information, say educators studying plagiarism. Digital technology makes copying and pasting easy, of course. But this is the least. The internet can also rethink how students who have come of age with sharing music files, Wikipedia and web links understand the concept of authorship and the peculiarity of any text image. Now we have a whole generation of students who grew up within a form that just seems to be hanging out there in cyberspace and doesn't seem to have an author," said Teresa Fishman, director of Clemson University's Center for Academic Integrity. "You can believe this information only there for those who take. Professors who have studied plagiarism are not trying to justify it - many are champions of academic honesty on their campuses - but rather trying to understand why it is so prevalent. In surveys from 2006 to 2010, Donald L. McCabe, co-founder of the Center for Academic Integrity and a Rutgers University business professor, about 40 percent of the 14,000 students admitted that he had been given several sentences in written assignments. Perhaps more significant, the number of those thought copying from the internet represents a serious hoax is declining - to 29 percent on average in recent polls from 34 percent earlier in the decade. Sarah Brookover, senior at Rutgers in Camden, New Jersey, said her classmates were blithely cutting and pasting without attribution. This generation has always existed in a world where media tangle property doesn't have the same gravity, said Ms. Brookover, who is 31 years older than most students. When you're overeating on your computer, it's the same machine you loaded music with, possibly illegally, the same machine you were broadcasting a free video that showed on HBO last night. Ms. Brookover, who works in a campus library, pondered the indifference between research in stacks and online. Because you don't go to the library, you don't physically hold the article, which takes you closer to it doesn't belong to me," she said. Online, everything can belong to you very easily. Susan D. Blum, an anthropologist at the University of Notre Dame disturbed by the high rates of reported plagiarism, is set to understand how proponents view authorship and the written word, or texts in Ms. Blum's academic language. She conducted her ethnographic study among 234 Notre Dame sub-players. Today's students stand at the crossroads of a new path of conception of the texts and people who create them and who quote them, - she wrote last year in the book *My Word! Plagiarism of College Culture*, published by Cornell University Press. Ms. Blum argued that student writing demonstrates some of the same old-fashioned luckiness that today lead to other creative endeavors - TV shows, who constantly refer to other shows or rap music that samples famous of previous songs. In an interview, she said that the idea of an author whose special efforts works original work is rooted in enlightening ideas of the indisciplines. It is underpinned by the Western concept of intellectual democracy rights secured by copyright law. But both traditions are challenged. Our notion of authorship and originality was born, it flourished, and it could weaken, Ms. Blum said. She argues that students are less interested in cultivating a unique and authentic identity - as their 1960s counterparts were - than in trying on many of the different personas that the internet allows for without networks . If you're not so concerned about presenting yourself as completely ungested, it's O.K., if you say other people's words, it's O.K., if you say things you don't believe in, it's O.K., if you write documents you don't care less about because they perform a task that retrains something and gets assessed, And that's O.K., if you put the words out there without giving any credit. The notion that there could be a new model of a young man freely harrowing from a whirlwind of information to sum up new creative work fuelled a brief brouhaha earlier this year with Helen Hegemann, a teenager from Hermann whose bestselling novel is about Berlin life turned out to include passages taken from others. Instead of offering an apology, Ms. Hegemann insisted: In any case, there is no such thing as originality, just authenticity. A few critics roared in her defense, and the book remained a finalist for fiction (but did not win). This theory doesn't wash with Sarah Wilensky, a senior at Indiana University, who said relaxing plagiarism standards don't make creativity, it promotes laziness. You don't come up with new ideas if you're grabbing and mixing and mixing, said Ms. Wilensky, who took aim at Ms. Hegemann in a column in her student newspaper headlined *Generation Plagiarism*. It may be increasingly accepted, but there are still multi-work people - authors and artists and scientists - who do original work, Ms. Wilensky said in an interview. It's a kind of an insult that the ideal is gone, and now we're left just to do the work of previous generations. According to Ms. Wilensky, whose writing skills earned her the role of informal editor of other student works in her freshman dormitory, plagiarism has nothing to do with fashion academic theories. The main reason, she said, is that students leave high school unprepared for the intellectual rigor of college writing. If you're taught how to carefully read sources and synthesize them into your own original argument in high school and high school, you won't be tempted to plagiarize in college, and you certainly won't do so unconsciously," she said. At the University of California, Davis, with 196 cases of plagiarism mentioned in the disciplinary office last year, most did not exempt students without nging the need to lend to the writing of others. Many times, said Donald D. Dudley, who oversees the discipline of the office at the 32,000 campus, it was students who intentionally copied - knowing it was wrong - who