ABSTRACT

Much of the scholarship in composition studies focuses on plagiarism as an epidemic, students’ dwindling ethics and lack of dedication to their academic careers. A few scholars, however, look beyond the personal or moral “flaws” of the individual learner and explore how students perceive and respond to the work of the writing classroom, the very context in which and from which students compose. I build on their body of work by grounding this study with Stuart Greene’s insightful characterization of authorship as a “relational term. . . situated within a broad sociocultural landscape” (“Making Sense of My Own Ideas” 213). I turn to Robert Kegan’s influential work in The Evolving Self to unpack what it means to understand authorship as a “relational term” and to illuminate the complex interactions—the relational interactions—among student learners, the development of authorship, and the instructional environment of the writing classroom.

This study uses survey research to examine students’ understanding and attitudes toward authorship and plagiarism. Participants included approximately 150 students enrolled in First-Year Writing (101, 102, and/103) and/or sophomore literature during the spring-fall semesters, 2009. Two areas of interest were: to learn about students’ beliefs and understanding of authorship and plagiarism at different points in their writing experiences; and, to explore relationships between students’ views of authorship and plagiarism and Kegan’s theory of psychological development. After analyzing students’ responses to survey questions, I argue that students’ understanding of authorship and plagiarism correspond to Kegan’s theory. I use Kegan’s work to build upon our knowledge of students, explain authorship as a manifestation of
who students are psychologically, and describe students’ perceptions and responses to the
writing classroom.

This study is not only timely and relevant in the field of composition, but it is also
necessary as those of us in education attempt to teach a generation of students with varying
commitments to and interests in the values of academia. This study should provide a foundation
to begin looking at students’ textual practices, but more importantly, this study may speak to a
larger issue: student resistance toward discussing the topic of plagiarism.
DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to the most beautiful people I know: Brent, Schyler Brenton, Ezra, Mother and Daddy. I also dedicate this book to my late grandfather James Alton Richards.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I must first and foremost thank the chair of my committee Dr. Carolyn Handa for her support, guidance, and patient spirit. I could not have completed this project without your belief in me and my work. Dr. Handa, I would also like to thank you for revitalizing this program with your energy and humor. Thank you to Dr. Ralph Voss who worked so very hard to support me during my time and work at the University of Alabama. For a brief time, Dr. Voss, you carried many students, and the CRES program alone, and I thank you for your commitment. Thank you Dr. Amy Dayton-Wood for your enthusiasm and ideas as I learned my way around the Institutional Review Board. I would like to offer a special thank you to Dr. Luke Niiler. Dr. Niiler did not know me prior to joining my committee, yet his service offered more support, respect, and insight than I could have imagined. Thank you for being such a pleasure to work with. I would also like to thank Dr. Lisa Scherff. Without your perspective and contributions, I would have never attempted such a project. Your voice and wisdom helped me get through some difficult times. I would also like to thank the English Department’s most amazing graduate guide Carol Appling for always assisting me at a moment’s notice!

Thank you to my beautiful mother and father. I aspire to love as you love and give as you give. Thank you to my most favorite person. Words cannot express my love, friendship, and respect. Brent, this would mean nothing without you. Thank you to my beautiful children, Schyler Brenton and Ezra. You have walked this road with me at such young ages. This is for you. Above all, thank you to the Most High. I finally shut up and listened.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

My experiences as an adjunct instructor at a local two-year community college and as a graduate teaching assistant at a state university have no doubt influenced my perspectives on the theory and teaching of writing. These experiences have helped shape each semester and allowed me to build on material and teaching strategies as I plan each term for a new group of students. However, while these two academic institutions differ greatly in multiple ways, one experience is consistently the same: first-year writing students exhibit the same struggles in both settings when it comes to issues of authorship, struggles that take shape in various forms: from trouble with basic textual production, cut and paste essays, poor documentation, weak integration of research, to blatant plagiarism. Moreover, these struggles seem to persist even after classroom discussions, instructions, workshops, and student-teacher conferences. Students' frustrations tend to manifest into one seemingly simple request: "just tell me what you want" in the paper.

Unlike other pedagogical experiences in the writing classroom, these struggles with authorship have not left me with a deeper understanding of my students, nor have I discovered effective strategies to alter my classroom practice. I have not been able to make sense of why academic authorship is often so difficult for students to grasp; why some students choose to forego their own authority and plagiarize; why students struggle to articulate the reasons they plagiarize; and why the relevant literature in the field struggles to explain the gap between the scholarship and administrative practice. Furthermore, my experiences with these students have not passed through my mind as easily as the countless number of successful students. These
students' struggles have somehow stayed with me, along with questions and concerns about plagiarism in the writing classroom and my ability to teach students to engage with material and to author a text with personal agency or academic authority; moreover, these images are complicated by my own loyalties/obligations. As an instructor, I have a professional and ethical commitment to the standards and practices of institutions of higher learning, including the duties of my job as an educator, yet I am also committed to searching beyond student performance and exploring who my students are and how they understand the work we ask them to do. When it comes to issues of plagiarism, these dual roles are not always easily reconciled.

**Purpose of Study**

Each case of plagiarism leaves me with more questions than answers, questions beyond honest students versus dishonest students or dedicated students versus indifferent students; I am, therefore, unwilling to simply accuse and convict my students without first asking what I can learn about authorship from first-year writers. What, if any, common assumptions or experiences do students bring with them regarding textual production, and how do these assumptions and experiences inform their understanding of authorship? Do first-year writers' understandings of authorship differ from their more experienced peers, and if so, how? Furthermore, what constitutes plagiarism in a generation of students with a growing access to changing forms of knowledge and information? Is the notion of authorship static? Does authorship evolve along with our culture, as some compositionists argue, or with our students? Is it instructors' responsibility to respond to authorship in new and changing forms, or are we to still guard the old ways? These questions are not mine alone; I share them with many instructors in the lounges, hallways, and listservs. These are the questions that are rapidly saturating the scholarship in composition and rhetoric. If plagiarism is the elephant in the composition
classroom, what can we learn from the existing scholarship on authorship and plagiarism? What can we learn from students' perspectives on authorship and plagiarism? And what, if any, classroom variables make students more or less likely to forego their own authorship rights? This study attempts to answer these questions as they relate to students in a first-year writing program and a sophomore literature program at a large public institution in the southern United States during the 2009 spring and fall academic semesters.

Relevance to Composition Studies

In “Understanding Academic Misconduct,” Julia M. Christenson Hughes and Donald L. McCabe observe that the prevalence of cheating and plagiarism on college campuses is well documented:

It has been described in the higher education literature as “ubiquitous” (Pincus & Schmelkin, 2003); as an “epidemic” (Haines, Diekhoff, Labeff, & Clark, 1986, p. 342), a “perennial problem” (Davis, Grover, Becker, & McGregor, 1992, p. 16) and “one of the major problems in education today” (Singhal, 1982, p. 775). (2) Hughes and McCabe describe academic dishonesty as a persistent concern on college campuses and as an area of intense focus for those involved in research and education. In “Reflections on the Cultural Climate of Plagiarism,” Matthew S. Willen likewise argues that plagiarism is increasing and suggests that the factors contributing to plagiarism are more complicated than educators may think:

[I]ncidents of plagiarism persist, and, [. . .] are probably on the rise. This persistence, in spite of efforts to teach students what plagiarism is, why it is unethical, and how to avoid it, makes clear that circumstances which lead a student to choose to plagiarize are considerably more complicated than the
Willen’s observations are important in the context of authorship and plagiarism. Even though we teach students how to avoid plagiarism with simple, straightforward guidelines, many continue to interact with a text in a way that is counter to the expectations of academic institutions. Moreover, Willen points out that most often students “choose” to forego their authorship rights. The issue of authorship and plagiarism is clearly more complicated than we perceive.

Over the past ten years the issues of authorship and student plagiarism have become increasingly hot topics in composition studies. This increased interest, or perhaps anxiety, is a response to what is often characterized as a plagiarism “epidemic” among college students as well as the culture at large. This debate has in turn illuminated a growing divide over how educators define plagiarism in the university, how it is addressed in the writing classroom, how we should address such violations, and more specifically, how we understand authorship in the writing classroom. As a result of these professional discussions, two schools of thought have emerged. One school of thought justifiably views plagiarism as a matter of "us versus them," and our primary job in regard to plagiarism is to detect and punish students who commit such acts. This perspective is often described as the “modern” notion of authorship; this view advances the idea that authorship is equivalent to ownership and the written word is the product of the autonomous individual. Scholars and researchers in higher education typically embrace and promote this view because it supports traditional academic values. On the other side of this controversy are composition scholars like Candice Spigelman, Rebecca Moore-Howard, and Kelly Ritter who suggest that rather than focusing all of our attention and resources on how to deal with plagiarism once it has occurred, we should engage in a more proactive approach to
how we and our students understand authorship within the academy in the postmodern era. This view is, therefore, referred to as postmodern because scholars from this perspective typically question the stability of a term like authorship. While this subject is complex, and describing the debate in modern/postmodern terms can be limiting, these terms help us to see the general frame and perspectives from which the views of authorship emerge.

While most teachers routinely encounter academic plagiarism in the writing classroom, it is still a subject that makes many of them uneasy. In "Plagiarisms, Authorships, and the Academic Death Penalty," Rebecca Moore Howard points out that this uneasiness continues to be reflected in the ways we discuss plagiarism:

[M]ost published discussions of student plagiarism proceed from the assumption that plagiarism occurs as a result of one of two possible motivations: an absence of ethics or an ignorance of citation conventions. Some students don't appreciate academic textual values and therefore deliberately submit work that is no[t] their own; others don't understand academic citation conventions and therefore plagiarize inadvertently. (1)

As Howard points out, by reducing our discussion of plagiarism to a lack of ethics or ignorance, we avoid plagiarism, and thereby authorship, in its complexity. Moreover, we ignore the many issues that our students face in the development of their intellectual identity. While Howard’s critique is accurate and the current debate alone marks a significant step toward furthering our understanding of authorship, it too presents limitations: The current debate suggests that authorship is best understood in either/or terms: writing is either a solely individual endeavor or writing is a socially constructed act.

Compositionists have traced the historical roots of these two schools of thought and
illuminated their fundamental differences: Many scholars associate the concept of the solitary author with the Enlightenment view of self most evident in the work of seventeenth century philosopher John Locke (Ouellette 4). Based on this view, if one "authors" a work, he or she, in a sense, creates something unique or different; the writer’s labor designates the work his/her property. This argument, therefore, hinges on what is often referred to as the Romantic view of authorship which maintains that “true” authorship is a solitary act of the writer genius expressing his/her gift/insight through language. Those who distance themselves from the concept of the solitary author, however, tend to embrace an equally limiting view. In his 1968 essay, “Death of the Author,” Roland Barthes argues that “a text is not a line of words releasing a single ‘theological’ meaning (the ‘message’ of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture” (6). Barthes’ argument deconstructs what he refers to as the “modern” concept of author worship, so to speak, and denies originality; therefore, with the “death” of the author, Barthes rejects the Romantic, genius-writer as well as the assertion that language can be owned as property. Meaning is then constructed in the culture/the social. In her book *Standing in the Shadow of Giants*, Rebecca Moore Howard likewise encourages her readers to explore a social view of authorship. She asserts that all writing is, in a sense, patchwriting--collaborative in essence (7, 14). While not all proponents of this view would go as far as Howard, many compositionists would agree that writing is not produced by the writer alone, but includes and therefore reflects, the various experiential and cultural imprints that inform a writer's perspective. From this viewpoint, writing is best understood as a socially constructed act.

Although enlightening and progressive in terms of theory and scholarship, independently,
these views are not pedagogically functional, nor do they provide a comprehensive understanding of what it means to “author” a text as one grows and develops. These views cannot and do not explain how students understand authorship nor do they explain the development of authorship. While both arguments represent competing views of authorship, they point to two equally important aspects of authorship: students need to assert a sense of solitary authorship and find their voices among others, yet students should also recognize that their writing reflects much about the culture/environment that has shaped their very selves. In many ways, writing instruction in the university reflects the fusion of these two perspectives: institutional policies typically mandate individuality, while some writing classrooms incorporate pedagogies that recognize the social construction of knowledge. In “Collaborative Authorship,” Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede observe that writing instruction has undergone a shift over the past twenty years, and most of these changes run counter to the traditional valorization of autonomous individualism, privately held intellectual property, competition, and hierarchy. But instruction in American colleges and universities still reflects traditional assumptions about the nature of the self (autonomous), the concept of authorship (as ownership of singly-held property rights), and the classroom environment (hierarchical, teacher-centered). (425)

Students are often faced with balancing these two contradictory positions simultaneously. Balancing the rigidity of solitary authorship with the flexible and transformative world of language via the internet is not easy for most students. I argue that these two current theories of authorship construct an incompatible binary, which requires students to occupy competing developmental perspectives: collaborate and expand views of authorship in the writing
classroom while authoring under the tension of autonomous textual production. This study attempts to demonstrate the limitations of such thinking.

The authorship binary, however, represents two essential views that are integral to a more pedagogically sound view of authorship. They both can and do inform a framework of psychological development which in turn creates a process view of authorship. This study uses such a framework to explore and promote a view of authorship as an evolving process. As I will argue throughout this study, to be proactive in the study of authorship, educators must be prepared to suspend their previously held conceptions of authorship and plagiarism and recognize the current theories as snapshots, rather than opposing and debatable precepts, along a continuum of a writer’s development. Composition studies should prepare the way for a more comprehensive view of authorship.

**Hypothesis Foundation: Building an Expanded View of Authorship**

In "Making Sense of My Own Ideas: The Problems of Authorship in a Beginning Writing Classroom," Stuart Greene provides the language which both justifies and rationalizes a theory of authorship and encompasses current views of authorship. The very title of Greene's article affirms the difficulties students face as they begin to participate in academic authorship. In response to his students, Greene proposes viewing authorship as a "relational term . . . set within a broad sociocultural landscape" (213). Like proponents of a socially constructed view of authorship, Greene embeds the notion of authorship within one's external context: the social, the cultural, and the instructional. Greene argues that the way students engage in authorship directly

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1 The process view of writing has influenced composition studies and is an integral part of a composition curriculum; authorship as a developing process, however, suggests that students' will assert themselves as writers, and thus authors, differently throughout their academic experiences. Therefore, authorship is not a single end, but a process which manifests differently throughout a writer’s psychological development, academic, and/or professional career.
reflects their history of schooling and culture (190). However, with the use of the term "relational," Greene points us toward an equally important domain: the individual.

Greene's case study presents two students: both are enrolled in a basic writing course, and both come from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds, one Hmong and the other Puerto Rican (190). Greene observes that each student engages in authorship differently. Greene argues that both students' treatment of authorship in their written work reflects the cultural, the social, and the instructional contexts which they have experienced. Greene claims that Vuang, the Asian student, “subordinate[s] his own ideas to those discussed by published authors,” and his learning has encouraged him to “accommodate other people’s ideas” (203, 206). Greene suggests that Vuang’s family and educational history reflects Western accommodation and assimilation (190, 200, 201, 206). Jesus, the Puerto Rican, on the other hand, is entrenched in his culture. Unlike Vuang, Jesus easily asserts his own voice within the context of other sources; Jesus recognizes the value of his sources by interacting with them and using them as a jumping off point, not as the sole authority (209). Jesus, Greene states, interjects his own voice in response to and within the space of "authorities" (210). By evaluating how the students engage with the text, Greene theorizes the importance of students' cultural settings as well as their prior instructional settings.

As previously mentioned, Greene's case study, while narrowly focused, illuminates another equally important aspect of authorship: the individual's psychological domain. For what would any of these areas be without the lens of the individual? Describing authorship as a "relational term," Greene not only recognizes the complexity of a term like authorship, but he more specifically challenges us to explore the complex set of interactions between who our students are and the learning environment in which they find themselves. Greene points to the
interactions that occur when one attempts to author a text: the very use of the term *relational*
requires us to look at both sides of this interaction because the individual is not simply a passive
recipient of outside influences. Greene's insight invites us to look at the individual situated
within the writing classroom at a particular physical time (social, cultural, and instructional), as
well as a particular psychological time. Greene emphasizes this argument by pointing to what
can be found in students' texts—how they do or do not use sources—and recognizing that all too
often it is easier to see what is missing from a text than to see what is actually there (206). While
Greene is interested in how cultural influences shape the basic writers he studies, he does not
argue the significance of his study or place his observations within the broader context of
authorship studies. However, Greene makes significant observations about authorship: he points
to how an individual writer interacts with a text and how that writer attempts to balance the
external influences of the writing classroom and the internal epistemological demands of the self.
Greene’s study illuminates how students respond to “experts” on their subject matter: some
students subvert their voices for that of an authority while others are confident that they can
engage the “experts” on their subject matter. These responses reflect different levels of
psychological development. Moreover, Greene’s term “relational” both encourages and
implicates the environment we create in the writing classroom.

**Authorship Reflected Through Psychological Development**

In an effort to investigate both the psychological and the social, that is, authorship as a
*relational* term, I turn to psychologist educator Robert Kegan and his theory of psychological
development. In his influential work *The Evolving Self*, Kegan provides a framework by which
we can understand the perpetual state of change in which our students, and no less ourselves, are
also engaging, as well as the cultural environment's responsibilities to the growing individual.
Rooted in an established psychological tradition, Kegan's "constructive-developmental" framework emerges from the pioneer work of well-known psychologists Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg (4). However, unlike Piaget's theory of adolescent development and Kohlberg's focus on moral development, Kegan's work looks at the individual’s natural progression into adulthood and attempts to answer the epistemological questions that accompany this growth. As a constructive-developmental approach, Kegan’s theory assumes that individuals’ ways of knowing and understanding their world undergo changes throughout adulthood. As I will explain, Kegan's interest in the changing individual also makes his theory suitable to writing instruction because he transcends notions of concrete psychological progression. Rather than proposing a predetermined step-by-step model that simply correlates development to age, Kegan's theory emphasizes the role of the culture in fostering or hindering psychological development.

The combination of Kegan's general model of the psyche along with the interaction between individuals and their culture, allows us to see the qualitatively different ways that we come to understand who we are in the world (81) and the relations of authorship, if you will. These "qualitatively" different ways can provide insight into how our students understand and relate to authorship and no less how we as instructors understand and relate to our students. This study examines survey research through the lens of Kegan’s theory of psychological development to understand how first-year writing students view authorship and plagiarism. The following are three particular areas of focus:

1. To learn about students' beliefs and understanding of authorship and plagiarism during their first-year writing courses (101 and Honors 103); For
comparative purposes, this study was modified to add students enrolled in EN 102 and sophomore literature to the population of respondents.

2. To examine how students view authorship and plagiarism at different levels of their first-year writing experiences.

3. To learn any possible relationships between/among students’ views of authorship and plagiarism and Robert Kegan's theory of psychological development.

By building on Kegan’s work, this study presents a comprehensive theory of authorship and textual practices and offers implications of a developmental framework on plagiarism studies. My hypothesis is that first-year students’ understanding of authorship and plagiarism correspond to Kegan’s theory of psychological development. Analyzing students’ views through Kegan’s theory, we may understand factors that influence different forms of plagiarism and why plagiarism may or may not occur in the writing classroom.

Kegan identifies six developmental milestones to represent the individual's growth potential. He refers to these milestones as balances. Accordingly, each developmental balance reflects a general understanding of how we continuously organize and re-organize who we are in the world at different points in our lives. As a result, each balance signifies an "evolutionary truce," or a temporary reconciliation of the self in the world (Kegan 44). Kegan’s balances are relevant to how students understand authorship because with each new developmental balance, individuals must continue to renegotiate their understanding of their world. Therefore, each developmental balance can provide insight into how we understand authorship as our students grow and change; we can see how students negotiate the demands of authorship. I use this framework to explore a developmentally informed view of academic authorship that is built on
the assertion that authorship is a process. Therefore, authorship encompasses many forms of writing and textual interactions. As we will see, first-year writers are caught at a pivotal moment in the process of authorship.

To emphasize the continual motion of psychological development, Kegan places these milestones/balances along a symbolic helix (see Figure 1). Each balance reflects an individual’s movement to either integration with others or separation from others (108-109). The helix helps us to imagine this three-dimensional view of the human psyche. Kegan labels these six developmental balances: the incorporative, the impulsive, the imperial, the interpersonal, the institutional, and the interindividual (109).

Figure 1
Kegan's Helix of Evolutionary Truces

[The Incorporative Balance]
Beginning in infancy, Kegan explains, we organize our world through our physiological reflexes (eating, sleeping, etc.); therefore, as infants we rely on others to complete our world.

[The Impulsive Balance]
As young children, we see the world through our impulses (our desires, needs, and wants); consequently, much of our psychological work is spent trying to fulfill and achieve these desires.

[The Imperial Balance]
During adolescence, we recognize and begin to value our own self-sufficiency and independence from others. At this point in time, we are interested in asserting independence, proving to our caretakers that we are capable of separation. Individuals in the imperial stage of psychological development can now experience a “private world” no longer controlled by their impulses (89). With this newfound personal agency, the imperial self brings forth a “new sense of freedom” (89).  

[The Interpersonal Balance]
As we continue to grow, we become more constructed by others, turning again to those outside of ourselves. This psychological balance is often evidenced in late adolescence and early adulthood when peer groups significantly influence us. Kegan suggests that during this time of psychological development, the self is not independent of others. Individuals within this balance attempt to conform to the expectations and opinions of those around them. Therefore, individuals within the interpersonal balance are always struggling to become what others want them to be. Interpersonal individuals are, in a sense, pleasers. Belonging to a social group or fitting into a particular setting is the most important aspect of this phase of development and the most significant feature of the interpersonal balance. Because of this desire to please others, we

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2 While this study does not explore authorship in children, I do believe that authorship styles in childhood will also manifest and correspond according to Kegan’s phases of psychological development.
can see that individuals in the interpersonal balance desire to fit in and meet the expectations of those around them. Because the influence of others is so important, students within the interpersonal balance, I believe, are more likely to engage in mimesis or patchwriting. In “Inventing the University,” David Bartholomae describes this type of authorship: “Everytime a student sits down to write for us [instructors], he has to invent the university. . . [or at least] a branch of it” (403). Students, he says, have to write themselves into a discourse community in which they do not belong; they must learn to fit into this particular community. Such mimesis, Bartholomae explains, may include adopting the form and /or jargon of academic discourse.

Authorship within the interpersonal balance reflects two developmental milestones: (1) individuals want to become part of a community, and (2) individuals want to acquire the particular discourse of that community. To achieve these two milestones, the community must matter to the interpersonal individual, and he/she must be willing to engage in interpersonal relationships with those within the community.

Furthermore, not only are first-year writing students trying to become part of the academic community, but they are also engaging in authorship for exchange. If students can write to meet the demands of the classroom or the instructors, they will be successful in a particular writing course. However, Bartholomae argues that “students have to assume privilege without having any” (408). They must pretend to be something they are not. Therefore, in whatever form plagiarism emerges, if it does at all, it will align with both the strengths and weaknesses of the interpersonal balance: the desire to fit in, to be accepted, or to please others.

