Participation in the Remix Culture: Situating the Remix Culture in an Academic Environment

By

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Abstract

According to a report released in 2011 by the Pew Institute, plagiarism has increased 55% in the past 10 years and most College administrators believe easy access to computers and the internet is the reason. This study undertakes to expand on this assumption by situating plagiarism in the context of a culture that rewards collaborative knowledge construction and dissemination through shared online networks. This study employs a cross sectional design to explore and interpret the relationship between plagiarism and non-academic information sharing activities. Data was gathered using a structured questionnaire from a convenience sample of first-year post-secondary students at NorQuest College in Edmonton, Alberta. An analysis of plagiarism policies from colleges located in Alberta is also undertaken to determine if academic integrity policies are situated within the emerging context of collaborative knowledge construction. The results of this survey do not lead to an obvious positive relationship between plagiarism and participation in the remix, but findings do illustrate that first year college students do indeed consume, produce, and distribute information on the internet as a part of their normal non-academic life, and a portion of students also directly participate in the remix. Result indicate that students apply a hierarchy of digital information use to a variety of information behaviours. Analysis of academic integrity policies from ten Alberta colleges did reveal that the regulation of plagiarism is not ontologically situated in the premise that knowledge is socially constructed.

Chapter 1. Introduction

1A. The Rising Tide

According to a report released in 2011 by the Pew Institute, plagiarism in post-secondary environments has increased by 55% in the past 10 years and most college administrators believe easy access to computers and the Internet is to blame (Taylor, Parker, Lenhart, & Patten, 2011). A recent study conducted in the United Kingdom found that 50% of university students admit to plagiarism (Sutton, Taylor & Johnson, 2014, p.130). Aggregated statistics listed on the *plagiarism.org* website state "36% of undergraduates admit to paraphrasing/copying few sentences from an Internet source without footnoting it" (2005). These publications identify the existence of a "rising tide of plagiarism" (Zwagerman, 2008, p.677), and access to technology is the primary culprit.

Plagiarism's definition evolved from the Latin 'plagiare', or 'to kidnap' and the word is commonly defined as "the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work" (Plagiarism, 2001). In many academic integrity policies, plagiarism's definition has been extended to include cheating, collusion, and the resubmission of previous assignments, among other acts of academic violation.

The aim of this research was to explore the assumption that plagiarism is increasing simply because of access to technology, both student access to the Internet and faculty access to detection software (Taylor et al., 2011). My intent is to explore plagiarism by situating it in the context of a culture that participates in collaborative knowledge construction and dissemination of ideas, text, and images through online media. The activity of collaborative knowledge construction through the manipulation of cultural objects is known as the Remix Culture (Lessig,

2008). The pervasiveness of a remix culture suggests that a broader cultural shift may be at play that challenges current academic positions regarding creativity, originality and idea generation.

For the purpose of this paper, plagiarism's definition will remain close to the *Random House* definition: appropriating the language, ideas and thoughts of another. Collusion, which forms part of an expanded category of plagiarism, is considered part of this definition because collusion is an act of collaborative creation. Authors Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford have written extensively about collusion and have argued that "the socially constructed nature of writing [is] inherently collaborative [at its] foundation" (2001, p.355) and thus collusion is a factor in this study.

It is the concept of appropriation that ties plagiarism to the remix culture. Just as a disc jockey appropriates slices of sound from different musical scores to create new music, learners appropriate concepts and sentences to form new understanding. "Whenever we are writing about sources that we're having difficulty understanding, we appropriate phrases and whole sentences from the source" (Howard, 2000a, p.82). We all appropriate something in some way.

1B. Situating Plagiarism in the 21st Century

There was an epochal shift in the nineteenth century from an exclusive religious educational orientation towards an inclusive secular orientation at the dawn of the period known as the Enlightenment (Gardner, 2004). This shift away from classical mimicry to originality and innovation created the concepts of authorship, ownership, and plagiarism. As Rebecca Moore Howard illustrates in her essay *The Ethics of Plagiarism,* "authorial plagiarism became a significant moral and aesthetic issue in the nineteenth century precisely because of the high premium put upon the ideas of originality and invention at the expense of classical imitation" (2000a, p.83). The idea of autonomous originality is what fuels academia to equate the appropriation of words to academic criminality.

The concept of originality in authorship may contradict a postmodern understanding of the collaborative construction of knowledge. We "no longer have originators and plagiarists – or giants and pygmies – but the collective, always unfinished text. It is sufficient to observe that this shift reflects and reproduces the social conditions that produce it" (Howard, 1995, p.791). Collaboration links people and their ideas together and the act of appropriating pieces and parts of another's work identifies participation in the remix culture.

Situating plagiarism within the context of the 21st century, which I propose is a postmodern era embedded in the culture of remix, may inevitably call for plagiarism's redefinition, however the purpose of this study is to investigate whether a tension exists between today's normative cultural practices of appropriation and academia's ideals of originality and autonomous creation. The term remix culture was originally coined by Lawrence Lessig, a lawyer and leader in the creative commons movement of the past decade. To Lessig, "remix is a critical expression of creative freedom that in a broad range of contexts, no free society should

restrict" (2008, p.56). Remix culture can be described by adherents and observers as a culture that orients itself around creating media by extracting component pieces from other people's media creations and creating something new (Lessig, 2008). Media is understood to be any cultural product; written text, visual art, music or video.

Advances in communication technology have facilitated the sharing of media in ways unimagined in previous generations. This has "enabled a paradigmatic shift in the quality and range of relationships individuals may build with one another and the media [they produce]" (Sinnreich, Latonero, & Gluck, 2009, p.1242). The shift is away from dichotomous and absolute constructs of creator/consumer and production/consumption. In a networked existence where we can produce and share easily, we are all creators, consumers and producers. Rainie and Wellman (2012) suggest we are experiencing a triple revolution of "social network, Internet and mobile [which] has created a new information and media ecology that is distinct from the past. The process of creating, collecting, assessing and distributing information is increasingly becoming networked through social process and very much tied to the rise of networked individualism" (p.226). In an age where anyone with an internet connection can create content and distribute it worldwide, the boundaries between producers and creators and owners and appropriators become blurred.

Approximately two thirds of adult internet users in the United States have created online material, which involves a variety of activities that include using, sharing, contributing, and taking material found on the internet (Rainie & Wellman, 2012, p. 198). These individuals self-identify as network creators, or more broadly as participants in the remix culture. A 2010 Pew Institute report found that 15% of all adult Americans who use the internet participated in

creating mashups: taking digital material they found online and remixing it into their own creations (Rainie & Wellman, 2012, p. 215).

There is a creativity expressed by the remix culture that cannot simply be defined as plagiare or the act of 'kidnapping ideas'. Henry Jenkins states in *Convergence Culture* (2006) that we need to rewrite school from the bottom up and recognize "that enacting, reciting, and appropriating elements from pre-existing stories is a valuable and organic part of the process by which children develop cultural literacy" (p.186).

In most post-secondary institutions, plagiarism is presented as a static ideology, as an absolute and universal rule that must be upheld. However, as Sinnreich et al. (2009) observe, "the laws, ethics and institutional regimes that surround cultural production are still mired in the dichotomous discourse of the 19th and 20th century concepts of cultural production, producing a tension between normative practice and our dominant system of cultural evaluation" (p.1243). What it means to create and what it means to be original have changed over time and the rules that govern these activities in the post-secondary education system have not evolved to meet these changes. Outside academia, members of the digital postmodern age are remixing and deconstructing cultural artefacts into new forms of knowledge and understanding. "What we think of as plagiarism shifts across historical time periods, across cultures, across workplaces, even across academic disciplines. We need to stop treating plagiarism like a pure moral absolute" (Price, 2002, p.90).

The tension between originality, remixing, collaborative knowledge creation, and plagiarism involves questioning the hierarchy of originality and re-evaluating our concepts of literacy in the 21st century. As Lawrence Lessig suggests, "we should be asking whether the

student has learned something through the process of remix rather than be concerned with the originality of composition as the only standard for grading" (Lessig, 2008, p.58).

This research seeks to investigate whether there is a positive relationship between the noted rise of academic integrity issues and student participation in remix and file sharing activities that occur in non-academic settings. Specifically I am curious whether file sharing activities that occur outside the classroom are creeping into the classroom and, if so, does this cause a tension when students are held accountable to academic policies that may not recognize shared and collaborative knowledge construction.

Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework

This investigation is ontologically framed by George Herbert Mead and Herbert Blumer's work in symbolic interactionism. This socio-cultural world view is augmented by the work of information management scholar, Ikjiro Nonaka, who provides both the notion of the '*ba'* as a philosophical place where digital interaction occurs and the Spiral Model, which contribute to an understanding of the social construction of knowledge. These perspectives are grounded in the assumption that society is a product of social interaction, and social interaction is a key element in the remix culture.

2A. Blumer's Symbolic Interactionism

The work of George Herbert Mead and Herbert Blumer is of particular importance as it lays the framework for validating socially constructed meaning through symbolic interactionism. David A. Snow from the University of California, Irvine, distills Herbert Blumer's overall concept of symbolic interactionism into three core principles: (1) that people act toward things, including each other, on the basis of the meanings they have for them; (2) that these meanings are derived through social interaction with others; and (3) that these meanings are managed and transformed through an interpretive process that people use to make sense of and handle the objects that constitute their social worlds (Snow, 2001, p. 376).

Blumer's core principles help us understand how the meaning of things comes to be: we understand the world through socially constructed meaning, which becomes the social construction of knowledge and cultural understanding. Social interaction takes on new definition in the postmodern era as we are able to interact over space and time through electronic networks in addition to interacting face-to-face. We are able to interact electronically and asynchronously

by sharing and manipulating each other's cultural products (text, images, art, videos, etc.) to expand and create new meaning.

2B Ikjiro Nonaka's '*ba*'

Ikjiro Nonaka and Noboru Konno (1998), knowledge management scholars, introduce the Japanese philosophical concept of ba to explain how social interaction and knowledge generation occurs in and out of time. The Japanese ba "can be thought of as a shared space for emerging relationships. This space may be physical, virtual, mental or any combination of them [sic]. What differentiates ba from ordinary human interaction is the concept of knowledge creation" (Nonaka & Konno, 1998, p.40). The ba is the "place" where remix happens. In the ba, the asynchronous digital exchange of cultural knowledge and products that results in new interpretations, ideas or connections occurs. The ba is the third persona that is created during social process writing. Margaret Price (2002) quotes Myka Vielstimmig's argument that collaborative writing "isn't written by two individuals, but by this third persona – created by the process of collaboration" (p.95). The ba is the mental moment of inspiration that occurs when knowledge is shared. The act of remixing exists within the ba.

2C. The Spiral Model of Knowledge Creation

The spiral model of knowledge creation established by Ikujiro Nonaka (1994) provides an additional framework for understanding the social nature of knowledge generation. Nonaka's theory comes from the genre of organizational learning, and it provides a model to address how an individual may come to know something through social interaction and through the appropriation of existing artefacts. "The reconfiguring of existing information through the

sorting, adding, recategorizing and recontextualizing of explicit knowledge can lead to new knowledge" (Nonaka, 1994, p.19).

Nonaka's model of knowledge interplay is called both the Spiral Model (Nonaka, 1994) and SECI Model (Nonaka & Konno, 1998). It refers to the dynamic conversion of knowledge through a series of phases: socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization, which are in constant interplay. Nonaka (1994) used the term spiral to indicate that knowledge generation is a never ending activity.

Knowledge exchange originates in the model's socialization mode. "Socialization involves the sharing of tacit knowledge between individuals" (Nonaka & Konno, 1998, p.42). Socialization is a communication process that materializes as individuals engage in sharing ideas, knowledge, and perceptions. The back and forth engagement between individuals who share their knowledge and perceptions is the embodiment of Nonaka's socialization. This exchange enables the development of deep understanding and has the potential for new idea creation through the act of combining knowledge. Saulais and Ermine (2012) identify this process as the "expression and appropriation of ideas" (p. 422). Knowledge that is appropriated in this phase of the model is emergent and requires a creative process to expand individual tacit knowledge expressed in the reformulation of knowledge and the development of empathy (Nonaka & Konno, 1998, p.42). The term socialization emphasizes that this is a collaborative activity involving active engagement.

The Spiral model is to be understood in terms of phases towards whole knowledge, and the next phase is externalization. Knowledge acquired through the socialization phase is next externalized, which means contextualizing what was learned through the socialization process into one's own constructs and expressions. Externalization involves building a personal

narrative around newly appropriated knowledge. “Externalization requires the expression of tacit knowledge and its translation into comprehensible forms that can be understood by others” (Rahimi, Arbabisarjou, Allameh & Aghababei, 2011, p. 19).

