

This essay focuses upon a “feminist scholar” who has self-plagiarized her doctoral dissertation for more than twenty-five years. On the strength of her “academic publishing” performance she has obtained grants, fellowships, and leaves of absence during that period probably worth more than a million dollars. She now holds a tenured professorship in the History Department, University of Washington (UW), obtained by nepotism and fraud. She receives an annualized \$114,240.00 (1999/00) salary plus taxpayer-financed fringe benefits through her marriage to the university president. Her salary ranks way above the average for her department and at almost double the average campus salary for a full professor with tenure. She obtained these benefits through a scandalous contract that appointed her husband, Richard L. McCormick as president of the University of Washington. Her name: Suzanne Dee Lebsock who has repeatedly indulged in self-plagiarism.

Nepotism has allowed Lebsock to get away with much of the scientific fraud that she has committed during the past quarter century. Her father-in law held an administrative position when she worked at Rutgers University (RU). Later her husband became provost at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC). Since then, the UNC chancellor, the late Michael K. Hooker, and his lawyer assistant, Susan H. Ehringhaus, have arranged to cover-up Lebsock’s unlawful employment at that institution. Like McCormick and his lawyer assistant, Carol S. Niccolls, they tried to deny access to public records although the offenses occurred before Hooker took office. The employment scam at UW followed the same pattern and practice as the scam in North Carolina.

Nmesis held a position as associate editor of a peer-reviewed scientific journal for several years and spent many years in commercial publishing. As a professor, he attended many employment interviews and sat on review committees. He has not previously encountered calculated publishing fraud and unlawful employment procedures operated over such a long period.

Self-plagiarism means the practice of publishing a book, a doctoral dissertation, or similar work, then recycling the material without adding new ideas or research. Usually, the sweet cheats who recursively publish their own work survive by cutting, pasting, and reformatting the original material with new titles to give the appearance of new work. They publish the same work repeatedly as journal articles and book chapters without revealing that they have excerpted or previously published the material. They then cite their own reprints as authorities. Self-plagiarism, like any deceitful practice for personal gain classifies as fraud morally, ethically, and legally.

Ethical researchers and writers not only cite their sources but also clearly delineate those parts of the work that they have previously published. This seems natural to an honest person. It also gives a solid foundation to the new work through greater credibility achieved from having previously published work on a similar topic. For example, Laura Engelstein<sup>1</sup> clearly stated in the

second paragraph of her book that she had based it entirely on published sources. Then acknowledged the people who had helped her.

Acknowledging the financial support of foundations also seems appropriate because it shows how the researcher spent the money. Engelstein acknowledged in her first paragraph that she had received financial support from five institutions. She also explained how she had received generous leave time from Princeton University who had additionally given her a congenial environment near her home in which to work.

Apparently, Engelstein had nothing to hide. She ethically accepted support with gratitude and went about fulfilling her moral commitment to her financial sponsors, to Princeton University, and to herself, in the pursuit and accumulation of knowledge. In contrast, Lebsack has not acknowledged that she received large sums of money from foundations or leave from three public universities. Neither has she stated that she recycled her own previously published work without measurably adding to it.

Moreover, Lebsack received a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship (\$265,000.00) in 1992. She proposed to the sponsors that she would examine a rural Virginian murder case in the 1890s, supposedly for representation of race, gender, and state role. However, she has published nothing on that topic or any other topic since. This despite additionally having received generous leaves from both UNC and UW (approved and endorsed by her husband unlawfully). Lebsack just took the money then ran with it.

The spontaneous impulse that guides the cheat the first time to practice self-plagiarism continually reinforces itself. The cheats, and the institutional malfeasance that supports them, cannot avoid continuing the practice after the original deception. Like most lies, this publishing deception needs continuous reinforcement and repetition. In the mind of the self-plagiarist their lies become their truth.

Academic committees generally do not properly investigate applicants' claims and some practice similar deceptions themselves. They rely upon their "knowledge of the discipline" when deciding issues. Consequently, they turn a blind eye (collegiality) to suspicious presentations. Funding sources ask for reports, however, cheats can easily fudge them to cover up their lack of scholarship. They know that generally the foundations do not follow up on grants or keep publication records.