[The Institutional Balance]

Self-independence sometimes follows as we begin to develop our own system or accept an ideology for governing who we are in the world. Unlike the interpersonal balance, the institutional balance is marked by the construction of a self-identity, an internalized notion of the
self. Most importantly, the institutional balance allows individuals to assert a voice of their own. Such self-authority marks a separation and independence from the judgment of others, which defines interpersonal authorship. Therefore, this developmental balance marks what some have characterized as the goal of university instruction: students must learn to synthesize and interact in academic discussions while maintaining their own voices and/or perspectives. Students who are driven by self-authority, however, may not only pledge their allegiance to a particular ideology, but their very selves are likely invested in this authority or system; it governs and justifies their actions. Here I argue that if plagiarism emerges during the institutional balance of psychological development, it takes two general forms: (1) a resistance to the environment, which may be the pedagogy driving the writing classroom. (2) a manifestation of an incompatible ideology; for example, students who are invested in capitalist ideology may see plagiarism as a way to get what they need/want from the academic climate. Regardless, the individual may feel threatened and, therefore, cling to his/her personal self-system or refuse to “buy into” or participate in any ideological construct other than his own.

[The Interindividual Balance]

The final phase of Kegan’s theory ushers in an understanding and recognition of, and ultimately, a respect for the many complex self-systems operating around us. At this point, we begin not only to recognize and tolerate diversity, but appreciate its value in the world (84-104). During this stage, it seems that individuals recognize the many individual self-systems operating in the world and begin to see their value and contribution to the world as a whole. The interindividual balance parallels the view that knowledge is socially constructed. No longer do we view concepts and ideas as fragmentations, but we begin to see how they are all interconnected. Individuals within the interindividual balance are both independent and connected.
While each psychological change highlights a different way of understanding and/or perceiving the world, they all share a common, sustaining tension between the self (who I am) and the “other” (who I am not) (Kegan 76). The tension reflects a continuous negotiation between our dependence on other people and/or our desire to be independent from others (76). Such a tension is operating as students come to interact with the academic notion of authorship.

If Kegan’s helix represents the human psyche accurately, then the very space it occupies likewise represents the changing environments that nurture the individual. Therefore, the second part of Kegan's theory addresses the importance of this external environment and its relationship to the individual. Because Kegan recognizes that psychological development is twofold, we cannot fully explore how our students understand authorship without looking at how we communicate notions of authorship in the writing classroom. As a symbol of fluidity and malleability, Kegan's helix allows us to see not only how the individual changes form, but also how we as a culture and instructional environment positively or negatively impinge on these evolving systems. Thus, equally important to a person's creation of the world is the world's creation of the person (Kegan 114).

For each balance along the helix, Kegan names a corresponding "culture of embeddedness" (115-132). Each culture of embeddedness simply describes the environment that is most likely to "nurture" a particular psychological balance, the environment which an individual is psychologically "subject to" (Kegan 115-122; 103-104). These cultures of embeddedness may vary, and will change over time; however, they all serve the same purpose: they must nurture us by "holding on," "letting go," and "remaining in place" (116). Kegan puts forth criteria for successfully achieving this type of nurturing environment: a supportive culture of embeddedness must confirm the new culture's ways of making meaning, thus "hold" the
individual. The new culture of embeddedness must be prepared, at some point, to *contradict* this way of making meaning or "let [the individual] go." And last, the culture of embeddedness must remain *continuous* or "in place/stable" so that as the individual grows and moves on, he/she can look back to whom he/she used to be (121-132). For Kegan, a culture of embeddedness that accomplishes these three elements provides the optimal circumstances for individuals to grow and learn successfully. Kegan’s criteria provide a theoretical framework for responding to student writing and nurturing students’ development of authorship in the writing classroom. Also, Kegan’s criteria can encourage us to reflect on the conditions we create in the writing classroom. We might look at the conditions of the writing classroom and ask ourselves if we effectively nurture the psychological development of our students. We might then ask ourselves if students plagiarize in the writing classroom in response to some type of psychological discomfort. Can we recognize and respond to the wrong turns that surface from this discomfort?

Kegan uses D. W. Winnicott’s example of the mother-child relationship to help us understand the individual’s relationship to the culture of embeddedness. Winnicott explains that just as a mother provides a nurturing environment for her newborn, an environment that the infant depends on to meet its needs, the mother is also responsible for contradicting the security of this environment. She must encourage a level of separation from the infant (Kegan 115-128); at some point, the mother must not immediately satisfy the child's every need. The mother, while changing, must also remain a stable presence in the child's life (129). This study applies these concepts of psychological growth to first-year writers and the development of authorship in the writing classroom. I use the notion of the embeddedness culture to evaluate how we as an educational environment nurture the development of authorship in the writing classroom.
To examine the writing classroom as an embeddedness culture, we must first discuss the most prevalent developmental balances of first-year writers, and identify the developmental balance valued in academic writing. By exploring Kegan’s framework through both current views of authorship, we find two developmental balances relevant to this study. Accordingly, first-year writers most likely fit into the interpersonal balance and/or the institutional balance. Kegan explains that as individuals enter adulthood they are typically invested in the culture of mutuality, the culture of self-authorship, or perhaps someplace in between. The culture of mutuality, much like the nurturing mother, nurtures a sense of appreciation for others. Kegan refers to individuals within this particular balance as being invested in interpersonal relationships; thus, this balance is the interpersonal balance. Individuals within the interpersonal balance not only value the approval of others, but they struggle to make decisions independently from their immediate influences and tend to view the self through the lens of others; peer pressure significantly affects individuals during this phase of development. Interpersonal individuals depend on the approval of others as it is the very essence of their selves. We might view the goals of secondary education as similar to those of the culture of mutuality: students’ activities and status often depend on their ability to master the conventions of high school. Grades are a central component of this academic economy. Students earn privileges by succeeding in the classroom. Much like Vuang in Greene’s study, individuals in the interpersonal balance tend to subordinate their own voice for that of an authority or an expert, or perhaps individuals in this balance may engage in their work with one ultimate goal: to satisfy the expectations of another. The voice of others dominates the interpersonal individual’s own voice.
The *culture of self-authorship* marks a clear distinction as it represents one's investment in self-governance and self-reliance. Kegan refers to individuals invested in self-authorship as occupying the institutional balance. The *culture of self-authorship* is an environment that not only encourages individuality, but it also demands that individuals demonstrate the ability to decide, speak, and thus write for themselves. The independence and willingness to assert one’s voice that Kegan describes is similar to the textual practices of Jesus, detailed in Greene’s study.

Not surprisingly, Kegan identifies going to college, the military, or a temporary job as a transitional bridge between these two balances (191). This identification clearly situates the university in a position to help students make this transition. Likewise, in *Creating Contexts for Learning and Self-Authorship*, Marcia Baxter Magolda claims that the self-authorship Kegan describes is the central goal of higher education (254). Magolda does not identify or specify first-year writing as a place of self-authorship; she looks at the importance of self-authorship across the curriculum. First-year writing can help individuals move beyond their dependency on the *culture of mutuality*, one's dependency on others, into the *culture of self-authorship*, one's independence from others. However, we must first recognize that both of these psychological balances and behaviors are not exclusionary aspects of authorship, but are inherent features in the development of authorship.

These two developmental balances are relevant to this study because they point to behaviors that are not only socially and psychologically expected of individuals within the age range of college students (young adulthood) but also reflect the academic expectations we have for students. Therefore, this study looks specifically at the *culture of mutuality* and the *culture of self-authorship* as relevant to students in a first-year writing program. I use this part of Kegan’s theory to evaluate how students come to engage or disengage with the academic concept of
authorship. I also argue that the general pedagogical strategies and theories of the writing classroom must serve two functions: present and maintain the demands of the culture of self-authorship and help students transition from the culture of mutuality into the culture of self-authorship. I argue that Kegan can provide a theoretical and pedagogical heuristic to both further and build upon our knowledge of our students, explain authorship as a manifestation of who students are psychologically, and describe students’ perceptions and responses to the writing classroom. Kegan's work is especially helpful because he not only focuses on the growing, changing individual, but also on what we as a culture demand from our members. This relationship, this "relational" interaction, is the focus of this study.

**Kegan’s Work as it Relates to Education and Composition Studies**

In "Upper-Division Assessment and the Postsecondary Development of Writing Abilities," Stephen North points out that we have a "developmental blind spot" in our teacher lore about how students develop as writers over time (152). I believe Kegan can help us remove that “blind spot.” In *Rehearsing New Roles: How College Students Develop as Writers*, LeeAnn Carroll presents the findings of a longitudinal study of student writers at Pepperdine University. She likewise asserts that authorship develops over time and is not necessarily related to positive writing experiences. Carroll’s study then reflects a pattern of positive growth and engagement that some writers experience when they are faced with psychological tension. There are, on the other hand, some students who do not respond positively to the psychological tension experienced through writing, and instead choose to plagiarize.

In composition studies, many researchers have used a psychological lens to evaluate writing issues. The history of psychology within the field, however, has left questions and concerns in its wake. In the 1980s, Linda Flowers and John Hayes worked to understand the
cognitive side of individual writing skills. Their work coincides with more modern notions of writing as an individual endeavor. In their landmark article “A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing,” Flowers and Hayes introduced a cognitive theory of writing which explores the individual thinking processes that writers use when they compose a piece of writing. However, with postmodern scholarship, scholars are taking note of the context in which we compose and heightening our awareness that the environment shapes the writing we do.

More than its presence in composition studies during the 1980s, psychology and the term development have often been associated with and limited to discussions about basic writers or those who are not quite prepared for the college writing classroom. Therefore, to many, the term development often refers to the term developmental, which in turn elicits various negative connotations. Some of these are associated with, and through the years have been used to describe, courses in developmental writing and linguistic terms that refer to developmental skills. In "Narrowing the Mind and Page: Remedial Writers and Cognitive Reductionism," Mike Rose argues that the language we use to discuss basic writers is not "value-free" but is overreaching and often reductive (268). However, exploring authorship as a relational term re-conceives the notion that only basic writers are in the process of development and turns our attention to the continuous journey of psychological development in which we are all engaging.

In Creating Contexts for Learning and Self-Authorship: Constructive-Developmental Pedagogy, Marcia Baxter Magolda addresses the widespread “gap between instructor and student [which] repeats itself daily across classrooms, disciplines, and institutions” and the difficulties this gap presents in engaging students in the learning process (3). Magolda addresses a common concern for all educators between what we want students to learn and what students perceive we want them to learn. Therefore, Magolda advocates a constructive-developmental
pedagogy that constitutes Kegan’s self-authorship and recognizes self-authorship as a developmental milestone central to the academic environment. She argues that society demands that we are “lifelong learners,” and that the foundation of college instruction is the ability to adapt to changes in our conditions: “College faculties want students to think critically, to know how to inquire, to think for themselves, and to be capable of using relevant information to make informed decisions” (5). Magolda asserts that the key to this developmental milestone is the ability to think critically about the material presented in the classroom.

Magolda proposes a constructive-developmental pedagogy for two reasons: “students construct knowledge by organizing and making meaning of their experiences and . . . this construction takes place in the context of their evolving assumptions about knowledge itself and students’ role in creating it” (6). Magolda then argues that students are in a critical process in their intellectual development, and that we must be aware of psychological development as part of the educational process. She also quotes from Kegan’s 1994 work, In Over Our Heads: “knowing what our students understand is insufficient; rather, we must know the way they understand it” (6). If we more fully understand how students come into authorship, we can more fully address the wrong turns students make when they choose to forego their authorship rights and plagiarize.

Furthermore, Magolda claims that while “contemporary literature advocates connecting with students’ experience as a foundation for engaging them in meaningful learning[,] a dimension of students’ experience that is often overlooked[ . . .] is their intellectual or epistemological development” (7). In order to deepen our understanding of how students learn, we must think about how students understand their personal experiences or how students know what they know. For this type of pedagogy to be successful, Magolda believes educators must be
willing to create “the developmental conditions that allow them [students] to generate their own ideas effectively, in essence to develop their mind, their voices, and themselves” (7-8).

Magolda, therefore, advocates that educators become aware of who their students are, where they want them to go, and how they can help them get there.

Kegan's work has already been introduced specifically to the field of composition. In "In Over Our Heads: Applying Kegan's Theory of Psychological Development to Community College Students" (1996), Howard Tinberg submits Kegan's work as an attempt to "uncover what is going on in the heads of our students as well as ourselves" (1). Relying on Kegan's more recent work, In Over Our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life, Tinberg highlights the complex relationship among administration, faculty, and students and argues that we must understand the gap that often exists between what we want from our students and what they perceive that we want. Tinberg concludes that Kegan can be used to better understand the community college classroom and "to determine what type of student development has occurred during the course of a semester" (2). Tinberg urges us to use Kegan's developmental phases to understand the gap between what we want from students and what we often get.

Nick Tingle's Self Development and College Writers is the most extensive work in composition studies using Kegan's theory. Tingle likewise bases his study on Kegan's more recent work. He explains that we must reconceive the first-year writing classroom as a place of transition and be attentive to the developmental moves that our students must make. Tingle does much work toward using Kegan's theory to explain where many of our students are developmentally when they enter the classroom, where many instructors are developmentally, and where the university demands that students head: He argues that students must move from a view of language as simply a means to identify objects in the world, a shared, commonplace
knowledge (which he attributes to Kegan’s interpersonal balance), to an understanding of language as abstractions and concepts (characteristics Tingle associates with Kegan’s institutional balance) (17). Tingle's work lays the foundation for the assertion that students must move through different notions of authorship; however, much of his insight about Kegan gets lost in his dense reliance on psychoanalysis and furthermore stops short of fully utilizing the structure of Kegan's original theory. The limitations of Tingle’s study, therefore, lie in his attempt to blend Kegan's work with other psychoanalytic theories, as well as his desire to use only the individual phases of psychological development, only one element in Kegan's work. Tingle uses the language of Kegan’s theory (interpersonal, institutional, and interindividual balances) but explicates it through the work of others. For example, Tingle suggests that Kegan’s work does not explain “what might be involved for students psychologically” as they move from one balance to another or “what might be needed to create an environment that is in fact supportive” (23). Tingle turns to the work of other theorists such as Freud and Lacan. Tingle suggests that their use of empathy describes more efficiently the role of the cultural environment to explain psychological development (Tingle 23). I, however, believe that Kegan clearly articulates the steps needed to promote the growth of the individual, and I use these steps to promote a developmental pedagogy.

In this study, I rely solely on Kegan’s theoretical framework. My study analyzes how the evolving individual psyche responds to the demands of the culture in which it finds itself, which for the purposes of this study is the educational climate of the writing classroom. For Kegan, this is a dual relationship; therefore, if students are plagiarizing, we must look at both the contextual and psychological factors of their particular situation. Thus, this study differs from Tingle’s in one fundamental way: I broaden this study to look at not only the psychological
development of authorship, but also I look at the manifestation of plagiarism. Plagiarism, in this study, is then considered a psychological wrong turn.

As previously discussed, some scholars have already noted the importance of how our students develop as writers over time. Others are using Kegan's work to explore how our students' psychosocial development is reflected in their writing. I build on this body of work by developing a survey with questions that point to and reflect particular elements of Kegan's theoretical framework. I use Kegan's theory to explore the general meaning-making skills of college-age students enrolled in a first-year writing program, and I ask how we can identify or meet these students where they are. By analyzing their responses to survey questions, I then look at the context from which our students come to view or interact with the academic notion of authorship and ask what our role is in developing or hindering students' relationships to authorship, particularly students who appear to disengage from the academic notion of authorship altogether. Finally, I explore what we can learn from a developmentally informed pedagogy. I explore what such a pedagogy would look like and how particular strategies we use already fit with or correspond to such a technique. My goal is to shift our focus from prevention to insightful exploration, from judgments to reflexive moments, from detection software to awareness pedagogy.

Limitations of this Study

Due to the stigmas surrounding the very word plagiarism, there are limitations to this study. These weaknesses lie in the sample population and the simple fact that first-year writing students are new to the research standards of higher education and the ethics in place to protect the expression of their views and opinions. Students were invited to participate in this study because they are new to the university; however, their very position in the academy makes them
less likely to openly share their experiences and perspectives because they may be afraid of exposing their writing habits within this new environment. Because plagiarism is taboo in academia, and the consequences are severe for any form of academic dishonesty, students may be unwilling to disclose or self-report behaviors that teachers and institutions find offensive. The sample populations of this study, therefore, may be uncomfortable discussing any topic related to academic dishonesty, much less one as serious as plagiarism. Furthermore, it is difficult to capture the complexity of Kegan’s theory through a survey method.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter Two—LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter two looks at how we have fostered a climate of suspicion and sustained this climate by and through modern notions of authorship and punitive language. In this chapter, I examine the three areas that anchor the roots of the authorship debate: the social, the historical, and the philosophical. After this brief history, I argue that the foundation of solitary authorship continues to influence current academic policy and practice and thus limits our understanding of plagiarism. In the last section of this chapter, I look at the view that authorship is a cultural/social construction. I review the literature that represents current shifting trends in this direction and how these views broaden the ways we understand authorship. While I will not ask readers to adhere to a view of solitary authorship nor a socially constructed view of authorship, I do ask that readers suspend the view of authorship as a stable, unchanging term. I then proceed to argue that authorship, like writing, is not and cannot be simply understood in either/or terms. Authorship is an individually guided process that manifests differently throughout students’ academic writing careers.
Chapter Three—METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I detail the survey research methodology which guides this study. The chapter divides the methodology into five sections: the purpose and research questions, the research methodology, the research setting and sample population, the instrument design, and the data collection.

Chapter Four—FINDINGS

If we are to consider authorship as a relational term as Greene's work suggests, then at the very center of this relationship is the situated learner. This chapter begins by looking specifically at students enrolled in a large university in the southern United States. The first section describes the demographic data of the survey population. The second section compares the data yielded in the two phases of the study (the pilot survey and the fall survey). The third section explores fall participants’ responses to specific questions of authorship and plagiarism. I examine the data through the lens of Kegan’s theoretical framework. I use Kegan’s theory to understand more thoroughly where our students are when they come in to the composition classroom and where we would like them to be when they leave.

Chapter Five—CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In this chapter I look at the many ways authorship and plagiarism occur in the writing classroom and explore more fully the possible psychological framework behind these actions. I ask whether the debate over individual authorship and collaborative authorship can and should be reframed, not in binary terms of either/or, but rather in terms of both/and. By highlighting the many forms of authorship that our students engage, I ask what happens when students are willing to forego their own authorship for blatant plagiarism. Any response to our students' writing must
also be supported by theory. Kegan provides the basic criteria for assessing student work: contradiction, confirmation, and continuity.

Conclusion

While the strengths and weakness of writing pedagogy are general and vary from classroom to classroom, they remind us that teaching writing is a challenging task with many implications and ethical responsibilities. In "Beyond Plagiarism: Transgressive and Nontransgressive Intertextuality," Ranamukalage Chandrasoma, Celia Thompson, and Alastair Pennycook assert that we spend "ever-increasing amounts of resources into plagiarism detection technologies, rather than trying to ascertain why plagiarism might be occurring in the first place" (171). However, as we continue to focus our attention and economic resources on developing software to catch plagiarists and fail to spend time and resources on educating writing instructors, we may be perpetuating an ever-growing problem. Kegan's criteria can provide us with general areas that we should be attentive to, as well as providing a solid foundation that explains how and why some pedagogical strategies work better than others.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Establishing and Sustaining a Climate of Suspicion:

The Limitations of the Authorship Binary

Proceeding with the belief that plagiarism is one of the biggest areas of concern to those in the field of education, specifically writing instruction, this chapter presents an overview of the current academic climate in regard to authorship and plagiarism. In this chapter, I look specifically at how the binary construction of authorship has shaped plagiarism policy in the university. To emphasize the limitations of this dual position, solitary authorship versus socially constructed texts, this chapter highlights the current pedagogical and administrative divide this argument presents writing instructors. In section one, I juxtapose academic views of authorship with current social views of authorship. Section two presents the major historical factors often attributed to the notion of the solitary author and outlines the most basic philosophical roots that feed the current debates regarding authorship and plagiarism. Section three offers alternatives to the criminalization of plagiarism and examines how these perspectives provide snapshots of authorship and thus inform a more comprehensive conception of authorship.

We may think of authorship as a concrete, very stable term. Until the advent of the Internet, the most accepted view of authorship in popular Western culture has valued an individually driven, capitalistic view of authorship as a solitary endeavor. From this perspective, authorship is a form of private or public self-expression, one’s career, profession, or artistic expression that may result in monetary compensation. Regardless of the writer’s intent, the work
holds the original ideas of the writer; accordingly, writing is a product and thus the possession or property of the writer. This view perceives writing as a viable good/product in a market economy. Inherent in this view, however, is the acceptance of a consumer/goods principle of what an author has to sell and what consumers value and are willing to purchase. The view of solitary authorship reflects that we, as a culture, accept writing as a quantifiable product that possesses certain “inherent” characteristics: a solitary writer, a traceable origin, original ideas or contributions, an aesthetic or monetary value, and a consumer market.

The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers explains that originality and proper citation is a central part of a society’s values:

[A] complex society that depends on well-informed citizens strives to maintain high standards of quality and reliability for documents that are publicly circulated and used in government, business, industry, the professions, higher education, and the media. Because research has the power to affect opinions and actions, responsible writers compose their work with great care. They specify when they refer to another author’s ideas, facts, and words, whether they want to agree with, object to, or analyze the source. This kind of documentation not only recognizes the work writers do; it also tends to discourage the circulation of error. (52)

The MLA Handbook views authorship as a form of accountability to public knowledge and the circulation of information. This view of authorship is rooted in one’s commitment to the values of society and one’s commitment to truth in reproduction. Those who fail to meet these expectations, The MLA Handbook explains, “undermine [. . .] important public values” (52-53). This conception of authorship does not seem radical, nor does it seem to challenge any of the
most common beliefs of a modern culture saturated by the market of value and exchange of information. It is, therefore, no shock that academia operates under a somewhat parallel system.

Academic systems similarly respond to the notion of writing as a form of property. Writing in the university hinges on the legal notion of intellectual property. *Black’s Law Dictionary* defines “intellectual property” as “a category of intangible rights protecting commercially valuable products of the human intellect.” Scholarly writing is likewise considered a product with an original writer who purports original thoughts and ideas. Consequently, the legal notion of intellectual property extends beyond social market currencies and operates within academic currencies: academic scholars and students typically write to engage in some form of intellectual, creative, or career driven pursuits, to participate in scholarly discussions, to contribute to disciplinary knowledge or insight, to develop a more comprehensive understanding of a subject through the writing process, to contribute to one’s financial status through monetary compensation/tenure and/or promotion, to achieve scholarly accolades, and of course, to obtain grades and credits toward a degree. Writing is a highly valued commodity in the academic economy, and as Andrea Lunsford points out in her essay “Intellectual Property,” the notion of intellectual property is the “very bread and butter of our existence” (261). The concept of intellectual property ensures scholars’ ownership of their work; therefore, plagiarism is a serious offense within academic circles and institutions.

