



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on March 21, 2024

## More Plagiarism at Harvard; Latest Case Fourth Since Former President Outed

Plagiarism gumshoe Christopher Rufo has uncovered another case of literary theft at Harvard University.

This time, [Rufo reported](#) in the Manhattan Institute's *City Journal*, the culprit is one [Christina Cross](#), an assistant sociology professor, who plagiarized her doctoral thesis for the University of Michigan.

Rufo's story cites a complaint that documents a dozen problematic passages, some of them unattributed verbatim quotes.

Cross is the fourth Harvard official outed for plagiarism.



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### The Stolen Passages

Noting that Cross is a "rising star in the field of critical race," a fraudulent "field" of study, and the author of *The Myth of The Two-Parent Home*, Rufo reported that "Cross's 2019 dissertation, *The Color, Class, and Context of Family Structure and Its Association with Children's Educational Performance*, won a slate of awards, including the American Sociological Association Dissertation Award and the ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Award, and helped catapult her onto the Harvard faculty."

But, as with the other three "scholars," Cross' work is riddled with stolen material, including "verbatim plagiarism, mosaic plagiarism, uncited paraphrasing, and uncited quotations from other sources," as the complaint puts it.

#### [Continued Rufo:](#)

The most serious allegation is that Cross lifted an entire paragraph nearly verbatim from a paper by Stacey Bosick and Paula Fomby titled [Family Instability in Childhood and Criminal Offending During the Transition Into Adulthood](#) without citing the source or placing verbatim language in quotations.

#### Bosick and Fomby:

We use data from the PSID and two of its supplemental studies, the Child Development Supplement (CDS) and the Transition into Adulthood Supplement (TAS). PSID began in 1968 as a nationally representative sample of approximately 4,800 households. Original respondents and their descendants have been followed annually until 1997 and biennially since then. To maintain population representativeness, a sample refresher in 1997 added approximately 500 households headed by immigrants who had entered the United States since 1968. At each wave, the household head or the spouse or cohabiting partner of the



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head reports on family household composition, employment, earned and unearned income, assets, debt, educational attainment, expenditures, housing characteristics, and health and health care in the household. In 2015 (the most recent wave available), the study collected information on almost 25,000 individuals in approximately 9,000 households.

Cross:

This study draws on data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (1985-2015) and its two youth-centered supplements, the Child Development Supplement (CDS) (1997-2007) and the Transition into Adulthood Supplement (TAS) (2005-2015). The PSID began in 1968 as a nationally-representative sample of nearly 5,000 U.S. households. Original sample members and their descendants were followed annually until 1997 and have been followed biennially since then. To maintain population representativeness, in 1997, a sample refresher added approximately 500 households headed by immigrants who had entered the United States since 1968. At each wave, the household head or the spouse or cohabiting partner of the head reports on household composition, and household members' employment, income, educational attainment, and health status. In 2015, the study collected information on nearly 25,000 individuals in approximately 9,000 households.

Cross also pilfered "another full paragraph" from the two without attribution. Worse still, Fomby served on Cross' dissertation committee.

Cross also ripped off [Examining the Antecedents of U.S. Nonmarital Fatherhood](#), by Marcia Carlson, Alicia VanOrman, and Natasha Pilkauskas — "the last of whom also served on Cross's dissertation committee — without the use of direct quotations, as required."

"Elsewhere in the paper, Cross borrows language from other academic sources, sometimes citing the authors but failing to place the verbatim language in quotations, and other times failing to cite the source at all, creating the false impression that it was her own work," [Rufo wrote](#).

Cross also plagiarized in a paper [she wrote](#) for *Population Studies* in 2018, *Extended family households among children in the United States: Differences by race/ethnicity and socio-economic status*.

The work clearly violates Harvard's *Guide to Using Sources*, available under two links at the university website: [Avoiding Plagiarism](#) and [What Constitutes Plagiarism?](#)

"It is considered plagiarism to draw any idea or any language from someone else without adequately crediting that source in your paper," the guide says.

As well, the university warns, "when you fail to cite your sources, or when you cite them inadequately, you are plagiarizing, which is taken extremely seriously at Harvard."

But Harvard doesn't take it seriously enough, apparently.

### **Four Cases**

Cross brings to four the number of Harvard officials credibly accused of plagiarism. The previous three were:

- [Shirley Greene](#), Title IX resource coordinator for students;
- [Sherri Ann Charleston](#), chief diversity and inclusion officer; and,



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- [Claudine Gay](#), president.

Warning that “more allegations are coming,” Rufo observed that — except for Gay, who was forced to resign her presidency — all are still employed at Harvard. That raises the question of whether professors are held to a lesser standard of academic integrity than students, and whether the university reviewed their academic work. Gay’s academic output was not vetted, the university’s [Crimson newspaper revealed](#).

“Given Harvard’s long-standing support for DEI policies and affirmative action programs,” [Rufo wrote](#), “it is reasonable to ask whether scholars such as Gay, Charleston, Greene, and Cross rose through the ranks on their merits or, at least in part, on their identity and their politics.”

At his X feed, Rufo noted that Cross was a faculty member at Ibram Kendi’s [Center for Antiracist Research](#) at Boston University, “which produced almost no work, collapsed into infighting, and had to lay off nearly half of its staff.”



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