

Correct Citation Practice

shades of grey in plagiarism

Lex Bouter

Content

- Impact of Plagiarism
- The Case - accusation
- The Memorandum
- The Case - verdict
- Conclusions



Spectrum of research practices

How it should be done:

Relevant, Valid, Reproducible, Efficient

Sloppy science:

Ignorance, honest error or dubious integrity

Scientific fraud:

Fabrication, Falsification, Plagiarism

*Responsible
Conduct of
Research*

*Questionable
Research
Practices*

*Research
Misconduct*

Forms of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the appropriation of other's people's material without giving proper credit

- Word-for-word plagiarism
- Paraphrasing plagiarism
- Plagiarism of ideas
- Unintentional plagiarism
- Self-plagiarism



Impact of Plagiarism

- Little impact on **validity** of knowledge
- Substantial impact on **trust** between scientists
- Substantial impact on **trust** in science
- Less impact than **F + F**
- Not always **RM**



Ranking research misbehavior

60 items ranked by 34/59 experts at 4th WCRI

- **How often will this misbehavior occur?**

very rarely (1) – rarely (2) – regularly (3) - often (4) - very often (5)

- **If it occurs, how large will its impact be on the
validity of knowledge?**

negligible (1) – small (2) – medium (3) - large (4) - enormous (5)

- **If it occurs, how large will its impact be on the
trust in science?**

negligible (1) – small (2) – medium (3) - large (4) - enormous (5)

Rank numbers

Plagiarism

frequency X

item	freq	truth	trust	truth	trust
Re-use part of your own publications without referencing	16	54	56	39	43
Use published phrases or ideas of others without referencing	29	51	27	44	26
Use unpublished phrases or ideas of others without their permission	39	48	41	47	48
Duplicate publication without disclosure	41	39	38	42	52
Re-use of previously published data without disclosure	42	37	50	41	56