The notion of intellectual property guarantees the rights and integrity of those engaged in financial, professional, and scholarly pursuits, but it also serves a larger purpose in academia: the concept of intellectual property validates the very core of the academic values of attribution and acknowledgment. Viewing writing in this way allows writers to navigate scholarship through a source trail, which aids in research, but it then provides the researcher an opportunity
to add his/her own mark in the midst of a disciplinary discussion; more importantly, this source trail pays homage to those whose work forms the disciplinary foundation from which new ideas emerge and are built upon. Respecting the rights of other scholars by engaging and earning one’s position through individual efforts and merits is at the very core of academic ethics.

Many in the mainstream media and popular culture are, therefore, surprised when academic scholars, especially those in the position to teach students the conventions of academic authorship, challenge the view of autonomous authorship and suggest exploring students’ textual practices. Discussions which question the very notion of individual authorship, however, thrive and find refuge in literary criticism and scholarly journals, and consequently, pave the way for more open discussions of a text as well as teaching strategies. Scholarship in writing composition has produced numerous resources which address the complexity of plagiarism and authorship. Yet, while these resources complicate the academic notion of authorship, they rarely cause pause in the way instructors conceive of students as writers, respond to students’ writing in the college classroom, or address incidences of plagiarism in the university. There is clearly a break in composition theory and composition pedagogy. In the “Introduction” to The Construction of Authorship: Textual Appropriation in Law and Literature, Martha Woodmansee and Peter Jaszi claim that this discrepancy is evident in the academic climate, and the way we teach and understand authorship:

The problem, at least in part, is that even as the notion of authorship is subjected to the scrutiny of critical theory, the teaching of literature and composition to which future lawyers are exposed continues to reinforce the Romantic paradigm.

Most writing today—in business, government, industry, the law, the sciences and social sciences—is collaborative, yet it is still being taught as if it were a solitary, originary activity. (9)

Woodmansee and Jaszi insightfully critique what we know as instructors and writers about the reality of writing and what we do (as instructors and gatekeepers) in response to student writing. Similarly, in “The New Abolitionism Comes to Plagiarism,” Rebecca Moore Howard critiques the discrepancy between what we know and believe as scholars and what we do as instructors:

In the mix of ideas about authorship, the perspectives of critical theory, which variously describes plagiarism as a cultural arbitrary that functions to maintain sociointellectual hierarchy, have become commonplace in intellectual circles. . . . Yet these perspectives—which amount to beliefs—have had little effect on composition pedagogy. Composition studies has not entertained the possibility that students would number among the mature, good poets who might engage in T.S. Elliot’s heroic plagiarism.4 Nor has composition studies represented students’ plagiarism as a potential commentary upon and revision of received notions of authorship. Nor has composition studies proposed that students’ written work is so valuable that their plagiarism should be overlooked. (89)

Howard’s critique is significant in that she advocates treating students the way we treat most other writers, or at least published writers. By using Eliot’s term “heroic plagiarism,” Howard

suggests that borrowing is very much a part of literary and poetic practice. Howard highlights the hypocrisy between the expectations we have for students as opposed to those we have for well-known authors or professional writers. Moreover, Howard explains that we do not celebrate the various forms of students’ texts nor do we afford student writers the same liberties we give to published authors and creative writers. Composition studies has not offered a “category of positive plagiarism for students” (89). In other words, compositionists have not enacted what they know about student writing: Students engage in various textual practices not all of which are transgressive. In *Standing in the Shadow of Giants*, Howard intensifies her argument and implicates cultural interests for sustaining the “fiction” of the modern author:

> the premises upon which the modern notion of plagiarism is based—the premises that a writer can and should be autonomous and original, and that as a result the writer can also be deemed moral and should be accorded ownership of his or her writing—are a fiction, produced by and for a capitalistic, patriarchal society. That we are pursuing plagiarism with increased vigor while at the same time doubting the validity of the very concept is only one of the many contradictions in our economy of authorship. (15)

Howard critiques the modern view of authorship and its role in a materialistic society; moreover, she claims that its very role in the culture is to produce and sustain more restrictive, and in this case, masculine ways of knowing. Howard’s claim suggests that solitary authorship sustains gender roles and values in Western culture. Authorship is then entangled and interwoven within a particular set of values within a culture rather than actual textual production.

Bruce Horner likewise critiques the discrepancies between the way we treat students and published authors. In his article, “Students, Authorship, and the Work of Composition Studies,”
Horner launches a materialist critique against this double standard which he refers to as the Author/student writer binary (505). Horner encourages compositionists to locate their work and their students’ work within the material conditions of the university and ask ourselves what the binary distinction says about the “mechanical craft” of composition and the “art” of literature (505). For Horner, the Author/student writer binary suggests that students’ writings are less than or inferior to the work of “true” authors. Horner’s argument is significant in that with the use of his phrase “the Author/student writer binary,” he captures the difficult space students must occupy in the writing classroom. Similar to Kegan’s description of the interpersonal and institutional psychological balances, the learning community of the writing classroom asks students to conform to the standards of the writing classroom as student writers while maintaining their own solitary voices as authors of their texts. The ability to balance these two perspectives is not always easy for students.

The disjunction between scholarship and administrative practice is perhaps most evident in the language and systems that govern textual practices in the university. The language of administrative policy on plagiarism, and consequently authorship, reflect the tension and limits of the authorship binary. The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers explains, “[s]tudents exposed as plagiarists may suffer severe penalties, ranging from failure in the assignment or in the course to expulsion from school. This is because student plagiarism does considerable harm” (53). Therefore, the consequences of plagiarism are long lasting and can affect students’ future academic endeavors. More importantly, the handbook makes clear that plagiarism harms student-teacher relationships and students, and of course, the institution’s reputation (53). In The Construction of Authorship in Law and Literature, Woodmansee and Jaszi likewise argue: “The stakes are high in disciplinary actions against students accused of
intramural offenses against authorship. Indeed, our institutions underline the seriousness of these proceedings by giving them the form, as well as some of the content, of legal actions for violations of copyright law” (9). When students fail to balance the authorship binary, solitary authorship and textual collaboration, Howard argues that their writing typically falls under one category: plagiarism (Standing 22).

Accordingly, the use of the word “plagiarism,” encompasses a variety of textual acts under one reprehensible term. In “Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices,” Writing Program Administrators collectively distinguish between various forms of plagiarism. In this statement, the WPA emphasizes the need to recognize various textual acts on both pedagogical and institutional levels:

Most current discussions of plagiarism fail to distinguish between: submitting someone else’s text as one’s own or attempting to blur the line between one’s own ideas or words and those borrowed from another source, and carelessly or inadequately citing ideas and words borrowed from another source. (1)

These distinctions suggest that authorship is more about students’ intentions rather than their interactions with texts. While the WPA statement leaves us with yet another either/or conundrum (our students are amoral or careless), educators are given more discretion and options for addressing textual interactions. The WPA’s definition of plagiarism reflects these distinctions: “In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source” (emphasis added). Notice this definition includes only intentional textual acts meant to deceive the reader. The Center for Academic Integrity uses Clemson University’s policy to define plagiarism: “Plagiarism which includes the intentional or
unintentional copying of language, structure of ideas of another and attributing the work to one’s own efforts” (Clemson Undergraduate Announcements). Clemson’s policy groups both intentional and unintentional acts as forms of plagiarism. Students can, therefore, commit plagiarism unintentionally and still suffer the consequences.

The WPA and The Center for Academic Integrity are possibly two of the most influential organizations associated with universities and first-year writing programs, yet even they do not agree on a definition of plagiarism. The discrepancy lies in the intent of the writer. The WPA makes a distinction between intentional acts versus unintentional acts, yet Clemson’s policy reflects the reality students face: any textual misstep is a form of plagiarism regardless of students’ intentions. Rebecca Moore Howard has urged universities to reconsider the way they define plagiarism. In 2006, Syracuse University was the first to alter its institutional policy on plagiarism in light of the WPA’s recommendations. Since then Washington State University has likewise developed a Plagiarism Information Site which explores and differentiates among various textual practices that are otherwise labeled plagiarism. The majority of educational institutions, however, have not followed suit.

Without distinctions between various textual practices, plagiarism policies do more than limit students’ textual practices and the way they engage with a text. Such policies suggest that

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5 An excerpt from Syracuse University’s Academic Integrity Policy

“While students are responsible for knowing how to quote from, paraphrase, and cite sources correctly, the ability to apply that information in all writing situations is an advanced literacy skill acquired over time through repeated practice. When a student has attempted to acknowledge sources but has not done so fully or completely, the instructor may determine that the issue is misuse of sources or bad writing, rather than plagiarism. Factors that may be relevant to the determination between misuse of sources and plagiarism include prior academic integrity education at Syracuse University and the program level of the student. Instructors are responsible for communicating their expectations regarding the use and citation of sources” (Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy).

6 Washington State University-Plagiarism Information Site distinguishes between intentional and unintentional textual acts. This site also offers examples of common knowledge, resources, and other helpful information for students and faculty.
there is no need for discussions/debates, and in turn, distances instructors and administrators from complex questions such as: how do first-year writers engage with a text and how do first-year writers create knowledge? While school policy aligns itself with the notion of the solitary author, scholars are taking note of these limitations, and many critique the very word plagiarism, suggesting it encompasses and criminalizes too many textual acts. Even in their somewhat clumsy early writing endeavors, students can be accused of various forms of plagiarism: citing without attribution, copying and pasting parts of another’s work into their own, intentional or unintentional borrowing, intentionally submitting someone else’s work or ideas as their own. Again, these offenses, while ranging in severity, are typically grouped under one term and described “in all its forms as a problem for adjudication” (“Plagiarisms, Authorship, and the Academic Death Penalty” 2). This perspective is evidenced in James M. Lang’s “It’s Not You.” Lang reminds educators “that personalizing the academic dishonesties of our students distorts the relationship we should have with them” (2). Lang argues that plagiarism is not personal, but it is a “sin” against the intellectual community: “When my students violate academic honesty, they are not sinning against me; they are sinning against the standards of an intellectual community they have agreed to join. The proper response is to follow the standards that the community has established for such offenses” (2). Embedded in Lang’s call is the use of criminal language. The terms “violate,” “sinning,” and “offenses” associate textual acts with criminal acts. This language does not correspond to the mission of the university, nor does it seek to understand students. It does, however, reflect the anxiety of those who feel it is their job to guard the gates of the university. Plagiarism is again identified as simply a moral issue. When students borrow the work of others, the university considers them thieves, and stealing in the academy, like stealing in any other area of society, is an offense with consequences and labels.
To reconcile the binary construction of authorship and to more thoroughly understand its effects on the academic climate, we must first understand the background from which this debate emerges. The very core of academic ethics is defined by the modern notion of authorship most evident in the Enlightenment. The authorship binary and the questions surrounding textual practices are, therefore, steeped in a long historical tradition. The following section explores this tradition and analyzes the historical and philosophical arguments which form the basis of the authorship divide. While this section does not provide an all-inclusive history of authorship, it does trace the most significant roots scholars associate with the “tradition” of solitary authorship as well as the resistance against it. After outlining significant historical markers and the major theoretical figures and schools of thought, I will frame the general context from which the authorship debate emerges.

Authorship—An Historical Phenomenon: The Advent of the Modern Author

During the Middle Ages, stories were commonly passed down through the oral tradition of recitation. Bards and scribes passed along cultural songs and poems, preserving an otherwise lost literary heritage. In the opening chapter of *Conceptions of Authorship in Law and Literature*, Martha Woodmansee reminds us: “From the Middle Ages right down through the Renaissance new writing derived its value and authority from its affiliation with the texts that preceded it, its derivation rather than its deviation from prior texts” (“The Author Effect” 17). Woodmansee marks a prominent distinction between a traditional view of authorship and the modern view. The traditional view of authorship gained prominence and value for its association with its predecessors rather than its differences from them; therefore, the focus of a text was not on the solitary efforts or contributions of the writer. Woodmansee describes the very process of textual production as a “corporate view of writing” and declares its prominence during this time.
period (17). By using the word “corporate,” Woodmansee invokes thirteenth century scholar St. Bonaventura’s description of the four types of book production: “transcription, compilation, commentary, and author” (17). This effort, Woodmansee claims, did not make distinctions nor value one mode of production over another. Association with other works established one’s ethos as an author. Howard argues, “For the medieval writer, practices that we now excoriate as plagiarism and forgery could provide ethical, sensible means for establishing one’s authorial credibility and advancing God’s Truth” (Constable 1983; Howard 14). In “Authority and Authenticity: Scribbling Authors and the Genius of Print in Eighteenth-Century England,” Marlon B. Ross explains that monks attempted to “stabilize meaning” through handwriting: “[t]he script must be seen to author itself, for the scribe is merely a vehicular authority, a translator or medium of authority” (232-233). While such transcription attempted to reflect God’s authority and Truth, Marlon points out that “true knowledge is always artfully displayed because true knowledge is always tainted when touched by human desire and perceived through human vision” (234). The reproduction of earlier writings then ultimately reflects a blended mode of composition.

Many scholars point to the time period between the Middle Ages and the Seventeenth Century to mark the major cultural, historical, and ideological shifts which underlie the Western concept of authorship which guides us today (Standing 58; Rose 3; Woodmansee 17; Sutherland-Smith 36-46). In Plagiarism, the Internet and Student Learning, Wendy Sutherland-Smith identifies three major historical and cultural factors that led to the legal precedence of the individual author: “the combined effects of the invention of the printing press bringing print text to the masses, the demand for books by an increasing readership and the spread of the ideology of the individual promoted the notion of the author as an individual creator of text” (39). The
transformations that followed book production radically changed Europe’s cultural climate and set the stage for a more individually minded populace.

During the time period between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, European culture underwent slow but striking cultural shifts that sparked major changes in the intellectual, spiritual, scientific, and social climate of the masses. However, the Enlightenment marks the beginning of these changes. In “Originality, Authenticity, Imitation, and Plagiarism: Augustine’s Chinese Cousins,” C. Jan Swearingen notes the consensus among prominent scholars who acknowledge the significance of the changes evidenced during the Enlightenment: “Individualist Enlightenment beliefs replaced earlier concepts of freedom of access to ideas, and knowledge created by God to be used by all for the common good” (Boyle; Grafton; Rose; Stock; Swearingen 20). Here Swearingen raises the questions at the core of the authorship debate: Do words and ideas belong to all? Does language derive from and belong to the social community and serve the common good, or is its natural state altered by the individual? Lunsford argues that the changes which made these questions possible were not easy: “for the notion of freedom of ideas is a very old and revered one in our culture. Ideas—knowledge—are given freely to us by God and should be freely shared for the common good” (264). The Enlightenment not only challenged traditional views of language, but the Enlightenment brought with it the beginning of social, cultural, and legal movements which subsequently replaced these traditional practices.

Based on the history of this time period, the first social shift which altered our relationship to language is the growth of an educated middle class. Ronald C. Arnett, Janie Harden Fritz, and Annette M. Holb refer to this shift in the social order in “The Rhetorical Turn
to Otherness: Otherwise Than Humanism.” In their analysis of Enlightenment ideals, they explain:

Confidence in individual and collective advance was at the heart of both the moderate and radical Enlightenment. This change in philosophy embraced the individual and the inevitability of progress, spurring early and long-standing positive consequences, freeing persons from the imposed authority and the communicative dictates of an aristocratic few. (116)

“Collective advancement” was evidenced in what marked for the first time in European history, an emerging middle class with successful, profitable businesses and therefore money and access to what was previously reserved for the nobility. As a result, the newly emerging social class had access to education, and as a result, the number of literate persons rose. Nurturing this social shift was the Protestant Reformation and the empowerment of individual spirituality, a spirituality that could exist independently and separately from the direction and guidance of the Roman Catholic Church. Science also underwent a shift in its mode of inquiry. With the rise of empiricism, scientists began looking for obtainable knowledge of the world through direct observation—the direct observations of the individual.

Swearingen maintains that “capitalist definitions of property drew on [these] Enlightenment concepts of individualism, autonomy, and political rights” (19). The Western conception of authorship/ownership evidenced in the social and academic communities today emerges from the independence of the individual so evident during the Enlightenment, as well as the spread of these ideas to the masses.

The advent of moveable type print with Gutenberg’s printing press in 1450 also fueled Enlightenment ideals and contributed to a shift in who controlled knowledge. For the first time,
individuals had the privilege of possessing the printed word. Literate individuals not only had access to print material, but they could also explore ideas in these texts, an intellectual exercise inconceivable to this particular population before this time. Sutherland-Smith explains: the printing press “revolutionized the way in which the general public had access to written works” and released literary texts from the control of the Church (37). Prior to the printing press, Sutherland-Smith explains, the Church not only controlled the spread of knowledge, but the Church controlled “the ways in which the pre-literate general population understood the world” (37). Relinquishing texts from the control of the church meant also empowering the individual with the printed word. No longer dependent on the interpretation and/or presentation of written materials by the church, individuals could interpret material free from religious constraints. As the public gained access to the written word, individuals also gained a self-possessed knowledge. Consequently, a dialogue regarding the ownership of texts surfaced: “[T]he invention of the printing press sparked a number of debates concerning the ownership and restriction of texts that had long been, in effect in the public domain” (Swearingen 20). Individuals began to see the financial possibilities previously buried in the written word. These debates were swayed by a more profound undercurrent: possessive individualism. Sutherland-Smith explains: possessive individualism is the “belief that individuals are entitled to protect themselves and the products of their labors. Under this idea, the individual has the right to decide how this physical body and the product of his labor will be used. This idea then extended to the way in which his mind and the product of his intellect could be used and owned” (38). This belief emphasized the inherent connection between the individual and his labor; the written word becomes a “product” which is “owned.” The current of individualism, therefore, set the stage for the legal protection of the author’s property and the product of his labor (Sutherland-Smith 38).
The early eighteenth century marked another significant historical change in the rights of the author and his work. Scholars point out that the 1710 Statute of Anne enacted in England marked a significant turning point in the history of authors and texts. The 1710 Statute of Anne became the “world’s first copyright statute” (Owners and Authors 4). For the first time, writers had legal claims and “proprietary rights” over their works (Sutherland-Smith 41). Copyright protection significantly changed the nature of writing: A text no longer belonged to the people; it belonged to the individual creator. Sutherland-Smith emphasizes the significance of this legal precedent: “This meant that where an individual person created new ‘works’ in writing or speech, they belonged to him as tangible property. At the same time, however, the law stipulated that the ‘work’ must be ‘original’ and add to or extend existing knowledge or information” (38). The 1710 Statute of Anne shifted the nature of writing and marked significant distinctions in the way it was previously conceived. Writers’ works became both properties and commodities from which they could benefit. These legal parameters were significant because they freed writers from the bondage of patronage. “Unfettered by patrons,” writers now had the opportunity for a somewhat profitable writing career (“Plagiarisms, Authorships, and the Academic Death Penalty” 2). Consequently, such a freedom brought with it a sense of individualism and originality not available to the poet whose social status and survival had previously depended on his service to a patron. Accordingly, writers now had the legal “right to act against those who trespassed on their intellectual ‘property’ by protecting the sale of works for 14 years, with one additional 14-year extension possible” (Lunsford 263). This protection afforded writers a security in their written work and in turn gave their work a monetary value.

However, the language which affords writers legal protection is the very language which limits modes of authorship today. The 1710 Statute of Anne marked a notable change in one’s
relation to language: One could now “trespass” against an author by infringing on the boundaries of a text. With the legal precedent set by the 1710 Statute of Anne, we see a counter to authorship—plagiarism. In Plagiarism, The Internet and Student Learning: Improving Academic Integrity, Wendy Sutherland-Smith argues, the “birth of copyright law” is inherently fused with the “notion of plagiarism” (41).

The term “plagiarism” is derived from the Latin term for plundering. . . There was a general acceptance in eighteenth-century England of the concept that words could be kidnapped or misappropriated by someone with legal recrimination. The idea that words could be stolen was set. (37)

The notion that words can be stolen or misused is central to the idea that the author possesses a tangible property in the written word and still guides modern conceptions of authorship today. Moreover, the legal parameters of authorship delimit the idea that authorship is a process and fail to recognize the many ways individuals engage with a text.

As previously described, the rise of Europe’s middle class set the Enlightenment notion of authorship into motion. The Enlightenment then marks a faith in the individual unlike ever before. With this faith, the individual is not only distinct from others, but the individual also possesses the ability to “self author”—to have an individual voice. These movements, therefore, inform contemporary views of authorship and individuality we hold today. The Enlightenment then gave us the most fundamental component of the modern notion of authorship—the faith in the individual.

Authorship—A Philosophical Debate

Enlightenment thinking as it relates to property and ownership is most evident in the social philosophy of John Locke and his views of property and ownership. The concept of the
solitary author is often attributed to Locke and his work “Of Property” from *The Second Treatise of Government*. Locke’s ideas emerge (1690) in the late seventeenth century at a time when Europe had been through many changes. As previously mentioned, individualism became a fundamental aspect of the sciences with empiricism’s focus on objective observation; the Protestant Reformation spawned the growth of an individually driven spirituality; and the social and economic success of the merchant class or bourgeoisie defined individual social mobility and economic success. Undoubtedly, the philosophical work of John Locke is a product of these changes. In Section 27, Locke clearly articulates the logic of this current through powerful language which emphasizes the distinctness of the individual:

Though the earth, and all inferior creatures, be common to all men, yet every man has a property in his own person: this no body has any right to but himself. The labour of his body, and the work of his hands, we may say, are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the state that nature hath provided, and left it in, he hath mixed his labour with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property. It being by him removed from the common state nature hath placed it in, it hath by this labour something annexed to it, that excludes the common right of other men: for this labour being the unquestionable property of the labourer, no man but he can have a right to what that is once joined to, at least where there is enough, and as good, left in common for others.

The influence of Locke’s philosophy to notions of solitary authorship is grounded in his distinction between what “man” owns in his own person and what is considered “natural” or belonging to all. For Locke, ownership is constituted when an element or item is removed from
its common natural state and the energy or labor from one’s body is added; thus one can remove what belongs to all and make it his own property. Locke’s philosophy, however, is much easier to apply to cattle and land property, physical tangible objects; the application of Locke’s philosophy to writing requires the belief that language is natural and common to all and therefore exists outside of oneself. We must first consider language, in its most organic sense, as a linguistic system which includes a series of utterances and symbols, emerging from a culture in order to communicate. This system then belongs to all and exists in a “natural” communal state. When we use language to write an individual thought or express an argument or creative idea, we remove it from its natural state. We have added our physical labor to what was common to all, language, in the act of writing (12-22).

Inherent in Locke’s philosophy is a working theory of economics driven by the work of one’s labor. The application and appreciation of Locke’s influence on authorship inevitably fuses the work of intellectual labor to ownership, and in turn, intellectual ideas become viable products in a market economy. If language can be transformed and thus altered into a form of property, it has a monetary value, at least in the sense that it can potentially benefit an individual and contribute to his/her financial betterment.

Relying on Locke’s ideas, however, conflates the concepts of labor and ownership with that of authorship. Language no longer resides in the community and simply serves the need to communicate, but words can be grouped, formed, made anew, and owned by the individual. From Locke’s view, it makes sense that policies on authorship and plagiarism are connected to capitalistic principles and ideology. If one steals or borrows another’s words or ideas, he/she has committed plagiarism, an offense equal to property theft. To use the work of another in the academic environment involves taking or stealing something that belongs to another, taking
one’s “property.” To this end, authorship is equivalent to property ownership and plagiarism is equal to property theft (“Collaborative Pedagogy” 55).