The combination phase is the third phase, where newly exposed knowledge, now expressible can be documented, codified and distributed (or redistributed). In terms of the discussion here, this phase of the model is also the remix phase. As the word ‘combination’ suggests, this is where the mixing of two or more individuals’ inputs can become a new output. This activity can also be considered an act of collusion, as characterised in some academic integrity policies. Kathrine Valentine (2006) defines the activity of patchwriting as “piecing together material from [a variety of] sources as a way of learning to write for a particular discipline” (p.96). Nonaka’s combination phase is Valentine’s patchwriting, as well as mashed up electronica. Nonaka’s combination phase is the remix.

Internalization is the final stage of the model before it spirals back again towards the socialization phase in a never ending cycle of ideation. Internalization involves the process of converting the knowledge developed through the externalization and combination phases into an individual’s personal knowledge base (Rahimi et al., 2011, p. 19).

Symbolic interactionism is the frame that validates the social nature of meaning, knowledge and cultural understanding. Nonaka’s ‘ba’ and the idea of a virtual place where social interaction can occur outside face-to-face engagement provides a pathway to understand that asynchronous digital interaction is still social interaction. The Spiral Model demonstrates that the growth and development of new ideas and knowledge is a dynamic process, which always begins in social interaction, be it in the ‘ba’ or face-to-face. Remixing is the essence of

social interaction, it is about appropriating pieces of each other's knowledge and cultural products to create something new.

Chapter 3. Literature review

There is an abundance of literature on the topic of plagiarism and much of it reports on practices aimed at reducing its prevalence in post-secondary environments. Both the research and rhetorical literature on plagiarism examine what constitutes plagiarism, speculate on technology's effect on plagiarism, and theorize about the behaviour of students in the new millennium. Most of the literature supports the notion that a rising tide of plagiarism exists, although none predict the wave's crest. Overall, the body of literature on plagiarism is characterized by quantitative studies that gather data through self-reporting student surveys. None of the studies used official statistics recorded in post-secondary academic integrity offices to gauge the prevalence of plagiarism. This phenomenon is largely due to uneven and inconsistent reporting of plagiarism within and across post-secondary institutions. It is consistently argued that easy access to vast information stores accessed through digital networks and advanced technology is the culprit responsible for increasing occurrences of plagiarism in the post-secondary environment. This study contributes to the already large body of research, by exploring the question: does the activity of appropriating and sharing digital resources in informal settings affect the rise of plagiarism in the classrooms of our post-secondary institutions and could this normative non-academic behaviour be a reason for conflict with academic integrity norms and academic preference for autonomously created works? And if this is so, could this phenomenon be partially responsible for the increase in plagiarism in post-secondary environments. In other words, is there a clash between normative networked behaviour and academic policies, rather than a deficiency in the ethical behaviours of students in the new millennium?

This review of the current literature on the subject of plagiarism is distilled into two distinct positions: those articles that view plagiarism as a nonnegotiable academic delinquency that requires fixing, and those articles that acknowledge the concept of plagiarism is shifting in a networked culture, which affects the concepts of authorship and originality. Literature that falls into the first category; plagiarism as deficiency, contains the largest body of research literature. Within this category of literature three general subcategories emerge: plagiarism/motivation, plagiarism/prevention, and plagiarism/punishment. These articles by and large seek fault with the student, the teaching technique, or with faculty members as the reason why plagiarism is on the rise. I have categorized this literature is an internal exploration into plagiarism. The second category of literature; shifting paradigm, is largely rhetorical in nature and looks externally for reasons why plagiarism is increasing as opposed to seeking fault with someone or something. These writers look outside the institution and past policy to examine emergent culture, online networking behaviours, and provide an historical analysis of authorship and originality.

3A. An Internal Exploration

3A1. Motivation

The authority on cheating in academic environments resides with Donald McCabe and Linda Trevino who conducted vast studies in the United States over the course of a decade in the 1990s. Generally, articles that fall into the 'motivation' category of writing on plagiarism cite McCabe and Trevino's work. In their seminal article *Cheating in Academic Institutions: A Decade of Research* (2001), the duo reflected on ten years of research and concluded that there are three primary causes for cheating (including acts of plagiarism): job competition, lax and non-caring faculty, and competition within the student peer group (2001). This research forms

the foundation for an entire line of thinking about plagiarism, which is based on a student's motivation to compete and get ahead. Many researchers have followed McCabe and Trevino in the decade since their landmark research but none have considered emergent cultural tendencies like participation in social networks, network creation, and remixing for creative content as a reason for increasing plagiarism (Aasheim, Rutner, Li, & Williams, 2012; Flores & James, 2012; Jones, 2011; Owunwanne, Rustagi, & Dada, 2010; Power, 2010).

McCabe and Trevino observe "disturbing increases [in cheating] were also found among women and in collaborative cheating (unpermitted collaboration among students on written assignments)" (2001, p. 221). To rationalize this observation, the authors acknowledge a change in students' perception of plagiarism during thirty years of plagiarism research (1964-1999). McCabe and Trevino compare the conclusions of plagiarism research conducted in the 1960s to their research conducted in the 1990s and find "selected behaviors that students may have classified as plagiarism in [the 1964] study do not appear to be considered plagiarism by many students today" (McCabe & Trevino, 2001, p. 221). They connect changing perceptions about plagiarism to the existence or absence of an institutional honour code rather than any external influences like the normalization of collaborative content creation and networked file sharing.

McCabe and Trevino's research describes a student's propensity to distinguish plagiaristic acts from non-plagiaristic acts as contingent on the institution's ability to embed an ideology of honor: "effective honor codes must be more than mere window dressing: a truly effective code must be well implemented and strongly embedded in student culture" (McCabe & Trevino, 2001, p. 224). The existence of a moral code of behavior becomes the single point of impact. McCabe's research into academic integrity issues is well respected, rigorous, and is always substantial in its depth of analysis. It is also internally reflective. The line of reasoning

and research that stems from the seminal writings of McCabe seeks to identify a gap or a fault with the student or the institution to explain the persistence of plagiarism in post-secondary institutions. Plagiarism is consistently defined as a moral default that can be corrected by pedagogy and adherence to honor codes.

Aasheim, Rutner, Li and Williams (2012) conducted a study of student attitudes towards plagiarism at Georgia Southern University by comparing attitudes and perceptions of plagiarism based on assignment type; they compared plagiarism in computer programming assignments and essay assignments. They administered a survey as a pretest/posttest instrument at the beginning and end of a semester to measure perception difference that may be related to plagiarism education. Pretest survey results show that students believe copying code for computer programming assignments is more acceptable than copying assignments for essays. Programming is viewed by students as something closer to mathematics, which is either right or wrong: "they don't realize that different approaches to the same problem can generate correct output, leading them to believe that if a friend found the 'right' answer [and they copy it] they cannot get caught if they cheat" (2012, p.304). The posttest found that introducing plagiarism education during the semester increased awareness of the concept of plagiarism in computer programming. The authors also suggest that it would be beneficial to adopt standards that allow for collaboration on programming assignments (p.306). They cite a Georgia Tech model where "students must sign a document outlining the forms of collaboration that are and are not allowed. For each assignment students must disclose the names of all collaborators and cite any websites used to complete the assignment (p.306). The Georgia Tech model - a modified honour code with a reliance on plagiarism education - is consistent with this theme.

Between 2002 and 2003 a study of 11 Canadian higher education institutions was developed to gather information about the extent of academic misconduct in Canada (Hughes & McCabe, 2006). The goal of this research was to ascertain whether academic misconduct was an issue in Canadian institutions, a legitimate question because much of the literature to date was American. The survey instrument was modified from one designed by McCabe and Trevino in 2001 and was distributed across five provinces and a variety of institution types (2006, p. 5). The survey design was to have respondents self-report acts of cheating and plagiarism. The researchers gathered 14,913 responses, with response rates that ranged from five to 25 percent at each institution. Self-reporting was defined as a limitation because students were fearful about being identified, even though the survey was anonymous (Hughes & McCabe, 2006, p. 5). The survey results were divided between high school (those student who have just left high school for post-secondary), undergraduate students, and graduate students. A full 73% of first year post-secondary student respondents admitted to plagiarizing in high school, 53% of undergraduates identified themselves as having plagiarized in university and 35% of graduate students indicated that they too had plagiarized. The survey identifies categories of plagiarism, which were originally developed by McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield in 2001. Two categories expressed collaboration: "working on an assignment with others when told not to" and "receiving unpermitted help on assignments" (p.9). A definition of 'unpermitted help' was not provided, thus there is uncertainty if this refers to help from tutors, writing centre staff or librarians. The results show high levels of cheating are aligned with the low levels of concern for reprimand (14%) (Hughes & McCabe, 2006, p.10). The authors interpreted these findings and recommend that "institutions should recommit themselves to academic integrity and that considerable effort needs to be put into understanding where existing policies are failing" (Hughes & McCabe,

2006, p. 17). They do not examine whether fear of reprimand is motivating factor. The recommendations continue with what is now a familiar solution from Donald McCabe: "one model of possible interest to Canadian universities may be the modified honour code model" (Hughes & McCabe, 2006, p. 17). However, Hughes and McCabe do acknowledge a growing culture of collaboration and state "the results may represent a clash between an emerging collaborative student culture and a more traditional, individualistic faculty culture" (Hughes & McCabe, 2006, p.15). This observation leans towards an acknowledgement that a cultural shift towards collaborative knowledge creation is occurring but it does not appear to influence the final recommendations of the study.

Other articles in this section of the literature review discuss the motivation to plagiarize, which can be distilled into two broad categories; competition for grades and fear of failure. By way of contrast, Rainie and Wellman (2012) identify five motivating reasons why people collaborate, in their book *Networked: The New Social Operating System.* The authors distill the propensity to collaborate in digital environments: (1) a desire for self-expression (2) an opportunity to learn through acquired and shared knowledge (3) the chance to participate in the milieu of interaction and negotiation (4) belong to a place of community to build social networks (5) be empowered through creating and sharing (p.217-219). There is an affective difference in the motivation to cheat and the motivation to collaborate, yet collaboration is defined as cheating in an academic context.

3A2. Prevention

Owens and White (2013), two Australian academics, report on a longitudinal investigation into plagiarism prevention strategies at an Australian university. This article evaluates a variety of prevention strategies employed in planned stages over five semesters. As

each new strategy was employed over the semesters, an assessment of the number of cases of plagiarism was made. The study began in 2007. Prior to 2007 when there was no overall strategy at this institution to halt plagiarism, the university reported very few cases of plagiarism. Academics in the psychology department suspected plagiarism but could not quantify their concern. Owens and White believe that plagiarism is "a threat to the endeavor of creating unique knowledgeable students and the act of transforming them into reflective thinkers in the age of easy access to digital resources" (p.14). The first strategy employed in 2007: the adoption of plagiarism detection software. Students were explicitly warned about the faculty's adoption of the plagiarism detection software *Turnitin* in 2008, and in-class writing exercises were added as the next strategy. In 2009 and 2010, writing quizzes were added and in-class writing exercises were removed. In 2011, all of the strategies were employed. Longitudinal results show "the most significant reduction in plagiarism occurred between 2007 and 2008 when in-class writing exercises coupled with an online constructive feedback module were introduced in parallel with plagiarism detection software" (2013, p.19). Owens and White support the adoption of plagiarism detection software as deterrent to plagiarism: "One way to address the challenge of easy access to online material is with plagiarism detection software. Plagiarism software matches the percentage of student text with external sources to indicate the degree of student originality" (Owens & White, 2013, p. 15). According to Owens and White plagiarism results from carelessness, ignorance or dishonesty (2013, p. 14) and a strategy to remedy these faults is a regime of exercises that increases conformity to plagiarism guidelines in combination with detection software, to catch those who don't conform. The emphasis here is on the students and preventing them from acting outside a particular paradigm.

Prevention articles overwhelmingly position themselves as being in a war on plagiarism and look to better teaching methods, better follow up, and better skill development as part of the arsenal that can be deployed against the enemy. Many articles discuss the benefits and detractions of employing plagiarism software like *Turnitin*, although there is no consensus among authors regarding its value (Hammer, Agnello, Kiser, & Osaghae, 2012; Youmans, 2011). One article in particular uncovered a rash of inconsistencies with *Turnitin* (Brown, Fallon, Lott, Matthews & Mintie, 2007). Brown et al. (2007) performed deep analysis of the product *Turnitin* and among other objections, object to the feature that stores student papers in perpetuity "once a paper is submitted to *Turitin* in, its fingerprint remains in the proprietary database indefinitely" (Brown et al., 2007, p.14). Brown et al. explain how *Turnitin* works; if *Turnitin* identifies text that has been copied in a submitted paper, they identify the copied text by providing a link to what *Turnitin* defines as the 'original.' In an experiment, Brown et al. (2007) submitted a graduate student's paper to *Turnitin* after it had been previously submitted. The paper was delivered to the student's instructor (not the researchers) with the links to the 'original' document, which contained the name, identification number and email address of the student on its cover page, which is in conflict with institutional privacy policies. Other inconsistencies include *Turnitin's* ability to detect only copy-and-paste plagiarism from within its own database, which is questionably defined (Brown et al., 2007, p.15). One wonders about the possible scenario where two students using the same textbook and writing the same assignment might quote the same sentence and what would result for the students in an institution that uses Turnitin?