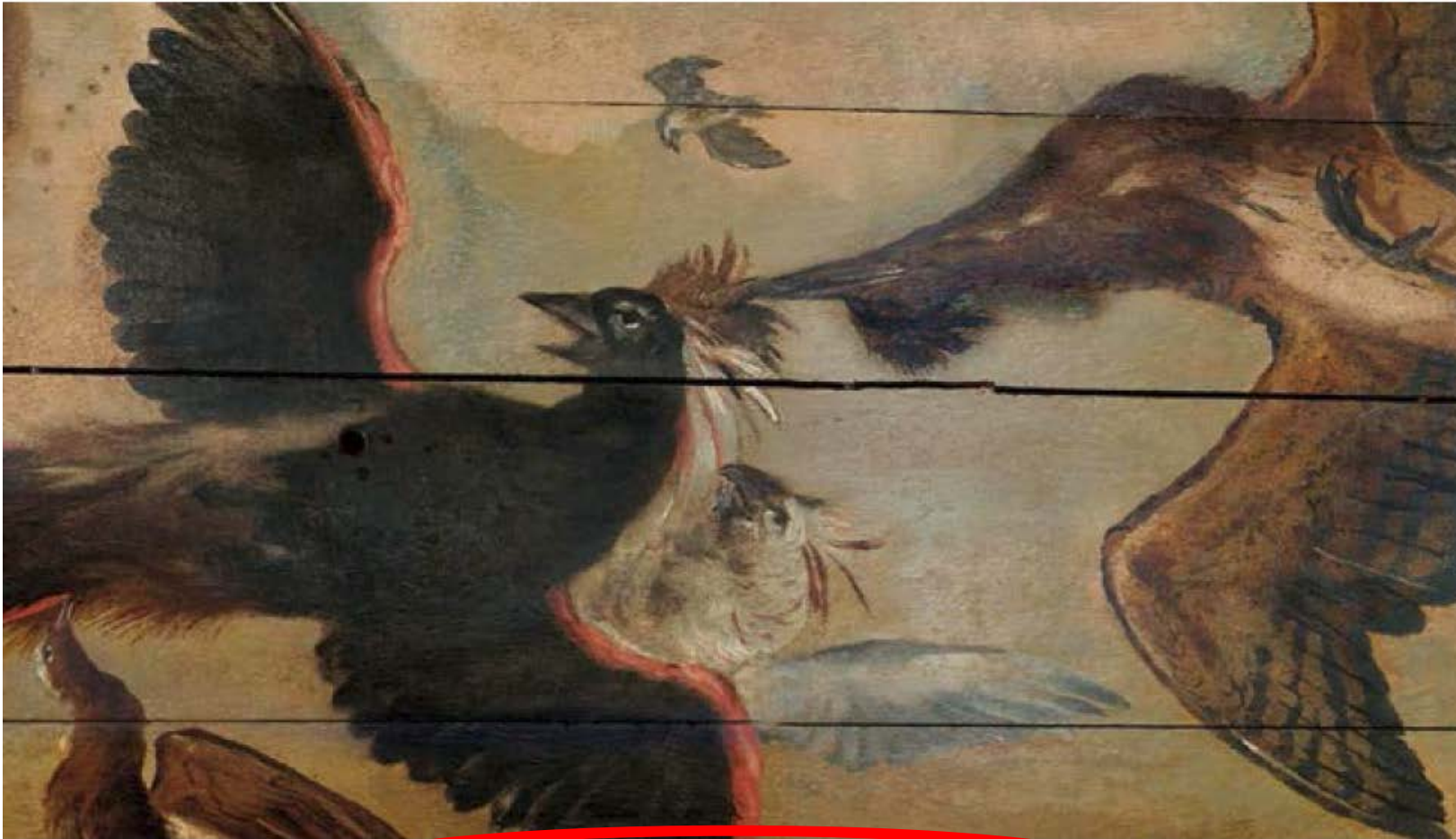
The Case - accusation

- Anonymous allegation of **self-plagiarism** in 16 publications
- High profile professor of economy (2,400 publications)
- ‘Character assassination’ in major newspaper
- **Investigation** → Research Misconduct
- 2 articles retracted by Review of Economic Analysis
- **Appeal** → **NO** Research Misconduct
- Self-plagiarism not in NL Code of Conduct → **memorandum**
- **Investigation** of complete oeuvre


CORRECT CITATION PRACTICE

Academy Advisory Memorandum

April 2014



Strutting with borrowed plumes



Debora
Weber-Wulff

False Feathers

A Perspective
on Academic Plagiarism

The Memorandum -1

- Self-plagiarism doesn't exist → stealing from oneself is not possible
- Core topic: **re-use of material without reference to its source**
- **Referencing the source is the norm**
- Labelled as quotation if word-for-word re-use of text is at issue
- Re-use can be verbatim, summarized, paraphrased, translated
- Impact (adverse effects) depends on a number of factors
- Re-use of material without reference to its source
→ **RM, QRP or no problem**