were unwilling to engage in a written product. Writing is hard, and doing it well takes time and practice," he said. And then there was a case that had nothing to do with the younger generation developing a view of authorship. The student accused of plagiarism came to Mr Dudley's office with his parents and his father admitted he was responsible for plagiarism. His wife assured Mr Dudley that this would not happen again. New York TimesJun 10, 2010Under pressure, Tamper teachers with TESTS USING TRIP GABRIEL Staff At Normandy Crossing Elementary School outside Houston eagerly awaited the results of state achievement tests this spring. For the principal and assistant principal, high scores could be a binge in their careers at a time when success is increasingly being measured by such testists. For teachers, maths and science fifth grade awards were more tangible: a bonus of \$2,850. But the results came back, some seemed too good to be true. Indeed, following an investigation by the Galena Park Independent School, the principal, assistant principal and three teachers who were re-named on May 24 in the test tampering scandal. The district said educators circulated a detailed study guide after stealing a look at the state science test by tubing it - squeeze the test booklet without breaking its paper seal to form an anomaly tube so the issues inside can be seen and used in the light. The district invalidated student scores. Of all forms of academic deception, none of them can be as impressive as the alibors who fake standardized children's tests. But investments in Georgia, Indiana, Massachusetts, Nevada, Virginia and elsewhere this year have pointed to cheating educators. Experts believe the phenomenon is rising as rates over standardised rather are higher - including, most recently, taking student progress on tests into account in teacher performance reviews. Colorado passed a sweeping law last month making teachers stay in office, which amounts to value based on test results, and nearly a dozen other states have introduced plans to evaluate teachers partly by scores. Many school districts already link teacher bonuses to student improvements on state assessments. Houston decided this year to use data to identify experienced teachers for layoffs, and New York City will use it to make decisions about tenure as a beginner teacher. Federal Law Without a Child Left Behind is a further source of pressure. Similar to the high jump bar set deliberately low at the start, the law - which stipulates that public schools bring all pupils to level in reading and maths by 2014 - was easy to meet at an early stage. But the bar rises higher annually, and fines for schools that can get over it are also rising: teachers and administrators can lose jobs and see their school. No national data on cheating educators is collected. Experts who consulted with school systems estimated that 1 to 3 percent of students - thousands annually - cross the line between accepted ways to raise scores, such as using old tests to boost students, as well as actual nutrition. Educators feel that the reputation of their schools, their livelihoods, their mental importance in life is at stake, said Robert Schaeffer, director of public education at FairTest, a nonprofit critical nonstandard testing group. It ends up pushing more and more of them over the line. Others say there are some bad apples in every profession and that high-stakes testing is not to blame. Gregory J. One real problem is states have no incentive to achieve this kind of problem, he said. Last illustrate the many ways, some subtle, that increase scores: "At a charter school in Springfield, Massachusetts, the principal told students to look over students' shoulders and point out incorrect answers since they took 2009 state tests, according to a state investigation. The state revoked the charter for the school, Robert M. Hughes Academy, in May. "In Norfolk, The V.A., an independent panel detailed in March how a principal - whose job scores were to blame for poor student special education test results - pressured teachers to use an overhead project to show these students responses to state readings, according to the Virginian-Pilot, citing a leak - the state school board commissioned a 191 schools study in February after a 2009 analysis of reading and math tests that educators erased students' answers and pencilled in incorrect answers. Computer scanners found abrasions, aclass rooms in which right-to-right erasures were far beyond the statistical norm were labeled as suspicious. The Georgian scandal is the most far-reaching in the country. This led to the referral of 11 teachers and administrators to the state agency with the power to revoke their licenses. More disciplinary referrals, including from a dozen Atlanta schools, are expected. John Fremmer, a data forensics specialist who was hired by an undesired group to dig deeper into Atlanta schools and who has invested earlier scandals in Texas and elsewhere, said pedagogy is growing. Every time you increase the rates associated with any testing program, you get more cheating, he said. It was also the conclusion of economist Stephen D. Levitt, a freconomics fame and blogger for The New York Times who, with acollage, studied letters of response from Chicago public schools after starting high-stakes testing in the 1990s concluded that 4 percent to 5 percent of elementary school teachers cheated. Not everyone agrees. Beverly L. Hall, who, as superintendent of Atlanta public schools, won national recognition for raising scores, said dishonesty was relatively low in education. Teachers in everything are principled people in terms of wanting to insure what they teach is what students learn, she said. Educators interested in cheating scandals rarely confess to misconduct. But at one Georgia school last year, the principal and assistant principal acknowledged their