Other solutions for prevention of plagiarism include unique assignments that can't be easily replicated on the internet (Probett, 2011), plagiarism-themed instruction (Estow, Lawrence, & Adams, 2011) and improved understanding of authorship (Dee & Jacob, 2012).

Likely the most militant position on plagiarism prevention belongs to Thomas S. Dee and Brian A. Jacob from an unidentified "highly selective post-secondary institution in the United States" (2012, p.402). Dee and Jacob approach the plagiarism issue from an economic perspective claiming the return on investment of a post-secondary education is lowered when plagiarism occurs: "there is broad concern that these investments are often compromised by student plagiarism, an illicit behavior thought to have grown increasingly common over the last two decades because of both technological changes and shifting social norms" (2012, p.398). Dee and Jacob equate a post-secondary education to a capital asset: "plagiarism may lower the human capital of those who plagiarize [by] reducing one's subject knowledge relative to understanding" (2012, p.398). The authors' economic perspective was a persuasive factor as Dee and Jacob were able to enlist the assistance of faculty members to collect anonymized essays from 28 undergraduate courses in a single semester, without the knowledge of the student participants. The sample was 1256 papers (Dee & Jacob, 2012, p.399). The 28 courses were randomized and assigned as either a 'treatment' course or a 'control' course (Dee & Jacob, 2012, p.403). Treatment courses contained a mandatory online plagiarism tutorial and quiz to be completed before students could submit an assignment. Overall, students in the treatment courses had fewer occurrences of plagiarism than students in the control courses, leading Dee and Jacob to conclude: "our intervention was designed to reduce the prevalence of plagiarism by educating students about what constitutes plagiarisms and providing them with effective strategies for avoidance. However, it may also be that this intervention reduced plagiarism

simply by increasing the perceived likelihood that plagiarism would be detected and prosecuted" (2012, p. 423). Dee and Jacob used demographic data gathered in their survey to make correlations between ethnic origin and rates of plagiarism and in a footnote they indicate that three teaching faculty refused to participate in the study "because they were uncomfortable with the 'deception' of students" (2012, p. 403).

3A3. Punishment

When I expanded the thesaurus available in the library databases on the term *plagiarism*, I found the following synonyms: copyright infringement, piracy, theft, academic dishonesty and cheating (education). Each of these synonyms carries a negative and almost criminal connotation. "Within the field of psychology, plagiarism is not only an academic crime, but also a violation of professional ethics" (Robinson-Zañartu, Pena, Cook-Morales, Pena, Afshani & Nguyen, 2005, p.321). Robinson- Zañartu et al. (2005) surveyed faculty members from a variety of universities in the United States to ascertain if the format of an assignment informs perceptions of severity and associated consequences when plagiarism is detected. Specifically, Robinson- Zañartu et al. (2005) believe there is inconsistency in application of punishment for plagiarized PowerPoint presentations and student created websites, but fairly consistent procedures and remedies for print-to-print plagiarism (p. 321). Researchers developed a case scenario survey instrument, where specific cases of plagiarism were described, including the quantity of plagiarized text. The respondents were asked to identify the penalty they would attribute using ordinal categories. The scenario questions ranged from subtle and potentially difficult-to-detect plagiarism, like using a portion of a peer's paper in a PowerPoint presentation; to the blatant and obvious cases of plagiarism, like locating an identical PowerPoint presentation or paper on the internet (2005, p. 324). Robinson- Zañartu et al. (2005) found overall consistency

between perceived severity of plagiarism but significant variation in the appropriate response, remediation or punishment for the detected plagiarism (p. 332). Overall, there was a reluctance to recommend university sanctions. The Robinson- Zañartu et al. study concludes with two findings; first is a recognition that different degrees of plagiarism exist and within this range is a bias to identify print plagiarism more readily, and second, no standard practice of actions and sanctions exists across the discipline of psychology, nor across institutions.

There are a significant number of articles that explore the theme of punishment as a deterrent to plagiarism and a technique to be used by institutions to deal with the 'tide' of plagiarism (Dee & Jacob, 2012; Gullifer & Tyson, 2010; Jurdi, Hage & Chow, 2011; Sutherland-Smith, 2010; Yeo & Chien, 2007). Researchers Judith Gullifer and Graham Tyson (2010) explored student perceptions of plagiarism using facilitated focus groups at Charles Sturt University in Australia. This study was conducted using a semi-structured agenda to guide focus group discussions of first and third year undergraduates. The agenda for the focus groups consisted of five questions used to frame a discussion on the definition, causes and implications of plagiarism. Transcriptions of the discussions lead to the identification of "six themes relating to the perceptions of plagiarism: confusion, fear, perceived sanctions, perceived seriousness, academic consequences and resentment" (Gullifer & Tyson, 2010, p.469). Both anxiety and fear were discussed as a reaction to "a combination of university expectations and sanctions" (Gullifer & Tyson, 2010, p.471). Participants discussed how "education about plagiarism is often presented as a set of rules and warnings that result in a 'sense of doom', which can be attributed to the legalistic discourse that positions plagiarism in a 'language of crime and punishment'" (Gullifer & Tyson, 2010, p.417). The researchers found that students are confused by plagiarism, not really knowing what it is, yet they are aware of the sanctions for plagiarizing, which are

perceived as "draconian" (Gullifer & Tyson, 2010, p.475). The authors conclude that "students reported negative academic consequences that manifested as a form of academic learned helplessness" (p.478) expressed through over-quoting and intentionally restricting the amount of individual input for fear of inadvertently plagiarizing. This study is limited by the number of participants and cannot be generalized across broader populations, but the research is insightful in its exposure of the affective consequences of over emphasizing the criminality of plagiarism.

A second Canadian study, somewhat similar to the study conducted by Hughes and McCabe (2006) discussed under the theme plagiarism/motivation, is a study conducted by Jurdi, Hage, and Chow in 2011. These authors use the same categories of plagiarism designed by McCabe and Trevino in 2001 and used by Hughes and McCabe in 2006. Similarly, Jurdi et al. (2011) reach the conclusion that "it might be worth considering the development of a 'modified honour code model' to foster academic ethics through honour pledges, peer reportage, and a peer-run judiciary" (Jurdi, Hage & Chow, 2011, p. 28).

The Jurdi et al. (2011) study is themed under the plagiarism/punishment theme rather than under plagiarism/motivation because it has an emphasis on developing a clear penal code as a strategy to combat plagiarism. In the Jurdi et al. (2011) study, 321 students in a single western Canadian university were surveyed using the McCabe (2001) situational survey tool and categories (2001). Students were asked to self-identify participation in specific acts of academic dishonesty. The Jurdi et al. (2011) study also included a number of individual (psychological), situational (social), and attitudinal (beliefs) factors related to academic dishonesty. They found three out of ten students in their sample population admitted to participating in some form of academic dishonesty during their school year and "peer-related factors [situational] were the most influential predictors of students' self-reported academic dishonesty" (Jurdi et al., 2011,

p.23). The study recommends that "the promotion and maintenance of academic integrity require a balanced, coordinated and comprehensive approach that focuses on prevention, detection and penalty" (Jurdi et al, 2011, p.27).

A corollary to student punishment for non-conformity to plagiarism policies is the fear teaching faculty have of retaliation for reporting such acts: "once detected, reporting plagiarism poses a series of other issues, from what sanctions to impose and to whom to report to the fear of retaliation " (Robinson-Zañartu et al., 2005, p. 320). Punishment as a deterrent to plagiarism appears to be a double-edged sword. While an accusation of plagiarism, as Rebecca Moore Howard (1995) suggests, is academic death, the act of identifying and following through with a charge of plagiarism fills the accuser with reluctance for fear of retaliation.

In 2002, Brigham Young University professor Wilfred Decoo authored the book *Crisis on Campus: Confronting Academic Misconduct* in which he acknowledges that many professors do not report even blatant acts of plagiarism. He believes the "reasons for this lack of action include…reluctance to undergo an emotional confrontation, and fear of retaliation by the student, of losing students, of being accused of harassment or discrimination, and even of being sued for these offenses and/or defamation of character" (Decoo & Copaert, 2002, p.152). Punishment as a deterrent for plagiarism is one response to the 'rising tide', however, it is fraught with emotionally charged feelings of fear and criminality.

3B. An External Exploration

Although there is an abundance of literature on the subject of plagiarism, there is little actual research conducted to quantify or qualify the impact of emerging cultural practices like remixing or digital file sharing on academic integrity models. The literature that explores the impact of external influences on plagiarism is largely rhetorical in nature. One study that can be

considered contributory to this theme was conducted by Sinnreich, Latonero, and Gluck in 2009. The research was not conducted in an academic institution but it was designed to explore the behaviors and attitudes of American adults in relation to configurable cultural practices (Sinnreich et al, 2009, p. 1247). Sinnreich et al. (2009) conducted a national survey of American adults in 2006 that resulted in 1779 respondents recruited by a market research firm. The researchers also gathered qualitative data through in-depth interviews with subject matter specialists. The qualitative data gathered were not integrated with the survey results; they were used to provide subject depth to the interpretation of the survey data. Researchers note there was an "inverse linear relationship between age and attribute measured. That is to say, younger people tended to be more aware of configurable technologies and practices, more likely to engage in them and more likely to accept the legitimacy of these expressive forms, by viewing remixes and mash-ups as 'original'" (Sinnreich et al., 2009, p. 1249). Analysis of the results led Sinnreich et al. (2009) to identify eight criteria that respondents used to evaluate ethical legitimacy or illegitimacy of reappropriated content, which are: commercial, legal, authenticity, innovation, labour, moral, continuity, and whether the end product was used for profit or non-profit purposes (p.1250). These categories indicate a nuanced approach to ethical judgment. For instance, the 'labour' category themed responses indicated that it was more acceptable to appropriate and change an existing artefact if hard work was involved but less acceptable if the appropriation was to avoid work. Sinnreich et al. (2009) conclude that "much of today's widespread anxiety towards new technologies and reappropriative cultural forms stems from a deeper, ontological anxiety regarding the uncertain foundation and future of general ethical and normative systems of evaluation" (p.1258).

The remaining literature in this external category is rhetorical and academic in nature. Beyond the Sinnreich et al. (2009) research, there is little research that directly investigates attitudes towards appropriating and remixing found artefacts, whether it be for academic or non-academic purposes. Regardless, there exists significant academic opinion to support an investigation of an emergent culture as a phenomenon that impacts the notion of plagiarism in the post-secondary setting. Emma Gross (2011) investigates plagiarism using a matrix comparison of modern and postmodern approaches. She concludes that a shift from modern to postmodern values of knowledge creation and sharing is not generally well understood in the current academic environment especially when it comes to plagiarism. Goss notes "what McCabe and others refer to as 'honor code violations' – which are based on beliefs about immutable notions about right and wrong – which no longer apply, either literally or figuratively" to today's learning situations (Gross, 2011, p. 435) . Plagiarism's immutability is something that Margaret Price (2002) identifies in her analysis of plagiarism policies: "[We] present plagiarism as something fixed and absolute. But plagiarism is not stable. I argue that a situated understanding of plagiarism will preserve, not harm, academic values of honesty and integrity. Acknowledging that the definition of plagiarism does not persist stably across contexts will, paradoxically, help open up that safe space that we wish to offer our students" (2002, p. 89).

In their engaging portrait of Napster culture, DeVoss and Porter (2006) continue to support the view that there may be something not right with our notion of plagiarism. They support the idea that "filesharing is more than something students do outside the class – filesharing and reconstruction of media into new forms represents a profound culture shift – a new digital ethic of text use runs counter to the usual expectations that have governed text use and plagiarism" (DeVoss & Porter, 2006, p. 179).

Johnson-Eilola and Selber (2007) situate the conversation in history by examining the historical concept of written text and originality. They challenge the modern perception that "the whole issue of plagiarism is still tied to the idea of the lone creative genius" (p. 378). They conclude that "academia as a whole remains rooted to the final text – as an artefact – regarded and measured by its propensity to be a unique creative original produced by a solitary student...[and] the ghost of authorial creative genius remains standing between the lines, propping up what is an increasingly unrealistic artefact in our postmodern age" (p.379).

