who, by means of their service, enhance with great effectiveness the abilities and productivity of our top scholars and outstanding teachers—these individuals have come close to realizing the full potential of their chosen products. All contribute to the common good, and all should be valued.

Scholarship is not inherently superior to teaching, nor is teaching inherently superior to scholarship. There are many flavors of geographic pursuit, each of which can contribute to the broader goal of increasing our knowledge and understanding. Disagreements over the value of this conclusion or that, this approach or that, can be tested directly by producing and offering an alternative. Many conclusions and approaches will not be sustained over time, given active testing, but it is the time that will tell, not the passion with which the position is argued at the moment.

Others’ choices need not be less worthy simply because they are not our own. In geography, there is too much to do for us to unwisely diminish the value of others’ efforts in non-constructive ways.

**Will Graf:** Fakery in the Publications Game

April 1999

DURING MY SERVICE as associate editor of several journals, AAG councilor and officer, reviewer of grant proposals, evaluator of candidates for promotion and departments, I have encountered three errors often made by authors: self-plagiarism, slicing the baloney thin, and deceptive reporting of publications on resumes. Within the last year, I have personally encountered instances of these transgressions, and colleagues report that there are all too many cases of these transgressions in our discipline. Those involved range from junior to senior faculty. I'm not certain whether these errors are intentional or simply made out of failure to recognize acceptable modes of behavior for authors, so in this column I briefly explore these difficult issues in hopes of bringing some clarity to them, or at least stimulating discussion about them among colleagues.

**Self-plagiarism**

Many journal and book editors have problems with self-plagiarism, the process whereby an author duplicates word for word in a present publication what he or she has written in a previous publication. Given the nature of our research and reporting, it is inevitable that many of us need to review the same issues or techniques in more than one paper, so that a certain amount of repetition of ideas is bound to occur. This repetition can be reduced by citing one’s previous publications, and clearly indicating the potential for duplication. Another approach is to fully outline the issue, technique, or literature in the first publication, and then summarise subjects briefly in subsequent related publications.

What is not acceptable is the word for word repetition of many sentences and whole paragraphs from previous publications. This practice is wasteful, unnecessary, and possibly fraudulent. It is wasteful because journal space is at a premium, and space occupied by self-plagiarized material is an area that cannot be used by authors wishing to publish original material. Self-plagiarism is unnecessary because by definition, the material that is appearing for a second time is already in the literature and is already available to users of the information.

Equally important, however, self-plagiarism exposes the author to charges of fraud. This issue is in part strictly legal. Most authors do not own the copyright to their published articles. Through formal signature by the author, most journals require the transfer of copyright from the author to the publisher. As a result, if an author duplicates his or her previously published sentences or paragraphs, there is often a problem of copyright infringement suffered by the publisher of the original. Self-plagiarism also makes the author appear deceptive, because if the duplicated material is not cited to its originally published source, the author appears to be trying to "double-dip." Because of the exact duplication involved, the author is usually aware of the transgression. Many geographers in academia and in agency positions have their promotion and merit pay partially linked to scholarly productivity, which is often measured in number of published papers. Self-plagiarized material thus is counted not as a single contribution, but is counted twice, providing a false picture of the true range of contributions made by the author. Self-plagiarism is therefore not acceptable and should not be tolerated by editors, authors, readers, or evaluators in academic institutions, agencies, or the private sector.

**Slicing the baloney thin**

Many researchers report the results of their work in a few relatively long, major articles that represent substantial contributions to literature and knowledge. Scientists often publish the results of extensive investigations in brief papers or technical notes that are only a few pages long but that condense succinctly the results of a considerable investment of time, talent, and resources. Some researchers publish their results in numer-
Our publications, with each article revealing only a limited portion of the entire story. This process of slicing the baloney thin produces numerous publications that are very closely related to each other and that are often partly repetitious. The result is a literature cluttered with reports small in contribution, if not in page length. Those who engage in this practice have lengthy resumes with numerous citations, but they cheapen their own work by the process, and evaluators of their contributions discover the rise upon reading the products.

Many academic institutions and agencies contribute to this problem by evaluating their employees simply on the basis of number of publications, and evaluation committees cannot or will not take the time to actually read the published work. Hence the conventional wisdom is that evaluators can count but can’t read. Many institutions have recently become more sensitive to this problem, however, and have taken a variety of approaches to exert some control. For example, some evaluation committees will consider the entire list of publications of candidates for promotion or salary increases, but require that candidates designate two or three publications that the committees actually read. In other cases, committees will consider only the five most important publications for promotion or salary adjustment, with the candidates making the selection of those pieces to be read and considered. Both of these approaches place a premium on the quality. Institutions should choose evaluation methods that emphasize quality rather than quantity, and authors should provide their readers with truly meaty slices of their baloney.

**Reporting of publications on resumes**

It is particularly important for geographers to accurately communicate to readers of their resumes the exact status of their publications at the date shown on the resume. Citations of published articles include the volume and page numbers, and without such information articles should not be considered “published.” Articles should not be listed as “in press” or “accepted” unless the author has written communication from the editor that contains specific and direct language that the paper has been accepted. A letter indicating that the paper is acceptable upon revision is not enough, because it means that the author has not yet completed satisfactory revisions, and the editor has not yet evaluated the revisions, or actually accepted the final paper. If authors insist on listing in their resumes papers not yet accepted, they should include a parenthetical statement indicating the precise status of the paper at the date of the resume, such as “submitted to the editor for review,” “under revision,” or “in preparation.” Jointly authored articles should be reported with the order of the authors’ names as they appear on the original publication.

False or misleading reporting of the status of publications on resumes is particularly damaging, because it gives an untrue picture of the author’s record, and because it establishes a pattern of stretching the true nature of the situation. The practice is surprisingly common. It is already difficult for committees reviewing job applicants, candidates for promotion, or grant applicants because of the wide range of specialties and publishing ethics we deal with in geography, a discipline populated by social scientists, natural scientists, and humanists. Precise reporting of publication status is also a question of simple personal honesty and self-confidence; it is not a situation in which to make false claims which may embarrassingly not prove true in the long run. Once discovered, imprecise reporting naturally leads to suspicion about other aspects of the resume, and a general erosion of confidence. Like self-plagiarism and slicing the baloney thin, imprecise reporting of publications does us all a disservice, and whatever the perceived rewards of such actions, they just aren’t worth it.

The issues of self-plagiarism, slicing the baloney thin, and inaccurate reporting of publications on resumes are important subjects of discussion between mentors and those with whom they work, as well as among professional colleagues generally. Formal training in ethics is becoming more common in private industry, and it should be part of the standard curriculum in our graduate education.

**Susan Cutter: Big Brother’s New Handheld**

May 2001

**Privacy is rapidly** becoming the issue of the 21st century. While many retain visions of George Orwell’s 1984, the reality of the information age makes his novel tame by comparison. The right to privacy is guaranteed in this country. Presumably embedded in this freedom is the right to hide. Current technology eliminates this fundamental right. Further, the geographical community is inadvertently contributing ideas, technology, software, training, and expertise that can be used to locate and thus monitor individual behavior remotely—a clear violation of privacy protections.