



Rand Paul admits his plagiarism 'is my fault'

Senator's office promises it will be more careful

By [James R. Carroll](#)

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WASHINGTON — After facing accusations of plagiarism in speeches, an article and one of his books, Sen. Rand Paul said Tuesday through a spokesman that he made mistakes in crediting sources and has set up a new system for vetting his work.

The Kentucky Republican and potential 2016 presidential contender has been buffeted since last week by a steady stream of allegations that he copied the works of others.

On Tuesday, [Buzzfeed said it uncovered](#) a new passage in Paul's book, "Government Bullies," that is nearly identical to a portion of a Forbes magazine article. [Buzzfeed also reported](#) earlier that three paragraphs Paul wrote in an op-ed in September for The Washington Times were nearly identical to a piece in The Week magazine.

Although he previously had said he was being targeted, Paul told CNN on Tuesday afternoon that he accepted responsibility.

"Ultimately, I'm the boss, and things go out under my name, so it is my fault," he said. "I never had intentionally presented anyone's ideas as my own."

Paul spokesman Doug Stafford said the office intends to be more careful.

"In the thousands of speeches and op-eds Sen. Paul has produced, he has always presented his own ideas, opinions and conclusions," Stafford said in a statement. "Sen. Paul also relies on a large number of staff and advisers to provide supporting facts and anecdotes — some of which were not clearly sourced or vetted properly."

Stafford said footnotes on sources "were not always used."

“Going forward, footnotes will be available on request,” he said. “There have also been occasions where quotations or typesetting indentations have been left out through errors in our approval process. From here forward, quoting, footnoting and citing will be more complete.”

Stafford added: “Adherence to a new approval process implemented by Sen. Paul will ensure proper citation and accountability in all collaborative works.”

The [Washington Times reported](#) Tuesday that it had reviewed [Paul's](#) columns and op-eds and mutually agreed with Paul to end his weekly column, which appeared each Friday.

“We expect our columnists to submit original work and to properly attribute material, and we appreciate that the senator and his staff have taken responsibility for an oversight in one column,” Times Editor [John Solomon](#) said in the Times’ report.

MSNBC’s Rachel Maddow, Politico and Buzzfeed all have found cases in which Paul used wording similar or identical to other sources without making it clear that the work was not his.

Maddow first found that Paul’s speech recounting the plot line from the film “Gattaca” used wording similar to a Wikipedia entry.

[Buzzfeed reported](#) that a speech the senator gave in June 2012 contained similar language from a Wikipedia entry on the film “Stand and Deliver.”

Paul’s response to President Barack Obama’s State of the Union address earlier this year used words identical to those in an Associated Press report from 2011, Politico reported.

The Kentuckian also used nearly identical phrases from a Focus on the Family magazine article in part of a speech he gave earlier this year at Howard University, Politico found.

Buzzfeed reported Saturday that “Government Bullies” contained three pages that borrowed heavily from a 2003 Heritage Foundation study, and a passage from a Cato Institute report.

Paul first said he was a victim of “haters.” But on Sunday, he said he was sloppy. “The footnote police have really been dogging me for the last week,” Paul said on ABC’s “This Week.” “I will admit that. And I will admit, sometimes we haven’t footnoted things properly.”

He also said that, among “thousands of things I’ve written, yeah, there are times when they have been sloppy or not correct or we’ve made an error.”

But Paul distinguished between the kind of plagiarism that results in students getting “F’s” on papers or being kicked out of school and giving a speech.

“I think the spoken word shouldn’t be held to the same sort of standard that you have if you’re giving a scientific paper. I’ve written scientific papers. I know how to footnote things,” he said.

“I take it as an insult, and I will not lie down and say people can call me dishonest, misleading or misrepresenting,” Paul said on ABC. “I have never intentionally done so.”

Paul also suggested he would have a remedy if this was an earlier century.

“If dueling were legal in Kentucky, if they keep it up, you know, it would be a duel challenge,” the senator said. “But I can’t do that, because I can’t hold office in Kentucky then.”

Jonathan Bailey, founder of the blog plagiarismtoday.com, said the instances uncovered in Paul’s book, speeches and an article fit the definition of plagiarism.

“This is dealing with different types of work, and it definitely indicates a much broader problem,” he said.

Bailey added that the plagiarism would be treated seriously in schools: “Even in quantities less than this, it can result in disciplinary action against a student.”

Noting that Paul is a former medical school student, Bailey said “I’m sure he would be aware that in an academic environment, this would not be acceptable.”