The image of the solitary student forms a basis for "ideologies in the academy [that] take the autonomy of the individual – and the author – for granted" (Ede & Lunsford, 2001, p.357). Ede and Lunsford challenge the ideology of the autonomous creator as a contradiction between theory and practice. "The socially constructed nature of writing – its inherently collaborative foundation" (2001, p.355) – occurs both inside and outside the academy. When practiced outside the academy it "allows us to see assumptions and practices that otherwise appear natural or commonsensical" (Ede & Lunsford, 2001, p. 356). This position runs contrary to the academically punishable offence called collusion. Evering and Moorman (2012) suggest the notion of the autonomous author stems from "a capitalist view of property and ownership. It assumes that everything of value can be owned, bought, and sold and that ideas, knowledge, and art are created by individuals who have the rights of ownership. This view is deeply ingrained in Western culture" (p.36).

Sean Zwagerman (2008) questions academia's continuous quest for the academic ideal of autonomy in knowledge creation. He submits that by "intensifying efforts at surveillance and punishment, the current crusade against academic dishonesty is a far greater threat than is cheating to the integrity and ideals of academic communities" (2008, p.677), suggesting we are

dismantling academic communities by denying that knowledge is created socially. "The obsession with authenticity is overshadowing the duty to encourage a student's authentic engagement with words and idea" (Zwagerman, 2008, p.682).

Authors Rebecca Moore Howard (1995) and Kathryn Valentine (2006) are proponents of patchwriting, which in most academic environments is a plagiaristic offence. "Patchwriting is a form of writing that learners employ when they are unfamiliar with the words and ideas about which they are writing" (Howard, 1995, p. 799). It is the "piecing together of material from [a variety of] sources as a way of learning to write for a particular discipline" (Valentine, 2002, p. 96). Howard has written a triad of articles on the ethics of plagiarism (*Plagiarism, Authorship, and The Academic Death Penalty,* 1995; *The Ethics of Plagiarism, 2000*; *Sexuality, Textuality: The Cultural Work of Plagiarism,* 2000b) and proposes an alternative approach to academic integrity policy development. It is of value to reproduce the preface of Howard's draft policy here: "It is perhaps never the case that a writer composes 'original' material, free of any influence. It might be more accurate to think of creativity, of fresh combinations made from existing sources, or fresh implications for existing materials" (Howard, 1995, p.798). Writing in 1995, Howard defines the act of remixing before the term was coined by its founder, Lawrence Lessig in 2008 and identifies the value of recombined sources as part of a proposed academic integrity policy.

Kathryn Valentine further challenges academic integrity policies through her reflection on the assumption made in most academic integrity policies that students are making a conscious choice to plagiarize or not. Valentine believes the choice is whether or not to follow a rule that doesn't make sense rather than a choice of how to represent themselves and the knowledge they are using and constructing" (2002, p.92).

3C. Summary

Overall, there are two very clear categories present in the academic literature on plagiarism. Literature that I have dubbed 'internal' tend to use academic integrity policies as the epicentre for appropriate academic performance. Activity that occurs outside the confines of policy is to be prevented, and when not prevented it should be punished. Typically the literature in this section uses hard data to measure the quantity of plagiarism occurring and then looks for strategies to reduce its occurrence. Primarily, the solutions are sought internally by analysing student motivation, rethinking teaching practices, and employing plagiarism software and other deterrents to manage the rise of plagiarism in the post-secondary environment. Most of the research studies analysed under the internal theme share the same survey instrument and categories of interpretation developed by Donald McCabe and Linda Trevino in the late 1990s. Using the same data gathering instrument has perhaps led to the similar findings and recommendations - to develop an institutional strategy to combat plagiarism through a commitment to an honour code. Literature in the internal category does not question the parameters of academic integrity nor do the studies examine the changing social world of collaborative knowledge construction. The research conducted by Gullifer and Tyson (2010) using focus groups to evaluate student perceptions of plagiarism is of particular interest. In the Gullifer and Tyson study, they uncovered a genuine fear of sanctions for unwittingly committing plagiarism, which resulted in creative paralysis and helplessness. These students expressed a loss in their ability to engage with knowledge academically and creatively. Conducting similar focus groups at a variety of institutions might inform organizations and help them to develop redress though a clear discourse on the topic.

The literature identified under the heading 'external' is rhetorical in nature. In this category, academics explore the concepts of emerging cultural changes and postmodern interpretations of authority, as well as the possibility that we are facing a paradigm shift in the way we construct and otherwise generate knowledge in a digital environment. Only one study was discovered, that conducted by Sinnerich, Latonero and Gluck (2009), where hard data was collected about individual participation in the remix, although this study was not situated in an academic environment.

Those whose writing has been discussed within the External Category enthusiastically explored the changing cultural paradigm and the influence an emerging culture is having on the world of academia and the concepts of plagiarism, which offer support for this explorative study. However, there is a lack of hard data in this area. There is sufficient speculation about the influences new media and appropriative practices are having on academic integrity, but few hard facts. Thus, this exploratory study contributes to the conversation by addressing the gap in research data. The objective of this exploratory research is to identify whether students act as both consumers and producers of digital content and if so, does this have any impact on determinants of academic integrity in post-secondary settings. There are many factors to explore in a 'changing cultural paradigm' and there is a need to study and contribute data to this identified gap so we can be better prepared as modern notions of integrity are challenged by a postmodern configurable culture.

Howard, writing in the late 1990s, acknowledges that 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 normative, individual author" (1995, p.791). DeVoss and Porter (2006) identify nearly a decade after Howard that "the attitudes and expectations students have

learned in digital file sharing environments enter our classrooms, influence students' production and understanding of print texts" (2006, p. 170). This influence is what Johnson-Eilola and Selber (2007) identify as lacking within our academic understanding - that "assemblage as a writing practise in academic courses is only beginning to appear on our collective radar screen despite the fact that remixed artefacts are everywhere, all around us, and not just in popular culture" (2007, p. 380).

Chapter 4. Research Question(s)

People form ideas and understanding of normative activities through interaction with other people. As a result people behave in their communities according the meanings they derive from their environment.

1. Does a relationship exist between an increase in plagiarism and current normative non-academic file sharing practices of first year college students?

2. Is the current approach to plagiarism regulation appropriately situated within the context of emerging cultural realties?

Central to these questions is Blumer's statement "it is the social process in group life that creates and upholds the rules, not the rules that create and uphold social life" (Littlejohn & Foss, 2010, p.192). Blumer's statement raises several questions ancillary to the main research questions of this study: how do members of a culture that participate in file sharing and collaborative knowledge construction make sense of plagiarism? Are file sharing activities that occur outside the classroom normalized and if so, is this behaviour moving into the classroom and, does this cause a tension when students are held accountable to a plagiarism policy that may not recognize shared and collaborative knowledge construction? This exploratory study hopes to shed some light on the interplay of collaborative knowledge creation and plagiarism.

Chapter 5. Research Design and Methodology

5A. Introduction

This study was approached using two methods of data gathering. Both a questionnaire and content analysis of relevant academic integrity documents were undertaken. To address research question one: "Does a relationship exist between an increase in plagiarism and current normative non-academic file sharing practices of first year college students?" a questionnaire was designed to ask students about their non-academic file sharing practices, the results of which can be found in chapter 6. To address research question two: "Is the current approach to plagiarism regulation appropriately situated within the context of emerging cultural realties?" a content analysis of academic integrity policies currently in place at ten colleges in Alberta was undertaken, the results of this analysis can be found in chapter 7.

5B. Questionnaire Methods

The questionnaire was designed to take a cross sectional one-time snapshot of first year post-secondary students at NorQuest College located in Edmonton, Alberta. NorQuest College is a Comprehensive Community Institution (CCI). Comprehensive Community Institutions are defined by the Alberta Government as "institutions [that] provide a broad range of programs that prepare learners for employment or for further study" (Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education, 2007). NorQuest offers a range of programming specifically designed for workplace readiness. The college offers English as a second language programs, academic upgrading, and a variety of diploma and certificate based programs, but NorQuest College does not grant degrees. The total student population at NorQuest College is about 8000 with many students attending on a part- time basis. The college graduates approximately 1200 students annually from its post-

secondary programs; which are Practical Nursing, Social Work, Business Administration, and Community Support Worker. Over half (55%) of NorQuest students are born outside Canada and represent 87 countries worldwide. Of the total population of students at NorQuest, 80% are female (NorQuest, 2012). Many NorQuest students have families of their own and manage employment while attending college.

NorQuest students in the post-secondary stream were chosen for participation in this study because they must adhere to NorQuest academic integrity policies and they represent a relatively homogenous academic population. Overall, the total student population at NorQuest is academically diverse, meaning that students have vastly different literacy and academic competencies when they enter the College. Some students enter NorQuest seeking skills for employment programs, while others come to the college to learn English. Some ESL learners are illiterate in their own language, while others may have tertiary degrees from their country of origin but experience a barrier to academic progression or employment because of English language proficiency. For reasons of heterogeneity, and the fact that students in the following program areas are not held to the same academic integrity regulations, students in the following programs were excluded from the sample population: Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program, Intensive English as a Second Language (ESL), Skills for Employment, and Academic Upgrading. Student competencies in these programs as well as in the Day Home Provider and Health Care Aid programs are highly varied.

Students in the study's convenience sample were identified by their enrollment in University Transfer English (ENG 2550) and an Introduction to Psychology in the Social Work program (SW 1040). ENG 2550 is a mandatory first year English composition class required for all diploma level nursing students and SW 1040 is a mandatory psychology class for Social

Work students. Both ENG 2550 and SW 1040 are offered face-to-face and at a distance through a learning management system (Moodle).

First year post-secondary students were targeted for the convenience sample in an attempt to capture the first interaction with academic integrity regulations. In total there were 205 students enrolled in ENG 2550 and 57 students enrolled in SW 1040 in the January term 2014. The total sample population was 262.

A questionnaire was chosen as the data gathering tool because it enables generalizations across a population using a sample of that population. As with most survey research this survey looked for three different kinds of information: (1) demographic, (2) information about values and attitudes, and (3) information about participants behaviour (Merrigan, Johnston, & Huston, 2012, p. 116). The survey was structured using ordinal categories for the demographic questions, lists, and ranking questions to ascertain participant behaviour, and scales to measure values and attitudes. The online questionnaire was structured using primarily closed-format questions.

The survey was developed using *Fluid Survey* and was distributed to the sample population through NorQuest College official student email in February 2014. Additionally, approval was received from teaching faculty for me, as the primary researcher, to attend each section of ENG 2550 and SW 1040 to introduce the research project, inform students of its intent, and respond to any direct questions. An online survey was chosen as the means for data collection because it is "inexpensive, requires no data entry, and allows for data to be compiled quickly" (Varnhaugen, 2013. n.p). An online survey also enabled the inclusion of distance students into the data pool using the same survey instrument. Distance students do not attend classes face-to-face, but access course information through learning management software (Moodle). The survey was easy to disseminate and provided a tight boundary around the sample

population by directly depositing the survey into the official email inboxes of those students enrolled in the targeted classes. Student email addresses appeared in the blind "cc" address line of the outgoing email. This method was chosen so no student could see the email address of another student. The survey was available to students for two weeks beginning on January 31, 2014, closing on February 14, 2014.

Fluid Survey was chosen as the survey tool for three reasons. First, it provided a platform and layout appropriate to the needs of the survey. Second, NorQuest College's applied research unit has an enterprise subscription to the product and as a NorQuest College employee, access was provided using the institutional account. Third, Fluid Survey is a Canadian company and all data is stored in Canada. Thus personal information is not subject to the laws and regulations of a foreign government (Fluid Survey, 2014).

5C. The Survey Design

A search for survey questions used by other institutions to gather student perceptions on plagiarism resulted in my finding a series of anonymous questionnaires that request student disclosure of academic dishonesty, collusion, negligence, and cheating (Aasheim, Rutner, Li & Williams, 2012; Hughes & McCabe, 2006; Jones, 2011; Jurdi, Hage & Chow, 2011; McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 2001; Office of Academic Integrity, 2012). Asking students to self-report cheating and academic misconduct affects survey results as "participant concerns about confidentiality and social desirability effects may…[cause] some respondents to understate their engagement in various activities" (Hughes & McCabe, 2006, p.5). Alternatively, the questionnaire used by Sinnreich et al. (2009), which made inquiry into adult participation in online network creation and reconfiguration of cultural products was the primary influence on this questionnaire's design. Developed by Aram Sinnreich, and Marissa Gluck in 2009 under the

auspices of their consulting firm, Radar Research (Sinnriech et al., p. 1258), the survey was not published in its entirety in their article *Ethics Reconfigured*, however, it contained a sample of the questions asked, which was used to frame the questions asked in the NorQuest survey.

The goal of the survey design is to ask questions about filesharing behaviour but not pass a moral judgment on the respondents. The aim was to understand the level of student participation in the remix culture and inquire into their attitudes towards knowledge sharing. A linear non-interactive version of the online questionnaire designed for this study is available in Appendix A.

