
PLAGIARISM ANTECEDENTS AND SITUATIONAL INFLUENCES

By Norman P. Lewis

A study of daily newspaper plagiarism over a ten-year period reveals the offense results from a combination of individual and systemic causes. An association between how the misdeed is termed and what sanction is applied, combined with evidence of a marked increase in disclosure and firings after the 2003 Jayson Blair case, reveal that plagiarism is situationally defined. Four types of plagiarism are identified, linked to three antecedents: rationalizing dishonesty, problematic techniques, and definitional ambiguity. Most plagiarism arises from professional routines that minimize attribution, yet is treated relatively harshly because it exposes a paradigmatic pretense of journalistic originality.



Plagiarism seems to stick to journalism like a leech, despite universal prohibitions, zero-tolerance policies, and fallout from the 2003 Jayson Blair episode. His extensive plagiarism and fabrication at the *New York Times* resulted in more than 3,600 newspaper reports in eight months,¹ cover stories in two national magazines² and two books.³ Editors at 350 daily newspapers reported having taken “specific action” in response.⁴ Yet despite proclamations that plagiarism is “one of journalism’s unforgivable sins”⁵ and a drain on credibility,⁶ the ethical infraction persists. The purpose of this research is to examine why plagiarism continues to stain the newspaper profession by analyzing cases over a ten-year period and interviewing people accused of the offense.

Little research has been conducted on professional plagiarism in journalism, and no published research could be found that examines its root causes. Part of the reason why plagiarism has received limited attention from communication researchers may stem from how it traditionally has been conceptualized, as an individual moral failing. Ethics textbooks generally give no more than passing reference to plagiarism,⁷ many professional codes ignore the subject,⁸ and the Society of Professional Journalists dispatches the topic in two words: “never plagiarize.”⁹

Emblematic of the prevailing attitude is a headline over a 2000 *Editor & Publisher* story about a rash of plagiarism cases that asked,

Norman P. Lewis is an assistant professor in the College of Journalism and Communications, University of Florida. This paper was developed from research conducted as part of the author’s doctoral dissertation, “Paradigm Disguise: Systemic Influences on Newspaper Plagiarism,” published in 2007 at the University of Maryland.

J&MC Quarterly
Vol. 85, No. 2
Summer 2008
313-330
©2008 AEJMC

“Why They Do It,” and then answered: “Desperation? Kleptomania? Stupidity? Or Just Plain Lazy.”¹⁰ While plagiarism, like most ethical infractions, can be attributed to personal choices, conceptualizing it as solely an individual problem overlooks situational influences. As Shoemaker and Reese have advised, presuming that “individual-level factors are the sole causes of behavior” can lead to research errors.¹¹ Therefore, this research examines plagiarism as both an individual and a systemic issue.

The profession’s treatment of plagiarism can be conceptualized as a manifestation of “paradigm disguise,” a variant of “paradigm repair” that describes a journalistic ritual to defend professional ideology. Paradigm repair theory originated in a study of how network television, “as if orchestrated by the same composer,” condemned an Alabama station that filmed a man who set himself afire for 37 seconds before assisting him.¹²

When individuals violate professional ideology in a public manner—such as a *Wall Street Journal* reporter revealing that he was a radical socialist¹³ or the paparazzi chasing Princess Diana at her death¹⁴—journalists enact a cleansing routine to sequester the individuals and declare the news paradigm repaired. Paradigm disguise builds on that construct by explaining why journalists, especially in the wake of Blair,¹⁵ are more willing to disclose plagiarism and dismiss offenders without evaluating whether the punishment fits the crime or addressing the situational influences that contributed to the plagiarism.

Literature Review

The limited academic research conducted on journalistic plagiarism affirms that it should be examined in both personal and organizational contexts. Three scholars asked to respond to the Blair case found shared responsibility, primarily in management’s inadequate and mixed responses to initial doubts about Blair’s accuracy and an overemphasis on bottom-line economics.¹⁶ Lasorsa and Dai included plagiarism along with other ethical newspaper infractions in concluding that warning signs of deceptive practices were overlooked in part because of inadequate definitions and a newsroom culture that privileges trust.¹⁷ Others have found that news organizations cloud the issue by failing to agree on definitions. Chaney and Duncan demonstrated that professionals and professors disagree over what constitutes plagiarism.¹⁸ White observed that ethics codes were too vague to help practitioners know when inadequate attribution became plagiarism.¹⁹

Newsroom practices are important in studying plagiarism because journalists take their ethical cues from their environment,²⁰ an environment which actually encourages borrowing without attribution. In a 1983 essay, Clark situated plagiarism in an atmosphere that accepted widespread copying.²¹ Kurtz noted that journalists “recycle words for a living,” borrowing heavily from wire-service stories and “old interviews by reporters we’ve never met.”²² Wolper found what appeared to be plagiarism in a *Los Angeles Times* story published in a Florida newspaper, but which turned out to result from a copy editor accustomed to blending wire stories. The copy editor said, “I think over the years that newspapers

have become lackadaisical about attribution."²³ An SPJ ethics committee co-chair declared that attribution is unnecessary for "facts involving numbers" and ruled a credit line in a chart is sufficient if a reporter "lifts a string of facts" from a book.²⁴ Journalists exempt from attribution material that is "generally known,"²⁵ even when the information was exclusively obtained by another news organization.

The word "plagiarism" is inherently ambiguous. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines plagiarism as "the wrongful appropriation" of someone else's "idea, design, passage or work,"²⁶ yet does not address how close the resemblance must be to be "wrongful." Journalists, like English teachers and academics, disagree whether plagiarism is limited to word-for-word copying (and if so, how many words constitutes a violation) or whether it can also involve an artful paraphrasing of purloined material. A sampling of ethics codes compiled by the American Society of Newspaper Editors—whose own code is silent on plagiarism²⁷—vary by calculating copying at the level of "words,"²⁸ "phrases,"²⁹ "distinctive language,"³⁰ and "wholesale lifting."³¹

There is no consensus whether journalists can copy from their own stories or from those of their colleagues. "Editors seem loath to define it, especially in marginal cases," wrote Clark.³² Journalists also disagree with another element of the *Oxford* definition, that ideas can be plagiarized. An American Press Institute presenter encouraged stealing ideas.³³ Only two of thirty-five ethics codes collected by the ASNE consider whether ideas should be attributed.³⁴ Shaw noted that journalists generally do not credit ideas because they "are reluctant to admit that they do not originate all their own material."³⁵ Gladwell observed that newspapers obsess about plagiarism "because journalism cannot own up to its heavily derivative nature."³⁶

Journalists contribute to definitional ambiguity by juxtaposing plagiarism and fabrication.³⁷ This tendency was reinforced by the extensive coverage surrounding Blair in 2003 and Jack Kelley of *USA Today* in 2004, because each involved plagiarism and fabrication. However, these are discrete behaviors. Plagiarism is copying someone else's words or ideas without attribution. Fabrication is misleading readers into thinking that fictional people, events, or details are genuine. Because the processes and motivations in creating fiction are different than those in copying information without attribution, fabrication should not be conflated with plagiarism.