The academic system works well with honest people. However, those who decide to abuse the system can do so quite easily. Hiring committees generally rely almost entirely on the number of publications and not on the quality of research. Many have almost no knowledge of the discipline themselves. Nmesis has sat on academic committees then walked out in protest when an applicant's work has received fatuous analysis. Several committees based their decisions more upon the special interests of the committee members than substantive research.

Safeguarding the process requires time: time committee members usually will not spend. This gives the intellectually challenged the opportunity to cheat their institutions and the public with very little effort. They evade the "accepted practices of the profession" and violate laws designed to deter fraud. They lie about their achievements hypocritically. They cause noble ideals to coexist with academic fraud as justice coexists with opportunism. A post mortem published by Lebsock exemplifies this practice.

Lebsock wrote a contradictory, pseudo book review forty-three years after publication of the book. The author died thirty-one years before she published her review in *Reviews in American History* in 1989. It shows her political self-interest and hypocrisy instead of historical scholarship:

[Mary Ritter Beard's] *Woman as Force in History* [1946] is an exasperating book. It rails at the founders of American feminism. It misconstrues the history of Women's legal rights. Its organization is unconventional at best, and at worst, perverse; it is partly for this reason that the book is virtually unusable in undergraduate courses. It is true that *Woman as Force* has been the subject of a number of perceptive essays. Still, except for a handful of specialists in the legal history of women, or in the history of women's history, no one is compelled to read it. Among the younger generation of scholars, hardly anyone does.<sup>2</sup>

Lebsock wrote this fatuous piece to vilify a respected American suffragette. Beard teamed with her husband during the first half of the twentieth century to write extensively on history and political science. Lebsock's scathing, unsupported criticism shows the extent of her hypocrisy. Her approach probably shows her psychological condition when she wrote the review. Beard cannot refute the statements because she died in 1958. Had she lived she would probably have exposed Lebsock as an academic fraud. Perhaps Beard will return to haunt her, if not, then Nmesis will substitute for her.

In contrast to Beard, Lebsock has for twenty-one years published virtually nothing. Instead, she has deceitfully left a publishing trail that has resulted in academic prominence and illicit economic rewards for herself. As a result, Lebsock and, by extension her husband, now hold lucrative, joint and several, tenured appointments as professors in the history department.

Paradoxically, Lebsock, an avowed feminist, has consistently used patriarchal ploys to her own advantage. She has used her father-in-law's influence and her husband's administrative positions to obtain lucrative, yet virtually no-show, academic employment and promotion. She has also obtained a series of fellowships and grants based on fraudulent credentials. Recently, she received an unrestricted MacArthur Foundation fellowship usually awarded to "talented persons who have shown extraordinary originality and dedication in their creative pursuits."<sup>3</sup> Lebsock certainly qualified for the MacArthur Fellowship with her originality and dedication to self-plagiarism. She continues to promote herself vociferously as a feminist scholar yet has few accomplishments and relies on self-plagiarism and patriarchy for her professional advancement: she indulges the feminist paradox.

The data show that what Lebsock touts as scholarship merely reveals the negative traits in her character. They constantly reappear, ever more markedly. She brought them into prominence through her own greed and deceit. The spontaneous impulse that guided her the first time she lied has continually reinforced itself. Her fraud, and the institutional malfeasance that supports it, has become increasingly more difficult for her to avoid since she committed the original deception. Self-plagiarism abides as the human plagiarism most difficult to avoid. This adage still applies when one considers the scientific fraud now prevalent in the academe.<sup>4</sup>

A correspondent who attended a UW function characterized Lebsock as having: “modern attire, poise, good speaking, and an affable disposition. She does not speak down to her audience. She presents herself as someone a person would like to know better [and] would be fun to have at one’s dinner table.” In this theater of the absurd Lebsock excels by continuing to spin her web.

Oh, what a tangled web she weaved,  
When first she practiced then deceived.  
But when she’d practiced quite a while,  
How vastly she improved her style.<sup>5</sup>

Her public relations style has definitely improved. She can now afford to appear benevolent and hide almost a quarter century of academic fraud, opportunism, and vindictiveness. The taxpayer now supplies her with spin doctors who constantly propagandize a positive image for her and her consort.