roles in the test scandal. For seven years, their Atherton Elementary School in suburban Atlanta met the standards known in federal law as adequate annual Progress - the A.Y.P. in jargon educators - demonstrating that the proportion of students arising performed at the grade level. Then, in 2008, the bar rose again and Atherton stumbled. In June, the school's assistant director for learning, reviewing students' letters from government tests, said its principal, can't do the A.J.P., according to an affidavit signed by the principal. We haven't discussed it any further, principal James L. Berry told school district investigators. We both understood what was bypassing. Pulling a pencil out of the cup on the table of Doretta Alexander, a steady principal. Dr. Berry told her: I want you to call me answers, according to the account ms. Alexander gave to investigators. The main erased bubbles on multiple-choice answer sheets and are filled in the right answers. Any celebrations about the results were short-lived. Suspicions were raised in December 2008 by The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, which reported that improvements in state tests at Atherton and several Georgia schools were so striking that they came close to astatistic impossibility. The state conducted an analysis of the enthaws sheets and found overwhelming evidence of tampering with tests by AT Atherton. Crawford Lewis, the district superintendent at the time, summoned Dr. Berry and Ms. Alexander to separate meetings. Within four hours of forging - back and forth, back and forth, back and forth, Dr. Lewis said - the principal and assistant principal confessed to cheating. They both broke down in tears, Dr. Lewis said. Dr. Berrinas is a former music teacher and leader of well-known marching bands, Dr. Lewis said, conveyed some of that spirit to pass state tests in the county where schools hold pep rallies to receive. Dr. Berry, who declined interview requests, resigned and was arrested in June 2009 on charges of falsifying a government document. In December, he pleaded guilty and was sentenced to probation. The state suspended her studies for two years and Ms. Alexander for one year. (Dr. Lewis, who stepped down as superintendent, was charged last month on unrelated charges stemming from a school interpreter investigation, which he denied.) Dr Lewis called for a reorientation of education away from high rates because of the distorted incentives he introduces for learning. When you add in pay performance and your score can be consecrated on how well your kids are doing testing wise, it's unfairly a huge amount of pressure, he said. I'm not saying there's any reason to do what's been done, but I believe this problem will intensify it gets better. 2010 To stop the codes, colleges learn their TrickeryBy TRIP GABRIELORLANDO, Fla. - Cordon in the battle to defeat a student tricked into being here at university's test center Central Florida. No gun allowed during an exam: chewing can disguise a student speaking into a cellphone without hands for an accomplice The 228 computers used by students delved into the honeypots, so anyone trying to take a picture of the screen - using, say, an hidden-cam pen to help a friend take the test later is easy to spot. Scratch paper is allowed — but it is stamped with a date and must be returned later. When proctor sees something suspicious, he records the student's work on the computer and directs the overhead camera to zoom in, and both sets of images are burned to a CD for evidence. Taylor Ellis, an associate dean who runs a testing center at a business school in Central Florida, the nation's third-largest camp by registration, said cheating has dropped significantly, to 14 suspected incidents from 64,000 exams administered during the semester. I'll never stop it completely, but I'll find out about it," Mr Ellis said. As the eternal temptation of students to cheat went hi-tech - not just on exams but also by cutting and pasting from the internet and sharing homework online like music files - educators reacted with their own efforts to hack. This summer, as freshmen fill out forms to select course roommates, some colleges - Duke and Bowdoin among them - are also directing them to complete online lessons about plagiarism before they can enroll. Anti-plagiarism services, which require students to submit documents for copy checking, are booming businesses. Fifty-five percent of colleges and universities now use such a service, according to a survey by the campus Computing Survey. The most prominent service, Turnitin.com, deals with endless playing of cats and mice with technologically savvy students trying to outsmart it. Turnitin algorithms are updated on an ongoing basis, the company warned last month in a blog post titled *Can Students Trick Turnitin?* The degree of cheating students, difficult to accurately measure, appears widespread in colleges. In surveys of 14,000 students over the past four years, an average of 61 percent admitted to locheating on assignments and exams. That figure is down slightly from 65 percent earlier in the decade, but the researcher who conducted the survey, Donald L. McCabe, a professor of abuse at Rutgers, doubts it's smaller. Instead, he speculates students no longer regard certain acts as a hoax at all, such as cutting and pasting a few sentences at the time from internet. Andrew Daines, who graduated in May at Cornell, where he served on the board at the College of Arts and Sciences, which hears cheating cases, said internet plagiarism was so common that professors told him they had replaced written tasks with tests and in class writing. Mr. a philosophy major, contributed to pages that Cornell last month on his student website to draw attention to inadequate integrity. These include links to tutorial plagiarism and strongly worded caveats that other generation may not have had as much temptation