**Romantic Literary Theory**

As previously discussed, the modern notion of authorship is inseparable from the Romantic belief in the solitary creativity of the writer. The Romantic idea of authorship is one of the most commonly referenced today and aligns closely with Locke’s concept of intellectual property ownership. However, the Romantics’ point of departure from Locke’s concept of intellectual ownership is another central component to the modern notion of authorship. The Romantic view of authorship goes one step beyond individual labor; essential to the Romantic view of authorship is the unique, creative, originality of the individual writer. Sutherland-Smith claims that this view took hold by the late sixteenth century, and was “nurtured and strongly promoted by poets and authors alike” (40). Writers claimed that “the author’s work was a ‘unique individual creation—unlike any preceding it’” (Sutherland-Smith 40). This view further nurtured the notion of individuality and emphasized one’s unique gifts. William Wordsworth was instrumental in this movement: Wordsworth brought to poetry what can be described as an essential element to the modern conception of authorship: In “The Author Effect,” Martha Woodmansee points out: “Our laws of intellectual property are rooted in the century-long reconceptualization of the creative process which culminated in high Romantic pronouncements like Wordsworth’s to the effect that this process ought to be solitary, or individual, or introduce a new element into the intellectual universe” (Woodmansee 27). These claims, Woodmansee argues, are most evident in “Essay, Supplementary to the Preface” (1815). Wordsworth professes the Romantic idea of “true” authorship:

> of genius the only proof is, the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and
what was never done before: of genius, in the fine arts, the only infallible sign is the widening sphere of human sensibility, for the delight, honour, and benefit of human nature. Genius is the introduction of a new element into the intellectual universe: or, if that be not allowed, it is the application of powers to objects on which they had not before been exercised, or the employment of them in such a manner as to produce effects hitherto unknown. (Wordsworth Par. 32)

Here Wordsworth distinguishes real and true authorship from other forms of authoring. After critiquing other artistic works for their lack of originality, Wordsworth suggests that authorship comes from within and broadens our understanding of the world. In *The Best Poems of the English Language*, Harold Bloom describes Wordsworth’s contributions: “Wordsworth did for literature what Freud was to do for modern psychology, nearly a century later” (322). Poetry, Bloom claims, no longer needed a subject; rather, Wordsworth’s was “the poetry of the growing inner self” (322). Woodmansee argues that the modern reverence of the writer over all others in the process of book production comes from the Romantic notion that “significant writers break altogether with tradition to create something utterly new, unique—in a word, original” (16). With Wordsworth’s poetry then, we see the emergence of an “inner self,” a self disentangled from its social environment. The Romantic view of authorship adds another layer to authorship beyond that of intellectual labor.

After reviewing the events and the philosophical arguments which define the Enlightenment, we see three prominent features surface as defining elements of modern authorship. (1) The cultural changes of the Enlightenment brought about a separation between the individual and his social environment. For the first time in history, the individual could see himself separately from others; moreover, the individual could envision social mobility through
the efforts of his own work and labor. The Enlightenment then brought about the conditions which permitted one to conceive of a self distinct and separate from his social environment. Equally important to the modern notion of authorship are the philosophical arguments of this time period. (2) Locke’s philosophy provides the logic behind intellectual labor and property. Locke also justifies writing as labor and thus constitutes ownership. (3) The Romantics, however, offer a more elite and distinguished element to modern authorship. “True” authorship offers something new, unique, and original in nature. The literary component of authorship is herein established. The figure below shows the significance of these connections (see Figure 2):

Figure 2
Enlightenment Elements Defining Modern Authorship

The modern notion of authorship is therefore complex and multifaceted. Clearly, there are more social, cultural, and historical elements that likewise inform authorship as a solitary endeavor and have served to strengthen its hold on Western society. From this history of individualism, we inherited an era of authorship and ownership fused with concepts of labor, property, and originality. Whether these notions will continue to stand up to the shifts in our culture today, however, remain to be seen.

As discussed earlier, the current social market economy and the academic environment both adhere to legal notions of intellectual ownership passed down from Enlightenment beliefs
and concepts. These notions both define and determine the way in which textual offenses are addressed today. The following section, however, demonstrates a radical departure from Enlightenment views of self and textual ownership. The following arguments question the individual’s ability to fully separate from the social and produce a text autonomously. Ironically, this section presents arguments which ultimately bring the authorship debate full circle, situating authorship again into the social.

**Socially Constructed Texts**

Broadening our view of authorship requires us, in many ways, to suspend our most common assumptions about property ownership, the concept of labor, and how a text functions in society today. However, emerging technology is forcing us to change the way we “see” a text, at least on the computer screen. Howard argues: “Today the technological innovation of the computer is precipitating and accompanying shifts in textual values that may be as profound as the modern emergence of the nonnative autonomous, individual author” (“Plagiarisms, Authorships, and the Academic Death Penalty” 3). Howard recognizes the changing ways we “see” a text. Websites such as Wikipedia allow multiple writers to contribute to a text, altering and shifting its appearance with the writings of multiple contributors. Moreover, instructors’ interactions with students’ texts are changing. Some writing programs use Comment, software which allows instructors to interact with students’ texts so that the texts then become visual representations of the writer-reader dialogue. This section looks at the philosophical critiques of modern authorship that have emerged within contemporary culture. When scholars discuss a less stable view of authorship, they typically point to two influential thinkers: Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault. Both offer critiques that systematically challenge modern notions of solitary
authorship specifically in terms of the power the author holds over a text, the function of the term author in society, and the instability of a culturally produced term like authorship.

As previously mentioned, Enlightenment views of authorship are new and radically changed previous held conceptions of language: In “Originality, Authenticity, Imitation and Plagiarism: Augustine’s Chinese Cousins,” C. Jan Swearingen states: “Western notions of intellectual property, and the related ideas of copyright and plagiarism, are less than [sic] three hundred years old” (19; Lunsford 262). For Swearingen, we too often forget that authorship as we know it today is a concept that emerges from a historical period, and authorship functions differently in other cultures. We typically conceive of authorship in terms of Enlightenment philosophy: Lunsford argues, “exclusionary ownership between the author and the work is one we have constructed, largely out of romantic ideology that linked the concepts of originality and genius to that of the ideas of an author” (Lunsford 264). Lunsford points out that the modern notion of authorship is a cultural construction which served the demands of a particular time in history. However, Lunsford suggests, these notions of textual ownership have run their course. Contemporary society has different textual needs and the modern concepts of authorship are breaking down: “In spite of their ambiguity, however, the notions of authorship and of work, as they have developed in our legal and academic institutions, are not only highly constructed and contingent. . . but also currently at the point of disintegration, or at the very least at a point of transformation” (Lunsford 265). Lunsford observes that changes in the cultural views of authorship are inevitable.

Barthes

In his 1968 essay “The Death of the Author,” literary critic Roland Barthes critiques Locke’s work by recognizing the very cultural and social period from which it emerges: “The
author is a modern figure, a product of our society insofar as, emerging from the Middle Ages with English empiricism, French rationalism and the personal faith of the Reformation, it discovered the prestige of the individual, of, as it is more nobly put, the ‘human person’” (4). Barthes’ assertion marks what is often viewed as a modern versus post-modern debate. Barthes more aptly notes the instability and the cultural values that inform the terms used to define textual production. Within the context of literary criticism, he echoes Frederich Nietzsche’s assertion that “God is dead” (181) when Barthes proclaims the death of the author: A single creator no longer drives the creation process or the writing process. Barthes states that “a text is not a line of words releasing a single ‘theological’ meaning (the ‘message’ of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash” (6). By undermining a single source from which “meaning” comes forth, Barthes empowers readers, and consequently critics like him, to expand their interpretations of a text beyond the author’s intentions. More importantly, Barthes transforms the one-dimensional space of a text, making room for writer-reader interaction. For Barthes, the most pressing question is not what the author intends, but how the language is encountered—the experience of and interpretation by the reader. Meaning, therefore, does not begin and end with the author, according to Barthes, but meaning begins with the readers’ response to a text. Barthes’ call is important to challenges against the solitary author because he recognizes writing and language as a social act and releases the reader from the guidance and direction of the author. Barthes argues: “To give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing” (Barthes 6). Barthes’ insight encourages us to see more in a text, but his motivation seems to add room for personal interpretation.
Moreover, Barthes blurs the lines between the individual and the culture. In *Plagiarism, The Internet and Student Learning*, Wendy Sutherland-Smith uncovers another equally essential element of Barthes’ critique. Sutherland-Smith asserts that Barthes does not see “authors as the individual creators of unique “works,” but rather “writers only have the power to mix already existing cultural forms and knowledge: to reassemble or re-deploy text where ‘text’ is understood to be socially produced” (16). Sutherland-Smith’s comments are significant as she observes Barthes’ major point of departure from Locke’s line of thinking: language already exists and cannot be owned even when a person attempts to “reassemble” language into a different form. Language in its natural state is common to all and cannot be extracted and reformed to create something new; rather, language is not a tangible object. Barthes further argues that the “text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture . . . The writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original” (5-6). Barthes contends that language is not transformed through the individual writing process of the solitary writer. Rather the writer only has limited powers: “to mix writings, to counter the ones with the others, in such a way as never to rest on any one of them. Did he wish to *express himself*, he ought at least to know that the inner ‘thing’ he thinks to ‘translate’ is itself only a ready-formed dictionary, its words only explainable through other words, and so on indefinitely” (6). Barthes highlights the limits one encounters in language. For the “natural” state of language, according to Barthes, is one of already existing symbols or a “ready-formed dictionary” (6). Language is not transformed into something new, but it is simply recycled symbols that exist outside of the self. Barthes’ views, in many ways, seem radical, but they do follow Stuart Greene’s point that authorship is “relational.” Barthes then makes one more significant point:

[A] text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into
mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, . . . there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author. The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text’s unity lies not in its origin but in its destination. Yet this destination cannot any longer be personal: the reader is without history, biography, psychology; he is simply that someone who holds together in a single field all the traces by which the written text is constituted. [. . .] [w]e know that to give writing its future, it is necessary to overthrow the myth: the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author. (7)

Barthes blames the “culmination of capitalist ideology, which has attached the greatest importance to the ‘person’ of the author” (4). Barthes opens a text to all that “holds” it together. The author cannot and does not create a work with a single meaning.

**Foucault**

The following year (1969), French philosopher and social critic Michel Foucault challenges the concept of the solitary author with the publication of “What is an Author?” Like Barthes, Foucault identifies authorship as a socially constructed term emerging from an identifiable period in history, specifically the “privileged moment of individualization in the history of ideas, knowledge, literature, philosophy, and the sciences” (9). For Foucault and many scholars who followed, authorship is a malleable concept that follows the ebbs and flows of the culture; authorship is a moment in history. Foucault states that “it is not enough. . . to repeat the empty affirmation that the author has disappeared. [. . .] Instead, we must locate the space left empty by the author’s disappearance, follow the distribution of gaps and breaches, and
watch for the openings that this disappearance uncovers” (12). Foucault’s observations are significant in that he prepares the way for the deconstruction of a text. These gaps, therefore, point to the other voices, silent yet present, in a text. Foucault then demonstrates the multiple texts existing, running counter to, an actual “singular” text. These other voices then also contribute to authorship, again placing authorship back into the social.

Foucault, however, goes on to critique the very name of the author and its function in society: he refers to this as the “author-function” (14). For Foucault, the author serves particular purposes in society. Accordingly, there are four characteristics of the author function:

1. The author function is linked to the juridical and institutional system that encompasses, determines, and articulates the universal discourses;  
2. it does not affect all discourses in the same way at all times and in all types of civilization;  
3. it is not defined by the spontaneous attribution of a discourse to its producer, but rather by a series of specific and complex operations;  
4. it does not refer purely and simply to a real individual, since it can give rise simultaneously to several selves, to several subjects—positions that can be occupied by different classes of individuals. (17-18)

Here Foucault draws our attention to the concept of the “author” and its role in or service to society. Foucault notes the multiple ways the concept of the author functions in a society: it allows censure and forces writer accountability. The author function applies not only to individual works, but also to discourses (19). For example, he cites Marx and Freud as “founders of discursivity,” as they make possible other works (18). He closes by pointing out that the author function has operated differently in different places and at different times. He reminds us that the author is not a source of infinite meaning but rather a part of a larger system
of beliefs that limit and restrict meaning (21). Authorship then preserves a belief or idea important to a society. Most importantly, Foucault suggests that the author-function does not necessarily point to one person, but to many other selves.

Foucault differs from Barthes in the central focus of his critique: Foucault focuses on authorship as an historical/social function. An author’s proper name “is not simply an element in a discourse . . . it performs a certain role with regard to narrative discourse, assuring a classificatory function. Such a name permits one to group together a certain number of texts, define them, differentiate them from and contrast them to others” (13). Foucault claims that the author’s name functions in the marketplace to classify particular discourses, but moreover, the author’s name limits the text: “The author function is therefore characteristic of the mode of existence, circulation, and functioning of certain discourses within a society” (14). Such discourses then also lead to the exclusion of other discourses. Foucault helps us to see how authorship holds together particular societal beliefs and systems.

The philosophers discussed in this section all share three common tenets: (1) language is social/culture; (2) texts are socially produced; (3) and, texts are not static, tangible objects to be owned. Sutherland-Smith observes that Barthes and Foucault both share the view that writing is socially produced and reflects the social experiences of the individual who produces the text. She insightfully observes from their work:

Everything around us in the social world will influence the ways in which we produce language and how we make meaning from our life experiences.

Language and meaning are—they argue—essentially social phenomena. Each individual will understand the same event differently. This then represents the very essence of individual subjectivity—and is unique for each one of us. (79)
Sutherland-Smith recognizes that both philosophers, Barthes and Foucault, note the relational aspects of a text. The social world influences meaning and language, and language influences the social world. Individual subjectivity then reflects these interactions. The work of these philosophers is the touchstone for the emerging scholarship in composition today. Both Barthes and Foucault create a space from which a theory of authorship can emerge.

**Recent Trends and Developments**

The social nature (and network) of contemporary society is becoming evident. Much of the increased interest in authorship today is a response to fears that the Internet exposes students to unlimited opportunities to weave the work of others into their own texts without proper attribution. Not surprisingly, the Internet has brought with it new concerns regarding textual production, especially within the learning community. For Woodmansee, the very notion of solitary authorship does not match the reality of textual production. In “The Author Effect,” she describes the effects of the Internet: “the computer is dissolving the boundaries essential to the survival of our modern fiction of the author as the sole creator of unique, original works” (25). Not only have students’ access to texts increased, but much of their visual world is constructed in the multi-dimensional space of the internet via the computer screen, rather than the one-dimensional world of print. Consequently, the Internet has changed the ways we and our students read and interact with a text, and the ways in which we conceive of authorship. Woodmansee then recognizes the reality that educators are often reluctant to face: Students perceive and interact with texts differently due to their exposure and access to various types of information via the Internet and thus the culture. Consequently, the very definition of plagiarism as well as the boundaries of a text are being questioned, specifically how students use the Internet to construct their own work. In an effort to address concerns about the current
generation of students who are faced with an unlimited access to information, compositionists continue to question the very term *plagiarism*. The final section of this chapter highlights three of the most prominent theories associated with emerging theories of textual practices and authorship: discourse community theory, patchwriting, and collaboration.

Discourse community theory recognizes the language specific to a particular learning community or discipline. Two foundational articles suggest that writing in the university requires students to participate in a discourse community with which they are unfamiliar. As previously discussed, in “Inventing the University,” David Bartholomae explores the difficulties inherent in this endeavor. Bartholomae recognizes that students must learn the conventions of academic discourse in order to participate in academic discussions. “Every time a student sits down to write for us, he has to invent the university for the occasion—invent the university, that is, or a branch of it, like history or anthropology or economics or English” (623). Students not only have to learn the conventions of academic discourse, but they also have to learn the disciplinary conventions of various academic discourses. Because students do not know these conventions, they must approximate the language of the academy. Bartholomae explains: “The student has to appropriate (or be appropriated by) a specialized discourse, and he has to do this as though he were easily and comfortably one with his audience, as though he were a member of the academy” (624). Therefore, students attempt to “appropriate” academic discourse by “mimicking its language” (624). Bartholomae recognizes that students are negotiating and balancing between themselves and a particular discourse: students must find “some compromise between idiosyncrasy, a personal history, on the one hand, and the requirements of convention, the history of a discipline, on the other hand” (624). Bartholomae’s insight is especially significant to this study because he recognizes the relational nature of authorship: students must
balance their histories, their personal perceptions along with the instructional environment.

More importantly, Bartholomae identifies a significant aspect of authorship development. Bartholomae describes students’ attempts to write in the university in terms of Kegan’s interpersonal balance. Students are attempting to become something that they are not. Students must assert a self that they may not possess in the early years of college; therefore, they write to belong, to be accepted. They write by mimicking the language of a particular discourse community.

In “Plagiarism as Literacy Practice: Recognizing and Rethinking Ethical Binaries,” Kathryn Valentine builds on arguments much like Bartholomae’s. For Valentine, “plagiarism is a literacy practice” (89). She advocates moving plagiarism out of an ethical discourse, which associates textual acts with morality (right/wrong), and situating it as a form of negotiation: “From this perspective, the work of negotiating plagiarism is also the work of negotiating identity for students” (90). Valentine argues that students often encounter academic discourses in much the same way one encounters a foreign language: students new to academic discourse then must “translate from one language to another” (96). The act of such translation does not indicate that students are trying to get out of work, as the discourse of ethics implies (96); rather, students are involved in a significant kind of intelligent work: work geared toward knowing and understanding. The work Valentine explains suggests that students want to belong to the academic community, and this desire to belong is significant psychological work in the development of authorship. Some forms of plagiarism can be understood as fundamental steps toward self-authorship.

Another prominent theory of authorship suggests that textual practices such as patchwriting are not simply literacy practices or approximations; patchwriting reflects the ways
texts are actually produced. Rebecca Moore Howard is at the forefront of rethinking authorship and plagiarism in the university. Howard’s work on issues of authorship and plagiarism is laying the groundwork for furthering our understanding of plagiarism as a social construct and the limitations of solitary authorship. In *Standing in the Shadow of Giants*, Howard claims that authorship is a product of the culture: “What constitutes acceptable and unacceptable textual practices changes from one era to another” (14). The culture continues to adhere to such definitions of solitary authorship to sustain societal hierarchies. Criminalizing plagiarism is therefore part of this cultural work. Howard goes on to argue that all writing is patchwriting: “all of us patchwrite all the time, but we usually cover the trail” (7). Unlike Bartholomae and Valentine, Howard argues that patchwriting is more than a way of learning: “patchwriting is not only a means of students’ learning; it is at the heart of writing itself” (7). Howard takes a bold turn away from Bartholomae and Valentine. Howard does not recognize solitary authorship as a reality.

Collaboration is probably the most accepted view of authorship among writing instruction. Many teachers use collaboration in the classroom to help students generate ideas and notions of audience. Kenneth A. Bruffee is an eloquent proponent of collaboration and expresses the view that knowledge is socially constructed. In Bruffee’s “Collaborative Learning and the ‘Conversation of Mankind,’” he encourages educators to fully explore the underpinnings and history behind collaborative learning. He explains:

if we accept the premise that knowledge is an artifact created by a community of knowledgeable peers constituted by the language of that community, and that learning is a social and not an individual process, then to learn is not to assimilate information and improve our mental eyesight. To learn is to work collaboratively
to establish and maintain knowledge among a community of knowledgeable peers. (427)

Bruffee’s argument is significant in that he responds to a significant amount of collaboration taking place in both the classroom and professional fields of inquiry. Moreover, he also explains the assumption inherent in the social construction of knowledge: learning and thus writing occurs through collaboration with peers. In “Collaborative Authorship and the Teaching of Writing,” Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede likewise promote collaboration in the writing classroom. They observe that “most of the writing produced in professional settings in America is done collaboratively” (418). However, the writing classroom is still structured in a way that continues to further the notion of solitary authorship (418). They argue that the “traditional model of solitary authorship is more myth than reality” (418). Therefore, the writing classroom is not teaching students how writers really write.

These resources challenge us to question the act of authorship and hold the term “plagiarism” up to the reality of textual production. Moreover, these views provide insight into various forms of authorship. While Bartholomae and Valentine address the very real demands placed on students in the writing classroom, Howard, Bruffee, Lunsford, and Ede all point to a re-conceptualization of the term “authorship.”

To fully understand the significance of these schools of thought, let us consider them within Kegan’s framework. Both Bartholomae and Valentine recognize mimetic writing as a valid textual act which moves students toward self authorship. Mimetic authorship can be understood as a means to an end along a continuum of more advanced ways of knowing/writing. However, the reality is that students who engage in mimetic writing are not recognized nor acknowledged for this developmental milestone. Rather than noting mimetic authorship as a
valid and fundamental movement in the process of authorship, most academic settings do not acknowledge mimesis as a valid textual interaction.

Howard, Bruffee, Lunsford and Ede, on the other hand, note the limitations of solitary authorship. Solitary authorship is not the end on their writerly continuum. They propose a much broader definition of authorship, a definition that doubts the concept of authorship altogether. For these scholars recognize the discrepancies between the way writers write and the way we teach students to write. They argue ideas are influenced by the cultural, social, and instructional background from which we emerge. Such perspectives reflect postmodern ways of knowing and are best understood as characteristics of Kegan’s interindividual balance. To view the world from Kegan’s highest developmental balance, we must experience the limitations of the previous balance. Therefore, these scholars have more than likely experienced the limitations of the self-authorship of the institutional balance. The interindividual balance requires us to see the limitations of the solitary author. Scholars, for example, who argue for or promote the social construction of authorship have recognized and possibly experienced the limitations of solitary authorship. In other words, authorship as a solitary endeavor no longer matches their experiences.

While these scholars construct similar arguments, they are clearly looking at the issue from different places. We can see then from these two perspectives, very different pedagogical strategies emerge. These discussions open a dialogue and encourage writing instructors to question their perceptions of authorship and plagiarism, yet they still only provide a snapshot of authorship as a whole, more comprehensive term. While the insight in these works has barely made a dent in academic policy on plagiarism, the very existence of these discussions has
brought many writing instructors to a crossroad between theory and practice. It is this crossroad that this study attempts to address.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

As detailed throughout this project, the academic climate in which students know and come to learn about plagiarism is part of social, historical, and philosophical traditions—traditions infused with conflicts and instability. While the terms plagiarism and authorship are debatable in the scholarship and academia, students’ opinions, understandings, and textual practices are often dismissed, or at the very least overlooked. The purpose of this study is to ask first-year students how they practice authorship and how they understand plagiarism in the university setting. The following chapter outlines the research portion of this study in five sections: the purpose and research questions, the research methodology, the research setting and sample population, the instrument design, and the data collection.

Purpose and Research Questions

There are numerous reasons why we should study authorship and plagiarism in the university setting: Authorship is a relevant topic to those in the field of composition studies, even though the pervasiveness of plagiarism extends well beyond the writing classroom into other disciplines. Studying authorship and plagiarism can provide insight into how we view our students and how we address plagiarism. Moreover, this study can help us understand what works on a particular campus, as well as what factors influence students’ views.

