



BUILDING BLOCKS

If You Can't Cite It, Don't Write It: The Emergence of Plagiarism in the 21st Century

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Abstract

In 2014, Senator John Walsh of Montana had his master's degree rescinded by the Army War College because he plagiarized his thesis. His actions led to him dropping out his state's 2014 senate race (Martin, 2014). More recently, Dr. Ben Carson, a potential 2016 Republican presidential candidate, has been accused of plagiarizing sections of his book, *America the Beautiful: Rediscovering What Makes This Nation Great*. In response to numerous written and online news releases, Carson issued an apology stating, "I attempted to appropriately cite and acknowledge all sources in *America the Beautiful*, but inadvertently missed some. I apologize, and I am working with my editors to rectify the situation" (Bradner, 2015). This lack of ethical integrity, intentional or unintentional, affects grades, professions, reputations, and knowledge progression, but many professionals and scientists still commit it. This essay describes pitfalls and solutions in this very serious infraction that can undermine integrity and acceptance of public information particularly in health promotion and disease prevention.

Suggested Citation:

Thomas, Monique, "If You Can't Cite It, Don't Write It: The Emergence of Plagiarism in the 21st Century", *International Journal of Ethnic College Health*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 33-35.