5D. Content Analysis Methods

Academic integrity policies were collected from a variety of colleges across Alberta and examined for content. NorQuest Library is a member of the province-wide consortium, The Alberta Library (TAL). A sub-set of TAL is a group called the Post-secondary Library Directors (PLD) group. The PLD meets twice per year and "seeks to enhance coordination of post-secondary library services on a province-wide scale" (*The Alberta Library*, n.d.). The PLD has 26 post-secondary library members, and of these 26 post-secondary institutions, four are research intensive institutions, two are polytechnic institutions, and two are federally funded First Nations institutions. The remaining institutions (18) are a mix of publicly funded and privately funded post-secondary institutions.

The PLD helped to define the sample population by establishing a list of identifiable colleges. The sampling frame excluded research intensive, polytechnic and First Nations institutions. This choice to exclude research institutions and polytechnic institutions from this policy collection was intentional because research protocol mandates that it is essential to compare like with like, or in this case college with college. The mandates, goals, and objectives

of research intensive institutions, polytechnical institutions, and community colleges are vastly different, which will be reflected in official documentation. First Nations institutions are funded by the Federal Government and designed to fulfill obligations of historical Treaties; this unique position in the post-secondary landscape suggests there may be significant differences in their official documentation from that of provincial community colleges.

In December 2013, PLD members who represent the 18 institutions in the study population were contacted for copies of their institution's academic integrity policies. The communication included an abstract of this research project and a request for public documents as they relate to the regulation of plagiarism. Ten academic integrity policies were received from colleges across Alberta. One policy was excluded because it could not be determined if the policy was oriented to students or faculty members. Thus, nine policies in addition to the academic integrity policy at NorQuest College constitute the content for the descriptive analysis. (For a list of institutions see Appendix B).

Chapter 6. Survey Results

The survey was designed to address the first research question: *Does a relationship exist between an increase in plagiarism and current normative non-academic file sharing practices of first year college students?*

The survey yielded a lower than hoped for response with 65 results out of a possible 262 respondents in the sample population (24.8% of sample population). This response rate carries a confidence interval of +/- 10.62% with a confidence level of 95%. Because the confidence interval is wide, results will not be extrapolated to the entire population, but will be seen as informative of the phenomenon within the population.

Students were informed in writing of the purpose of the research, the anonymity of the questionnaire, the voluntary nature of the questionnaire, and their right to skip any question or exit the survey when they wished. Those students who attend class face-to-face and were in attendance on the day I spoke with their class section were also informed of their rights verbally. An introduction embedded within the survey contained a link to the complete informed consent letter that provides additional detail about the research and full researcher contact information (Appendix C). The introduction portion of the survey outlined the informed consent protocol and no students could participate in the survey without selecting the 'Agree' button located on the front page of the survey. The survey required that they indicate their agreement to participate and that they understood the conditions of participation. Clicking on the "Agree" button opened the survey to the first question. Respondents were also advised of the length of time the survey would take, which was ten minutes. The percentage of students who completed the survey is 96.5%.

Fluid Survey offers a branching feature. The branching feature enables the use of contingency questions, which are used to direct participants to respond to specific questions that are most appropriate for them (Merrigan et al., 2012, p. 117). For example, when participants were asked to respond to an ordinal question; "do you access the internet from home?" (Question B1), the answer was restricted to yes or no, which directed respondents to an appropriate follow up question based on whether they answered yes or no. Additionally, Fluid Survey offers a touch feature. When activated, this feature enables users of touch devices to complete the survey without having to use a traditional computer (i.e. tablet, smart phone). When students were asked to identify what personal devices they use to access the internet (Question, B1a) and were permitted to choose "all that apply", the tablet and smart phone were identified 71 times. This result indicates that enabling touch responses to the questionnaire provided increased accessibility to this survey.

6A. Questions about the Student: Demographics

Of the respondents in the convenience sample, 85.7% are female. This percentage is slightly higher than that within the total student population at NorQuest, which is 80% female (NorQuest, 2012). The age category was presented as a list of age ranges. The highest number of respondents (54.7%) self-identified as under 25. The next largest age grouping was the 26-30 year age range with 18.8% of respondents falling into this category. The third most popular age range was in the over 40 category at 10.9% of the sample population.

In terms of previous academic experience, 25% of respondents entered NorQuest with a post-secondary certificate as demonstrated by responses to the question "what is the highest level of education you have received before you entered your current area of study at NorQuest?" (Question, A3). A further 17.2% held a post-secondary level diploma and 9% have

baccalaureate degrees. Additionally, in the "other" dialog box, many students self-identified that they have incomplete post-secondary experiences. Although the responses to this question are interesting statistically, this data cannot be used to isolate the novice post-secondary student.

Socioeconomic variables impact a student's ability to afford access to the Internet. Rather than ask direct and personal questions that relate to socioeconomic variables, students were asked if they have access to the Internet at home (Question, B1). The foundation for this question is the assumption that if an individual cannot afford to buy a computer and maintain internet connection fees at home it is likely that file sharing habits are not well formed. Only one respondent indicated no internet access at home. This respondent was directed to answer a question about whether they accessed the Internet from another location, and indicated access was gained using school computers, the public library, and cell phone.

6B. Questions about Student Behaviour: Consumer and Producer

The next series of questions asks about participant's interaction with the Internet. Question B2 asks respondents to select the top four reasons to access the Internet from a list of possible reasons, the top three choices were: school work (92%); communicating with friends and family (92%); and finding information (90%). After the top three responses, respondent choices were distributed across the remaining options. One limitation of this question is the use of the phrase "download video" to express an activity (Question, B2). Students stated they *view* video online but they don't necessarily *download* video.

In Question C1 the students were asked whether they use social media for any of the activities expressed in Question B2 (interaction with the Internet). In all, 87% of student respondents said they use social media tools available through the Internet, with Facebook being the most used social media tool (98%). After Facebook, social media utilization diversifies

across the population to include; YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google+. The question (C1) provided a list of nine popular social media products plus an open ended 'other' option. In the 'other' category respondents identified social media tools they use that were not identified in the list provided.

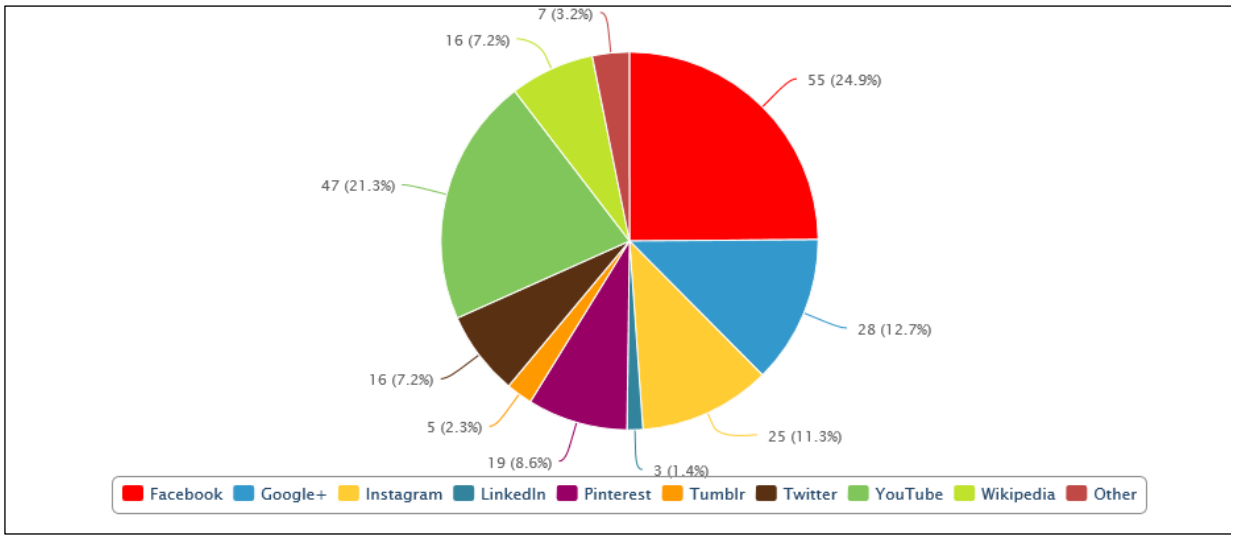

Table 1. C1(a) What social media tools do you use to network? Please select all that apply. Other category includes: Vine, Skype, WordPress, Fetlife, Google Drive, Hotmail.

Next, students were asked about their interaction with the Internet to shed light on the dichotomy between consumer and producer: Do students in the sample population passively engage with the Internet by consuming video, text, and audio, or do they actively contribute to the Internet as producers of objects made available globally through the network? The data suggests students in the sample population are indeed both consumers and producers of information. Sixty of the 65 respondents may be identified as network consumers by the following activities: students download and listened to music (79%), download and watch movies (63%), download and read articles and other textual information (69%). A smaller

number of students download and played video games (30%) and download and read books (46%). These activities speak to the consumption of cultural objects.

As network producers, 77.8% of the sample population identified that they contributed "text, audio or pictures" (Question, D2) to the Internet. This percentage suggests that students in this sample population are active in their engagement with the digital network. Students are both consumers and producers of digital objects. The distribution of network production across the 77.8% of the sample population is illustrated in the following table.

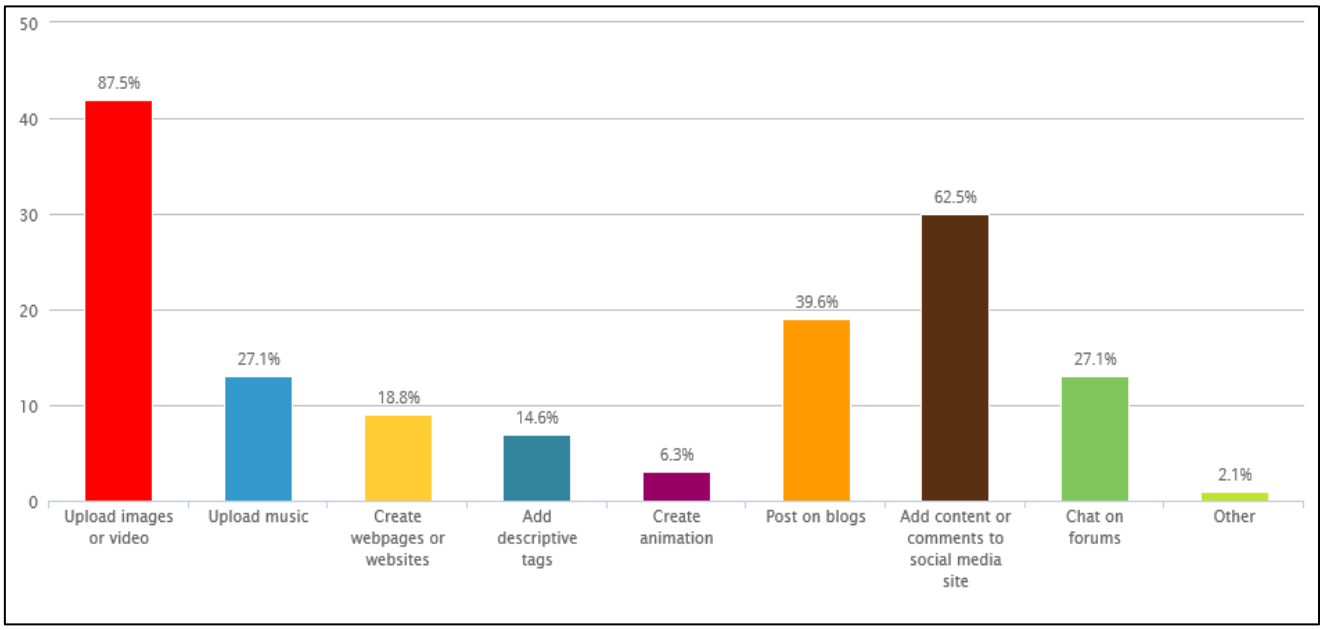

Table 2. D2(a) What activity best describes how you contributed content to the Internet? N=65.

Some respondents self-identified as network collaborators, producing content with another person and posting it on the Internet (35%) and 26% of respondents said they have changed information found on the Internet and posted it for others to use or view (Question, D3) (Table 3). The percentage of respondents who participate in remix activities is small (26%) and when examined with the confidence interval of +/- 10.62%, this number could be as low as 15% in a larger population. This percentage matches the percentage of participation in the remix

identified by the Pew Institute (2010) as it reports: "15% of adult Americans who use the internet participated in creating mashups: taking digital material they found online and remixing it into their own creations" (Rainie & Wellman, 2012, p. 215).