to cheat or plagiarized as yours, and encouraged students to reconsider this as character test. Mr. Daines said he was particularly worried by the epidemic of copying homework. The term joint work has been matched to this incredible extreme, where it means, because of the ease of emailing, one person is looking at someone else who has made a thespies, he said. At M.I.T., David E. Pritchard, a physics professor, was able to inaccurately measure copying homework with software he developed for a different purpose — to allow students to complete sets of physico-problems online. Some answered questions so quickly, at first he had some geniuses here at M.I.T., Dr. Pritchard said. Then he realized that they were completing problems in less time than it took to read them and copy the answers — basically, it turned out, from an email from friends who had already done the task. About 20 percent copied a third or more of their homework, according to a study dr. Pritchard and colleagues published this year. Students copying homework find answers on sites such as Course Hero, which is similar to Napster homework sharing, where students from more than 3,500 institutions upload documents, class notes and past exams. Another site, Kramster, specializes in solving textbook questions in science and engineering. It boasts responses from 77 physico-textbooks - but not the popular Dr Pritchard Mastering Physics, an Anonline tutorial, because its publisher, Pearson, searches the internet for handiworks and asks that they be taken down to protect their copyrights. You can use the technology as well as to detect how to commit cheating, Dr. Pritchard said. The most popular anti-cheating technology Turnitin.com, says it is used by 9,500 high schools and colleges. Students submit written purposes that should be compared to billions of archival web pages and millions of other student works before they are sent to instructors. The company says that in schools that have been using the service for several years, there has been a decline in plagiarism. Scammers trying to outset Turnitin have tried many tricks, some of them spelled out in blogs and videos. One is to replace each e in plagiarized text with a foreign letter that looks like it, such as a Cyrillic e, designed to trick Turnitin scanners. Another is to use the Macros tool in Microsoft Word to hide the copied text. Turnitin says no scheme works. Some educators have rejected the service and other anti-fraudulent technologies on the basis that they consider students guilty, undermining the trust sought by instructors with students. University of Washington and Lee, concluded several years ago that Turnitin was incompatible with the school's honor code, which stemmed from the foundation of trust in our students, students, Dawn Watkins, vice president of student affairs. Such services, Turnitin.com, give implication that we expect our students to cheat on. For similar reasons, some students at the University of Central Florida objected to the business school's testing center with its videos in the sky in the early days, Dr. Ellis said. But recently, during the final exams after the summer semester, almost no students voiced such concerns. Rose Calixte, Sr., said during the exam to bring her cap back, a rule meant to prevent students from writing notes under the edges. Ms. Calixte disapproves of the claim that she's not the cause: It's college. There's an opportunity for people to cheat. M.B.A. first-year student, Ashley Housermann, said that when she was an undergraduate at the University of Florida, everyone cheated in a class of her 300 comparing responses during quizzes. She referred to the highly concentrated testing center because it encourages you to be ready for the test because you can't turn up and ask: What do you get? For educators uncomfortable in the role of anti-cheating enforcer, anonline tutorial on plagiarism can prove to be an elegantly simple technical fix. This was the conclusion of a study published by the National Bureau of Economic Research in January. Students at an unnamed selective college who completed a web textbook were shown to plagiarize two-thirds less than students who did not. (The study also found that plagiarism was concentrated among students with lower SAT scores.) The textbook had an inhesion effect, said Thomas S. Dee, a co-author who is now an economist at the University of Virginia. Many instructors are reluctant to create this kind of adversariality with their students, where there is a presumption of the issue, Dr. Dee said. Our results suggest that the textbook worked through students' learning, not scaring them. Only a few colleges currently require students to complete such a textbook, which usually illustrates how to cite a source or even some other people's ideas, followed by a quiz. The textbook, used by Bowdoin, was developed with his neighbors kolegs Bates and Colby a few years ago. Part of the reason it is essential to enrollment, said Suzanne B. Lovett, of Bowdoin Psychology, whose specialty is cognitive development, is that internet-age students see so many examples of text, music and images copied without credit that they may not fully understand the idea of plagiarism. As for central Florida's testing center, one of its most recent cases had nothing to do with the internet, cellphones or any technology. The heavily tattooed student was found with notes written on his arm. He fit them into his art body. I think a lot of plagiarism is done through a boring routine that amays a lot of uninteresting things that to the hill of beans in the success of our carriers. I know I hated an English literature lesson with all my old linguistic interpretation. Shakespeare is, of course, a revered classicist, but I hated it working so badly, I couldn't even explore it. I got my first F in England because of it. It.

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