Instead of academic research and teaching, functions for which the taxpayer rewards Lebsock handsomely, she now supports McCormick in his totalitarian ideology. Both deign to rule by royal prerogative and consistently violate state laws. Lebsock attends multiple “hen parties” to promote McCormick’s diminutive arrogance while Washington State attorneys general exhibit an abysmal ignorance of the law then violate it to support a cover-up.

Neither Lebsock nor McCormick apparently realize that the royal prerogative ended with Queen Anne although UW’s Queen Suzanne would like to revive it. Both Governor Gary Locke and Attorney General Christine O. Gregoire have consistently indulged in willful blindness. They have neglected to investigate these confidence tricksters despite possessing ample evidence about various violations of both state and federal law.

Lebsock contrasts the extensively published Richard White, the “star” UW history professor whom she apparently displaced when her husband became president of that university. With her professorship came a much higher salary than White ever received. She has also received several leaves of absence approved by her husband contrary to state law. Meanwhile, Robert C. Stacey, Professor and Chair, History Department (UW), and David B. Thorud, Acting Vice President for University Relations (UW), continue to conceal public records, apparently to cover up violations of law by both McCormick and Lebsock. Both UNC and UW have unlawfully denied access to

public records presumably in attempts to cover up the fraud and their complicity in it. However, documents obtained from a variety of other sources support the contentions made here.

Generally, faculties have come to a point where they defend turf instead of cooperatively advancing the accumulation of knowledge. This self-interest allows charlatans to progress professionally without traditional credentials. Communication among them virtually ceases. Unfortunately, the news media, elected officials, university administrators, and professors, have developed such a contempt for each other that each group has lost touch with reality. Very few of them find meaning in anything that does not have an economic reward.<sup>6</sup>

Tenure depends entirely upon a belief that universities must have permanent, competent, and ethical faculties. However, debates about tenure concern only power. Now, freedom of expression and accumulation of knowledge no longer define the original notion of tenure. Tenure opponents propose more power to administrators with faculty deployment as academic assets using economic perspectives and judgments.

Consequently, a preponderance of tenured faculty members think only about their status and job security. Proponents of tenure believe that faculty members with proven professorial competence should have freedom to challenge administrators and regents also students and the public. The latter view depends upon traditional notions of scholarship and teaching that result from free thinking and judgment instead of royal prerogatives.<sup>7</sup> Common beliefs cannot grow from homogenized special interest groups and the nepotistic aspirations of university presidents, their wives, and their academic whores.<sup>8</sup>

*Nmesis.*

1. Laura Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-Siècle Russia* (NY: Ithaca, Cornell University Press), ix.
2. Suzanne D. Lebsack, In Retrospect: Reading Mary Beard, *Reviews in American History*, 17(2): 324, 1989.
3. The MacArthur Foundation, *The MacArthur Fellows Program*, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, (May 96).
4. Marcel Proust, *The Sweet Cheat Gone*, (Translated from the French by G. K. Scott Moncrieff), New York, NY: Vintage Books, Division of Random House, 1970, 15.
5. With apologies to Sir Walter Scott, *Marmion* and J. R. Pope, *A Word of Encouragement*.
6. Liz McMillen, Scholars Gather to Ponder the State of US Democracy, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, (11 Oct 98), A16.
7. Matthew W. Finkin, The Assault on Faculty Independence, *Academe* (Jul/Aug 97), 21.
8. See Note 6.

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## Sweet Cheat

The only thing worse than a liar is a liar that's also a hypocrite.<sup>2</sup>

**Suzanne Dee Lebsock (December 1, 1949– ), History Department, University of Washington.**

**Publication Record as of May 31, 2000.**

Suzanne Dee Lebsock (wife of Richard L. McCormick, President, University of Washington) has reached fifty years of age having written virtually nothing apart from her PhD dissertation. She has survived academically for almost half her life by self-plagiarism, employment fraud, and misapplying grant and fellowship funds. She now holds a full professorship in the History Department, University of Washington, at an annualized salary of \$109,848.00/year plus the taxpayer-financed fringe benefits that her husband receives. The data show a pattern and practice of self-plagiarism and unlawful nepotism that a reasonable person (and probably a judge) will interpret as employment and scientific fraud. December 1, 1999, Nmesis requested both Governor Gary Locke and Attorney General Christine O. Gregoire to investigate irrefutable evidence supporting alleged employment contract fraud by Lebsock and McCormick. They have not responded. Moreover, Locke and Gregoire need to study the similar scheme that Lebsock and McCormick allegedly used to swindle the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill before moving to the University of Washington. An independent scholar has reviewed and verified all the evidence that support the data in the tables. The penultimate column shows peer review status.