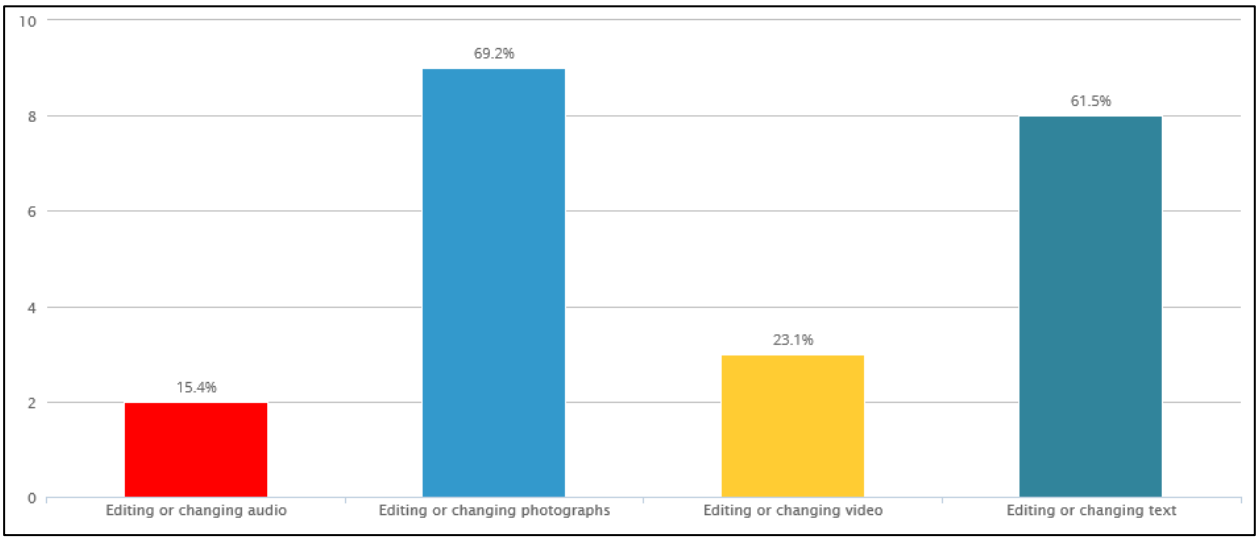

Table 3. D3. Have you ever changed information you found on the Internet for others to view or use? N=16.

6C. Questions about Values and Attitudes

The final section of the questionnaire was designed to take a snapshot of values and attitudes as they relate to the remix. In this section, students were asked to respond to 10 statements by indicating their level of agreement or disagreement to the statement by choosing one of the following Likert-scale responses: 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree", and 'strongly disagree'. Responses to the statements in this section of the questionnaire are less homogenous than in previous parts of the questionnaire resulting in widely distributed percentages.

While 55% of the respondents "strongly agree" and "agree" that "It is OK to take pictures, images and music found on the Internet and share them on social media sites", only 20% "strongly agree" and "agree" that "It is OK to make changes to the found objects and share

the changes for others to see" (Question, E2). Most of the respondents who answered positively to Question E2: "It's OK to take pictures, images, and music I find on the Internet and make changes to them for others to see" had identified themselves as participants in the remix by responding positively to Question D3: "Have you ever changed information you found on the Internet for others to view or use?" On two occasions, respondents who self-identified as participants in the remix by answering Question D3 to the positive did not agree with the statement in E2. For example; Respondent 4061193 self-identified as a participant in the remix by identifying the following remix activities as a response to Question D3 (a): "Editing or changing audio, Editing or changing photographs, Editing or changing video, Editing or changing text", however this same respondent opted to "disagree" with the statement that "It is OK to take pictures, images, and music I find on the Internet and make changes to them for others to see" in Question E2. This is a noted contradiction.

In the dialog box for comments provided at the end of section E, one respondent elaborated on his/her answer:

> Digital information is generally fair game to share, unless it compromises a person's safety or freedom. I believe it is not stealing to download music in the same way it is not stealing to listen to the radio. The original owner of the media has already profited and there is no reason a person should have the right to profit from it in perpetuum [sic] though there is also no reason that they shouldn't. In the same way someone who makes a physical product only profits when the product is initially sold. Or how people are allowed to resell books at a used bookstore without the original publisher gaining any additional profit.[1]

Nearly half (46%) of the respondents "strongly agree" and "agree" that "It is OK to copy text from the Internet and share it on social media sites." As one respondent commented:

> What most people do when it comes to social media (I do this too) is we find a picture of a quote or something like that that we like through any of our social medias or google, and we want to post it on our own social media and we put a

[1] Respondent system identification number 41462500

> "filter" on the picture to basically change the colour slightly. I don't think I am changing the picture, I'm just making the picture brighter, or duller, or black and white. I rarely state where I found the picture. Sometimes if it is a picture of a quote, the author/speaker's name is in the picture as well, but not always. And if the name is not in the picture, rarely do people search the internet to find out who originally spoke these wise words.[2]

Although 69.8% of respondents "strongly agree" and "agree" that "It is OK to use anything they find on the Internet for school assignments as long as I say where I found it", there was significant backlash to the statement "It is OK to change something I find on the Internet and then use it for a school assignment without identifying the original" (Question, E5). A full 95% of respondents selected "disagree" and "strongly disagree" to the statement in E5. The follow up statement E6, "It is OK to download stuff from the Internet and do what I want with it" resulted in nearly equal response rate for every category of response (strongly disagree 22%, disagree 32%, neutral 30%, agree 16%). Such an equal distribution means this question is not reliable in terms of identifying values and attitudes, but it does illustrate the lack of consensus, and the large number of neutral responses (30%) indicates ambiguity regarding this issue.

The final two questions within this section related directly to the idea of the remix and ideas about originality. In total, 62% of respondents "strongly disagree" and "disagree" that a remixed image or audio is a new original, and 24% selected a neutral response. When it comes to music, 14% of respondents "strongly agree" and "agree" that remixed music is a new original. One respondent provided clarification for his/her neutral responses to this portion of the survey stating:

> In most of my answers I said I was neutral because in those situations I think it depends on the context, sometimes share something might be right sometimes might be wrong. As long as we don't compromise the integrity and dignity of others.[3]

[2] Respondent system identification number 40922040
[3] Respondent system identification number 41668434

Another respondent provided additional background and opinion on the concept of remixing and defining originality of objects found on the internet, and similar to most of the comments received, a keen sense of justice underpins the opinion expressed. Respondents overwhelmingly couched all comments in the context of ownership, respect and integrity.

> I think it is ok to alter images, audio, or text that is found on the internet. Once something is out in the open, it is no longer private but public. Some people can change/alter things for the wrong reasons, however when you post something on the internet you run that risk because what you posted is now public.[4]

Student responses to the open ended questions reveal a concern with integrity and a tension between wanting to be an active participant in the global network but at the same time doing no harm to other network users. In these open ended responses we see respondents who acknowledge they download, upload, share, and change cultural objects discovered on the Internet. A common understanding emerges from the open ended comments that once objects are found on the Internet, they are free for the taking, with some provisos based on context. The context appears to be an ethical context. Phrases like “wrong reasons”, “compromise the integrity of another”, and “compromise the safety” suggest there is a keen sense of integrity within the milieu of remixing, consuming and producing information on the Internet.

[4] Respondent system identification number 40543667

Chapter 7. Content Analysis - Academic Integrity Policy

In part two of the data gathering for this investigation, a descriptive analysis of the content of the available academic integrity policies was undertaken to address the second research question: *Is the current approach to plagiarism regulation is appropriately situated within the context of emerging cultural realties?* The claim for this content analysis approach, is that current academic integrity policies are not situated within the context of emerging cultural realities of collaboration and the social construction of knowledge.

A descriptive approach to content analysis was designed in an "attempt to describe…[the documents] characteristics in a particular cultural context" (Merrigan et al., 2012, p. 128), which is the cultural context of digital remix activities within a college environment concerned with plagiarism. In order to maintain some consistency in analysis, the thematic breakdown used in the content analysis was designed to reflect the thematic breakdown used in the literature review. In the Literature Review, literature was thematically identified as internal or external in its approach to understanding plagiarism. The internal review consisted of three broad categories; motivation, prevention and punishment. It seems pertinent to explore the same thematic categories when unitizing the ten academic integrity policies. "Unitizing [is the process] of identifying units of analysis which are relevant to [the descriptive] claim, such as words, sentences, paragraphs or thematically coherent phrases or passages" (Merrigan et al., 2012, p. 134).

Prior to the thematic analysis, the ten policies were categorized by their structure. Not all academic integrity policies are in fact categorized as policies; they are identified as guidelines, procedures, regulations, handbooks and policies. Most of the documents contained a preface, which in most cases presented an overarching ethical statement and definitions. Only one

document did not contain a preface or introductory paragraph. The titles of the documents varied but the most common title was 'Academic Dishonesty'. Variations include 'Academic Honesty', 'Academic Offences', 'Academic Affairs', and 'Student Misconduct'.

Creating codes for thematic categories provided a rich analysis of the meaning of the documents but it was also a subjective analysis. "Thematic distinctions rely on subjective meaning of each text…and are the hardest units to identify" (Merrigan et al., 2012, p. 135).

A code sheet was produced for each academic integrity document. Words were identified as they fit into the following categories based on subjective interpretation: (Code 1) criminal connotation (punishment); (Code 2) salvation (prevention); (Code 3) value judgement (motivation); (Code 4) acknowledgement; (Code 5) object; (Code 6) action; (Code 7) degree (Table 4).

Document #	Code 1	Code 2	Code 3	Code 4	Code 5	Code 6	Code 7
001	6	2	3	1	4	2	3
002	6	0	3	0	1	1	1
003	1	0	4	0	2	8	3
004	3	1	8	0	12	4	0
005	8	2	4	0	7	5	2
006	7	0	2	0	6	6	2
007	2	5	1	0	11	2	0
008	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded
009	8	4	0	0	7	4	0
010	6	2	1	1	11	6	3
011	0	3	0	0	4	6	0
Total:	**47**	**19**	**26**	**2**	**65**	**44**	**14**

Table 4. Academic Integrity Policies.
Individual policies numbered 001-011. Code 1: Punishment; Code 2: Prevention; Code 3: Motivation/Ethics; Code 4: Acknowledgement; Code 5: Object; Code 6: Action; Code 7: Degree.

Table 4 shows the number of times that words associated with the code appears in each document. For a complete listing of words identified in each of the categories, a summary of the words categorized can be viewed in the appendices of this document (Appendix D). Code 1 words are words that have a criminal connotation. In total, there were 47 individual words used across the ten documents that express criminal-like activities: offence, violation, abetting, theft, fraud, transgression, and guilty to name a few. Code 2 elements identify ideas of salvation from the criminality of Code 1. These are words or phrases that suggest a way to prevent plagiarism from happening, or the rules to follow for salvation. Words in this category consistently relate to the act of citation. There are 19 different ways that these documents say 'cite to your source' such as: cite, give credit, quotation, bibliography, and proper acknowledgement.

Code 3 words reflect the motivation not to plagiarize, and these words harken back to Donald McCabe's (2001) insistence on the existence of an honour code. The words identified as Code 3 words reflect ethical behaviour, righteous academic behaviour and good moral character. Code 3 words are value judgements and signal an interpretation of moral character like: dishonest, integrity, manipulating, ignorance, and carelessness.

The acknowledgement category (Code 4) refers to words or phrases that acknowledge an emerging awareness of the ways in which 21st century learners engage with digital objects and construct knowledge and understanding socially. Only two words in two separate documents can be interpreted as words that give a nod to change. Here, a student may be in a 'developmental' phase of understanding plagiarism and may 'inadvertently' engage in plagiarism. Neither of these terms truly acknowledges a shift to the social construction of knowledge nor an acceptance of collaboration, but they do suggest an awareness that a student may not be familiar with the concepts of plagiarism, which suggests other realities exist.

By far the most varied language is used to express the object of plagiarism. The ‘what’ of what is being plagiarized. There are 65 different words used to express the object of plagiarism in Code 5. In some documents, the object of plagiarism is generalized and referred to as simply a ‘work’. In other documents, a detailed list of objects is presented, for example: ideas, opinions, graphs, statistics, facts, phrases, words, and theory. In this category, some academic integrity documents attempt to isolate ‘ideas’ and ‘thoughts’ as being an object of plagiarism.

The object category identifies the object of the policy while the action category (Code 6) refers to what a student does with the object in question and with whom. Some form of action must be associated with the object in order to trigger the policy. An appropriated thought is not an offence until it is shared. The action of taking a thought and doing something with it triggers the policy. Students who are accused of plagiarism must do something with the object, like: submit, duplicate, borrow, collaborate, collude, assist or alter something.

The final category is the degree category (Code 7). Some academic integrity documents contain words that express a degree of wrongness. The degree category is a complex category because it refers to the intent to plagiarize as well as the quantitative amount of text that is plagiarized. The degree of plagiarism is expressed as intent with words like: inadvertent, deliberate, and developmental. The degree of plagiarism as expressed as something quantifiable uses words like: substantial, complete, whole, entire essay.