Even when the lines between borrowing and plagiarism are clearer, journalists may be tempted to take shortcuts to get ahead³⁸ or to adapt to a newsroom culture that accepts some journalistic deception. Lee learned that journalists routinely justify practices such as withholding information from sources or exhibiting false flattery to get a story,³⁹ and excused deception if they were dealing with a "bad" person. He concluded, "Journalistic deception is an occupational construct shaped by professional demands."⁴⁰ Organizational behavior scholars have confirmed the power of situational determinants on individual decision making in workplace deviance. Robinson and Bennett concluded that "any given specific deviant act can be traced to a provoking inci-

dent, as perceived by the deviant actor; be it a perceived unfair decision, a financial crisis, a policy dispute or other event(s)."⁴¹ Situational variables such as competitive pressure were stronger predictors of attitudes toward deviant behavior than individual factors such as personality.⁴² People were especially willing to engage in deception when the standards were unclear.⁴³

Method

This study examined reported plagiarism involving full-time journalists at U.S. daily newspapers from 1997 through 2006. It is a mixed-methods study, applying quantitative comparisons to groupings of relevant data from the plagiarism cases and qualitative depth interviews of eight journalists accused of plagiarism during those ten years. The research was limited to journalists employed full time to avoid capturing data from individuals such as stringers or interns who may be less mindful of professional norms. Cases were drawn from trade publications *Editor & Publisher*, *American Journalism Review*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, and *Quill*; Jim Romanesko's column on the Poynter Institute for Media Studies Web site; Web sites Regret the Error and the Freedom Forum;⁴⁴ longtime media reporters Howard Kurtz of the *Washington Post* and David Shaw of the *Los Angeles Times*; alternative weeklies and magazines that monitor their local media; the Associated Press; and general Web searches.

The key limitation in identifying the population of cases from which to sample is that the offenses had to have become public. Each journalist accused of plagiarism constituted a case, regardless of the number of infractions. Seventy-six cases were found. Categorical data such as job function, experience, and circulation size were evaluated using chi-square statistics at a significance level of $p = 0.05$.

From those seventy-six cases of plagiarism, eight journalists were chosen for interviews, in keeping with McCracken's advice that "no more than eight" should be interviewed.⁴⁵ The eight reflected Weiss's directive to pursue "perfect strangers" and a "sample of representatives."⁴⁶ Five were men and three were women, echoing the gender ratio of journalists at daily newspapers.⁴⁷ Their positions covered a cross-section of newsroom positions and their employers encompassed all four circulation categories used by the Newspaper Association of America.⁴⁸ Their professional experience ranged from eleven to twenty-seven years. Six lost their jobs because of the plagiarism accusations while two received suspensions. Respondents were granted anonymity to encourage candor. The interviews were conducted in person in February and March 2007 and were recorded, lasting an average of ninety-seven minutes. Transcriptions were evaluated using grounded theory techniques.⁴⁹

The seventy-six cases and the eight interviews constitute an inductive study designed to answer five research questions:

RQ1: Is there anything about accused plagiarists that distinguishes them from other journalists?

RQ2: Is there anything about the newspapers that employ accused plagiarists that distinguishes them from the rest of the industry?

RQ3: How do newspapers tend to respond to plagiarism?

RQ4: Has the Jayson Blair case affected the frequency of plagiarism or how it is treated?

RQ5: Why did the plagiarism occur?

Findings

In response to **RQ1**, the only variable that distinguishes suspected plagiarists from the population of daily newspaper journalists is gender. While men held 62.8% of newsroom positions during the period studied,⁵⁰ they made up 81.3% of those accused of plagiarism ($\chi^2 = 4.949$, $df = 1$, $p = .026$).⁵¹

However, it is likely that gender is serving as a proxy for age in this study. At least 62.2% of the journalists in the study have more than ten years of post-college experience, and the portion of all journalists older than 35 who are female ranges from 24.8% to 34.6%, according to the latest *American Journalist* survey.⁵² Further, the *American Journalist* survey shows no difference in how men and women respond to questions about ethics. A 2000 meta-analysis of 113 studies in organizational behavior literature found effect sizes of gender differences in attitudes toward workplace ethics to be insignificant.⁵³ Absent research supporting the notion of gender differences in ethical orientation, and in light of evidence that women are less likely to practice journalism after age 35, the finding that accused plagiarists are disproportionately male probably reflects the age of those journalists.

RQ2 asked about the newspapers that employed people accused of plagiarism. The study revealed that reported plagiarism varies with newspaper size. Because larger newspapers employ more journalists, and thus have a greater probability of an employee being accused of plagiarism, the newspapers captured by the study were separated into the four NAA size categories to provide a measure of control for staff size. Even with that control, the data show the nation's largest newspapers were more likely to incur plagiarism. While 27.3% of the nation's daily newspaper journalists were employed by newspapers of more than 250,000 circulation,⁵⁴ 46.1% of the seventy-six cases captured by the study involved newspapers in that category ($\chi^2 = 30.216$, $df = 3$, $p < .001$).