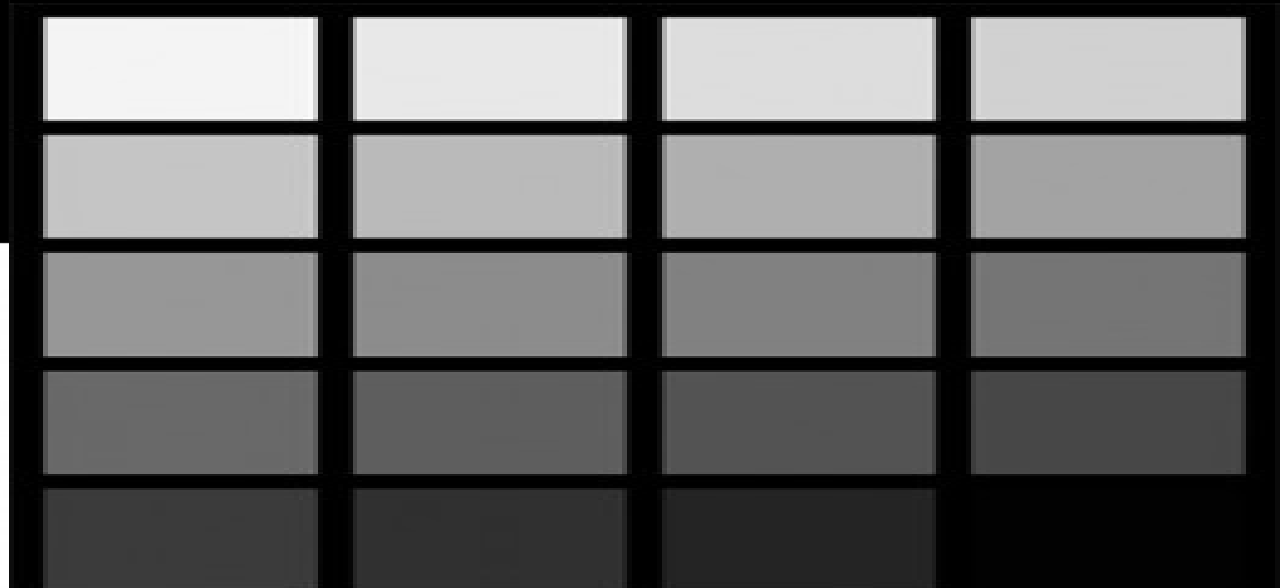
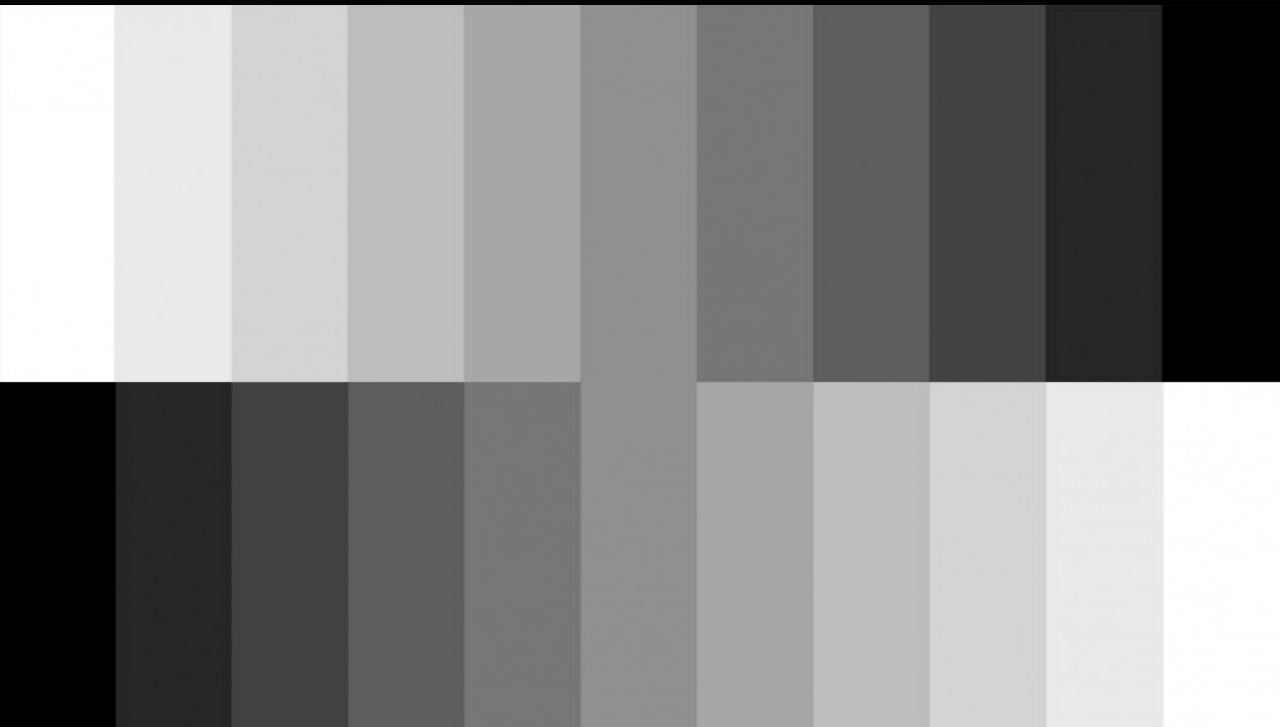
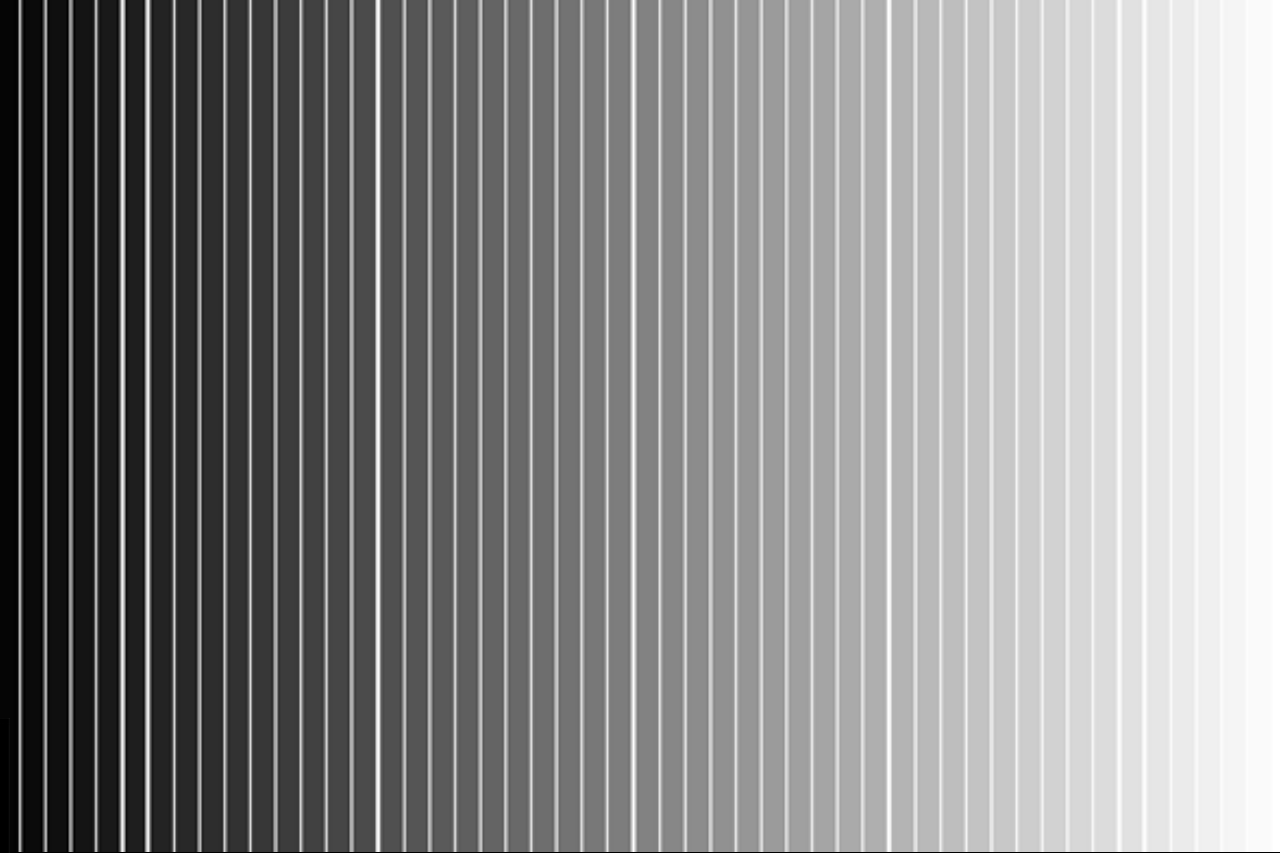
<i>Re-use of material without reference to its source</i>	Material of others	Material made together with others	Own material
<i>Definitions and theory description (introduction or methods section)</i>	Sometimes QRP	No QRP	No QRP
<i>‘Real’ knowledge production (results or discussion section)</i>	RM	QRP	Sometimes QRP
<i>Data eligible for meta-analysis</i>	RM	RM	RM