My interest in authorship and plagiarism derives from several areas: As a researcher, I am interested in how to reconcile intellectually the conflicting scholarship on authorship and plagiarism. As a writing instructor I am influenced by my teaching experiences and my desire to
create a classroom strategy to study authorship development in the classroom, as well as to
discover appropriate responses to student plagiarism. Also, my educational background in the
social sciences and desire to understand psychological development leads me to look to
psychological theory for insight into students’ textual practices. Finally, I want to be a student
advocate; I want to understand my students and how they see themselves as writers. In addition,
plagiarism and authorship issues affect how students progress into their academic disciplines and
their respective professional fields. Because this topic makes students and faculty alike
uncomfortable, this study can contribute to and assist in a necessary and continual dialogue
among faculty, students, and administrators.

Research Questions

This study stresses the importance of students’ perspectives by situating the study within
a first-year writing program at a large research university in the southern United States. By
using survey research, this study seeks answers to explore the following areas:

1. To learn about students’ beliefs and understanding of authorship and
plagiarism at the beginning and end of their freshman writing course (101)
and the beginning and end of the freshman honors writing course (103).
[Modifications were made to include students in both EN 102 and
sophomore literature. Pre- and post-surveys were omitted. See page 71-73.]

2. To examine how students view authorship and plagiarism at different
points in their freshman writing experience.
3. To learn any possible relationships between/among students’ views of authorship and plagiarism and Robert Kegan’s theory of psychological development.

Research Methodology

In *Locus-Of-Control Differences Among Women Administrators in Two-Year Colleges*, Carol Slone reminds us that survey research is “a very old research technique” (59). Surveys are still a reliable way to attain valuable information about particular populations and/or groups of people. In *Survey Research Methods*, Floyd J. Fowler outlines the basic criteria for general survey research:

- The purpose of the survey is to produce statistics, that is, quantitative or numerical descriptions about some aspects of the study population.
- The main way of collecting information is by asking people questions; their answers constitute the data to be analyzed.
- Generally, information is collected about only a fraction of the population, that is, a sample, rather than from every member of the population. (1)

Surveys, Fowler states, include more than simple counts of people and quantitative data; through the use of this simple methodology, researchers can ascertain additional descriptive data and thus better understand a particular population as a whole. The overall goal of survey research, then, is “tapping the subjective feelings” of a population. Surveys obtain additional facts by asking a group of people questions about themselves, their views, and their particular situations (Fowler 2). The very design of survey research makes it an appropriate method to access subjective opinions about controversial topics like authorship and plagiarism.
Survey research is preferable to other research methods for several reasons. One of the most significant benefits of survey research is that it provides the opportunity to reach a large group of people and measure a large number of variables within a limited amount of time (Slone 60). Moreover, surveys can be a better source of information because they incorporate three different methodologies in combination: sampling, standardized measurement, and data analysis (Fowler 3-4). To enhance the reliability of the data, this study attempted to attend to these three elements of survey research. This study uses survey research to describe freshman students’ textual practices and beliefs about authorship and plagiarism in the writing classroom.

Research Setting and Demographics

As previously mentioned, the setting of this study is a large research institution in the southeastern United States. This institution enrolled over 28,807 students during the fall semester of 2009, a “record high” for this university (“Enrollment 2009”). Some of the demographic and academic factors specific to this population of students are reported as follows:

- 68% come from [in state]
- 29% come from elsewhere in the United States
- 3% are international students from 72 countries
- 27% of our undergraduates belong to sororities or fraternities
- 53% are women
- 12% are African-American
- 2% are Hispanic-American
- 1% are Asian-American

On our campus,

- 30% major in arts and sciences
- 22% major in business
- 9% major in communication
- 10% major in education
- 10% major in engineering
- 10% major in human environmental sciences
- 2% major in law
- 5% major in nursing
• 2% major in social work

(Due to rounding, totals may exceed 100%)

Source: Quoted directly from: “Quick Facts-Demographics” http://quickfacts.ua.edu/demographics.html

The data show that over half of the students enrolled during the 2009 fall semester were in-state residents, and over half of the enrollments were women. The majority of students were Caucasian with only 15% representing different ethnic backgrounds. The majority of respondents were also majoring in the arts and sciences and business, with education, engineering, and human environmental sciences equally identified as the third most common major.

Target Population and Sample Selection

The target population of this study is first-year students. According to the university’s “Quick Facts,” 5,207 entered the freshman class during the 2009 fall semester (“Quick Facts”). The university reports that 5,116 of this class were first-time new freshmen. Over half of these first-time new freshmen were in-state residents (see Table 1).

Table 1

Number of First-Time Freshman Students During the Fall 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage of New Freshman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In State</td>
<td>3,207</td>
<td>62.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of State</td>
<td>1,877</td>
<td>36.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Because the target population of this study is freshman students, I identified the sample group from a required freshman course: 100 level first-year writing. By designating a subset of the freshman population to survey, I can better describe the target population’s textual practices
and understandings of plagiarism. The sample selection was chosen from a series of 100 level writing courses. The courses’ outcomes are listed on the university first-year writing websites and are described as follows:

**English 101**-The first in a two-course sequence, English 101 introduces students to college-level expository writing, critical reading, basic citation, and the rhetorical tools needed to participate successfully in . . . [the university] discourse community. (http://www.as.ua.edu/fwp/101)

**English 102**-The second course in [the university's] first-year sequence, introduces students to the principles of formal argumentation, advanced critical thinking, university-level research techniques, and research paper writing. (http://www.as.ua.edu/fwp/102)

**English 103**-is a one-semester course that introduces students to the rigors of expository writing and formal argumentation. The course emphasizes critical reading, critical thinking, and writing as synthesis, along with university level research techniques and research paper writing. (http://www.as.ua.edu/fwp/103)

**Timeline**

The study was divided into two phases. The first phase of this study began in the spring semester of 2009 and ended at the close of the semester (January-May). The study was to include a pre-test, a post-test, and a focus group; however, lack of participation forced me to drop these options.

The study developed into two phases because of two concerns which emerged during phase one: (1) Student recruitment was slow and difficult. (2) The survey instrument needed improving. While the overall research goals remained the same, I addressed these concerns by
broadening the sample population: I modified the research proposal to include students enrolled in 102 courses during the spring semester. I also addressed superficial errors within the survey instrument and restructured questions. Through the summer of 2009, I reviewed the survey instrument and made changes which, I believe, increased its validity. Phase two of this study began in the fall semester of 2009 and was closed at the end of the semester (August-December) and the fall survey also included an additional group of potential participants: students enrolled in 200 level literature courses. From this point forward, phase one of the survey is referred to as the pilot study, and phase two is referred to as the fall survey.

**Pilot Survey and Fall Survey**

The pilot study originally targeted approximately 200 students in first-year composition. Students were selected and requests for participation were based on their enrollment in two required freshman writing courses during the 2009, spring semester: First-Year Composition (101) or First-Year Honors Composition (103). The sample was to include students between the ages nineteen to twenty-eight years or older. Students eighteen years of age and under were not allowed to participate because the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at this university requires the consent of a guardian, and this form of consent was not a realistic option for students living away from home on a college campus. The IRB regulation significantly reduced the number of students who were allowed to access the survey. Due to low participation, students in English (102) were added. Students were selected and requests for participation were distributed according to their enrollment in First-Year Composition (101), (102), and (103).

The names of instructors teaching courses in EN 101 and Honors EN 103 (and eventually students in English 102) were located on the university’s website under course listings. Ten classes were randomly selected; every fifth section of First-Year 101 and every fifth section of
First-Year Honors 103 listed on the 2009 spring roster was selected. Email addresses for instructors teaching these particular sections were procured; they were then sent an email explaining that their particular section had been randomly selected. This email also notified instructors to expect a follow-up email (Student Invitation to Participate). I asked instructors to forward the follow-up email, the Invitation to Participate (see Appendix A) to students listed on the roster of their selected section. Due to low participation, the sample selection was modified; students in EN 102 were included in the selection and participants were no longer randomly chosen; this study included any and all students enrolled in English 101, 102, and 103. Along with broadening my sample selection base, I attempted to hold a focus group discussion. I offered students ten dollars for their time and participation; one respondent expressed interest, and follow-up correspondence with this student went unanswered. I followed the same protocol when contacting the additional sample selection group: I procured all instructors’ email addresses who were teaching EN 101, 102, and 103 and sent them the invitations to participate in either the survey or the focus group.

The distribution of students’ invitations to participate was emailed to instructors first for several reasons: According to Fowler, “[w]hen survey requests come from less known or unknown sources and go to people who vary widely in how and how much they use the Internet, results are predictably variable. Sometimes, virtually no one responds” (61); “Identifiable sponsors” help improve recruitment (61). For this reason, I chose to contact the sample population by means of their instructors. Advertising the study through instructors, I hoped to achieve credibility with students. Students on campus were not familiar with me nor my affiliation with the Composition, Rhetoric, and English Studies program. (I had not been teaching and/or working on campus for at least two years prior to the study). I also felt that if
instructors mentioned the survey to their particular sections, it would legitimize the study as an official academic pursuit and assure students of my interest in their opinions. I had hoped that if the email was forwarded to students by their instructors, it might ease the discomfort often associated with discussions of plagiarism.

The fall study included sophomore students enrolled in any 200 level literature survey course. Emails were sent to all instructors teaching any 100 level or 200 level writing/literature courses. The same procedures were followed as stated above.

**Gaining Informed Consent from Participants**

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board on this particular campus. The head of the English Department and the Director of the First-Year Writing Program both granted permission to conduct this survey. Individual consent forms were attached to the survey link located in the Invitation to Participate. When students clicked on the link in the Invitation to Participate, they were directed to the Informed Consent page (see Appendix B). The Informed Consent explained the full scope of the study. Respondents were given information to contact the researcher and/or the IRB with any questions or additional information. Respondents were notified that they could choose to decline participation at any point during the survey. At no time would non-participation affect their academic status. Participants had to be nineteen years of age or older to consent to participate in this study.

**Research Design**

**Instruments**

The online commercial software *SurveyMonkey* was used to develop, conduct, and analyze this survey. An online resource was chosen because all students enrolled at this university are granted access to computers through their university enrollment. The online
system, therefore, ensured that students in the sample population who wanted to participate had access to the survey.

*Surveymonkey* required the researcher to obtain a membership with a monthly access charge. *Surveymonkey* provided design templates, question formats, data collection, and data analysis. The host site, surveymonkey.com, contained a collector’s page which allowed the researcher to view results. *Surveymonkey* also offered a privacy option: to either save email addresses with the results or to not save email addresses with the results. I chose to delete email addresses in the reporting of results as the identity of the participants is irrelevant to the study and the anonymity of participants is most important due to the nature of the topic. Further, *Surveymonkey* does not identify email addresses, only IP addresses, which would not allow this researcher to connect the survey response to the respondent. The account is also private and password protected. Additionally, *Surveymonkey* protected the data through “firewall and intrusion prevention technology” (surveymonkey.com).

**Theoretical Framework and Question Development**

Kegan’s theory of psychological development was the theoretical framework from which the questions were constructed. I began constructing a survey that addressed questions about students’ textual practices, and I aligned possible answers to these questions with aspects of Kegan’s theory. Two main developmental balances were central to the construction of questions and answer options: the interpersonal balance and the institutional balance. In an effort to structure questions, my survey uses Tricia Bertram Gallant and Patrick Drinan’s description of Kegan’s notion of self-authorship. They refer to the actualization of self-authorship as having an “internal locus of control versus an external locus of control” (“Organizational Theory and Student Cheating: Explanation, Responses, and Strategies” 843). Their description is helpful as
it describes what individuals within these two balances are “subject to” or how individuals define themselves (*The Evolving Self* 115-122). The questions, therefore, include answers which may be described as external or internal to the participants.

Students in the interpersonal balance are thought to be more concerned with external appearances: Kegan suggests that such individuals see themselves and construct their identity through the opinions of others. Questions included answers that reflected what I considered interpersonal answers: conforming to a particular environment and/or people; being liked, appreciated, and/or valued; fitting into one’s peer culture or the academic culture. These answer options pointed to external motivations or the approval of an individual or others. Students whose answers corresponded to external motivations; for example, answers that referred to things/people outside of themselves, were considered to be functioning within Kegan’s interpersonal balance. Students within this particular balance want to please the teacher, satisfy the requirements, and make the grade. Their aim is to please. I propose that if these students plagiarize, they may be doing so not out of malice or resistance, but out of conformity, attempting to be successful members of the academic environment.

Kegan’s theory identifies one of the key concepts or behaviors that we want students to learn in the writing classroom and one of the key concepts associated with the binary view of authorship: self-authorship. Several aspects of self-authorship were considered in the development of this survey. To identify students operating within the institutional balance, or employing self-authorship, questions contained answer options that suggested an internal motivation or a particular system/ideology rather than an external motivation or the influence of a particular person. Keywords associated with this particular developmental balance reflect more skepticism about societal norms, terms, and the perceptions of others. Such answers also
assert a clear right/wrong answer which may be based on a particular adherence to a particular ideology. I hypothesize that students who choose to forego their authorship from this standpoint do so out of a greater loyalty to a personally accepted ideology. This ideology could take the form of, but is not limited to, an economic, theological, or a philosophical viewpoint. Students who are functioning from within Kegan’s institutional balance are more likely to plagiarize out of resistance. These students are loyal to an internalized system. They are not as concerned about meeting the needs of the instructor; therefore, individuals within the institutional balance will forego their own authorship before conforming to the expectations/ideology of the composition classroom. These students, in my opinion, may feel threatened by the ideology of the classroom; they refuse to conform, and they are also more confident in their writing skills. These are the students who blatantly plagiarize.

My hypothesis is that authorship is a process, and first-year writing students’ responses to the survey reflect this process. Students’ answers to the survey questions reflect elements of Kegan’s interpersonal balance or institutional balance. These views provide insight into students’ understandings of plagiarism. I propose students in 103 and 200 level sophomore courses chose answers more associated with the institutional balance, whereas students in 101 and 102 chose answers that reflect more interpersonal meaning making skills.

**Question Structure**

To access students’ developmental balances, I constructed questions in four primary formats: Multiple Choice (check all that apply/multiple answers allowed); Multiple Choice (limited number of answers allowed); Open-Ended Comment questions (a box for students to type in their own answers); and Rating Questions (participants’ responses corresponded to a value set of 1-5).
Multiple choice questions contained two to three types of answers: (1) answers that referred to or indicated an external motivation; (2) answers that referred to or indicated an internal motivation; (3) comment boxes for students to articulate their own responses.

Questions, therefore, offered answer options typically aligned with Kegan’s interpersonal balance, the institutional balance, or a neutral option labeled “other.” The third option, “other” or “can you explain,” gave students the opportunity to deviate from the two types of answers and/or explain their answers more thoroughly. Ratings questions offered students a range of answers regarding the textual practices of their peer group: Each row on a table contained a ratings question regarding the frequency of a particular textual practice; for example, “my friends visit online paper mills.” Participants then answered based on the frequency of this particular behavior: rarely, somewhat rarely, regularly, often, or always. The general structures of the survey instruments are as follows (see Table 2):

Table 2

Overview of Survey Instruments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Specific Focus Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>General demographic information</td>
<td>Age, gender, ethnic/racial background, employment information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Academic Status, Extracurricular Activities, and Employment</td>
<td>Semester credit hours, past enrollments in educational institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Students’ Textual Views</td>
<td>This section asked participants their views about authorship and plagiarism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Personal Experiences with Plagiarism</td>
<td>This section asked participants questions regarding their personal experiences with plagiarism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>Views of Plagiarizers</td>
<td>Participants were asked about their perceptions of those who have been accused of plagiarizing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Fall Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Question Focus</th>
<th>Specific Focus Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>General Demographic Questions</td>
<td>Students’ ages, gender, ethnic/racial background. Employment, year graduated, primary reason student works, work hours per week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Academic Status/ Extracurricular Activities</td>
<td>Academic Status (number of semester hours); major; writing or literature course currently enrolled; first/second time to take the course; primary reasons for attending college; university honor code.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Writing in the University</td>
<td>This section asks students to compare their high school writing experiences with those of the university. Some of the questions include: motivations for writing in college; differences in high school and college papers;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Students’ textual practices and perceptions</td>
<td>This section asks students their views about authorship; for example, students are asked questions about features of a text, characteristics of an author, differences in published and non-published writing, original ideas, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>Plagiarism</td>
<td>Students’ understandings of plagiarism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Plagiarism and Peer Group</td>
<td>Students’ perceptions of plagiarism among their peer groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For a more detailed review of the fall survey, see Appendix 3.

### Validity and Reliability

The issues of validity and reliability are important to survey data. The more reliable and consistent a survey is, the more valid the data will be. A valid study then must measure what it claims to measure. There are four types of validity: content validity, construct validity, criteria validity, and face validity. While this study was concerned with conducting a valid survey, the time and scope of this research did not allow a thorough investigation into all four aspects of validity. This study focuses on measuring subjective states; therefore, I focused on basic research design and constructing reliable survey questions. This survey closely attended to two types of error. Fowler refers to errors associated with those who answer, the survey’s sample selection, and errors associated with the answers respondents record (15).

One of the central threats to validity can, therefore, occur in the research design, specifically through the sample selection. Inferences cannot be made if the survey purposely
excludes a group of people (Fowler 13, 17). The sampling selection chosen in this study was all freshman and sophomore students enrolled in a composition or literature course in the English department. Therefore, all freshman and sophomore students who were not enrolled in one of these courses were excluded. This design does not jeopardize the validity of the study because both writing composition and English literature are part of the core curriculum which all students must take at some point in their undergraduate education.

The validity of the survey instrument is also affected by the reliability of the questions. Slone argues that surveys are typically stronger on reliability than validity:

> The data collected through the use of a questionnaire are reliable in that the exact same questions may be asked of each respondent. Additionally, the respondent has the opportunity to complete the questionnaire in a manner that is free of external constraints. Also, by using the same set of questions for each respondent, [sic] any bias on the part of the researcher is eliminated. (60-61)

Slone points out that because the survey participants are given the same instrument, thus the same questions, the researcher establishes consistency during the research. The reliability of this survey is then enhanced by the standardization of questions; all participants in the pilot study were asked the same questions, and all participants in the fall survey were asked the same questions. Also, I knew only basic demographic information about the students: age, gender, ethnic background, age, academic course, and academic hours completed. The reliability of the data is enhanced because the respondents are anonymous. By eliminating the respondents’ identities from the survey, I hoped to reduce researcher bias and create a more open environment for participants to respond. However, I must acknowledge the fact that some surveys were possibly accessed on campus. The negative connotations associated with plagiarism are
pervasive; accessing the survey while on a public campus might affect the extent to which participants were willing to self-disclose/report their behavior.

A second potential threat to validity is associated with the respondents’ answers to survey questions. The errors in self-reporting can be caused by a number of things. Fowler explains “misunderstanding the question, not having the information needed to answer and distorting answers in order to look good are only a few examples” (Fowler 15). In response to this potential threat to validity, I spent a considerable amount of time structuring the questions to increase clarity. Fowler suggests that the structure of the question enables the participant and researcher to communicate effectively: “In a self-administered survey, on paper or via a computer, the researcher speaks directly to the respondent through a written questionnaire or words on a computer screen” (88). Clear questions adhere to the following properties:

- The researcher’s side of the question-and-answer process is entirely scripted so that the questions as written fully prepare a respondent to answer questions.
- The question means the same thing to every respondent.
- The kinds of answers that constitute an appropriate response to the question are communicated consistently to all respondents. (Fowler 89)

To increase the reliability of the survey, the term plagiarism was phrased consistently with the definition used in the university’s honor code and policy on academic misconduct: plagiarism is “representing the words, data, works, ideas, computer programs or output, or anything not generated in an authorized fashion, as one’s own” (http://catalogs.ua.edu/catalog 08/502000.html).

The structure of the questions also contributes to the reliability of respondents’ answers. As previously discussed, this survey consists of two phases. The fall survey was modified to
clarify questions which appeared confusing to participants in the pilot survey. Fowler argues scripted answer options increase reliability: “The simplest way to give respondents the same perceptions of what constitutes an adequate answer is to provide them with a list of acceptable answers” (Fowler 97). Closed questions were included and offered respondents a list of appropriate answer options.

**Data Collection Schedule**

The data collection was officially closed in January 2010; however, respondents typically quit responding at the end of the spring semester, 2009, and during the middle of the fall semester, 2009.

**Analysis of Data**

Statistics and descriptive data were used to infer the findings of this study. *Surveymonkey* provides the numeric data and statistics from participants’ responses; the descriptive analyses are inferred from these reports. I analyzed the survey data by evaluating the basis of students’ responses: responses associated with external motivations and responses associated with internal motivations. I conclude that students who chose answers more closely aligned with external motivations were operating within Kegan’s interpersonal balance, whereas participants whose answers were associated with more internal answers were operating from Kegan’s institutional balance.
CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

In the beginning of this study, I argued that authorship is an evolving process with clear patterns of growth and development. I asked several questions that became the driving force of this study: Do freshman students perceive authorship and plagiarism differently from their more experienced peers? Do students’ perceptions of authorship correspond to elements of Kegan’s developmental balances? And, do students see themselves as authors? This chapter attempts to answer these questions by analyzing the quantitative and descriptive data collected in this research through the lens of Kegan’s theory of psychological development. Section one presents the demographic data of the respondents. In this section, I describe and compare the respondents in both the pilot and fall surveys. Section two looks specifically at the fall survey and the differences in participants’ responses based on their age and experience: students in 101 and students in 200 level literature courses. This section then analyzes students’ responses to questions about texts, authors, and plagiarism and highlights comparisons between students’ responses and Kegan’s theory of psychological development. Due to the limited number of respondents, this chapter seeks to draw comparisons rather than conclusions between students’ perceptions of authorship and plagiarism and Kegan’s developmental balances.

Pilot Survey and Fall Survey Demographics

Both the pilot survey and the fall survey had fewer than expected participants. The number of students who responded to the fall survey was significantly lower than the number of students who responded to the pilot survey; however, the graph below shows that while the pilot
study reached more students (101 respondents) than the fall study (53 respondents), the number of respondents who followed through and completed the survey was nearly the same. The fall survey, therefore, had a higher percentage of students to complete the survey: 71.6% of students who accessed the fall survey completed it, as opposed to 41.6% of the students in the pilot study. Of the 42 students who completed the online pilot survey, 61.5% were female, while only 39.6% were male. Of the 38 students who completed the fall survey, 68.4% of the respondents were female while 31.6% were male. While the fall survey did reach slightly more females and fewer males than did the pilot study, the graph below shows that the differences in female to male respondents were similar (see Table 3).