It is possible that larger newspapers incur more plagiarism because they are more likely than small ones to pursue easier-to-copy national stories (rather than unique local stories) or that larger papers compete so vigorously for print and online audiences that they have a financial incentive to avoid attribution. However, because plagiarism at a large newspaper is more likely to become public than at a small paper,

TABLE 1

	Kept Job (row pct)	Lost Job (row pct)	Total
Under 250,000	12 (29.3%)	29 (70.7%)	41
Over 250,000	21 (60.0%)	14 (40.0%)	35
Total	33 (43.4%)	43 (56.6%)	76

the finding is probably an artifact of the methodology. Big newspapers are in urban areas that, unlike small cities, may have an alternative weekly or a city magazine exposing the dominant daily's flaws. In this study, other publications forced newspapers in Baltimore, Detroit, Kansas City, Jacksonville, Miami, and St. Louis to acknowledge plagiarism. The newspaper with by far the most cases captured by this study, seven,⁵⁵ is the intensely scrutinized *New York Times*, which is watched by a Web site that critiques its every move⁵⁶ and another that inspects the paper's daily corrections.⁵⁷ Further, trade magazines pay more attention to miscues at large-circulation newspapers because of their place atop the industry hierarchy.

A more meaningful size difference surfaced in findings related to **RQ3**, about how newspapers respond to plagiarism. To avoid cells with fewer than five cases, the four circulation categories were compressed into two—dividing the cases at the 250,000-circulation mark—and a dummy variable was created to divide sanctions between immediate dismissal⁵⁸ and retaining employment.

Table 1 reveals an association between circulation size and outcome. While 40.0% of journalists accused of plagiarism at the largest newspapers lost their jobs, 70.7% of those at papers with less than 250,000 circulation were dismissed ($\chi^2 = 7.259$, $df = 1$, $p = .007$). This association may show that larger newspapers are more wedded to their employees. Larger newspapers may have stronger unions or a culture, like the *New York Times*, that would rather reassign than fire.⁵⁹ Or, the association between size and sanctions may reflect the ability of managers at larger newspapers to parse plagiarism more carefully than their harried counterparts at smaller papers.

More salient is a relationship between sanctions and terminology. In eleven of the seventy-six cases, newspapers do not appear to have made any attempt to communicate with readers about the plagiarism, based on an archival search for corrections, editor's notes, or columns about the episodes. In the remaining sixty-five cases, a strong association emerged between how the newspaper termed the offense and what happened to the journalist ($\chi^2 = 20.101$, $df = 1$, $p < .001$).

Table 2 shows that in the cases in which the newspaper called the offense plagiarism, the journalist was dismissed 86.7% of the time. But journalists lost their job in only 31.4% of the instances in which the newspaper did not use "plagiarism" and employed synonyms such as "paragraphs were quoted verbatim,"⁶⁰ "inappropriately duplicated wording,"⁶¹

TABLE 2

Severity	Kept Job (row pct)	Lost Job (row pct)	Total
Synonym	24 (68.6%)	11 (31.4%)	35
Plagiarism	4 (13.3%)	26 (86.7%)	30
Total	28 (43.1%)	37 (56.9%)	65

and “exact or close replicas.”⁶² Such synonyms may reflect an effort to be precise about the infraction and may not equate to a reluctance to call the offense plagiarism or alter its definition. For instance, a Denver editor said he avoided using the word because of a “bad experience” involving a previous plagiarism case that went to arbitration.⁶³

However, a tendency to reserve the word “plagiarism” for episodes involving dismissal may flow from public pronouncements about zero tolerance for the offense; newspapers that want to retain the journalist may wish to employ a benign phrase to avoid triggering a more serious outcome. Editorial proclamations that plagiarism is “one of the worst offenses”⁶⁴ and “among journalism’s most serious professional breaches, if not the single most grave thing”⁶⁵ leave little room for discernment if an episode surfaces. Recasting the offense as something other than plagiarism offers editors disciplinary flexibility.

RQ4 asks about the influence of Jayson Blair, who resigned May 1, 2003.⁶⁶ Twenty-eight cases transpired in the seventy-five months before Blair. The remaining forty-eight cases, including Blair’s, occurred in the final forty-five months, nearly tripling the frequency rate. Such a finding reflects not a surge in plagiarism, but an increase in openness about the offense and in external scrutiny.

For example, in the aftermath of the Blair case, the *Kansas City Star* published its ethics policy online and invited comments, which prompted an alternative weekly to expose a year-old plagiarism case the *Star* had concealed and, in turn, prodded the *Star* to admit to the pre-Blair offense. When asked why the paper did not disclose the plagiarism when it occurred, the *Star*’s editor responded, “Times change.”⁶⁷

An evaluation of the relative severity of plagiarism in each case according to categories of limited, substantial, and serial⁶⁸ revealed no significant difference ($\chi^2 = 2.341$, $df = 2$, $p = .310$) before and after Blair, yet the sanctions applied changed. Before Blair, 57.1% of journalists accused of plagiarism kept their jobs, while after Blair, 64.6% lost their jobs, a reversal approaching significance ($\chi^2 = 3.398$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.065$).

These two findings—an increase in reported cases and a greater likelihood of dismissal after Blair—could be related. The journalistic black eye produced by the Blair case may have prompted a greater degree of transparency and scrutiny, and less mercy for offenders. In the wake of Blair, editors also may have been more willing to disclose plagiarism cases in which a journalist was dismissed to demonstrate the newspaper could police itself, as predicted by paradigm repair.⁶⁹ The

change may also reflect the growing influence of the Romenesko column, which has become a de facto national enforcer of journalistic standards. Daniel Okrent, who became the *New York Times*' first public editor in the wake of the Blair debacle, said that some offenders "wouldn't have gotten fired five years ago, pre-Romenesko."⁷⁰

Causes of Plagiarism

RQ5 involves the question of why plagiarism occurs. A textual analysis of public writings⁷¹ about the seventy-six cases, fortified by the depth interviews, revealed three primary antecedents: rationalizing dishonesty, problematic techniques, and definitional ambiguity. Journalists accused of plagiarism often blame being overworked at deadline: Pulitzer Prize winner Alex Storozynski said he only had two reporters to produce a free-distribution New York daily,⁷² Blaine Harden of the *Washington Post* said he had just three hours to research and write a murder-suicide story,⁷³ and the *Florida Times-Union* acknowledged Editorial Page Editor Lloyd Brown was under time constraints.⁷⁴

But deadline pressure is a constant in professional journalism and cannot explain why plagiarism occurs. Management style (transactional or transformational⁷⁵) and workplace climate (caring or utilitarian⁷⁶) can influence ethical behavior, but such variables are best conceptualized as moderators or mediators rather than as causal elements.