Books				
1977		<i>Women and Economics in Virginia: Petersburg 1784-1820</i> University of Virginia, 310 pp.	Yes	PhD Dissertation.
1984		<i>The Free Women of Petersburg: Status and Culture in a Southern Town 1784–1869</i> New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 326 pp.	No	An edited version of the PhD dissertation with a thesis change, and chapter rearrangement. The book contained no reference to previous publication.
1984		<i>A Share of Honor: Virginia Women, 1600–1945</i> Richmond, VA: Women's Cultural History Project, 167 pp.	No	Catalog for an exhibition held at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, November 10, 1984 through January 6, 1985; the Chrysler Museum, February 7 through March 17, 1985; and the Roanoke Museum of Fine Arts, April 18 through June 6, 1985. Contained the third revision of an essay excerpted from the PhD dissertation without any reference to previous publication. Exhibition catalogs rarely qualify as scholarship, instead, they rank as commercial publications.

1987		<i>Virginia Women 1600-1945: A Share of Honor</i> Richmond, VA: Virginia State Library. 174 pp.	No	Revised edition of the museum catalog entitled <i>A Share of Honor</i> prepared by the Virginia Women's Cultural History Project (1984) with an introduction by Anne Firor Scott and a changed title. Contained no reference to fourth publication of the same essay.
1988		<i>Virginia Women: The First Two Hundred Years</i> Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 39 pp.	No	Principal author Anne Firor Scott coauthored by Suzanne D. Lebsock.
<i>Articles, Excerpts, and Reprints</i>				
1977	Radical Reconstruction and the Property Rights of Southern Women	<i>Journal of Southern History</i> 43(2): (May 1977): 195-216	U 9862 E No	
1982	Free Black Women and the Question of Matriarchy: Petersburg, Virginia, 1784–1820	<i>Feminist Studies</i> 8 (Summer 1982), 271-92.	U No E 9247	An edited excerpt from the PhD dissertation <i>Women and Economics in Virginia: Petersburg 1784-1820</i> (1977), with paragraph rearrangement and thesis change. The article contained no reference to previous publication.
1983	"We Have Not Lived for Ourselves Alone": Women and Domesticity in Antebellum Petersburg	<i>Virginia Cavalcade</i> 33(2) (Autumn 1983), 53-63.	U No E 9294	An edited excerpt from the PhD dissertation <i>Women and Economics in Virginia: Petersburg 1784-1820</i> (1977), with paragraph rearrangement and thesis change. The article contained no reference to previous publication.
1983	Free Black Women and the Question of Matriarchy: Petersburg, Virginia, 1784–1820	In <i>Sex and Class in Women's History</i> Judith Lowder Newton, Mary P. Ryan, and Judith R. Walkowitz (Ed.) London, England: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983, 146-66..	No	Reprint of Free Black Women and the Question of Matriarchy: Petersburg, Virginia, 1784–1820, <i>Feminist Studies</i> 8 (Summer 1982), 271-92. The article contained no reference to previous publication.
1987	Women Working	In <i>Conflict and Consensus</i> (7 <sup>th</sup> Ed.) Allen F. Davis and Harold D. Woodman Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath, 1987.	No	Lebsock claims in her curriculum vitae to have published an excerpt from <i>The Free Women of Petersburg: Status and Culture in a Southern Town 1784–1869</i> (Chapter 5), 1984 in this anthology. However, the investigator found no reference to the article in that publication.
1990	Introduction	In <i>Past and Promise: Lives of New Jersey Women</i> The Women's Project of New Jersey (Ed.) Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, Incorporated, 486 pp.		Introduction by Suzanne D. Lebsock.
1990	Free Black Women and the Question of Matriarchy: Petersburg, Virginia 1784–1820	In <i>Black Women in United States History</i> Darlene Clark Hine (Ed.) Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing. 1990, 271-292.	No	A reprint from <i>Feminist Studies</i> 8 (Summer 1982), 271-92, in itself an edited and excerpt taken from the PhD dissertation <i>Women and Economics in Virginia: Petersburg 1784-1820</i> (1977), with paragraph rearrangement and thesis change. The article contained no reference to previous publication.

