



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on May 22, 2017

## Sheriff Clarke Faces Accusations of Plagiarism

CNN has launched an attack upon Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, Sheriff David Clarke, alleging that he plagiarized content in his 2013 master's thesis, *Making U.S. Security and Privacy Rights Compatible*. Clarke received his master's degree in Security Studies from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

*Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* defines "plagiarize" as "to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own use (a created production) without crediting the source."



CNN claims that while Clarke did footnote his sources in the thesis, he failed to use quotation marks in places where he had used passages "verbatim." The Naval Postgraduate School defines plagiarism as "submitting material that in part or whole is not one's own work without proper attribution."

Considering that Clarke *did* footnote his sources, one could argue that CNN is simply nit-picking in order to launch an attack upon Clarke.

In fact, that is what Clarke does argue in response. He told the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* that the story was partisan. "Only someone with a political agenda would say this is plagiarism."

Clarke added that the reporter, Andrew Kaczynski, "is a sleaze bag." In addition, Clarke noted that Kaczynski had said the same thing about Senator Rand Paul's book *Government Bullies*. Kaczynski claimed in 2015 that Paul's book had plagiarized material from the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute. Paul called Kaczynski, who was working for the left-wing site *Buzzfeed* at the time, an "idiot."

"The only criticisms have come from some guy who's a partisan," Paul said of Kaczynski. "There's a ridiculous cottage industry out there of people who think they're smarter than everyone else, and because certain quotes are disputed — well, yeah! If you want to say something's not a Thomas Jefferson quote, you can get a whole book on whether it's a quote or not."

In specifically addressing Kaczynski's "plagiarism" claims, Paul was even more adamant. "I mean, this idiot says the same thing about my speeches," he told the *Washington Post*. "Do I need to say in my speech, 'as many people attribute to Thomas Jefferson, but some people dispute,' before I give the quote? It's idiocy, it's pedantry — it's ridiculous stuff from partisan hacks. And I'd say that guy's one of them. He's not on my good list."

This dispute highlights problems that are extremely difficult for the average person to assess. What exactly constitutes plagiarism is one question, and how are the standards different in academic papers, speeches, and popular newspaper or magazine articles? It would seem that the committee that reviewed Clarke's thesis would have known best how to interpret their own college's rules on the issue, and they granted the master's degree, after reviewing Clarke's thesis. It certainly is an easy charge to make, and any politician who has published an academic paper can probably expect to have political opponents attempt to make it. It is now well established that Martin Luther King's dissertation had



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multiple flaws in this specific area of academic plagiarism, which his committee missed, yet he has a national holiday in his honor.

According to a Wikipedia account, Kaczynski received criticism himself for his inaccurate reporting of the Boston Marathon bombings in 2013, because he had retweeted “false reports made by Reddit user Greg Hughes about a particular person who was innocent of the crime.” That seems to be somewhat more serious than failure to use quotation marks when citing a source, as in Clarke’s case.

Clarke recently raised some eyebrows for his announcement last week that he would be taking a position with Homeland Security in which he would coordinate the department’s working with other law-enforcement agencies in the states, municipalities, and even tribal governments. On a radio program in Milwaukee, Clarke said, “I’m both honored and humbled to be appointed to this position, working for the Trump administration.”

But the Homeland Security Department would not confirm Clarke’s appointment, which does not require Senate approval. They issued a statement that “such senior positions are announced by the department when made official by the secretary. No such announcement with regard to the Office of Public Engagement has been made.”

There has also been some speculation that Clarke might make a bid for the U.S. Senate in Wisconsin in the future.

Clarke is the author of *Cop Under Fire*, which I reviewed for *The New American* in the April 3 issue. In that book, Clarke expressed his contempt for the group Black Lives Matter (BLM), which he referred to as “Black Lies Matter.” His conservative positions and support for President Donald Trump (he spoke at last year’s Republican National Convention in Cleveland) have brought him predictable scrutiny by the liberal media, and the criticism that can be expected for any black person who takes conservative positions (e.g. Clarence Thomas, Herman Cain, and Ben Carson).

For example, Clarke has been castigated for his assertion that ISIS and BLM are creating an alliance to destroy America. While the media reaction to this claim is predictably negative, with the implication that such an assertion is absurd, the group Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) did join in Oklahoma with Black Lives Matter (BLM) in denouncing the acquittal of a Tulsa police officer in a shooting incident that caused a black man’s death. CAIR’s civil rights director, Veronica Laizure, said, “We are disappointed that Officer Shelby was not found guilty of manslaughter despite the overwhelming evidence. We support Black Lives Matter Oklahoma in their demands.”

According to Daniel Pipes in *National Review*, CAIR was created by Hamas, which is considered a terrorist organization by the United States and several other governments.

When Clarke appeared on *Fox and Friends* last year to discuss BLM, he said, “First of all, there is no police brutality in America,” but that comment was taken out of context by many media outlets who reported it. In his book, he explained that such brutality is “no longer systematic, nor is it condoned within our ranks.”

But any incident involving a police shooting is cast as evidence by BLM that the police are brutal, Clarke wrote. “No matter how wrong, misguided, reckless, and dangerous a black person might be acting, they’ll side with them over the police every time.”

As long as Clarke continues to make such remarks, he will continue to receive hostility from those on the Left side of the political spectrum.



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