Rationalizing Dishonesty. Rationalizing dishonesty is evident by its fruit: extensive, unabashed serial theft like that practiced by Blair. His newspaper identified at least six stories in seven months with substantial plagiarism, including copying an entire story.⁷⁷ Diagnosed as bipolar,⁷⁸ Blair justified various ethical infractions by claiming his employer was taking advantage of him.⁷⁹ A similar pattern afflicted three other journalists. Nada Behziz of the *Bakersfield Californian* copied from stories for 30% of the work she submitted to the *Californian*, yet alleged she was the victim of "a witch hunt."⁸⁰ Khalil Abdullah plagiarized one in every five stories at Georgia's *Macon Telegraph*⁸¹ and one out of every nine stories he wrote previously at the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*,⁸² from which he had been fired for plagiarism. "I knew better," Abdullah said.⁸³ Eight times in three months, Assistant Managing Editor Chris Cecil of the *Cartersville Daily Tribune News* in Georgia stole directly from syndicated columnist Leonard Pitts Jr., including one column in which he copied how Pitts learned his mother was dying of cancer;⁸⁴ Cecil blamed a friend he said edited his columns for him.⁸⁵ These cases of repeated plagiarism reflect a rationalization of dishonesty perhaps stemming from perceived inequities,⁸⁶ inadequate self-efficacy,⁸⁷ depression,⁸⁸ or other factors.

Problematic Techniques. One common problematic technique is mixing notes. Steven Erlanger of the *New York Times* copied two paragraphs from a magazine and "mingled them with his own notes from an interview."⁸⁹ *Baltimore Sun* columnist Michael Olesker blended material from a year-old interview with a former U.S. senator with research notes from the *Washington Post*.⁹⁰ One of the eight interviewees, a reporter with twenty-five years of experience, copied paragraphs from a competitor's story into a notes file to use as a basis for an interview, then forgot to remove those paragraphs when submitting a fresh story. Another prob-

lematic technique, using a competitor's story as a template, affected two of the interviewees. In each case, the story was outside the reporter's normal beat, and the reporters leaned heavily on a competitor's version for background and sources to interview. Both used the competitor's story to begin framing their own, and even though the reporters had fresh information, their work too closely mirrored that of another publication.

Definitional Ambiguity. Plagiarism's hard-to-demarcate nature and journalism's aversion to attribution produce definitional ambiguity. Journalists disagreed over definitions and sometimes contended copying was not plagiarism if the author lacked malicious intent.⁹¹ When the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* published a story in which the words, design, and photo were similar to a competitor's version, the managing editor singled out the photographer and coined the term "visual plagiarism," prompting a staffer to ask if such an offense existed.⁹²

Comparing similar cases between newspapers reveals definitional disagreement. Copying from a book was considered plagiarism at the *Baltimore Sun*,⁹³ but not at the *Wall Street Journal*.⁹⁴ When Octavio Roca of the *Miami Herald* reused articles he had written for previous employers, his paper dismissed him and called the offense plagiarism.⁹⁵ Yet when Mickey Herskowitz of the *Houston Chronicle* recycled a column he had written for the *Houston Post*, the *Chronicle* said the offense was "bad form" but was not plagiarism.⁹⁶

Ambiguity also resulted from journalism's ingrained reluctance to attribute. Douglas Martin of the *New York Times* said he did not attribute information from two London newspapers that supplied half of an obituary he wrote because foreign correspondents were used to copying from overseas publications.⁹⁷ *San Francisco Chronicle* reporter Edward Guthmann said he did not attribute quotations to *New Yorker* because the magazine piece was two years old and the quotations were "general."⁹⁸ One of the interviewees said it used to be the newspaper's practice to recycle quotations as long as their accuracy had been confirmed. Another interviewee copied press releases, which the newspaper did not normally credit.

Attribution aversion surfaced frequently in sports. When golfer Tiger Woods won a U.S. Open by fifteen strokes, Mitchell Krugel, sports editor of the *San Antonio Express-News*, wrote a question-and-answer column drawn entirely from other news sources, yet the only attribution was a line at the end: "Express-News wire services contributed to this report."⁹⁹ After a competitor complained, Krugel said such copying was common. "We would be kidding ourselves if we thought this didn't happen all the time," he said.¹⁰⁰

The *Hartford Courant* public editor quoted the paper's sports editor, Jeff Otterbein, as saying that newspapers routinely filch items for "notebook" columns.¹⁰¹ When a reader of Tom FitzGerald's *San Francisco Chronicle* compendium of humorous sports items¹⁰² complained that a paragraph was copied verbatim from the *Boston Globe*, his editor decided that although FitzGerald placed his name on material gathered and reported by others, the notebook column was not plagiarism.¹⁰³

After the author of a book about baseball spring training complained that the *Orlando Sentinel* copied his work, the paper's public editor acknowledged the book and seventeen other sources should have been credited¹⁰⁴ but denied the copying was plagiarism.¹⁰⁵ Reporter Emily Badger said she thought an editor would cover attribution through a chart and added, "Sports departments do a notoriously poor job of sourcing,"¹⁰⁶

When the *Detroit Free-Press* investigated columns written by Mitch Albom,¹⁰⁷ it found multiple instances in which Albom lifted quotes gathered by others, including exclusive comments. Albom said quotations did not have to be attributed if they were copied accurately, an assertion supported by the paper's sports editor.¹⁰⁸

One of the interviewees said reporters covering NASCAR races quoted drivers as if they had been interviewed without telling readers the statements came from handout sheets supplied by automaker representatives. Another interviewee described how several newspapers whose writers covered an athletic conference hired someone to compile and distribute stories, conference call transcripts, and quotes so the journalists could take from each other without attribution.

Plagiarism Types

Although plagiarism is generally conceived as monolithic, the cases captured by this study fit a four-factor typology. The most egregious type, such as that associated with Blair, can be considered appropriation plagiarism: knowingly and repeatedly taking another's work. Although Blair is often cited as a plagiarism exemplar, such brazen serial thefts are rare. Only four of the seventy-six plagiarism cases, all of which involved rationalizing dishonesty, fit the category of appropriation plagiarism.¹⁰⁹

Far more common is research plagiarism, which is blending original reporting with someone else's words or insufficient attribution. Sixty-seven of the cases, or 88.2%, fit this type, and can stem from any of the three antecedents.