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pilot Survey</th>
<th>Fall Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The goal of this study is to target a subset of the freshman population enrolled in 100 level writing courses during the spring 2009 academic year. Sophomore literature students were included to provide more data and permit comparisons. A freshman student was defined as a student with 0-32 semester credit hours completed, and a sophomore student was defined as having completed a total of 33-64 semester credit hours. Of the number of students reached in the pilot study, 83.5% were freshman students, while the fall survey reached only 60.5% of the freshman participants; 21.1% of the fall survey participants were sophomores.
The first eleven questions of the pilot study concerned basic demographic information and questions regarding participants’ academic statuses. Participants’ ages were also relevant to this study as the target population is first-time new freshman students. Most of these students were in the age range of a typical first-time freshman: the pilot survey reached 94.5% of students in the 19-21 age range, while the fall survey reached 97.4% participants in the target age range of 19-21. The data also report that both surveys reached similar populations of students representing/mirroring the ethnic diversity on campus (see Table 4).

Table 4
A Graph Comparing Respondents’ Ethnicity

![Graph comparing respondents' ethnicity]

Source: University Statistics from “Quick Facts-Demographics.” (see page 69).

**Academic Information (Status/Background/Major)**

Questions regarding students’ academic backgrounds were included in the survey. The pilot study revealed survey respondents with various academic backgrounds: 30.8% previously attended a two year institution; 20.5% previously attended another four year institution; 2.6% previously attended a technical or trade school, and the other 51.3% were first-time new freshmen. Once again, these statistics demonstrate that I reached the target population, first-time new freshman (51.3%).

Unlike the pilot survey, the fall survey requested students identify their college or major: The following figure suggests that the majority of students in the fall survey associate themselves
and/or their major with the college of arts and sciences (31.6%), the college of commerce and business (18.4%), and the college of education (15.8%). The following figure reflects students’ affiliations by school/college (see Figure 3).

Figure 3
Fall Survey Respondents Classified by School/College

Of the students who accessed the online pilot study, the graph below shows the majority of students who participated were enrolled in first-year writing (83.5%) and only 16.5% were enrolled in advanced/honors writing 103. While the fall survey included fewer freshman students enrolled in first-year writing 101 and 103 (2.6%), it did include an additional group of students: 7.9% of participants were enrolled in first-year writing 102 (see Table 5).

From the group of students in the pilot study, 79.1% were taking the course for the first time while 94.5% of respondents in the fall survey were taking the course for the first time. For the purposes of this study, we might pause and consider the differences in these two groups of participants: 20.9% of the participants in the pilot study were taking the first-year writing course for, at least, the second time, while only 5.5% of the fall participants were taking the course for
the second time. As we might expect, the spring semester had slightly a higher percentage of students retaking the course.

Table 5

Pilot/Fall Survey Respondents by Course Enrollment

![Bar chart showing employment distribution by course enrollment]

**Employment/Extracurricular Activities**

Plagiarism on college campuses is often attributed to students’ lack of time or a last resort when students are overwhelmed with other obligations; therefore, as a researcher interested in how freshman students develop psychologically, I wanted to better understand not only how students spent their time, but I also wanted to know if students held jobs to financially contribute to their college education and/or their extra activities. I am mainly interested in what students value and this, I concluded, could be assessed by looking at how students choose to spend their time. Are students employed due to their college expenses, or are students employed to earn money for extracurricular activities and luxury spending? The next set of questions looked at rates of employment among these particular groups of freshman students.

Of the students who took the online pilot survey, only 26.7% were employed (69.2% of this group were employed less than 10 hours per week) and only 26.3% of the fall survey
participants were employed. Of the 26.7% of respondents who worked in the pilot survey, 32.6% worked specifically to pay college expenses; 32.6% worked to purchase luxury items; and 32.6% worked for reasons not offered on the survey. Of the 26.3% of students who worked during the fall survey period, the distribution, while smaller, was similar. Students indicated that they worked to pay college expenses (8.1%), to purchase luxury items (8.1%), or to pay for extracurricular activities (8.1%). The reasons students worked were equally distributed among college/financial expenses, luxury items, and other. The students in this survey, then, are not working long hours outside of the classroom and do not appear to be overwhelmed with excessive financial burdens.

Respondents also participated in one or more of the following extracurricular activities: Students in the pilot study participated in academic organizations/societies (31.8%); “other” (30.3%); fraternity/sorority organizations (28.8%); organized athletics (19.7%); and student government (4.5%). Students in the fall survey participated in organized athletics (14.3%); student government (14.3%); charitable organizations (25.0%); and academic organizations (46.4%). More than half of the respondents in the fall survey participated in fraternity/sorority organizations (57.1%). An overwhelming half of the participants in the fall survey were involved in fraternity/sorority organizations, while only 28.8% of the pilot study participated in such organizations. While these numbers vary, the fall survey suggests that social affiliation is a significant factor and part of the average freshman experience at this particular university. These affiliations compare to aspects of Kegan’s interpersonal balance and the desire to be socially accepted. Individuals in Kegan’s interpersonal balance value social affiliations and connections with others. Peer interaction and social community emerges as the most statistically significant affiliation for students in the fall survey. We might conclude that such affiliations are so
important to students that they are willing to spend their time working to pay for or contribute to the expenses incurred by their social organizations (see Table 6).

Table 6

Pilot Survey/Fall Survey Comparison Graph of Extracurricular Activities

The category marked “other” allowed participants to include activities not listed on the survey. Some of the write-in responses included, but were not limited to, “religious organizations and/or church activities, band, young life, Black Student Union, media organizations, activities at home, and dance/theater.” One student identified “activities at home” as his extracurricular activities. This response emphasizes the importance of his social environment. An area for further studies might include students who return home frequently and the extent to which they are still involved in activities at home. Such behavior could point to students operating from Kegan’s interpersonal balance. The importance of social groups on campus might indicate that students were transitioning from home-based peer groups to a school-based peer groups. While this replacement still situates students in the interpersonal balance, it might also mark a significant movement toward establishing one’s identity.

Honor Codes and Plagiarism Policies

Studies emerging from the Center for Academic Integrity identify honor codes as a significant reducer in incidences of plagiarism on college campuses. In “Some Good News
About Academic Integrity,” Donald McCabe and Gary Pavela note the importance of “modified” honor codes which are honor codes redesigned to include student participation. The notion of a “modified” honor code is interesting, considering Kegan’s theory. McCabe and Pavela note the importance of student investment and participation in setting the textual guidelines and boundaries as opposed to simply reading and signing a policy on academic integrity. While this particular university has an honor code, I wanted to know (1) are students aware of the honor code, and (2) under what circumstances are students asked to sign the honor code? The purpose of these questions is to evaluate under what external circumstances and conditions such codes are presented to students. Also, is conformity to the academic community a factor in signing the honor code, or are students truly invested in the ethical system of the learning community?

This question is significant in the overall picture of authorship and plagiarism as this study addresses students who are operating within Kegan’s interpersonal developmental balance. Interpersonal individuals are significantly affected by external influences; therefore, if the social conditions stressed and encouraged students to sign an honor code, it would not necessarily insure their loyalty to the honor code. Rather, students could simply be conforming to the demands and expectations the university presents. The results were as follows: Of the respondents in the pilot study, 85.2% acknowledged their awareness of the university’s honor code; 1.1% was not aware of an honor code; 13.6% were unsure. The fall survey only included the question: “Does the university have an honor code?” The data report an overwhelming 97.4% of students are aware of the honor code, while only 2.6% were unsure.

I asked participants in the pilot study if they were encouraged to sign the honor code in the presence of their peers or instructors: 53.2% of respondents said yes; 41.9% said no; and, 4.7% were unsure. Over half of the freshman students in the pilot survey, then, signed an honor code.
code in and around the influence of others. If the honor code is consistently presented in this manner to first-year students, and we generalize this situation to the entire freshman class, the data suggest at least half of the students signed the honor code under the influence of others, which might indicate less personal investment in the code. Students might agree or conform to go along with their peer group or satisfy those in authority without recognizing the significance of such a code. This situation could, in turn, affect the extent to which students are invested in the ideology of the university.

**Educational Goals**

Understanding students’ goals for attending college seems especially significant to psychological development. Students’ goals for attending college are significant in understanding what is important to them. This question is also simple enough to include in any classroom environment; instructors might ask this type of question to begin evaluating students’ meaning making strategies at the beginning of a course/semester. Are students’ goals connected to internal desires to grow intellectually or are students more interested in obtaining material items and a good job, external factors. Again, answers that leaned toward internal goals and drives might point to more self-authorship, while answers related to external demands might suggest that students are attending college to meet certain expectations held by others, society, peer group, etc. This question is important to me because understanding educational motivation and goals can provide insight into why students may be enrolled in college and perhaps how they are making meaning: Are students driven by internal drives or goals or are they seeking the approval of others? Interpersonal goals will be more focused on the approval of others. Institutional goals will be more ideologically geared to either finances or personal achievement. This question allowed two different types of responses: In the pilot survey, I asked students to
check all that applied, and in the fall survey, I asked students to choose the two most important reasons for attending college. Both surveys included a comment space to allow students to express their views more clearly (see Table 7).

Table 7

Pilot Survey/Fall Survey Respondents’ Educational Goals

![Graph showing educational goals comparison between Pilot Survey and Fall Survey](image)

The graph shows some variation within the two survey groups. As the graph demonstrates, students’ goals were similar except when it came to options three and four: “to be considered a success in your family” and “meeting your parents’ expectations.” Students in the pilot study indicated that they were more influenced by the expectations of their family than those in the fall survey. This is a significant difference in that 21.9% of the students in the pilot study were taking the class for the second time. This particular subset of students in the pilot study had not been able to meet the requirements or expectations of the course the previous semester or the last time they were enrolled in the course. While their reasons could range from issues with attendance to failing grades, the pilot study participants reflect answers more associated with the approval of someone outside of themselves. The goals of participants in the pilot study were
slightly below the fall study in areas of individual assertiveness and higher in externally related
goals. Some of these students possibly struggled to meet the demands of “self-authorship.”

Of the five additional comments reported in response to this question, four were from
participants in the fall survey. Some of the comments students’ entered were as follows:

- to be able to support myself (pilot study)
- to helps [sic] spread the gospel; to better myself (fall study);
- to better myself and to gain the authority to better the world around me
  (fall study);
- to prove to myself and others that I am better than what they say (fall
  study);
- to make a difference in the world (fall study).

These responses are interesting in light of Kegan’s theoretical framework. Two of the comments
include a two-part answer: “to better myself” and “to helps [sic] spread the gospel”/ “better the
world around me.” These comments locate educational motivations both internally and
externally. These comments show some signs of an emerging institutional self (“to better
myself”), one governed by self-authorship. While respondents’ comments suggest that they see
themselves separately from their environment, they invest their goals within the community.
Some respondents justify their college enrollment in terms of what they can then give back to
their community. These students appear to be interested in developing authority, perhaps finding
or gaining it through their independence or enrollment in college. The third comment is also
especially interesting in that this student believes a college degree will give him the authority to
better the world. The degree is external to him; it is “out there” to be attained. In the midst of
these somewhat independent comments (comments that suggest or lean toward the institutional
Several participants are still very much invested in and tied to the interpersonal way of making meaning. These comments again reflect a self defined by and in service to the community.

We might, however, argue that such comments reflect a particular ideology; perhaps students are governed by a theological/philosophical perspective. While this argument can be made, it seems unlikely based on the previous responses from this group and their ages. However, one student’s answers show a significant psychological awareness. This student is there to prove two things: to prove to himself and others that he is better than what other people say he is. This seems to be a pivotal moment in development because this student’s comments reflect a psychological tension between the opinions of others and his own self-view. These comments suggest that the participants have moments of self-authorship, but the majority of participants are still connected to the social, external environment that defines them. How they manage/balance these two ways of making meaning will ultimately determine their success in the academy.

From the two groups compared in this section, the pilot study and the fall study, we see that the educational goals of these participants are still somewhat guided by their social environment and the expectations of others. While participants demonstrate some aspects of the institutional balance, they are still balancing between two ways of making meaning. While the differences between these two groups are slight, they raise questions for further consideration. Are these differences related to the 20.9% of participants in the pilot study who were taking the course for the second time? Were these students more invested in interpersonal ways of making meaning? Had unsuccessful writing experiences challenged their abilities to self-author? Did they struggle to meet the demands to self-author during their first enrollment in the freshman writing course? Further research in this area might lead to areas in student writing which may
cause some students to struggle and plagiarize. While this section shows the differences and the similarities between freshman students in two different semesters, the next section analyzes students’ understandings based on their ages and experiences.

**Issues of Texts and Authors**

In this section, I turn entirely to the fall survey to look at how students view authorship and plagiarism at different points in their academic careers. The most respondents to the fall survey were from 101 and 200 level participants. From this point forward, these two groups are the only participants discussed. The following section presents findings regarding students’ understanding of texts and authors. I look at the differences in students’ understandings of authorship as a response to their educational experiences. Are there common assumptions among students about texts and authorship? Do first-year writers' understandings of authorship differ from their more experienced peers, and if so, how? To get a better understanding of students’ perceptions the next section explores students’ understandings of a “text” and textual production.

I asked participants to “check all of the following you consider a text.” This question seemed significant as the Internet has brought with it not only changing views of print texts, but also what we consider a “text” to be. Students in 101 and 200 agreed 100% that a published book is a “text;” 94.4% of 101 students and 100% of 200 level students viewed a journal article as a “text.” Students were able to achieve a significant level of consistency regarding the definition of a print text. Their responses to a “paper submitted in an academic course,” however, varied: only 77.8% of 101 students regarded a student paper to be an actual “text” and even fewer, 57.1% of 200 level students view an academic paper as a text. The numbers dropped
Again for 101 participants when asked if an Internet website could be a “text”: 101s (61.1%) and 200s (57.1%). The graph below records these differences (see Table 8).

Table 8
Fall Survey Breakdown: What do you consider a text?

![Graph showing differences between 101 and 200 level courses on what is considered a text]

Both groups struggle to pin down their own and Internet writings as “texts,” yet we know that any form of a text can appear on the Internet: a book, a magazine, a newspaper. Do these responses speak to how students view their writing and others? Do participants then perceive these media to lack authors to be transgressed against? Is an identifiable author relevant to students’ understanding of a text and plagiarism? Does the term “text” only refer to tangible print media? *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines a *text* as “the main body of a book as distinct from notes, appendices, pictures, etc.; the original of an author or document, esp. as distinct from a paraphrase or commentary on them; a textbook; data in textual form, esp. as stored, processed or displayed in a word processor etc. ” (840). This definition then seems to include online texts. The responses to this question show that 101 participants have more open views of what a *text* is than participants in 200 level courses. Also, more 101 students define their own work as a text.
These numbers challenge my hypothesis that students in 200 level courses would recognize their work as a text. I expected older students to connect any written work to a writer, originator, or author. The views of 200 level participants, however, were more stringent and selective. Perhaps participants in 200 level courses place more emphasis on an identifiable author. A print text is directly linked to its author because the author’s name is clearly visible and connected to a tangible object unlike the author of a website. This discrepancy may illuminate students’ views of Internet information: students may perceive the Internet as a community text, a text that is not connected to one individual or author. Students may not hold Internet information to the same standards as print information. If students do not perceive Internet information in the same way they view print information, perhaps they are more likely or more comfortable borrowing from it. Moreover, students may see the act of Internet surfing as a passive, casual activity rather than a deliberate act of searching through a print text. Further studies might ask exactly how students perceive Internet information.

I went on to ask students the three most important features of a piece of writing whether it is published or unpublished. 101 students listed: content (88.9%), organization (55.6%), clarity and original ideas (33.3% each). 200 level students identified: author credibility (50%), originality (50%), and content (50%).

101 students present the three most common areas in which student writings are typically evaluated (students’ unpublished texts), while 200 level students appear to identify areas more clearly associated with published texts. Both groups of participants seem to reiterate or perhaps reflect areas most valued in their current course of enrollment: writing composition/student texts and literary/published texts. Such associations are then reflective of the principles of both the interpersonal balance and the institutional balance. (see Figure 4)
What are the three most important features of a piece of writing (published/unpublished)?

The responses are interpersonal in that they mirror the instructional environment, but at the same time, they both identify modern notions of what a text should be. Both groups include “original ideas” in their list of the three most important features.

**Students as Authors**

When participants were asked the two most important characteristics of an author of a text:

72.2% of 101 students said creativity and 44.4% answered originality; of the 200 level students, 64.3% chose insightfulness and 50% said originality. 101 students valued creativity and originality, while 200 level students valued insightfulness of the author and originality (see Figure 5). These responses present interesting pairs in which one characteristic seems intrinsic to the other. Creativity seems to define one’s originality and one’s insight makes his work original to some extent. These notions reflect modern/Romantic conceptions of authorship. These statistics also demonstrate originality as one of the central characteristics of authorship and textual production.
Fall Survey: What are the two most important characteristics of an author?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>101 Students</th>
<th>200 Level Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creative: 44.40%</td>
<td>Insightful: 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original: 72.20%</td>
<td>Original: 64.30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When participants in the fall survey were asked if they considered a freshman/sophomore student to be an author, more 200 level students perceived freshmen and sophomores to be authors. Of the participants in 101, only 38.9% answered, “yes” freshmen/sophomores can be authors; over half (64.3%) of sophomores viewed freshmen/sophomores as authors of their texts. These numbers show a significant difference in the extent to which older students see themselves as authors as opposed to freshman students.

These numbers offer clear comparisons between 200 level students and Kegan’s institutional balance. Following Kegan’s psychological balances, I expected older students with more experience in the university to see themselves as authors of their texts. Figure 6 confirms this hypothesis.
The explanations offered by students in 101 reflected their adherence to the external or social requirements that define authorship: One student said that “it depends on how good the context [sic] of the student’s work;” one participant indicated an author has to be “experienced;” therefore, a student could not be an author. Yet even in the midst of these responses, one participant argues that “being an author is not based on age.” Another student argued that “yes, they may not be some big shot author but they still can be an author.” Similar to the characteristics of the interpersonal balance, participants’ views of authorship are constructed through the perspectives of others. The work must be credible, thus approved by others or deemed credible by others; “the context” or possibly the content must be deemed acceptable; experience also seems to establish credibility. The work must be “good,” thus meeting the social or instructional standards by which we can determine how “good” a work is or is not.

More striking is the last comment that a student is an author even if she is not a “big shot” author. This student’s response stands out, deviates from her peers, and moves toward a different perspective, one which goes against societal expectations and ideals. This student’s response reflects a significant aspect of the institutional balance: She points out the social context of authorship: they, authors, are “big shots” or perhaps well-known in their
profession/culture. This participant stands up against societal norms and awards students the same status as authors. Such a statement takes a significant amount of self-assertion and reflects the marked independence associated with the institutional balance.

The 200 level students’ answers are not as clear. Responses included: “I don’t think there is any age that makes someone an author;” “If they author things;” “I consider an author someone who publishes their [sic] work and enjoys writing;” “They are required to write. They don’t do it for personal satisfaction.” The most obvious distinction between the 101s and 200 level responses is the use of the first-person: “I don’t think...” or “I consider...” Participants appear to take some ownership of their opinions as opposed to simply repeating a definition of an “author.” The last two responses make significant observations about authorship which set them in direct contrast to the possibility that students can be authors. Both responses highlight two similar themes: (1) authorship is connected to or reflects one’s internal, emotional feelings about writing, and (2) authorship is connected to external obligations /finances. One response suggests that an author “enjoys writing” as opposed to the last participant who points out that an author “does not do it for personal satisfaction.” These responses imply an author either simply enjoys writing or perhaps writes to fulfill obligations. Both responses, however, connect writing to finances. An author, as opposed to a student writer, “publishes” his writing and is “required” to write. The phrase “to publish” suggests an author receives financial compensation or personal satisfaction while the opposite, “is required to,” suggests a contract between two parties. The use of the verb “required” implies that one does not author because of “personal satisfaction;” one perhaps authors to meet obligations, to earn money. The outcome for both is some type of reward/return, one personal and the other monetary.
These two responses suggest a value system, perhaps an ideology: one system governed by doing work and finding some sort of pleasure in the accomplishment of this work: publishing. The other response is governed by a monetary system of exchange: one does not have to enjoy the work; he just has to do it. I associate these responses with the institutional balance as opposed to the interpersonal balance because the participants identify an exchange rather than simply participating in that exchange. These responses indicate that there is a system of exchange involved in authorship; however, the focus is on the personal benefits (personal satisfaction/monetary gains) received from the interaction/exchange. The person is not subject to this interaction; rather she recognizes and participates in the exchange. It is an informed and voluntary engagement.

Both groups of fall participants have one respondent who argued that authorship is not related to one’s age. When I asked students, “Do you consider a freshman/sophomore student to be an author,” I never considered age as a relevant factor in their responses. However, the question clearly prompted these assumptions, and respondents reacted accordingly: “Being an author is not based on age” (101); “I don’t think there is any age that makes someone an author” (200). These participants appear to react to the question rather than respond to it. Participants’ reactions are interesting in that they move beyond the common assumptions that authors are typically professional adults. These participants seem to stand up against common assumptions about student writers, but they failed to address the significance of the question. Instead, they focus on a somewhat superficial matter – age.

**Plagiarism**

A central focus of this study is to ask students how they understand plagiarism. The following section reports the answers to a series of questions regarding plagiarism. I began by
asking participants: “What comes to mind when you hear the word plagiarism?” Both 101 and 200 level students gave straightforward, definition-like responses. This category above all others seems to reflect Kegan’s interpersonal balance. Students produced concrete definitions, which seem rooted in an external authority. While participants produced definitions of plagiarism, they were not able to produce an inclusive definition of a text earlier in the survey. The participants’ definitions of plagiarism are linked to interpersonal ways of making meaning because these definitions are at times placed alongside or interlaced with social or moral judgments.

Responses from 101s are listed below:

Cheating; cheater; copying a credible author’s work by not summarizing. . . ;
taking what does not belong to you and submitting. . . ; cheating possibly by
mistake; using someone else’s work; copying someone els [sic] work without
giving them. . . ; copying; stealing other people’s ideas; taking bits of information
and using it directly in . . . ; a copy of important data that is not being cited. . .
copying someone els [sic] words and using them as your own –on purpose.

Two common threads occur in these responses: moral and social judgments. These responses appear to pass judgment on the plagiarist as an “offender,” “stealing,” and “taking” what is not hers. Participants’ answers offer the same punitive language reflected in social views of plagiarism. While these definitions are rooted in the external, the social, they are also grounded in what Valentine describes as an “ethical discourse” (“Plagiarism as Literacy Practice” 90).

200 level responses were somewhat different. They seemed to be instructing or offering advice:

[Co]pying verbatim or paraphrasing without giving credit; writing something that
has been previously written; copying a source; copy paste; wrong; lazy;
idiotic; It's easily avoidable; Cite your references! copying someone else's work/ideas/words; cheating; cheating by copying others [sic] work.

When it comes to plagiarism, participants in 200 level courses did not stand out as distinctly different from 101s. Both seem rooted in interpersonal ways of making meaning: moral judgments or instructional/social advice.

I also asked students if there is a difference between a student who plagiarizes an essay and a student who cheats on a test. 83.3% of 101 students said no, and 85.7% of students enrolled in 200 level said no. The students in 101 responded with definition-type answers. These answers reflected interpersonal subjectivity (see Table 9).