The content analysis of academic policies was employed to determine if these policies recognize the collaborative and social nature of generating knowledge. Overall the policies are silent on these themes and the policies investigated do not expresses an acknowledgement that students work collaboratively and that knowledge is generated socially.

Chapter 8. Discussion and Analysis of Findings

The research questions posed in this exploratory study are rooted in an ontological understanding that people form ideas and understanding of the world around them through interaction with other people as supported by the theoretical proposition of symbolic interactionism: we derive meaning from social interaction. This perspective is further supported by Nonaka's (1994) Spiral Model of knowledge creation that supports socialization as a starting point to innovation and ideation, facilitated by sharing and appropriating knowledge from each other. In short, social interaction is at the nexus of knowledge creation.

8A. Research Question One

Does a relationship exist between an increase in plagiarism and current normative non-academic file sharing practices of first year college students?

The survey was designed to make inquiry into the file sharing behaviour of first year college students. The results of the survey clearly indicate that students in the sample population are consuming, producing and sharing information through digital networks. This complements Rainie and Wellman's (2012) conjecture that a revolution is occurring. This 'revolution' is identified as the rise of networked individualism, altering the information landscape as individuals collect, create and distribute information differently than they have done in the past (p.226). In the NorQuest survey, 26% of student respondents self-identified as participating in remix activities. Although the low response rate of the NorQuest survey does not permit a generalization to a broader student population, in this particular instance NorQuest student participation in the remix is close to the percentage established in a 2010 Pew Institute survey,

which found 15% of American adults participate in the remix (Rainie and Wellman, 2012, p.215).

The NorQuest survey was inspired in its design by a survey Aram Sinnreich, and Marissa Gluck developed in 2009 under the auspices of their consulting firm, Radar Research (Sinnriech et al., p. 1258) (see Methodology chapter). The NorQuest survey is small by comparison and relied on a convenience sample of respondents. Regardless of the differences in the survey population, the findings are remarkably similar in some areas. The Sinnreich et al. (2009) survey analysis concluded that "for many survey respondents, authenticity and legitimacy are premised on the explicit acknowledgment of the source materials or 'original creator'" (p.1253). The legitimacy of a remixed artefact is provided by the level of acknowledgement or reference to the original work. This sentiment was mirrored by several students in the NorQuest survey, where they expressed no ethical dilemma about participating in remix activities, but they believe the original source should be identified, as evidenced in the statement: "Credibility should always be given to the owner, for everything found on internet, either original or remix. It's their sweats, they worked and spent money in order to publish whatever."[5] And quite clearly articulated by "Always identified the original."[6]

A further similarity between the responses in this survey and the Sinnreich et al. (2009) survey results is a sense of 'justice' for the original artefact. Sinnreich and Gluck found "some respondents [in their survey] believe that rules should be enacted to protect the original content from the threat of bastardization" (2009, p. 1255). This sentiment is echoed in the NorQuest

[5] Respondent system identification number 41866584
[6] Respondent system identification number 41238448

survey by statements like: "you should not be able to do 'whatever you want' with information you find on the internet, information you find should be used with only the best intentions".[7]

Identity, originality and ownership are ideas that permeate the open-ended comments of the respondents in the NorQuest survey. Respondents in the NorQuest survey identify as both consumers and producers of information on the Internet, and these students do share information informally through social media without defining the original source:

> What most people do when it comes to social media (I do this too) is we find a picture of a quote or something like that that we like through any of our social media's or google, and we want to post it on our own social media and we put a "filter" on the picture to basically change the colour slightly. I don't think I am changing the picture, I'm just making the picture brighter, or duller, or black and white. I rarely state where I found the picture. Sometimes if it is a picture of a quote, the author/speaker's name is in the picture as well, but not always. And if the name is not in the picture, rarely do people search the internet to find out who originally spoke these wise words.[8]

However, in the context of 'school work' a boundary is apparent around information sharing. At 'school', issues of reference, citation, and authorial ownership become moral and ethical issues.

In terms of a relationship between plagiarism and participation in the remix, the results of this survey do not lead to an obvious positive relationship. What the survey does suggest is that there is a hierarchy of digital information use. When digital artefacts or information are used for school related work, the original reference must be provided. When digital artefacts or information are shared on social networks they do not require the same treatment. By untangling the academic use of information from the social use of information we can see a different set of rules apply. Assemblages and remixed materials are fair game for file sharing socially but they

[7] Respondent system identification number 40497279
[8] Respondent system identification number 40922040

do not appear to be fair game for inclusion in academic work. What is not clear is whether the cultural artefacts, which are the result of socialized information sharing on social networks, would be used by students in their academic activities if academia broadened its interpretation of authorial autonomy and originality? To revisit Sinnreich et al. (2009), they thoughtfully surmise "although technologies and behaviours have undergone rapid transformation…our discursive and ethical codes have not yet caught up and are still framed in the black and white language of property, theft, appropriation and piracy that informed our legal code in the last century" (p. 1247).

Results of this study indicate that file sharing activities do occur outside the classroom, and the data suggest file sharing activities exist inside the classroom but are not employed with free abandon. The data suggest that students construct boundaries around their file sharing activities that delineate non-academic activities from academic activities.

8B. Research Question Two

Is the current approach to plagiarism regulation appropriately situated within the context of emerging cultural realties?

The analysis of academic integrity policies from ten Alberta colleges revealed that the regulation of plagiarism is not ontologically situated in the premise that knowledge is socially constructed. In these documents authorial autonomy is paramount. The appropriation of ideas, thoughts, words, and images from another person is considered an ethical breech. The act of plagiarism is most often defined in criminal terms and is presented as an absolute rule. If a student breeches the absolute rule of plagiarism by not identifying an original source, or identifying the source incorrectly, the action is understood as a challenge to authorial privilege.

Teaching students how to protect authorial privilege and identify source materials appears to be the goal of academic integrity policies, and in learning how to do so, the student is protected from academic criminality. All academic integrity policies consulted offered salvation to a potential plagiarist if the student gives credit to sources consulted, appropriated, and remixed when used in an academic environment. A potential problem arises when the originality of the source is not immediately apparent to the student because its genesis and evolution to current state occurred in informal digital environments.

Identifying the validity of information sources, which includes an information object's provenance, forms part of the definition of information literacy. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) established the standards for *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* in the year 2000. These standards, which have been embraced by post-secondary organizations, specify that identifying the source of information artefacts consulted in the process of post-secondary learning is a hallmark of an information literate person, as well as a way to avoid being a plagiarist.

The 2000 standards contain a list of linear competencies, which when followed, step-by-step, guide a student towards information literacy and academic integrity. An information literate person is defined as someone who can find, cite, use, and incorporate information according to a set of standards. Information literacy competencies are designed to achieve an understanding of the legal and ethical use of information through the intentional act of identifying authorship and provenance of every information source used in an assignment. Information literacy skills directly support academic integrity and academic integrity exists to protect the legal and ethical sanctity of authorial privilege and autonomous knowledge creation.

In February 2014 a new *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* was released in draft form by the ACRL. The draft Framework differs significantly from its predecessor and stands in significant contrast to existing academic integrity policies. The draft Framework recognizes two things that the academic integrity policies examined in this study do not. Firstly, the Framework acknowledges that we exist in a complex information ecosystem, and secondly, that the standards need to support collaborative student work because it is a necessary skill in the 21st century (ACRL, 2014, p.1). The proposed Framework identifies the original standard as "limited and formulaic [in its] approach to understanding complex information ecosystem…the standards focus attention on the objects of scholarship as mostly textual" (ACRL, 2014, p.3).

The 2014 draft Framework acknowledges the social nature of knowledge creation in the critical observation that "the Standards [2000] valorize the information literate student as a construct of imagined accomplishment, at the endpoint of a set of learning experiences, without the involvement of peers, tutors, coaches, faculty advisors or other collaborators" (p.3). This observation speaks to a significant break in tradition and a new recognition that knowledge is constructed socially through collaborative interaction. Like the solitary author, the 'valorized information literate student' of the previous Standards resides in autonomy. The draft Framework broadens its understanding of scholarly activity to reflect the reality of the digitally networked student.

The draft ACRL Framework, if adopted, will inevitably impact academic integrity policies that govern what is permissible in terms of academic work in post-secondary institutions. The academic integrity policies reviewed for the purpose of this exploratory study, as they stand today, do not support collaborative student work. The policies consulted for this

study are firmly entrenched in authorial right and privilege, which is achieved through autonomous activities generated by original and solitary thought.

8C. Limitations

The findings in this exploratory study are limited by the small and narrowly defined sample population of students in one college, in one city, at one specific moment in time in only two different program areas. A deeper and broader understanding of how students apply boundaries around file sharing behaviour would emerge from cross institutional study using a larger population.

Regarding methodology, the attempt to capture a 'first' academic experience was only partially successful. Although students were selected for the convenience sample based on their enrollment in the first-year of an academic program, this recruitment strategy did not guarantee that participants were experiencing their first exposure to academic integrity as a concept. Over half (62%) of the students who participated in the NorQuest study identified as individuals with previous academic experience. A 'first' exposure to academic integrity rules and regulations is a difficult variable to isolate.

A lower than hoped for response rate is a limiting factor of this study. Out of a potential 262 candidates, this study received 65 respondents. Regardless of the promise of anonymity, it is possible that some students were fearful that a truthful answer might penalize them in some manner. I also wonder if the study was simply not of interest to a very busy student body. Typically students at NorQuest are multitasking employment, studies, and a complex domestic life. It is plausible that asking these students to direct their attention to just one more thing was one thing too many.

The use of word 'download' proved to be problematic within the survey. Specifically, one survey question asked if students downloaded artefacts, i.e.: "download and listen to music", "download and watch movies". The activity that is "to download" can be declared an archaism in today's world of livestream. One respondent said "I download very rarely – I livestream everything"[9].

Finally, this study is limited by the number of academic integrity policies collected. The ten academic integrity policies were gathered from Alberta colleges and did provide a glimpse into the similarities among policies, broadening the scope of analysis to other provinces or other types of institutions would provide additional insight.

8D. Recommendations for Further Study

A recommendation for further study in this area is to expand the survey to a broader base of students across multiple post-secondary institutions. Additionally, it would be of value to introduce intercultural variables into a study of this topic in order to explore how non-North American educational systems might influence boundary setting behaviours between non-academic and academic file sharing behaviours.

The NorQuest survey netted excellent content from the few open-ended questions provided to respondents. Students provided generous comments about remix activities and their thoughts about appropriating the work of others that delivered significant insight. I would encourage the use of more open-ended questions in a broader investigation of this topic.

The content analysis aspect of this research study provided a rich albeit subjective look at the trend in academic integrity policies in colleges across Alberta. Incorporating analysis of the academic integrity policies of research intensive, baccalaureate and polytechnical institutions

[9] Respondent system identification number 40580089

within a more broadly based study would provide a far richer examination of whether academic integrity policies are situated in the 21st century.

Chapter 9. Conclusion

Lawrence Lessig suggests that "we should be asking whether the student has learned something through the process of the remix rather than be concerned with the originality of composition as the only standard for grading" (2008, p.58). Concern for originality is, however, the prevailing authority in the academic hierarchy; the autonomous and original creator sits at the top. The analysis of the content of ten academic integrity policies illustrates that the act of submitting any 'work' in an academic setting that is not autonomously created is a plagiaristic act and is akin to cheating. Yet, both literature and theory support the notion that the act of knowledge creation is a collaborative act, dependent on socialization and the appropriation of another's thoughts and ideas. Assemblages and collaborative learning need not be positioned as enemies of academia, nor are they ailments that require curing or fixing. Students learn differently in the 21st century than they did in the 20th century because they are influenced by a variety of new media. Many writers identify new media as the reason why plagiarism is increasing, while others understand new media as an enabler to new levels of networking, collaboration, and knowledge sharing.

This researcher is not certain how it can be determined what idea or thought has not been borrowed or copied or expanded upon as a basis for academic writing. For example, everything in this assignment is appropriated from somewhere else. The survey, the theory, and the literature have all been appropriated. Nevertheless, I have used the rules of citation to identify the original creators and have thus situated this assignment in the context of 20th century academic integrity. Accordingly, I applied the rules of salvation to stave off a charge of academic criminality.

Students in this exploratory study are both consumers and producers of digital artefacts, and these activities can be identified as normalized behaviours within the sample population. Students surveyed for this study willingly provided comments that distinguish them as having a profound sense of ethics and integrity when dealing with information sources in an academic setting. These students have drawn a clear boundary between how information is created, used, and shared in informal networks and how information is used for 'school work'.