A third type is self-plagiarism, defined as a journalist recycling his or her own words published by a different employer (but excluding instances in which a journalist reuses material from prior stories for the same employer). Such a definition reflects the fact that ownership of a writer's words is generally assigned to the newspaper, not to the journalist, and, of the two cases of self-plagiarism cited earlier, favors the *Miami Herald's* assessment. In those two cases, self-plagiarism resulted from definitional ambiguity.

The fourth type is idea plagiarism, which surfaced in three cases. Two involved visuals (the aforementioned re-creation of a posed picture in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* and a *Tulsa World* political cartoon that closely mirrored one drawn twenty-four years earlier in the *Hartford Courant*¹¹⁰) and one involved words, when a *Star Tribune* editorial writer twice drew heavily from *New Yorker* commentaries.¹¹¹ As with research plagiarism, all three antecedents could be influences on idea plagiarism.

Discussion

This study affirms that plagiarism is not solely an individual-level issue, but results from a combination of personal and situational factors. Two antecedents, rationalizing dishonesty and problematic techniques,

are individual factors while definitional ambiguity is an organizational issue. Moreover, the study shows the offense is situationally defined: editors associate “plagiarism” with dismissal and avoid using the word when the journalist retains employment. The Jayson Blair episode was a watershed resulting in more disclosure of plagiarism episodes and a greater willingness to dismiss offenders.

Beyond demonstrating that plagiarism varies in type, cause, and definition, the study exposes an underlying pretense of journalistic originality. Editors who portrayed plagiarism cases to their readers struggled to explain why it mattered, calling it a breaking of trust with readers¹¹² or a violation of principles.¹¹³ Such vague descriptions reflect the tenet that plagiarism is the theft of someone else’s original work. However, normative journalism is duplicative, reproducing the words and ideas of others. Absent subpoena power, journalists depend on officials to ferret out information; limited by time and geography, they rely on peers for story templates and ideas.

Still, journalists are reluctant to reveal all their sources for fear of crediting competitors and betraying their dependence on borrowing. They minimize attribution and treat paraphrasing as a sovereign remedy for plagiarism. Tellingly, seven of the eight journalists interviewed said their mistake was insufficient rewriting; only one mentioned attribution. Yet the cure for plagiarism is attribution, which is why the offense matters: it denies readers the opportunity to evaluate the credibility of sources and the origins of news.¹¹⁴

In ignoring journalism’s unoriginal essence and asserting that plagiarism is a heinous offense demanding banishment from the professional town square, the fourth estate engages in an extension of paradigm repair¹¹⁵ that can be dubbed paradigm disguise.

If plagiarism is viewed as an affront not to other journalists but to readers, its status as “one of the worst offenses” ought to be weighed against other credibility-detracting infractions that rarely result in dismissal, such as when a reporter is caught in a compromising relationship with a source or produces a story so inaccurate a front-page correction is required.

Even though Blair is justifiably vilified for his serial plagiarism, his news-altering admissions that he changed a story to benefit a friend and exchanged coverage for sex¹¹⁶ are rarely mentioned by journalists or educators. Journalists treat plagiarism more seriously because it unmasks the *pretense of originality*.

Paradigm disguise describes the professional routine that concentrates on phrasal similarities to divert attention away from the borrowing that underpins journalism. The increased willingness of journalists in the post-Blair era to divulge plagiarism and treat it as a capital offense is a purification ritual predicted by paradigm repair.

It is also a paradigm disguise that allows journalists to avoid acknowledging that the news they produce is less an original enterprise than an iterative repackaging of information.

Plagiarism is an epistemological transgression that should be taken seriously, and this study offers practical application. Newspapers

that want less plagiarism should define it better than “never plagiarize.” Editors can distinguish among types of plagiarism and severity in evaluating responses; reserving the term for dismissal and using synonyms for less noxious cases risks invoking the corrosive influence of dismissive euphemisms¹¹⁷ and results in definitional malleability. Above all, professionals and educators must restore the primacy of attribution. Journalists should abandon the “excessive pride”¹¹⁸ that precludes acknowledgment of a story’s origins and routinize hypertext links or “about the sources” sidebars for narrative works if they want to change the traditions that facilitate plagiarism.

This study examined plagiarism cases that had been made public; research is needed to determine how often the offense occurs. Future studies also could evaluate whether changes in newsroom climate or management style moderate plagiarism. Researchers could employ personality measures to compare those accused of plagiarism with the population of newspaper journalists. They could also evaluate plagiarism by genre, to determine whether departments such as sports are more prone to copying.

Additionally, researchers could study how technology influences plagiarism as it redefines when information becomes “general knowledge” and facilitates copy-and-paste behavior while aiding detection through search engines and software tools.

Finally, research could test whether print’s migration to an online medium and acceptance of hyperlinks ruptures the professional ideology behind paradigm disguise. If journalists are going to reduce plagiarism, they will have to drop the facade of originality and see attribution as part of the story.

NOTES

1. Nexis database search of “Jayson Blair” for “all newspapers” in 2003.

2. *Newsweek*, May 18, 2003; *Atlantic*, May 2004.

3. Jayson Blair, *Burning Down My Masters’ House: My Life at The New York Times* (Beverly Hills: New Millennium Press, 2004); Seth Mnookin, *Hard News: The Scandals at The New York Times and Their Meaning for American Media* (NY: Random House, 2004).

4. Jill Rosen, “We Mean Business,” *American Journalism Review*, June/July 2004, 22-29.

5. *Washington Post* Standards and Ethics, <http://www.asne.org/ideas/codes/washingtonpost.htm>.

6. Jan Johnson Yopp and Katherine C. McAdams, *Reaching Audiences: A Guide to Media Writing*, 3d ed. (Boston: Pearson Education, 2003), 246.