The Memorandum -2

- Allow for the factors from the table
- Take into account the extent, frequency and context of re-use
- Re-use of material **with reference** can also be a QRP, e.g.
 - deliberate over- or under-citation
 - distorted citation
- Referencing all sources is impossible and not necessary
 - ideas may have become **common knowledge**
 - same ideas can often be found in in **multiple materials**

The Memorandum - 3

- Involve **peers** in judgments on accusations of (self-)plagiarism
- Do not confuse **plagiarism** with violation of **copyright**
- Update the NL Code of Conduct
- Do not apply rules that did not yet exist
- **Plagiarism Scanners** have serious limitations
- Discussion will continue



The Case - verdict

- Committee investigating complete oeuvre used the Memorandum
- Re-use of own or coauthored articles without reference to its source
- Peer reviewed 'born digital' articles since 1995 in university database
- Analysis with **iThenticate** followed by manual interpretation of re-use
- **60 of 261 articles re-used strings of > 50 consecutive words**
- Publication strategy: quantity above originality
- **No RM (plagiarism), but clearly QRP**

Conclusions

- Plagiarism has **little impact on truth, but moderate impact on trust**
- Referencing the source of re-used material is the norm
- Not referencing can be **RM, QRP or no problem**
- Depending on
 - What is the function of the re-use in the paper?
 - Is the author that re-uses without referencing (co-)author?
- **Always involve peers** in judgments on accusations of plagiarism

5th World Conference on Research Integrity



www.wcri2017.org

The Netherlands
May 28th-31st, 2017



Im.bouter@vu.nl