Table 9

Is there a difference in a student who plagiarizes and a student who cheats?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>100 level</th>
<th>200 level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They are both known as cheating and you can be expelled. . .</td>
<td>Literature should be read on your own time, not for a grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are both in th[e] wrong.</td>
<td>Plagiarizing is cheating. When you cheat on a test you . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are both cheating.</td>
<td>Cheating is cheating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are both the same. You are taking something that. . .</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plagiarize means to onot [sic] give credit to the actual source. . .</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheating is cheating no matter what.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both are cheating just different methods of going about. . .</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

101 interpersonal answers used words such as “plagiarize means” plagiarism is “known as” both are “in the wrong” “no matter what.” 200 level answers were similar in that they used definitive answers, yet they seem to take more individual perspectives and opinions.

The next question focused on particular behaviors associated with textual acts and forms of plagiarism. Participants in 200 level courses consistently reached higher levels of agreement.
on behavior or acts associated with plagiarism than did participants in 101. While both groups seem to be able to reach a consensus, the 200 level students appear clearer on what constitutes transgressive textual acts in the university. The 101 students seemed more unsure (see table 10).

Table 10

Which of the following behaviors constitutes plagiarism?

![Bar chart](chart.png)

The data in this section show that students are clearly able to define plagiarism as it is described in their social and instructional environments. Students are also aware of the behaviors which constitute forms of plagiarism, yet when I asked participants how students use the Internet to write an essay, 42.4% answered “cut and paste.” While students offered descriptions of texts which emphasized the importance of originality, insight, and creativity, a significant percentage of participants acknowledged students do not seek this in their own writing. The data also show discrepancies between these two groups on issues of texts and their ability to author a text. These areas then suggest that students are unsure about the material they find online. They struggle to identify the type of material it is, and they struggle to use it properly in their writing. Students, however, were more certain of the types of behavior which constitute plagiarism than they were of identifying the type of texts they find online.
Closing Section

The data reported in this section are rich and informative and at times confusing and inconsistent. While the data do show responses more reflective of the interpersonal balance, the data do not allow us to see a consistent pattern which corresponds age and experience to Kegan’s psychological balances. However, there are moments when students seem to be balancing two ways of making meaning. Originally, I anticipated students in 200 level courses to respond in ways more associated with Kegan’s institutional balance. While some of their answers showed signs of self-authorship, these types of responses were not consistent across the survey. Students in 101 courses, however, did offer responses more associated with Kegan’s interpersonal balance. They appeared to be more grounded in the social, external environment. More importantly, the survey provided a glimpse of students’ confusion when it comes to how students understand texts and authors.
CHAPTER FIVE

IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Toward a Pedagogy of Awareness

Throughout this study, I have pointed to the limitations of the binary construction of authorship and advocated an expanded view informed by and through Kegan’s theory of psychological development. Such a view recognizes individual textual practices as an expression, manifestation, and/or reflection of psychological development. In this chapter, I return to two questions: Does authorship evolve along with our culture, as some compositionists argue, or with our students? Is it our responsibility to respond to authorship in new and changing forms, or are we to still guard the old ways? Section one of this chapter outlines authorship as an evolving process and seeks to describe and situate particular textual practices into a comprehensive understanding of “authoring” as we grow and change. In section two, I explore what happens when individuals disengage from their authorship rights, and I attempt to describe the psychological reasons behind these decisions. In section three, I propose a pedagogy of awareness which embraces the insights and strengths of the current authorship debate and places them within a larger framework of authorship development. Such a pedagogy encourages writing instructors to actively seek and pursue an understanding of student writers and the particular meaning making strategies evidenced in their textual practices. Awareness pedagogy, therefore, advocates, instructor awareness of students’ meaning making strategies when they enter the writing classroom and the psychological challenges students face over the course of a semester. I advocate Kegan’s theory as a foundation for understanding the work we already do
Authorship as an Evolving Process

With the application of Kegan’s theoretical framework to the development of authorship, we see that authorship is not necessarily a cultural arbitrary, a social phenomenon, or an individual creation; rather, authorship draws upon all of these areas. Authorship is a multifaceted process that reflects one’s psychological engagement with language, knowledge construction, and the demands of the social, the cultural, and the instructional environments. Authorship within the context of Kegan’s theory exemplifies Greene’s assertion that authorship is relational “set within a broad socio-cultural landscape” (213). Authorship is the interaction between the individual and the environment in which he finds himself; therefore, authorship as a psychological process reflects the many ways individuals interact with their environment.

In the fall survey, I attempted to measure the extent to which authorship is relational or how students psychologically balance their personal histories with the demands of the writing classroom. I asked participants: “Do the papers you are asked to write in college require you to ‘think’ differently or perhaps encourage you to question beliefs or ideas that you were taught by your family, culture, or religion?” The results suggest that authorship for students on this particular campus is relational: almost half of the participants report “yes,” college writing requires me to think differently (47.4%), 21.1% answered “no;” and 31.6% report “sometimes.” Students do feel they have to negotiate their individual histories with the expectations of the
These statistics are even more compelling when viewed alongside participants’ responses:

101 students stated:

There has been one paper that really had us look at a belief that we have and then analyze as to why we have this belief and what would cause us to change our stance; College writing requires more personal experience and beliefs than high school writing; I never knew what analyze [sic] until I [sic] came to UA; it depends on the topic; If we are supposed to research something out of our common knowledge then yes it makes me think differently; I had a difficult teacher who challenged me in high school; they sometimes ask certain questions that may cause one [sic] to go out of their [sic] comfort zone; No the papers do not require me to question my beliefs; [I]t makes me dig deeper into my mind and think about what to write in order to make an A.

200 level students replied:

You have to think more critically and be open minded to more diverse people unlike high school where you were comfortable; not in my english [sic] class, but the papers I’ve been asked to write in my religious studies class; I went to a small Christian school where all of our answers had to be Biblically sugarcoated to some degree, so it is refreshing to be able to think logically now; Most students are annoyed by the liberal slant of the College of Arts and Sciences; They require you to be more mature and learned about culture and society; they require more analyzing.
Participants’ responses range from issues of religion, politics, previous schooling, and maturity, to other courses in the university. Students are writing and authoring from a place where the cultural, the instructional, the personal, the social, and the psychological all blend, fuse, and ultimately, emerge into an individual mode of authorship. These modes correspond to the general psychological moves students must make in the university (the interpersonal to the institutional).

While psychological balances vary in their duration and correlation to particular ages, Kegan identifies three which typically begin and continue throughout adulthood: the interpersonal, the institutional, and the interindividual. These psychological balances then provide insight into the ways adults engage in authorship. In his book *In Over Our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life*, Kegan applies his theoretical framework to the issues of modern life. As his title suggests, Kegan explains, we are often “in over our heads” in our daily modern lives. However, as a culture we are accustomed to recognizing only the psychological growth inherent in childhood. We often forget that adults are in the process of psychological development as well: “Adulthood itself is not an end state but a vast evolutionary expanse encompassing a variety of capacities of mind” (Prologue 5). These “capacities of mind” crystallize in the written word, on the printed page, in students’ essays. I argue that writing and the process of writing produce artifacts of psychological growth and change.

Moreover, for Kegan, these “capacities of mind” begin in the culture: Kegan claims that the three major cultural shifts which have influenced the capacities of the individual mind are the Traditional, the Modern, and the Postmodern. Likewise, these “cultural frames” precipitate and thus give rise to individual psychological balances. The culture continues to press upon the individual with more demanding levels of psychological growth and development. Previously, I
discussed the social, historical, and philosophical shifts which influenced these “cultural frames” (see chapter three). Below, I place them alongside Kegan’s psychological balances and attempt to demonstrate how they correspond to the individual development of authorship (In Over Our Heads, Prologue 10-11). See Table 11 for these comparisons.

Table 11

The Evolution of Authorship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kegan’s “Cultural Frames”</th>
<th>Kegan’s Psychological Balances</th>
<th>Authorship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>Interpersonal Balance</td>
<td>Mimetic Authorship (also referred to as patchwriting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern</td>
<td>Institutional Balance</td>
<td>Autonomous Authorship (also referred to as the Modern or Romantic notion of authorship)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postmodern</td>
<td>Interindividual Balance</td>
<td>Collaborative Authorship (also referred to as the social construction of knowledge or postmodernism)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table juxtaposes cultural evolution and individual psychological evolution with patterns of authorship. The cultural shifts outlined above (Traditional, Modern, and Postmodern) parallel individual psychological growth (interpersonal, institutional, and interindividual). Moreover, views and conceptions of authorship follow this same pattern (mimetic authorship, autonomous authorship, and collaborative authorship). However, Kegan argues that there is a marked difference in the environment we experience today and that of the past: “The distinguishing feature of contemporary culture is that for the first time in human history, three mentalities exist side by side in the adult population, even in the postindustrial, so-called ‘developed’ or ‘First World’ societies—the traditional, the modern, and the postmodern” (Kegan 303-304). It is not surprising, then, that modes of authoring are as complex as ever. As we move into more complex ways of making meaning in the world—the interindividual/postmodern—the more
demanding and diverse our audience becomes. The interindividual balance, therefore, requires us to recognize not only our own self systems, but we must also acknowledge the many individual self-systems operating and contributing to the whole. We can then see how all three modes of adult authorship exist in the culture simultaneously and consequently, feed the current authorship debates (patchwriting, solitary authorship, and collaborative authorship).

To some extent, Kegan’s psychological balances are hierarchical. They progress from making meaning in childhood to more complex modes of psychological development experienced in adulthood. Viewing authorship through Kegan’s framework, we should not value one mode of authorship over another; however, we must recognize that one mode of authorship may be more valuable to a particular embeddedness culture/environment. This is evident in higher learning. Kegan and Magolda both observe that learning in the university requires students to successfully engage in the self-authorship, evidenced in Kegan’s institutional balance. While this demand does not negate the value or validity of other forms of authorship, self-authorship does present new challenges: Individuals must demonstrate the ability to take different positions in relation to knowledge and/or the writing subject. The writer must also make judgments based on her own perspectives rather than relying on the views of an external authority or the immediate social environment.

In the model below, I attempt to compare the process of authorship to Kegan’s helix of psychological balances. The model demonstrates how authorship evolves along with the individual’s psychological development; as the epistemological strategies of the individual evolve, so does the way a person authors a text. The model also differs from Kegan’s helix so as to look into the helix as opposed to a frontal view. With this image I propose what we might see looking into Kegan’s helix (see Figure 7). If we imagine this model in motion, in the same way
we are to view Kegan’s helix, we see the flexibility and movement of these environments. At times these environments/ embeddedness cultures are more demanding than at other times.

Figure 7

Authorship as Process: An Evolutionary Model of Individual Authorship

*Note that this model does not incorporate the authorship practices of those younger than early adulthood.

With this model of authorship, we can also see that just like Kegan’s helix of psychological development, as we grow, our ability to engage, to author, expands and becomes more diverse. Therefore, along with psychological growth and development, individuals incorporate/develop various forms of authorship along the way. This model then shows how individuals cannot simply adopt one mode of authorship. Rather, the development of all modes of authorship is essential to the evolving individual. These different modes of authorship build upon one another. The authorship binary, as it is presently described, is limiting and denies the validity and importance of these various forms of authorship.
Authorship/Plagiarism in the Interpersonal (Balance 3)

As the data suggest, the majority of students in 100 level and 200 level writing and literature courses are typically still invested in the interpersonal balance. While 200 level students record answers that demonstrate some independence and self-assertion (see pgs. 110-112), the fall study suggests that participants’ views of authorship and plagiarism are more commonly defined through the lens of an outside authority. The most influential factors which guide students’ writings were also guided by external requirements.

I asked the fall participants, “What is the most important factor that motivates the writing you do?” Students attributed their motivations to “class requirements” (31.6%) and “grades” (28.9%), as opposed to “future goals” (2.6%), “personal drive” (7.9%), or “intellectual ability” (7.9%). The participants in the fall study, then, write mostly for exchange: grades and requirements. Such students may find it difficult to work within the parameters of the writing classroom as they may struggle to determine what constitutes successful exchanges. Because students firmly embedded in the interpersonal balance may find themselves driven by external motivations and/or the approval of others, they are more likely to write to please the instructor (Tingle 105); consequently, students within this balance might view the process of evaluation as an entirely subjective act, with no objective basis. In “Ranking, Evaluating, Judging, and Liking,” Peter Elbow notices students’ motivations: “I’m fed up with students following or obeying my evaluation too blindly—making whatever changes my comments suggest but doing it for the sake of a grade” (196). Elbow observes students will often forgo their own choices for the preferences of an instructor to pass a course or to conform to a particular reader’s wishes. I argue that students in the interpersonal balance are trying to meet the expectations of those
around them and this includes the expectations of the instructor and the educational setting in which they find themselves. For some, uncovering these expectations is a guessing game.

The interpersonal balance is the stage of authorship when students most likely engage in mimetic authorship typically accomplished through patchwriting. Students attempt to fuse their own words with that of an authority. There are, I believe, various forms of mimetic authorship ranging in the amount to which students transgress against other texts. However, rarely does this behavior suggest that students are immoral or do not care about the ethics of the university. Contrastingly, this behavior exhibits a desire to know, to become a part of the discursive practices of the university. Patchwriting as a form of authorship, therefore, suggests a desire to be accepted, to fit in.

Students struggling to function successfully in the writing classroom may feel that everything they know is being challenged. The realm of exchange is no longer enough. These students are met with new psychological demands that require them to step outside of the expectations of others and govern their own thoughts and ideas. Such challenges can destabilize students, and they may then choose to plagiarize simply to pass a course, to keep from disappointing their parents, to please the instructor/teacher, or to remain in a course with their peers. During the interpersonal phase of authorship, I argue, students will blatantly plagiarize to meet obligations. They will forego their very “self” because that “self” does not exist outside of its immediate social context. Students engage in patchwork mimesis to become part of the intellectual community, not to rob or steal from it. The interpersonal balance is guided by a form of mimetic authorship.

Tingle attempts to explicate Kegan’s interpersonal balance as it applies to language: Tingle uses David Bartholomae’s term *commonplaces* to explain the language of the
interpersonal balance (Tingle 93-95). “Commonplaces,” he suggests, are clichés or the language of our immediate culture; it is the language that binds us to a particular social group (Tingle 102). Such commonplaces, he says, “stabilize” individuals (102); commonplaces connect people to their social group. Susan Blum speaks to such commonplaces in her book *My Word! Plagiarism and College Culture*. She notes that students commonly quote material from their favorite television shows or movies without attribution: “students *celebrate* quotation in ordinary conversation, as it fosters and indeed constitutes their ideas of successful and pleasing relationships” (42). Such unattributed quoting, she claims, reflects the “common knowledge” that fosters relationships and reflects students’ “shared experiences” (43). Here Blum highlights a significant aspect of the interpersonal balance and the nature of young adults’ social relationships. Quoting from popular culture indicates shared experiences that connect students to one another and include them in a social network. Moreover, Blum notes “the proliferation of the genre of quotation seemed to me to hold the potential for shaping the way students think about intertextuality in academic writing” (41). Blum suggests that the intertextuality evidenced in some student writing reflects an increasingly common practice among this generation of students. However, in the midst of Blum’s insight about how students interact, she attributes their textual practices to the way students’ understand language: students perceive language as collaborative in nature.

While Blum makes insightful observations, students use unattributed quotation to connect themselves to their peers. Unattributed quotations are common/collaborative in the sense that they help students fit in and belong. For students to break with the social culture in which they are invested, the culture of mutuality, students must redefine themselves. They must come to see themselves as separate from these “shared experiences.” To see the collaborative construction of
knowledge, I argue, one must first see himself as an individual. Tingle explains: separating the interpersonal self from one’s group and asserting “oneself as speaker can be downright paralyzing.” To “break” with one’s commonplaces can cause anxiety (Tingle 103). This anxiety or psychological tension could be the source of most blatant, transgressive plagiarism.

Plagiarism within the interpersonal balance, therefore, is a manifestation of both the strengths and weaknesses of an individual operating with interpersonal meaning making skills. The strength of the interpersonal balance is to be part of a community, to belong. The weakness, however, is self-doubt, no perception of the self beyond the perceptions of others. Students may choose to engage in patchwriting or may do so without recognizing it as a transgressive textual behavior. Regardless of the motive, students are typically struggling to incorporate an unfamiliar discursive practice. Students are then attempting to meet the expectations of the writing classroom, self-authorship, while preserving their social connections, the culture of mutuality. Psychologically, this stance is very difficult to balance. If plagiarism occurs within the interpersonal balance, it is to meet the external expectations of the writing classroom. It is guided by self-doubt not immorality.

Authorship/Plagiarism in the Institutional (Balance 4)

Kegan refers to modernism as the “major” of the culture’s current curriculum (In Over our Heads 335). Self-authorship is then the dominant way of making meaning in Western culture. Self-authorship, according to Kegan, requires individuals to adhere to or invest in a particular ideology. Because the individual in the institutional balance is no longer defined by the external perceptions of others, one internalizes a particular ideology and derives her own sense of self from it. Authoring in the institutional balance represents the modern notion of authorship that the university demands. Students must engage with a text in a way that
demonstrates a confident voice with an ability to mediate between authorities or experts. The survey data within this sample pool show some students with tendencies toward self-authorship. The data suggest that the institutional balance is more closely associated with older, experienced students (64% of sophomores view freshman/sophomores as authors of their writings). The institutional balance demonstrates the ability to interact with others without losing one’s sense of self. Ideally, a student who is moving toward self-authorship invests in the principles of the university—the principles of academia.

The system or ideology which guides individuals in the institutional balance is imperative to the value they place on authoring a text or the extent to which students will respond positively or negatively to the writing classroom. Therefore, authorship within this balance can easily take a wrong turn: students within the institutional balance can become invested in ideologies directly opposed to those of higher education. Individuals may adhere to the economics of capitalism; authorship within this scheme is simply a matter of purchasing the work of another. Students may perceive that an education is a financial exchange: through paid tuition, their grade has been purchased. This view supports the notion that education is a means to an end, a hoop one must jump through to reach a certain level of success in life. From this perspective, education is simply the demonstration of a skill set, as opposed to knowledge and critical thinking, which leads one to a financially successful career. Individuals, then, not only participate in this system, but they are also invested in it and guided by it. Students may also be guided by a theological or political ideology and thus feel threatened by the material presented in the writing classroom. As previously mentioned, one sophomore student in the fall survey commented: “Most students are annoyed by the liberal slant of the College of Arts and Sciences;” another sophomore student stated: “You have to think more critically and be open
minded to more diverse people unlike high school where you were comfortable.” The respondents’ comments clearly articulate their perception that they are presented with ideas or ideologies that make them uncomfortable, or they encounter ideals that are threatening and directly opposed to their own. The student who suggests that there is a “liberal slant” in a particular school or college seems especially significant when we think about how students react to the writing classroom. I argue that if plagiarism occurs within the institutional balance, it more than likely occurs in the form of whole-text plagiarism. Students will completely relinquish their authorship rights and remove their very selves from their texts and do so without the burden of guilt. Plagiarism could then be perceived as honorable resistance.

In “The Economics of Authorship: Online Paper Mills, Student Writers, and First-Year Composition,” Kelly Ritter explores blatant, whole-text plagiarism. She states: “First-year composition students today carefully weigh interconnected economic, academic, and personal needs when choosing whether to do their own college writing and research or purchase it elsewhere” (602). Ritter affirms the notion that some students not only “choose” to plagiarize, but they also weigh their options. Moreover, these are the students funding online paper mills: “Without these students—who do not believe that they can and should be authors of their own academic work, but do believe that they can and should co-opt the accomplished authorship of others when necessary—the anonymous and powerful online paper-mill industry could not exist” (602). Ritter claims that these students do not see themselves as authors and continue to financially support online paper-mill sites.

The data in my research confirm Ritter’s assertion that some students do not see themselves as authors of their texts: 61.1% of freshman participants in this study do not consider freshman/sophomore students to be authors. (See Figure 6). If students do not see themselves as
authors, they may weigh their options. I argue that students more firmly invested in the institutional balance are more likely to plagiarize out of resistance to the pedagogy, ideology, or lack of success in the composition classroom. These are also the students who engage in intentional plagiarism. I posed this theory to fall participants.

The fall survey statistics, however, refute my assumption. I asked participants: “Do you think students plagiarize because they do not agree with or choose not to conform to the material/ideas presented in class?” 60.6% of the respondents said “no.” 18.2% answered sometimes, and 21.2% reported they were unsure. The comments generated from this question reflect moral/social judgments about students who plagiarize: “they’re too lazy;” “don’t care enough;” “think they will get by;” “too lazy;” “they’re just lazy;” “lazy student;” “may not know what to write.” Of the comments, the 101 students’ comments are less judgmental than the 200 level participants. Participants did not agree with my theory, but more telling, the 200 level participants offered socially scripted cues which describe the “plagiarizer.” Questions like this one produce the most perplexing aspect of this data. While participants show elements of self-authorship, characteristics associated with independence are not evident across the board. These responses do not necessarily reflect individuals using the strategies of the institutional balance. These responses are superficial in that they simply judge students who plagiarize; thus, they appear more reflective of the interpersonal balance. The data become more complex when we consider “contemporary” modes of authorship.

**Plagiarism/Authorship in the Interindivdual (Balance 5)**

“Kegan argues that if modernism is the “major” of our “culture’s curriculum,” postmodernism is the “honors track” (*In Over Our Heads* 335). Kegan adds that postmodernist claims are more than the “modern” individual can handle--they put even the modernist “in over
our heads” (304). Similar to the cultural shifts which led to the advent of the modern author during the Enlightenment, contemporary society now demands a different way of constructing knowledge. Moreover, the interindividual balance reflects and describes most contemporary research. The characteristics of the interindividual balance correspond to the social construction of knowledge. However, along with postmodern scholarship, postmodern pedagogies promote the social construction of knowledge.

Looking at authorship from these three perspectives highlights the gap among students, the writing classroom, and instructors. Three expectations exist simultaneously, as Kegan describes. These expectations of authorship are evidenced in this study: the interpersonal strategies of students, the institutional demands of the academic environment, and the interindividual inclinations of the scholarship and writing instructors. This dilemma points to the crossroad from which many instructors must work today. Tingle likewise addresses this dilemma: “How is one—or students and teachers, for that matter—to understand postmodernism unless one has understood and passed through modernism?” (21). In light of the binary view of authorship, this question again situates the authorship debate in either/or terms. Tingle concludes:

I believe it leaves them [instructors] squarely teaching the modernist self. I don’t see how one can, without putting students in an untenable position, teach that there is no such thing as an autonomous self. For it is precisely this self that one wants to teach if one wishes also to encourage students to experience the act of writing as a decision-making process. (21)

Tingle’s assertion raises serious questions about the way we teach writing in the composition classroom; moreover, Tingle’s assertion simultaneously affects the way we address plagiarism.
If the notion of the solitary author must be taught, does teaching solitary authorship support the policing of plagiarism? Is one inherent in the other? He goes on to observe that “[t]he postmodern critique of the modernist self does not . . . wipe out or obliterate by some intellectual fiat the modernist self” (22). Just because scholars see the limitations of solitary authorship, are we to accept that solitary authorship is no longer a mode of authoring relevant to the culture? Tingle goes on to argue that until institutions change, the notion of solitary authorship will remain. From this stance, Tingle suggests that if the culture changes and the institutions no longer value the modern notion of authorship, the notion of solitary authorship would no longer exist. However, I argue that regardless of the evolving cultural notions of authorship, autonomous authorship is still crucial to the development of authorship. In a writing classroom, we must then recognize the developmental balance valued within higher education—self-authorship.