7. For example, plagiarism is barely mentioned in leading textbooks by Philip Patterson and Lee C. Wilkins, *Media Ethics: Issues and Cases*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2007); Clifford G. Christians, Kim B. Rotzoll, Mark Fackler, Kathy Brittain McKee, and Robert H. Woods Jr., *Media*

Ethics: Cases and Moral Reasoning, 5th ed. (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2004); and Ron F. Smith, *Groping for Ethics in Journalism*, 5th ed. (Ames: IA State Press, 2003).

8. Fifteen of thirty-five ethics codes archived at the American Society of Newspaper Editors Web site, www.asne.org, do not mention plagiarism or attribution.

9. Society of Professional Journalists ethics code, <http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp>.

10. Mark Fitzgerald, "Why They Do It: Desperation? Kleptomania? Stupidity? Or Just Plain Lazy," *Editor & Publisher*, August 7, 2000, 23.

11. Pamela J. Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese, *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content*, 2d ed. (White Plains, NY: Longman Publishers, 1996), 20.

12. W. Lance Bennett, Lynne A. Gressett, and William Haltom, "Repairing the News: A Case Study of the News Paradigm," *Journal of Communication* 35 (spring 1985): 50-68.

13. Stephen D. Reese, "The News Paradigm and the Ideology of Objectivity: A Socialist at The Wall Street Journal," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 7 (December 1990): 390-409.

14. Ronald Bishop, "From Behind the Walls: Boundary Work by News Organizations in Their Coverage of Princess Diana's Death," *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 23 (January 1999): 90-112; Dan Berkowitz, "Doing Double Duty: Paradigm Repair and the Princess Diana What-a-Story," *Journalism* 1 (August 2000): 125-43.

15. Elizabeth Blanks Hindman, "Jayson Blair, *The New York Times*, and Paradigm Repair," *Journal of Communication* 55 (June 2005): 225-41.

16. Christopher Hanson, Robert G. Picard, and Paul McMasters, "Debate: The Jayson Blair Case and Newsroom Ethics," *Journalism Studies* 5 (August 2004): 399-408.

17. Dominic L. Lasorsa and Jia Dai, "Newsroom's Normal Accident? An Exploratory Study of 10 Cases of Journalistic Deception," *Journalism Practice* 1 (summer 2007): 159-74.

18. Jerry Chaney and Tom Duncan, "Editors, Teachers Disagree About Definition of Plagiarism," *Journalism Educator* 40 (summer 1985): 13-16.

19. Marie Dunne White, "Plagiarism and the News Media," *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* 4 (1989): 265-80.

20. David H. Weaver, Randal A. Beam, Bonnie J. Brownlee, Paul S. Voakes, and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, *The American Journalist in the 21st Century: U.S. News People at the Dawn of a New Millennium* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2007), 159.

21. Roy Peter Clark, "The Unoriginal Sin," *Washington Journalism Review*, March 1983, 43-47.

22. Howard Kurtz, *Media Circus* (NY: Times Books, 1993), 124.

23. Allan Wolper, "Copycat Syndrome," *Editor & Publisher*, June 30, 2003, 34.

24. Fred Brown, "Ethics Calls Apply Widely," *Quill*, March 2004, 22.

25. *News-Gazette* (Champaign, IL) ethics code, <http://www.asne.org/ideas/codes/newsgazette.htm>.

-
26. *Oxford English Dictionary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), vol. VII, 932.
 27. American Society of Newspaper Editors ethics code, <http://www.asne.org/kiosk/archive/principl.htm>.
 28. *Asbury Park Press* (Neptune, NJ) ethics code, <http://www.asne.org/ideas/codes/asburyparkpress.htm>.
 29. *News-Gazette* ethics code, <http://www.asne.org/ideas/codes/newsgazette.htm>.
 30. *Orlando Sentinel* ethics code, <http://www.asne.org/index.cfm?ID=410>.
 31. *San Jose Mercury News* ethics code, <http://www.asne.org/ideas/codes/sanjosemercurynews.htm>; *Kansas City Star* ethics code, <http://www.asne.org/ideas/codes/sanjosemercurynews.htm>.
 32. Clark, "The Unoriginal Sin."
 33. Steve Buttry, "When Does Sloppy Attribution Become Plagiarism?" September 20, 2006, American Press Institute, http://www.americanpressinstitute.org/pages/resources/2006/09/when_does_sloppy_attribution_b/
 34. *Washington Post* Standards and Ethics, <http://www.asne.org/ideas/codes/washingtonpost.htm>; *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* ethics code, <http://www.asne.org/index.cfm?id=5108>.
 35. David Shaw, "Recycling the News: Just Laziness or Plagiarism?" *Los Angeles Times*, July 6, 1984.
 36. Malcolm Gladwell, "Something Borrowed," *New Yorker*, November 22, 2004, 47.
 37. For example, the March 2001 cover story of *American Journalism Review* was on "The Fabrication and Plagiarism Outbreak" and the Freedom Forum blends the two offenses in a catalog of "Plagiarism/Fabrication Scandals" (<http://catalog.freedomforum.org/FFLib/JournalistScandals.htm>)
 38. David Shaw, "Plagiarism: a Taint in Journalism," *Los Angeles Times*, July 5, 1984.
 39. Seow Ting Lee, "The Ethics of Journalistic Deception," in *The Moral Media: How Journalists Reason About Ethics*, ed. Lee Wilkins and Renita Coleman (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005), 100.
 40. Seow Ting Lee, "Lying to Tell the Truth: Journalists and the Social Context of Deception," *Mass Communication & Society* 7 (2004): 97-120, 99.
 41. Sandra L. Robinson and Rebecca J. Bennett, "Workplace Deviance: Its Definitions, Its Manifestations, and Its Causes," in *Research on Negotiation in Organizations*, vol. 6, ed. Roy J. Lewicki, Robert J. Bies, and Blair H. Sheppard (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1997), 14.
 42. Michael D. Mumford, Mary Shane Connelly, Whitney B. Helton, Jill M. Strange, and Holly K. Osburn, "On the Construct Validity of Integrity Tests: Individual and Situational Factors as Predictors of Test Performance," *International Journal of Selection and Assessment* 9 (September 2001): 240-57.
 43. C. Daniel Batson, Elizabeth R. Thompson, Greg Seufferling, Heather Whitney, and Jon A. Strongman, "Moral Hypocrisy: Appearing Moral to Oneself Without Being So," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 77

(September 1999): 525-37.