1990	Women and American Politics, 1880–1920	In <i>Women, Politics, and Change</i> Louise Tilly and Patricia Gurrin (Ed.) New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 1990, 35-62.	No	
1990	No Obey: Indian, European, and African Women in Seventeenth-Century Virginia	In <i>Women, Families, and Communities: Readings in American History</i> (Vol. 1) Nancy A. Hewitt (Ed.) Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman, 1990.	No	An excerpt from <i>A Share of Honor: Virginia Women, 1600–1945</i> (Chapter 1), 1984.
1993	Women Suffrage and White Supremacy: A Virginia Case Study	In <i>Visible Women: New Essays in American Activism</i> Nancy A Hewitt and Suzanne Lebsack (Ed.) Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993. 62-118.	No	Anthology co-edited with Nancy A. Hewitt.
1995	Women Suffrage and White Supremacy: A Virginia Case Study	In <i>Women's America: Refocusing the Past</i> , (4 <sup>th</sup> Ed.) Linda K. Kerber and Jane Sherron DeHart New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1995. 320-334	No	Excerpted from: <i>Visible Women: New Essays in American Activism</i> , 1993.
<i>Book Reviews</i>				
1989	Reading Mary Beard	<i>Reviews in American History</i> 17(2): (June 1989), 324-339.	NA	Book Review
1990	Complicity and Contention: Women in the Plantation South	<i>Georgia Historical Quarterly</i> 74(1): (Spring 1990), 59-83.	NA	Book Review
1993	Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1800–1920.	<i>The New York Times Book Review</i> , (9 May 93) 10, Col. 1	NA	Book Review

**Suzanne Dee Lebsack (December 1, 1949 – ), Professor, History Department, University of Washington.**

**Grants and Fellowships as of May 31, 2000.**

1967–68	Carleton College	Undergraduate	
1968–69	Carleton College	Undergraduate	
1969–70	Carleton College	Undergraduate	
1970–71	Carleton College	Undergraduate BA	
1971–72	University of Virginia	Graduate	
1972–73	University of Virginia	Graduate MA (1973)	
1973–74	University of Virginia	Post Graduate	Danforth Foundation (Fellowship)
1974–75	University of Virginia	Post Graduate	Danforth Foundation (Fellowship)

1975-76	University of Virginia	Post Graduate PhD	Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation (Dissertation Fellowship in Women's Studies) also Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (Grant-in-Aid)
1976-77			
1977-78	Rutgers University	Assistant Professor	
1978-79	Rutgers University	Assistant Professor	American Council of Learned Societies (Grant-in-Aid for Recent Recipients of the PhD)
1979-80	Rutgers University	Assistant Professor	
1980-81	Rutgers University	Assistant Professor	
1981-82	Rutgers University	Assistant Professor	Rutgers University Research Council (Junior Faculty Fellowship)
1982-83	Rutgers University	Assistant Professor	
1983-84	Rutgers University	Associate Professor	Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation (Faculty Development Grant)
1984-85	Rutgers University	Associate Professor	American Association for State and Local History (Grant-in-Aid)
1985-86	Rutgers University	Associate Professor	Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (Fellowship)
1986-87	Rutgers University	Professor Acting Director, Women's Studies	
1987-88	Rutgers University	Professor	
1988-89	Rutgers University	Professor	John Simon Guggenheim Foundation (Fellowship)
1989-90	Rutgers University	Professor	John Simon Guggenheim Foundation (Fellowship)
1990-91	Rutgers University	Professor	
1991-92	Rutgers University	Professor	
1992-93	Rutgers University	Professor	John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (Fellowship)
1993-94	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Professor (Tenured)	John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (Fellowship)
1994-95	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Professor (Tenured)	John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (Fellowship)
1995-96	University of Washington	Professor (Tenured)	John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (Fellowship)

1996–97	University of Washington	Professor (Tenured)	John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (Fellowship)
1997–98	University of Washington	Professor (Tenured)	
1998–99	University of Washington	Professor (Tenured)	

1. Marcel Proust, *The Sweet Cheat Gone*, (Translated from the French by G. K. Scott Moncrieff), New York, NY: Vintage Books, Division of Random House, 1970, 15.
2. Tennessee Williams, *Rose Tattoo*, Act 3.

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