Sitting on the horizon is the draft *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, which has the potential, over time, to unseat authorial autonomy from the top of the academic integrity hierarchy. It is possible to imagine that over time, collaborative creations may be acknowledged as having integrity and be worthy of submission without fear of reprisal. Rebecca Moore Howard provides insight into a plausible academic integrity policy that contains the preface; "it is perhaps never the case that a writer composes 'original' material, free of any influence. It might be more accurate to think of creativity, of fresh combinations made from existing sources, or fresh implications for existing materials" (1995, p.798). This preface becomes transformational by its inclusion of the notion that no writing is free of influence and that new ideas may come from combining existing sources to create something new. If academic integrity policies included a provision similar to this, much of the discourse around plagiarism would not be necessary.

Initially, this study was undertaken because I wondered what happens when participants in the remix culture enter the classroom and are confronted by an institutional regime that rewards individualism and originality but devalues collaboration and reconstruction of existing cultural products. The result appears to be the development of a split personality. Students in this study established boundaries around their digital behaviour. As networked individuals, they

are producing, consuming, and appropriating cultural objects and sharing these objects across social networks. In 'school' however, these same students treat information differently and seem to recognize the demand academic institutions have for solitary production.

The current *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* represents an awareness of the concentration on individualism and originality in academia and an acknowledgement that the same emphasis halts the dynamic process of knowledge creation. In their draft Framework, the ACRL is entrenching an awareness of the "rise of collaborative student work and the increase in students as creators" (2014, p.1) and that collaborative creation is the remix. DeVoss and Porter's summation is an appropriate concluding thought to this study: "yes, we need to teach students to 'avoid plagiarism' and to respect the labor of others, but we also just as vigorously need to teach students to defend and contribute to the public domain, to encourage fair use of others' material, and to share their work as widely as possible" (2006, p.202).

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Appendix A – The Survey

A questionnaire about how you interact with the Internet
Research Question: Participation in the remix culture: Situating the remix culture in an academic environment

My name is Eve Poirier. I work in the Library at NorQuest. I am also working on a Master's degree, which is why I am conducting this study. The purpose of this study is to examine the learning behaviors of students who live in the "remix culture". By remix I mean people who use the Internet to share and reshape things they find into something new. Remix is about remixing found content and creating something new. I am hopeful that the answers you provide will create a new context with which to view current academic policies. This questionnaire is designed to gather information from a cross section of first year post-secondary students at NorQuest. This survey will take no more than 10 minutes to complete. There are 5 sections in this survey. Thank you!!!!

This survey is anonymous and voluntary. You may choose not to answer a specific question and you can choose to exit the survey at any time. By clicking on the AGREE button below you are providing your consent to participate in this research study. For additional study information please view the full Informed Consent letter.

- ○ I Agree
- ○ I do not Agree, exit survey

Section A: Questions about you

A1. Please identify your age by selecting the appropriate range:

- ☐ Under 25
- ☐ 26-30
- ☐ 31-35
- ☐ 36-40
- ☐ Over 40

A2. Please identify your sex:

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Other

A3. What is the highest level of education you have received before you entered your current area of study at NorQuest?

- ☐ High school graduation or equivalent
- ☐ Post Secondary Certificate program
- ☐ Post Secondary Diploma program
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Graduate degree
- ☐ Other, please specify... _____

Section B: Questions about you and the Internet

B1. Do you have access to the Internet at home?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

B1. (a) You answered YES. What personal device do you use to access the Internet at home? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Desktop computer
- ☐ Laptop
- ☐ Tablet
- ☐ Smart phone
- ☐ Other _____

B1. (b) You answered NO. Do you access the Internet from another location? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ At school
- ☐ At the public library
- ☐ At an Internet cafe
- ☐ Other _____

B2. There are many reasons why people access the Internet. Please identify the top four (4) reasons why you access the Internet.

- ☐ Download music
- ☐ Find information that I need
- ☐ Download videos
- ☐ Communicate with my friends and family
- ☐ Do school work
- ☐ Get images/photographs
- ☐ Participate in online chat forums
- ☐ Gaming
- ☐ Other response not mentioned here _____

Section C: Questions about you and social media

Using social media to participate in social networking is a sharing activity. By social media I am referring to the following social networking activities: collaborative projects (example: use Wikis or Google Docs to share information) blogs and microblogs (example: comment on blogs or use Twitter) content communities (example: share content on YouTube) social networking sites (example: Facebook or LinkedIn) virtual game-worlds (example: interactive multiplayer gaming like World of Warcraft)

C1. Do you use social media for any of the activities mentioned above?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

C1. (a) If YES, what social media tools do you use to network? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Google+
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Pinterest
- ☐ Tumblr
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ YouTube
- ☐ Wikipedia
- ☐ Other _____

Section D: Questions about you and the information you find on the Internet

D1. Which of the following activities do you participate in? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Download and listen to music/audio
- ☐ Download and watch movies
- ☐ Download photographs and images
- ☐ Download and read books
- ☐ Download and read articles and other textual documents
- ☐ Download and play video games
- ☐ I don't do any of these activities
- ☐ Other activity not mentioned here _____

D2. Have you ever added text or audio or video or pictures to the Internet?

- ○ Yes

○ No

D2. (a) You selected YES. What activity best describes how you contributed content to the Internet? Please check all that apply.

☐ Upload images or video

☐ Upload music

☐ Create webpages or websites

☐ Add descriptive tags

☐ Create animation

☐ Post on blogs

☐ Add content or comments to social media site

☐ Chat on forums

☐ Other _____

D2. (b) If you selected one or more of the activities above (D2 (a)), have you ever worked with anyone else to post this type of content on the Internet?

○ Yes

○ No

D2. (c) If you answered YES, can you tell me about what you posted on the Internet?

D3. Have you ever changed information you found on the Internet for others to view or use?

○ Yes

○ No

D3. (a) If YES, please choose all that apply.

- ☐ Editing or changing audio
- ☐ Editing or changing photographs
- ☐ Editing or changing video
- ☐ Creating content in a game
- ☐ Editing or changing text
- ☐ Other _____

You are almost finished...just one more section...10 quick questions.

Section E: Please give your opinion about the following statements using the scale provided.

E1. It is OK to take pictures, images and music I find on the Internet and share them on my social media sites.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

E2. It is OK to take pictures, images and music I find on the Internet and make changes to them for others to see.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

E3. It is OK to copy text from the Internet and share it on my social media sites.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree

- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

E4. It is OK to use anything I find on the Internet for school assignments as long as I say where I found it.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

E5. It is OK to change something I find on the Internet and then use it for a school assignment without identifying the original.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

E6. It is OK to download stuff from the Internet and do what I want with it.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

E7. It is OK to download stuff from the Internet and share it the way I want to.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

E8. Remixed music is really new original music.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

E9. When someone makes changes to an Internet image, like a photograph or a cartoon, the changed image is really a new original.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

E10. Please add any additional comments you have about finding, using and/or remixing things you have found on the Internet.

Appendix B – List of Institutions

Ambrose College

BowValley College

Concordia University College

Lakeland College

Medicine Hat College

NorQuest College

Northern Lakes College

Prairie Bible Institute

Portage College

Red Deer College

St. Mary's University College

Appendix C – Informed Consent Letter

INFORMATION LETTER and CONSENT FORM

Study Title: Participation in the remix culture: situating the remix culture in an academic environment.

Research Investigator:
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Background

- You are invited to participate in this study because you are in your first year of academic study in the Social Work program or in English 2550 (ENG 2550), which is a university transfer level course.
- The information you provide through your responses to my questions will form part of a research project required for my Master of Arts in Communications and Technology.
- All your responses will remain anonymous.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the learning behaviors of students who live in the "remix culture". By remix I mean people who use the internet to share and reshape things they find into something new. Remix is about remixing found content and creating something new. I am hopeful that the answers you provide will create a new context with which to view current academic policies that seem to favour originality and independent knowledge creation in an academic setting.

Study Procedures

This survey should take 10 minutes to complete.

Benefits

- The results of this survey may result in the creation of academic integrity policies that recognize the realities and benefits of remix activities. However, no participant will benefit directly and immediately from participation in this research study.
- You will not receive any compensation for participating in this survey.

Risk

Any risk to yourself is minimal. You cannot be identified by the researcher. Participation in this survey will have no bearing on your grade or in-class assignments. The answers you provide will be aggregated with all other survey results to ensure your privacy and the confidentiality of the data.

Voluntary Participation

- You are under no obligation to participate in this study. Participation is completely voluntary. You can choose not to participate or not to answer specific questions. However, once you have submitted the questionnaire you will not be able to withdraw from the study because the responses are anonymous and your specific data can not be identified in order to be removed.

Confidentiality & Anonymity

- This research will become part my final paper for my Master's degree. Results may be shared in the form of a research article or presentation.
- The responses you provide to the survey questions are the data I will analyze. It will be identified as data gathered from students who attended NorQuest College in the 2013/2014 academic year. However, no particular individual who completes the survey can be identified because the responses are anonymous and aggregated before I can see the raw data.
- The data will be kept confidential. The survey results are collected through the Applied Research office at NorQuest College. Dr. Ann Curry and I will be the only people who see the raw data in aggregate form.
- The raw data resulting from this survey will be stored on a USB key and kept in a locked filing cabinet in the office of my supervisor, Dr. Ann Curry. Dr. Curry's office is located at the University of Alberta, Enterprise Square campus. The data file will be kept for five (5) years following the completion of this research project and then destroyed.

Questions and contact:

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints please contact:

Researcher: Eve Poirier, 780-644-6258, epoirier@ualberta.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Ann Curry, 780-248-1110, ann.curry@ualberta.ca

Ethics Approval Statement:

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to the ethical guidelines and approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta and approved by the Applied Research Office of NorQuest College. For questions regarding the rights and ethical conduct of research, please contact the University of Alberta Research Ethics Office at 780-492-2615 or the NorQuest Applied Research Office at 780.644.6259.

Participant Informed Consent:

By completing this survey you are providing your informed consent to participate.

Appendix D – Content Analysis Code Sheets

	Code 1	Code 2	Code 3	Code 4	Code 5	Code 6	Code 7
001	6	2	3	1	4	2	3
002	6	0	3	0	1	1	1
003	1	0	4	0	2	8	3
004	3	1	8	0	12	4	0
005	8	2	4	0	7	5	2
006	7	0	2	0	6	6	2
007	2	5	1	0	11	2	0
008	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded
009	8	4	0	0	7	4	0
010	6	2	1	1	11	6	3
011	0	3	0	0	4	6	0
Total:	**47**	**19**	**26**	**2**	**65**	**44**	**14**

Code 1: Criminal/Punishment/Quasi-judicial	
Offence	3
Violation	2
Confession	1
Misrepresentation	4
Abetting	1
Consequence	1
Reprimand	1
Transgression	1
Stealing	1
Theft	3
Disciplinary action	4
Fraud/fraudulent	2
Defrauds	1
Unauthorized	2
Guilty	1
Impersonating	1
Falsification/false	3
Deceive	1
Suspected	2
Investigated	1
Dealt with/judged	2
Kidnapping	1
Accusation	1
Misconduct	5
Mislead	2

Total	**47**

Code 2: Salvation/Prevention	
Citation / works cited	2
Credit (giving credit)	4
Quoted	2
Identifying	1
Explain terminology	2
Explain ideas	1
Bibliography/references	2
Proper /appropriate (i.e. Citation, quotation, etc.)	4
Acknowledgement	1
Total:	**19**

Code 3: Motivation/Ethics	
Carelessness	1
Ignorance	1
Inadequate	1
Dishonesty	17
Seriously	1
Undermines	1
Integrity	1
Deceptive	1
Manipulating	1
Sharing	1
Total:	**26**

Code 4: Acknowledgement	
Developmental	1
Inadvertent	1
Total:	2

Code 5: Object	
Phrase	3
Sentence	1
Thought	2
Argument	3
Work	3
Essay	2

Idea	9
Word (spoken, written)	6
Opinion	2
Theory	1
Fact	2
Statistics	2
Graphs	3
Drawings	1
Quotations	3
Information	2
Image	1
Data	2
Judgment	1
Table	1
Chart	1
Language	1
Painting	1
Film	2
Prototype	1
Writing	1
Mind	1
Invention	1
Radio transmission	1
Substance	1
Structure	1
Any source	1
Assignment	1
Research	1
Total:	**65**

Code 6: Action	
Duplication	1
Submission/Submitting	14
Representing	2
Presented	1
Copied/Coying	3
Accident	1
conducting	1
Borrowed	2
Collusion	1
Collaboration	3
Altering	1
Withholding	1
Assisting	2
Use/Using	5

Imitation	1
Paraphrasing	1
Reproduce	1
Download	1
Taking	1
Paying	1
Total:	**44**

Code 7: Degree	
Substantial	1
Complete	1
Inadvertent	1
Deliberate	1
Whole	3
Part/Parts	4
Entire essay	1
Inclusion	1
Developmental	1
Total:	**14**