44. <http://catalog.freedomforum.org/FFLib/JournalistScandals.htm>.

45. Grant McCracken, *The Long Interview* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1998), 37.

46. Robert S. Weiss, *Learning From Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies* (New York: Free Press, 1994), 17.

47. According to ASNE newsroom surveys from 1999 through 2006, men averaged 62.8% of newsroom employment at U.S. daily newspapers, ranging during that period from 62.3% to 63.1%, <http://www.asne.org/index.cfm?id=5660>.

48. The Newspaper Association of America uses four categories: (1) under 50,000 circulation; (2) 50,000 to 100,000; (3) 100,001 to 250,000; and (4) over 250,000.

49. Karen Locke, "The Grounded Theory Approach to Qualitative Research," in *Measuring and Analyzing Behavior in Organizations: Advances in Measurement and Data Analysis*, ed. Fritz Drasgow and Neal Schmitt (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 18.

50. See footnote 47.

51. Two of the seventy-six cases involved unnamed people. Of the remaining seventy-four, sixty were men.

52. Weaver et al., *The American Journalist*, 11.

53. Sara Jaffee and Janet Shibley Hyde, "Gender Differences in Moral Orientation: A Meta-Analysis," *Psychological Bulletin* 126 (September 2000): 703-26.

54. 2005 newspaper census data compiled by the ASNE, obtained by telephone request.

55. The newspaper in the study with the second most cases, the *Salt Lake Tribune*, had three.

56. www.timeswatch.org.

57. www.regrettheerror.com.

58. The "immediate dismissal" category excluded a couple of cases in which journalists who initially escaped dismissal were later hounded by their peers into departing.

59. Mnookin, *Hard News*, 115, footnote.

60. Mitchell Krugel, "A Letter from the Sports Editor," *San Antonio Express-News*, July 15, 2000, sec. C, p. 2.

61. John Temple, "Editorial Did Not Meet Standards of the News," *Rocky Mountain News*, August 5, 2005, sec. A, p. 2.

62. Julia Wallace, "To Our Readers," *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, April 28, 2006, sec. A, p. 2.

63. Michael Roberts, "The Message," *Denver Westword*, August 11, 2005.

64. Colin McEnroe, "On Plagiarism, and What to Do About It," *Hartford Courant*, Aug. 14, 1991, sec. A., p.1.

65. "Editor's note," *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 5, 2005, sec. A, p. 2.

66. Jacques Steinberg, "Times Reporter Resigns After Questions on Article," *New York Times*, May 2, 2003, sec. A, p. 30, col. 5.

67. Howard Kurtz, "TV Wary of Problems That Keep Popping Up in Print," *Washington Post*, July 14, 2003, sec. C, p. 1.

68. Journalists who copied fewer than three paragraphs were coded as "limited"; those with more than three paragraphs in three or more stories were coded as "serial"; those in between were coded as "substantial."

69. Bennett, Gressett, and Haltom, "Repairing the News"; Reese, "The News Paradigm," Bishop, "From Behind the Walls"; Berkowitz, "Doing Double Duty"; Hindman, "Jayson Blair."

70. Howard Kurtz, "Ethics Pressure Squeezes a Few Out the Door," *Washington Post*, May 2, 2005, sec. C, p. 1.

71. "Public writings" include everything that could be found about each case through Nexis and Factiva databases and Web search engines. This included not only the publication involved, but also external sources that wrote about the episodes, including alternative weeklies, city magazines, business publications, journalism trade publications, and blogs.

72. Letter to Jim Romenesko, Poynter Institute for Media Studies Web site, http://poynter.org/forum/view_post.asp?id=9714.

73. Erik Wemple, "Taking Names," *Washington City Paper*, June 6-12, 2003.

74. Carl Cannon, "Editorial Page Editor Resigns; Publisher Pledges Highest Standards," *Florida Times-Union* (Jacksonville), November 2, 2004, sec. B, p. 1.

75. Craig L. Pearce and H.P. Sims Jr., "Vertical Versus Shared Leadership as Predictors of the Effectiveness of Change Management Teams: An Examination of Aversive, Directive, Transactional, Transformational, and Empowering Leader Behaviors," *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice* 6 (2002): 172-97; Michael E. Brown, Linda K. Treviño, and David A. Harrison, "Ethical Leadership: A Social Learning Perspective for Construct Development and Testing," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 79 (2005): 117-34; Dawn S. Carlson and Pamela L. Perrewe, "Institutionalization of Organizational Ethics Through Transformational Leadership," *Journal of Business Ethics* 14 (1995): 829-38; Edward Aronson, "Integrating Leadership Styles and Ethical Perspectives," *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences* 18 (2001): 244-56.

76. Satish P. Deshpande, "Ethical Climate and the Link between Success and Ethical Behavior: An Empirical Investigation of a Non-profit Organization," *Journal of Business Ethics* 15 (1993): 315-20, 317.

77. Dan Barry, David Barstow, Jonathan D. Glater, Adam Liptak, and Jacques Steinberg, "Correcting the Record: Times Reporter Who Resigned Leaves Long Trail of Deception," *New York Times*, May 11, 2003, sec. A, p. 1, col. 1.

78. Blair, *Burning Down My Masters' House*, xi.

79. Blair, *Burning Down My Masters' House*, 21.

80. Gretchen Wenner, "A Californian Reporter's Web of Deceit," *Bakersfield Californian*, November 15, 2005.

81. Charlie Lanter, "Telegraph Reporter Fired After Questions Raised About Stories," *Macon Telegraph* (Macon, GA), March 7, 2004, sec. A, p. 1; Rosen, "We Mean Business."