We cannot conclude that any of these ways of authoring a text are more important or more valid than another. They must all be recognized and validated as ways of authoring whether we appreciate them or not. When authorship does not emerge within the parameters of these developmental balances, we can see that individuals have chosen to forego their authorship rights and their reasoning for doing so can be understood through the particular developmental balances in which students are embedded.

**Awareness Pedagogy and Classroom Strategies**

In the beginning of this project I set three goals: to shift our focus from prevention to insightful exploration, from judgments to reflexive moments, from detection software to awareness pedagogy. Awareness pedagogy, then, provides a basis for why we do the things we do, the logic behind our classroom strategies. From a developmentally informed pedagogy, we
can learn that students come into the writing classroom at different moments in their psychological development. This development is often reflected in the way students engage with the work of the writing classroom. We need to ask ourselves if we create a learning environment which supports different types of student growth. Awareness pedagogy does just this: awareness pedagogy allows us to shift the focus from policing students to engaging them in the learning process.

Pedagogies grounded in psychological development are not new. Higher education has recognized the need to acknowledge how students make meaning in the university. In *Creating Contexts for Learning and Self-Authorship*, Magolda emphasizes the importance of using a constructive-developmental pedagogy. Basing her pedagogical practices on Kegan’s constructive-developmental theory, Magolda argues that self-authorship is the foundation of constructive-developmental pedagogy (210). “Pedagogy that fails to take students’ current epistemic assumptions into account often fails to engage them meaningfully” (7). Magolda’s argument hinges on the assertion that students are in the process of psychological development.

Authorship within awareness pedagogy is not defined in either/or terms; rather, it appears in many forms (some of which are considered plagiarism by academic standards). Informed by the epistemology of the individual, authorship reflects students’ continuous attempts to make meaning within the context of the writing classroom. Unlike current perspectives of authorship, awareness pedagogy moves the issue of plagiarism out of the context of ethics, morals, or lack of experience with citation rules and into the context of psychological growth. Awareness pedagogy advances a view that plagiarism is complex, and students who choose to plagiarize do so in response to a psychological struggle.
What does a theory of authorship mean for the writing classroom? A developmentally informed pedagogy recognizes the constructive-developmental moves that we must make as we encounter and engage in authorship. To adhere to Kegan’s tenets, we must be a nurturing culture, and we must recognize authorship in the forms previously described. We must also acknowledge that authorship does not and will not always meet our expectations. In the fall survey I asked students: “what do teachers not understand about plagiarism in college writing and/or in our society/culture in general?” An overwhelming majority of students’ comments reflect a desire to be understood:

101 responses:

Sometimes it is hard to put author’s words into your . . . ; It is not always on purpose; Teachers sometimes have a very harsh view of plagiarism; For most, plagiarism is not meant to happen; that some students don’t know how to go about citations [sic].

One 200 level student responded with the following paragraph:

I think teachers do not realize how easy one can accidently plagiarize; The human mind can see a phrase during searches for a research paper, record that phrase, and later while writing, that same phrase can appear in the mind as a new idea; Only, once that person uses what they believe to be an original compilation of words, they are crucified for plagiarism without a second thought; Our entire society is based upon plagiarism; Throughout history, we have copied melodies, quotes, and/or styles of people in the past, and in one way or another managed to plagiarize some portion of another’s work; Yes, plagiarism is wrong, but the accredited English community’s witch hunt is just as inappropriate.
These students’ responses are both defensive and protective, but overall, students ask for understanding. Students’ responses seem to come from writing in a climate of fear and anxiety.

By outlining the functions of the embeddedness culture, Kegan provides criteria by which we can evaluate the culture of self-identity, or for our purposes, the writing classroom. In this section, I ask to what extent we can fulfill the role of a nurturing culture. How effectively do we contradict mutuality and simultaneously confirm or foster self-authorship all within two semesters and in the context of the typical writing classroom (with twenty plus students)? Moreover, how do we provide a nurturing environment without losing some of our students to plagiarism along the way? In other words, for those students who plagiarize, do we, as a nurturing culture, hold some culpability and if so, how much? If we consider plagiarism within the context of psychological growth, we see that the way our students experience the writing classroom plays a crucial role in how they come to understand academic authorship. Therefore, if we consider our students as growing, changing beings, we must recognize that they adopt many forms of authorship. We can create a more nurturing environment through Kegan’s criteria for a nurturing embeddedness culture: confirmation, contradiction, and continuity.

[Confirmation]

Magolda claims that the most important conditions we create is an environment that validates students as knowers (65-68), and simultaneously, we must recognize and validate students as authors. The writing classroom that recognizes students as valid knowers, then, creates a nurturing place for students to engage with the work of the writing classroom. More importantly, such an environment does not pass judgments on students’ abilities but instead works with students to achieve a way of authoring that the university demands. Students must
then author in a way that reflects themselves as knowers. Magolda notes scholars who describe the confirming nature of the writing classroom:

The value of caring in the teaching relationship stems from the belief that learning is a relational process in which connections to others and to one’s own experience make learning more meaningful (Gilligan 1982; Lyons 1993). “Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994) advocates a connectedness with students as a key characteristic of effective social relations in teaching. Nel Noddings (1984), using the terms receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness to characterize caring. (17)

These views reflect Kegan’s language of nurturing. The learning environment is “relational,” “caring,” and reflects “connectedness.” Elbow suggests, we must begin by liking student writing and recognizing it for what it is (201). To develop student writing and authorship, we must acknowledge its value and confirm it within the development of authorship.

I argue that the writing classroom that confirms students as valid authors begins by focusing on issues of identity and self-reflexivity. Writing assignments would then encourage students to explore their culture, religion, and social environments. Students might first identify elements which contribute to their identity (clothes, music, activities, etc.). Students might then use quotations from advertising, music, etc. to demonstrate these connections. Next, students could explore their cultural backgrounds and describe themselves situated within this background; for example, do the students consider themselves a minority/majority, socioeconomic status, a political group, etc. Students might then examine how this environment defines/supports/ constructs their identity. Next, students could be asked to look at how these backgrounds manifest in the writing classroom through their writing and their perceptions. Students might then be encouraged to describe where they come from and how their background
makes their perspectives unique. Students might explore the language that connects them to their social group; for example, students might quote common slang or language unique to their social group and explore the background behind this language and the purpose it serves within their social group. The final phase of confirmation would ask students to reflect on how they are different from their hometown environment and how they are different from their peers.

[Contradiction]

A nurturing environment, according to Kegan must also contradict individuals’ ways of making meaning. The writing classroom must also challenge students while simultaneously acknowledging and validating their previous or existing conceptions of the world. To set up the classroom in a way that provides opportunities for positive writing growth, we must contradict students’ previous ways of authoring and support new ways of authoring in the university. I argue that the composition classroom becomes an exploration of identity. Students should look at authorship as a way of representing themselves. Contradiction in the writing classroom occurs in many forms: by reading the work of other students in the class, students might come to see how others construct their identities. Students should also analyze texts that break with social conventions or explore identity and difference (examples include: Virginia Woolf, Martin Luther King, Jr., Amy Tan, Langston Hughes). Students could be encouraged to explore how these writers/authors stand out from their communities and assert a solitary voice. Students might look at the rhetorical moves these writers make and discuss their effectiveness. They might then look at how a writer’s identity makes his/her work unique and different. How might a text look if it were written from another perspective by another person? Students could examine these texts from different perspectives (or assume another identity from that time period) and write their own texts that break with the conventions of their social environment.
This exercise could expand to other media such as music, art, or social networking. The main focus would be difference.

Many scholars suggest that writing in the composition classroom should be based on personal experiences through “I” writing. While there is a place for personal experiences, the use of first-person perspectives can keep students from asserting a sense of authority. “I” writing encourages students to stay grounded or dependent on their social influences. It does not require students to step outside of their social identity and assert an independent self. Students might continue to offer what Tingle refers to as “commonplaces” rather than speaking from an authoritative position. Keeping students focused on identity and difference encourages them to not depend on their social community.

[Continuity]

For awareness pedagogy to be successful, it must set up the writing classroom so that students can see the development and progression of their work. Continuity is essential to psychological development. When the writing classroom is no longer in session, the writing portfolio provides a sense of continuity: This is where I was, in my writing, but this is where I am now. Portfolio assessment is the only way to provide students with a sense of continuity. Kegan says that continuity provides stability as one grows. Because we only have students for one semester, it is important that we establish a sense of continuity, a place or space from which students can move forward as they grow and develop as writers. Such a context allows students to move forward and also have a place to look back. Portfolios permit this type of student growth.

In “Assessing Portfolios,” Sandra Murphy explains, “Portfolios... have given us a new way to look at student writing and an opportunity to gather new information about our students”
(114). Along with many other areas, portfolios are “making known what the student sees and values in her writing” (Murphy 114). Portfolios, therefore, allow students to make choices as writers and see the results of these choices. Portfolios force students to make decisions about their writing and how it is presented. The portfolio then represents the self that the individual creates, not the self created by the external influences of the instructor. If students keep a historical record of their writing, they will see how authorship progresses. A reflective letter almost always accompanies the writing portfolio. Students can present their material and reflect on how their writing has changed their strengths and weaknesses as writers. The “products” of their labor allows them to see who they are as writers.

**Closing**

The academic climate is clearly a product of the binary construction of authorship. While scholarly notions of authorship seem to lean toward more open understandings of authorship and thus plagiarism, the reality of the university is that it is bound by and committed to the modern notion of authorship, for its very existence has become interwoven with the notion of intellectual property and the language of university policy. The tradition of sole authorship continues to govern writing and will continue to guide administrative policies in the university until a comprehensive theory of authorship frames adult textual practices.

While administrators and campus leaders are implementing programs that focus on academic integrity, the emphasis is still one of strengthening penalties and measures aimed at catching and punishing plagiarists, rather than analyzing how students understand authorship. Therefore, Howard accurately maintains, the “tradition of solitary authorship persists” (“Collaborative Pedagogy” 55).
While there is clearly a place for all discussions, these are not the only angles from which we can approach plagiarism in the writing classroom. However, averting scholastic missteps with punitive measures/consequences is reactionary and offers little insight to both instructors and students. Furthermore, a reactionary approach constructs a contentious relationship between instructors and students, a relationship based on parental control rather than mutual respect. In “From Discipline to Development,” Dannells states: “perhaps no other single subject so dramatically reflects our attitudes about students and how we define our duty and our relationship with them” (“From Discipline to Development” 1). The presence and use of detection services suggest that students cannot be trusted to become active and invested members of academic culture and implicitly accuse students of either deceitful motives or academic ineptness, thus rendering them guilty before they begin. Students are not participating in the academic culture of honesty and integrity but are being monitored. Likewise, instructors are offered even fewer benefits: limited understanding of issues of plagiarism and even less insight into students’ struggles with authorship. Plagiarism detection services stand in for intellectual engagement and stand in the way of a meaningful exploration of a very important issue in the writing classroom. Dannells argues:

colleges and universities and their students would benefit by thinking about student discipline in less adversarial and more developmental ways . . . mediation. . . ‘caring confrontation,’ wherein the student’s behavior is critically examined in a supportive relationship, and the central goal of the process is to see what can be learned from the situation, but not so much the determination of guilt and the application of punishment. (3)
Dannells call lays the foundation for a shift in our focus and urges educators to actively participate in the growth of our students.

**Implications for Further Studies**

The findings in this study demonstrate the complexity of authorship and plagiarism among students in first-year writing and sophomore literature. This complexity is evidenced in students’ writings in the classroom every day. While this study did not lead to clear conclusions about authorship and plagiarism, it does offer a starting place for looking at how psychological development manifests in the writing classroom and how it affects students’ understandings of authorship and plagiarism. Further studies might look at the following areas for more insight:

- How do students’ views of authorship differ from those presented in the writing classroom?
- How do students understand common knowledge?
- Are students more likely to plagiarize if they perceive a particular ideology is being promoted in the classroom, college, etc.?
- How does self-authorship function in collaborative exercises? Is self-authorship important in collaborative writing? How does the developmental balance of self-authorship contribute to the social construction of knowledge?
- If students need to experience self-authorship, how should we address plagiarism?

While this study took directions I did not anticipate, it opens up areas unique to this generation of students and demonstrates the need to further explore who our students are and how they experience the work of the writing classroom.
References


Appendix A

Invitation to Participate (Fall Survey)

Dear Student,

I am inviting you to participate in a study called “Developing Conceptions of Authorship: A Study of Textual Practices Among Students in First-Year Writing Composition at the University of -------.” Approved by your Writing Program Administrator, the purpose of this study is to learn about students’ understanding and attitude toward authorship and plagiarism at the University of -------; examine how students view authorship and plagiarism at different points in their freshman and sophomore writing experiences at the University of -------; and learn any possible relationships between/among students’ view of authorship and plagiarism and Robert Kegan’s theory of psychological development. You are being asked to participate because you are enrolled in First-Year Composition (101, 102, or 103) or a 200 level sophomore literature course.

Please click on the link:
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If you have any questions about the research or procedures you can contact the researcher Christie Lamon-Burney at (---) -------- or by email (-------), if you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant. You can also contact Ms. -----------, Research Compliance Officer, The University -----------, if you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant at, (---) -------.
Appendix B

Informed Consent (Fall Survey)

Developing Conceptions of Authorship: A Study of Textual Practices Among Students in First-Year Writing Composition at the University of Alabama: Informed Consent

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Christie Lamon-Burney, from the UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA, Composition, Rhetoric, and English Studies Program. I hope to learn about students’ beliefs and understandings of authorship and plagiarism during their freshman writing courses (101 and 102), freshman honors writing course (103), and sophomore 200 level literature courses to examine how students view authorship and plagiarism at different points in their writing experiences at the University of Alabama; and, to learn any possible relationships between/among students’ view of authorship and plagiarism and Robert Kegan’s theory of psychological development. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are enrolled in a First-Year Composition course or a sophomore literature course during the 2009, fall semester at the University of Alabama.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete a 15-20 minute online survey in the fall of 2009.

This research and your participation pose no foreseeable risk to you. The survey is anonymous, and only the researcher will have access to the database. The benefits include learning how to better understand first-year and second-year literature students’ view of authorship and plagiarism, how students’ views change between their first and second year writing courses, how students’ views of authorship and plagiarism correspond to Kegan’s theory of psychological development, and how instructors can work with students who are in the process of psychological development. However, I cannot guarantee that you personally will receive any benefits from this research. Subject identities will be kept confidential by creating the survey to be anonymous. The only identifiable information will be the name of the university in which you are enrolled.

Your participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the instructor or the university. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Christie Lamon-Burney at (256) 355-9279 or via email (lamon008@crimson.ua.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Ms. Tanta Myles, the University of Alabama Research Compliance Officer, at 205-348-5152.

1. Completing the survey constitutes your consent to participate and certifies that you are 19 years of age or older. Please detach this letter from the email and keep for your records.
   - Yes
   - No
Appendix C

Conceptions of Authorship (Fall Survey)

2. I have read and understand the informed consent and wish to participate in the survey:
   Yes, I agree to participate.
   No, I do not wish to participate.

3. Age:
   19-21
   22-24
   25-27
   28+

4. Gender:
   Male
   Female

5. Race/Ethnicity:
   African American
   Asian
   Caucasian
   Hispanic
   Native American
   Other (please specify)

6. What year did you graduate from high school?
   2006
   2007
   2008
   2009
   Other

7. Are you employed?
   Yes
   No

8. What is the primary reason you work? (If you do not work, please mark N/A.)
   To help pay college expenses.
   To pay college expenses.
   To purchase luxury items.
   To pay for extracurricular activities.
   N/A
   Other (please specify)
9. How many hours per week do you work? (If you do not work, mark N/A.)
   0-10 hours per week
   10-20 hours per week
   20-30 hours per week
   30-40 hours per week
   More than 40 hours per week
   N/A

10. Are you involved in any extracurricular activities? Check all that apply.
   Organized athletics
   Fraternity/sorority organizations
   Student government
   Academic organizations/societies
   Charitable organizations
   Other (please specify)

11. Please indicate your academic status as of the Fall semester, 2009.
   Dual Enrollment
   Freshman (0-32 semester credit hours)
   Sophomore (33-64 semester credit hours)
   Junior (65-96 semester credit hours)
   Senior (97 + semester credit hours)
   Unsure
   Other (please specify)

12. Please indicate the college in which you are majoring.
   Arts & Sciences
   Commerce and Business Administration
   Communication and Information Sciences
   Community Health Sciences
   Continuing Studies
   Education
   Engineering
   Honors
   Human Environmental Sciences
   Law
   Nursing
   ROTC-Air Force
   ROTC-Army
   Social Work
   Unsure

13. Please indicate the writing or literature course in which you are enrolled.
   EN 101-First-Year Writing Course
   EN 102-First-Year Writing Course
   EN 103-First-Year Writing Course
EN 200 Level Literature Survey
EN 200 Level Honors Literature Survey

14. Is this your first time to take this course?
   Yes
   No

15. Select two of the most important reasons you are attending college.
   To get a well paying job.
   To obtain personal achievement.
   To be considered a success in your family, society, etc.
   To meet your parents’ expectations.
   To impress others.
   To achieve social standing.
   To be enrolled with your friends.
   Other (please specify)

16. Does the University of Alabama have an honor code?
   Yes
   No
   Unsure

17. What is the most important factor that motivates the writing you do in your writing/English class?
   Creativity
   Class Requirements
   Future goals
   Personal Drive
   Intellectual Ability
   Intellectual Challenge
   Good Grade
   Anxiety
   Stress
   Fear of Failure
   Other (please specify)

18. What kind of papers did you write in high school?
   Expository (papers that give information)
   Argumentative (papers that take a stance)
   Narration (papers that tell a personal story/event)
   Compare/contrast
   Summary
   Research papers (require the use of external sources)
   Rhetorical analysis (analyze how a writer makes an argument)
   Response (read and respond to a text)
   Other (please specify)
19. Are the papers you write in college different from the ones you wrote in high school?
Yes
No
Unsure
If yes, how so?

20. Do you feel that your high school writing experiences adequately prepared you for writing in the university?
Yes
No
Somewhat
Unsure
If no, why or why not?

21. Do the papers you are asked to write in college require you to “think” differently or perhaps encourage you to question beliefs or ideas that you were taught by your family, culture, or religion?
Yes
No
Sometimes
Unsure

22. When you are writing a paper for a college course, what two factors are most on your mind?
Due date
Length of paper
Instructor
Topic
Grade
Content
Grammar
Organization
Citations
Other (please specify)

23. Is the language of the university and the way you are expected to write similar to the language you speak? If no, can you explain how they are different?
Yes
No
Sometimes
Comments

24. Do you ever feel ill-equipped to write in the university?
Yes
No
Sometimes
Unsure

25. Check all of the following you consider a text.
A published book.
An internet website.
A blog/personal commentary.
An article in a journal.
Print news/media.
A paper submitted in an academic course.
A journal/diary.
Other (please specify)

26. In your opinion, what are the two most important characteristics of an author of a text?
Creative
Talented
Studious
Smart
Trustworthy
Passive
Introverted
Original
Insightful
Fair
Responsible
Independent
Other (please specify)

27. Do you consider a freshman/sophomore student to be an author?
Yes
No
Unsure
Can you explain your answer?

28. In your opinion, is there a difference between a student author and a published author?
Yes
No
Unsure

29. In your opinion, is there a difference between a student who plagiarizes an essay and a student who cheats on a test?
Yes
No
Can you explain your answer?
30. In your opinion, what are the three most important features of a piece of writing (published or unpublished)?
Grammar
Organization
Outside sources
Author’s credibility
Content
Topic
Clarity
Original ideas
Logic
Other (please specify)

31. In your opinion, should a published text/essay/paper produce a new original idea?
Yes
No
Unsure
Can you explain your answer?

32. In your opinion, should a student text, paper, essay produce an original idea?
Yes
No
Unsure
Can you explain your answer?

33. In your opinion, do instructors expect student papers to produce new, original ideas?
Yes
No
Unsure

34. What comes to mind when you hear the word “plagiarism”?

35. Is intention relevant when considering a term like “plagiarism”?
Yes
No
Can you explain your answer?

36. In your opinion, which of the following behaviors constitutes plagiarism?
Borrowing the words of another without giving him/her credit
Borrowing another’s form and/or language.
Submitting a friend’s paper.
Buying a paper online.
Paying a friend to write a paper.
Collaborating with peers outside of class.
Collaborating with peers during classroom exercises.
Having a parent, friend, or acquaintance edit a paper.
Having a parent, friend, or acquaintance write the paper.
Having a parent, friend, or acquaintance purchase the work of another.
All of the above.
None of the above.

37. In your opinion, what do teachers not understand about plagiarism in college writing and/or in society/culture in general?

38. Do you think students plagiarize because they do not agree with or choose to conform to the materials/ideas presented in class?

Yes
No
Sometimes
Unsure
Can you explain your answer?

39. How common is plagiarism among your peer group?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Somewhat rarely</th>
<th>Regularly</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My friends plagiarize:</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>My friends visit online paper mills:</td>
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<td>My friends understand the consequences of plagiarism:</td>
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<td>My friends do not care about plagiarism:</td>
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<td>My friends talk about plagiarism:</td>
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<td>My friends have others write their papers:</td>
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<td>My friends purchase papers online</td>
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<td>My friends depend on online paper</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
40. In your opinion, what prevents/deters students from plagiarizing?
Failing grade
Suspension from school
Public embarrassment
Disappointing family
Tarnishing academic record
Academic honor code
Future employment
Future educational goals
Personal integrity
Other (please specify)

41. In your opinion, is there a difference between students’ views of plagiarism and instructors’/professors’ views of plagiarism?
Yes
No
Unsure
Can you explain?

42. What is the most common way students plagiarize?
Purchasing a paper from a friend
Purchasing a paper from the Internet
Having a friend write a paper
Borrowing a paper from a . . .
Having a parent write a paper
Having a parent purchase a paper
Other (please specify)

43. Can you describe the way students use the Internet to write an essay?
Read articles
Use databases/library resources
Cut and paste
Read blogs/commentaries for ideas
Search paper topics
Other (please specify)

44. In your opinion, is cutting and pasting words/phrases from the Internet the same as plagiarizing?
Yes
No unsure
Can you explain your answer?
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

1. Identifying Information

Principal Investigator: Cherie Lorraine Bannay
Second Investigator: 
Third Investigator: 

Name: 
Department: English 
College: Arts and Sciences 
University: University of Alabama 
Address: 415 Old Street No. 
Decatur, AL 35601 
Telephone: 256-358-7579
FAX: 256-358-7560
Email: lban@ua.edu

Title of Research Project: Developing Conceptions of Authorship: A Study of Textual Practice Among Students in Freshman Writing Compositions at the University of Alabama

Proposed Date: 12/16/09

Funding Source:

Type of Proposal: [ ] New [ ] Revision [ ] Renewal [ ] Completed [ ] Fostering [ ] Completed IRB at the top of the page
Please attach a current copy of studies form

UA faculty or staff member signature: 

APPENDIX D