

The
Wow

e-newsletter

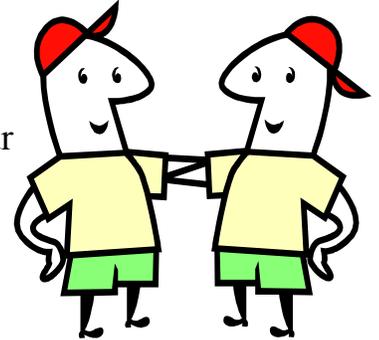
by Ken and Dahlynn McKowen

Principles

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Double Trouble



When is it acceptable to use someone else's words as your own? The short answer is *never*. Plagiarism has been around for as long as people have had the ability to write, and especially since the book business has become profitable for so many in the name of fame, fortune or both.

So, what constitutes plagiarism? While the subject is much too complex to cover in its entirety here, essentially plagiarism is taking someone else's phrasing and claiming it as one's own. Is it illegal? Generally speaking, no, but it can certainly



"I copied my report on plagiarism."

2007 Jonny Hawkins

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damage or end one's career as a writer, historian, scientist, or business person if plagiarism becomes the preferred route to recognition. Plagiarism becomes illegal when someone steals too much material and crosses the line into copyright infringement.

So, where's the line? First, if you never use another writer's phrasing of thoughts and ideas, you don't have to worry too much about where that line may be. And besides, the line varies. Steal a few sentences from someone's novel because you like the way the author describes a particular scene, you're guilty of plagiarism. Use two lines from a copyrighted song in one of your

published works, even with attribution, and you can be guilty of copyright infringement if you haven't received permission from the music publisher (or copyright holder) to use the lyrics. Here you can go from simply being ostracized by your professional colleagues and into the courtroom where you could find yourself fighting a civil lawsuit—and losing.

What constitutes fair use of someone else's works? Generally, (notice the "waffling") you can use a few sentences from someone's book if you provide credit

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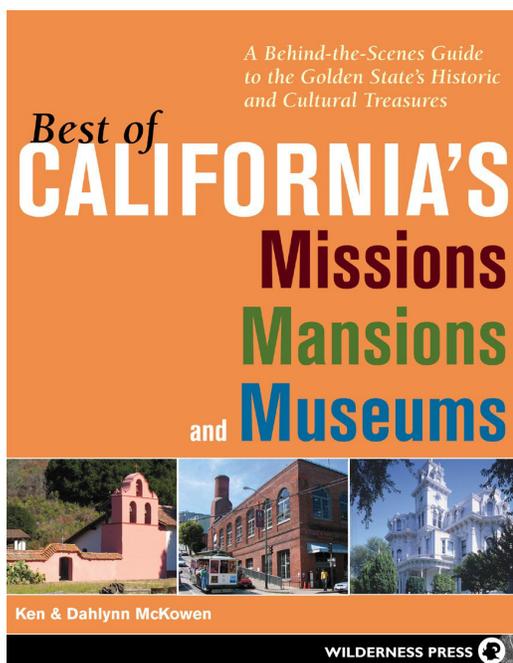
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to that person. You can probably get away with using a few lines from a longer poem, again, assuming that the original author and title of the work is properly cited. Citations are easy to do in nonfiction books, but they become more difficult in novels, where footnotes seldom are used. Here, permission can usually be obtained from the work's publisher, often for a fee.

You pretty much have free rein (notice the "waffling" language again) when using titles. Book titles can't be copyrighted. So if you want to write a book about hurricanes and entitle it *Gone with the Wind*, feel free to do so. There are exceptions, though, because some book titles (and brand names)—*Chicken Soup for the Soul* being a good example—are trademarked. You'll run into legal problems if you decide to be less than creative and use someone else's trademarked property without their permission.

With millions of people writing and publishing, what are the chances that you can be accused of stealing another's work, even though what you created was entirely original? Not too likely, as long as you don't become rich and famous such as J.K. Rowling. In 2002, a U.S. book author filed suit against British author J.K. Rowling for stealing some of her ideas, characters and themes and incorporating them into the *Harry Potter* series. The U.S. book author lost her case and was fined for "doctoring" evidence.

Want to know more about plagiarism? Do a little research on Google or one of the other Internet search engines. 



National Book Award

Our latest travel guide--*Best of California's Missions, Mansions and Museums*--took home top honors in one of the nation's most prestigious book competitions; Publishers Marketing Association's 2007 Benjamin Franklin award, travel category, 1-2 color inside. Our publisher for this title is Wilderness Press, based in Berkeley, California (www.wildernesspress.com).

To celebrate, we're dropping the price of the book to \$16.95, which is \$5 off retail (through June 21, 2007). Thrill your friends and family with an autographed copy of the best independently-published travel guide in the country! Visit our website to learn more.

The Wow Principles e-newsletter

HOT STUFF! HOT STUFF!



Chicken Soup for the Do-It-Yourselfer's Soul

By Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Dahlynn McKowen and Ken McKowen

Owning your own home is the American Dream, but transforming a house into your home—and doing it yourself—is what this book is all about. From decorating to demolition, painting to plumbing, pounding nails to pounding thumbnails, these stories will offer encouragement and entertainment to do-it-yourselfers, the novice and the experienced.

The deadline for story submissions is September 30, 2007. Send your stories directly to Publishing Syndicate at Story@PublishingSyndicate.com. **LIST “DO-IT-YOURSELFER’S SOUL” IN THE SUBJECT LINE OF YOUR E-MAIL SO OUR SPAM FILTER DOESN’T DUMP IT.** All stories must be true and written in first person. Also, please keep the story length at about 900 words. Submit stories in the body of your e-mail; no attachments, please.

For further submission guidelines, go to Publishing Syndicate’s website and click on “How to Submit Your Chicken Soup Story.” The release date for this book is 2008.

The following Chicken Soup books need stories from you!

IMPORTANT: We are not creating the titles below, only passing along the call-outs, so please do not send them to Publishing Syndicate. Submit stories for the following books to www.ChickenSoup.com.

Divorced Soul: Stories of hope and encouragement for divorced people. Deadline: July 31, 2007. **Submit to www.ChickenSoup.com.**

Father and Son’s Soul: Stories that celebrate the special relationship between a father and a son. Deadline: July 31, 2007. **Submit to www.ChickenSoup.com.**

Twenty-Something Soul: Stories to warm the hearts of those who are no longer teenagers and who are adjusting to the world of adults. The deadline date for story submissions is September 30, 2007. **Submit to www.ChickenSoup.com.**

Go for it! Get published!

www.PublishingSyndicate.com