82. Maria Trombly, "To Check or Not to Check?" *Quill*, May 2004, 19.

-
83. Lanter, "Telegraph Reporter Fired."
84. Leonard Pitts Jr., "Chris Cecil, Plagiarism Gets You Fired," *Miami Herald*, June 3, 2005, sec. B, p. 1.
85. Harry R. Weber, "Small-Town Newspaper Columnist Fired for Plagiarizing Work of Pulitzer Winner," *Associated Press*, June 3, 2005.
86. David Callahan, *The Cheating Culture: Why More Americans Are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2004), 168.
87. Self-efficacy enables individuals to display greater integrity: Michael D. Mumford, Mary Shane Connelly, and Lyle E. Leritz, "Integrity in Professional Settings: Individual and Situational Influences," in *Advances in Psychology Research*, vol. 24, ed. Serge P. Shohov (Huntington, NY: Nova Science Publishers, 2005), 221-57, 242.
88. One of the eight interviewees committed plagiarism while suffering from depression.
89. Steven Erlanger, "Dramatizing the Mideast's Cacophony," *New York Times*, November 28, 2005, sec. E, p. 3, col. 1; "Editor's Note," *New York Times*, December 2, 2005, sec. A, p. 2, col. 4.
90. Corrections, *Baltimore Sun*, December 24, 2005.
91. David Noack, "St. Louis Post-Dispatch Denies Plagiarism Charge," *Editor & Publisher*, October 24, 1998, 8; Hsiao-Ching Chou, "Key Ingredient was Omitted: The Credit," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, August 30, 2000, sec. E, p. 1; Cannon, "Editorial Page Editor Resigns."
92. Louise Seals, "Ethics Case: We Erred, and Now We Are Taking Action," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, August 28, 2005, sec. E, p. 4.
93. Corrections, *Baltimore Sun*, November 24, 1999.
94. Gloria Cooper, "Darts & Laurels," *Columbia Journalism Review*, November/December 1998, 27.
95. Tom Fiedler, "The Herald's Most Valuable Asset: Your Trust in Us," *Miami Herald*, July 4, 2004, sec. L, p. 1; "The Xerox Man," *Miami New Times*, July 1, 2004.
96. "Sports Reporter Fired After Rerunning Work," *Quill*, June/July 2004, 63. The title is erroneous; the journalist was suspended, not fired.
97. Dan Kennedy, "Changing the Rules," *Boston Phoenix*, July 20-27, 2000.
98. Tommy Craggs, "A Bridge Too Far," *SF Weekly*, November 16, 2005.
99. Mitchell Krugel, "Can Man or Course Tame Tiger?" *San Antonio Express-News*, June 20, 2000, sec. C, p. 1.
100. Krugel, "A Letter From the Sports Editor"; Joe Strupp, "S.A. Scribe Scored on Sourcing," *Editor & Publisher*, July 24, 2000, 14.
101. Karen Hunter, "Stop Me If You've Read This Before," *Hartford Courant*, February 9, 2003, sec. C, p. 3.
102. Tom FitzGerald, "Letter to Readers From Tom FitzGerald," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 26, 2001, sec. D, p. 2.
103. Dan Fost, "Sports Humor Columnist Reinstated by Chronicle," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 26, 2001, sec. A, p. 22.
104. "Clarification," *Orlando Sentinel*, March 7, 2004.
105. Richard Prince, "Orlando Plagiarism Charges Escape Much Attention," *Maynard Institute*, June 30, 2004, www.maynardije.org

/columns/dickprince/040630_prince.

106. Torea Frey, "Ex-Daily Editor Feels the Heat in Orlando," *Daily Northwestern*, May 21, 2004.

107. Mitch Albom wrote a column, "Longing for Another Slice of Dorm Pizza," *Detroit Free Press*, April 3, 2005, in which he wrote about two former Michigan State players attending the 2005 NCAA men's basketball Final Four games on a Saturday, using phrases such as "They sat in the stands, in their MSU clothing, and rooted on their alma mater." Albom spoke to the players ahead of the event. When neither attended, Albom's column turned out to be a fabrication and the newspaper investigated. See also Mitch Albom, "I Owe You an Apology for Sunday's Column: Here It Is," *Detroit Free Press*, April 7, 2005.

108. David Zeman, Jeff Seidel, Jennifer Dixon, and Tamara Audi, "Albom Probe Shows No Pattern of Deceit," *Detroit Free Press*, May 16, 2005, sec. A, p. 1.

109. *USA Today's* Jack Kelley, who achieved almost as much notoriety as Jayson Blair, doesn't fit in the appropriation category because, although his fabrications were repeated and serious, his plagiarism generally involved minor lifting of quotes.

110. *Tulsa World* cartoonist David Simpson was fired five months after Bob Englehart of the *Hartford Courant* pointed out his twenty-four-year-old cartoon had been copied, reflecting the ambiguity journalists have about idea plagiarism. "World Cartoonist Loses Job After Plagiarism Investigation," *Tulsa World*, November 11, 2005, sec. A, p. 1; Matt Eagan, "Tulsa Paper Fires Cartoonist; Says He Plagiarized 1981 Englehart Work," *Hartford Courant*, November 12, 2005, sec. B, p. 5.

111. Kate Parry, "Can a Writer Unintentionally Plagiarize?" *Star Tribune*, November 19, 2006, sec. AA, p. 2; "Star Tribune Plagiarism Probe Clears Minn. Editorial Page Writer's Work," *Associated Press*, December 17, 2006.

112. Mark Silverman, "Accuracy, Trust are Paramount," *Detroit News*, December 22, 2000, sec. A., p. 2; Janet Weaver, "From Grade School On, Plagiarism is Forbidden," *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, June 23, 2002, sec. B, p. 3.

113. Linda Grist Cunningham, "Rockford Register Star Sports Reporter Glennon Dismissed," *Rockford Register Star*, May 26, 2001, sec. C., p. 1; Harry T. Whitin, "Plagiarism: A Cardinal Sin of Journalism," *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*, February 13, 2005, sec. C, p. 2.

114. Edward Wasserman, "Plagiarism and Precedence," *Media Ethics* (fall 2006): 16.

115. Bennett, Gressett, and Haltom, "Repairing the News"; Reese, "The News Paradigm"; Bishop, "From Behind the Walls"; Berkowitz, "Doing Double Duty"; Hindman, "Jayson Blair."

116. Blair, *Burning Down My Masters' House*, 138, 226.

117. Albert Bandura, "Social Cognitive Theory of Mass Communication," in *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research*, 2d ed., ed. Jennings Bryant and Dolf Zillmann (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2002), 132-3.

118. Byron Calame, "Reporting the News Even When a Competitor Gets There First," *New York Times*, March 1, 2008, sec. 4, p. 14, col. 2.