

Famous Plagiarists



What'd He Do?

We're not saying that King wasn't an incredible person who did more to advance the human race than most of us can ever hope to do. We're just saying that he was also a [plagiarist].

What's the Problem?

For starters, his own university [admits](#) that his doctoral thesis, the very foundation of his career, was significantly plagiarized. Seriously. They had an official inquiry and everything.

"We had many of the same professors, we worked in the same atmosphere during our graduate studies," said John Cartwright, an MLK scholar and member of the committee that investigated his plagiarism allegations, "under no circumstances would the atmosphere under which he did his work condone what Doctor King did. It's incredible. He was not unaware of the correct procedure. This wasn't just done out of ignorance."



Despite clear findings of plagiarism, the committee did not recommend he be posthumously stripped of his title, due to Dr. King's incredible services to the world.

The first allegations of King's plagiarism were hushed up, denied, or 'excused' by academia. However, the accusations continued to flow in.

This [timeline](#) shows how the realization of King's plagiarism unfolded. Not only was his dissertation plagiarized, but many of his student papers and sermons were stolen in whole or in part from other writers.

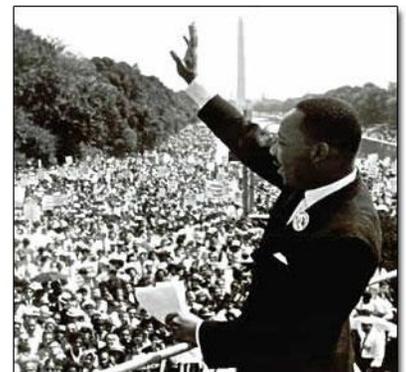
The staff of the King Paper's Project at Stanford even admits that, "King's plagiarism was a general pattern evident in nearly all of his academic writings."

Is That All?

Perhaps the most notable example of King's plagiarism was the general tone, and several select lines from his famous "I Have a Dream," speech. Theodore Pappas presents a detailed accusation in his book, *Plagiarism and the Culture War*. Most of the issue centers around the closing lines.

Here's how King's speech ended;

"This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with a new meaning, 'My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring.' And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania! Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado! Let freedom ring from the curvaceous peaks of California! But not only that; let freedom ring



from Stone Mountain of Georgia! Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee! Let freedom ring from every hill and every molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring."

Compare that to a much earlier speech by another Civil Rights activist, Archibald Carey:

"We, Negro Americans, sing with all loyal Americans: My country 'tis of thee, Sweet land of liberty, Of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, Land of the Pilgrims' pride From every mountainside Let freedom ring!"

That's exactly what we mean--from every mountain side, let freedom ring. Not only from the Green Mountains and White Mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire; not only from the Catskills of New York; but from the Ozarks in Arkansas, from the Stone Mountain in Georgia, from the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia--let it ring not only for the minorities of the United States, but for the disinherited of all the earth--may the Republican Party, under God, from every mountainside, LET FREEDOM RING!"

Did He Pay?

Not during his lifetime. To be fair, it takes [puts] to accuse the greatest civil rights activist in history with plagiarism.

Read more: http://www.cracked.com/article_17198_5-great-men-who-built-their-careers-plagiarism.html#ixzz2kSEKBuwe

President Barack Obama: During the presidential campaign of Barack Obama in February 2008, Obama was accused of plagiarizing a speech by Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick, given in October 2006. Obama's speech, given in Wisconsin, included quotations from several other speeches, which he credited to Martin Luther King Jr. and John F. Kennedy, as well as a quotation from the Declaration of Independence. PlagiarismToday.com noted that after comparing Deval's speech with Obama's, one could see that Obama "used many of the same quotes as well as very similar phrasing." Obama apologized for not giving credit to Deval after the two had worked on his speech together, and Deval made a public announcement, calling the whole incident "unfair," and supporting Obama's speech, according to Boston.com.

Read more: <http://www.onlineclasses.org/resources/top-10-plagiarism-scandals-of-all-time/>

Vice President Joseph Biden: As a law student, Biden plagiarized a paper in a legal methods course which result in a failure of the course. But that is only the beginning. On the campaign trail he lifted the words of British Labour Party leader Neal Kinnock. It was brought to light by an opponent in the presidential primaries. But the trend of plagiarism continued as other examples of his borrowing from speeches given by famous people, the likes of Robert F. Kennedy and Hubert H. Humphrey.

Read more: <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/2066640/posts>

Alex Haley: The judge who presided over Haley's plagiarism case admitted that "I did not want to destroy him" and so allowed him to settle quietly - even though, he acknowledged, Haley had repeatedly perjured himself in court. Large sections of Roots, including the plot and main character, was lifted from a novel written in 1967 by author, Hal Courlander.

Read more: <http://www.martinlutherking.org/roots.html>

George Harrison: The former Beatle has also been accused of Plagiarism. In fact twice. The most famous of the two cases surrounds his hit, My Sweet Lord. His fine by the judge in the case equaled about seventy-five percent of the royalty revenue raised in North American market sales. Another interesting incident involving George Harrison was when he plagiarized himself (which actually can be considered a serious issue in academia). The beginning of "I'm Looking Through You" has been said to be the same as the end of "End of the Line" from the Traveling Wilburys, a group that he belonged to.

Read more: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/My_Sweet_Lord and
<http://examples.yourdictionary.com/what-are-famous-examples-of-plagiarism.html>