Order of Authorship

Herman Gower is a professor of anthropology at a well-known eastern U.S. university. His name is not quite universally known, but a steady stream of doctoral students arrives at his university each fall to study with Dr. Gower. The new doctoral students hope that their work under the professor will launch them into a well-paid career at a well-respected university. For his part, Dr. Gower sees the graduate students as a fertile source for maintaining and enhancing his reputation as a prolific academic writer.

Zeke Adamson is one of this year's new graduate students. When he was an undergraduate at Harvard, his professors recommended that he pursue a Ph.D. They knew of Zeke's interest in anthropology and mentioned a few possible doctoral programs to which he might apply. Zeke looked into all of them and decided on the program at Dr. Gower's school, and on Dr. Gower in particular. This was a match made in heaven as far as Dr. Gower was concerned. Here was a well-educated and intelligent student with whom he could work and coauthor papers. Students like this would carry his legacy forward into the next generation.

During his first semester in the doctoral program, Zeke excelled. He was beginning to learn that he loved the work of an academic. Reading articles and working on his own was going to suit him fine. In his second semester, he was finally in Dr. Gower's class. Part of the class assignments were two research projects. Using data on age at attaining puberty from three groups of indigenous peoples in New Guinea, Zeke was required to produce a paper ready for submission to a conference and a second one that was designed for eventual publication in an anthropology journal. Zeke was psyched.

Over the course of the semester, Zeke met with Dr. Gower three times to discuss the two papers. They talked about the statistical tests Zeke was using and about the theory that guided both of the papers. Dr. Gower did not read either of the papers, however, until the end of the semester. At that time, the smaller paper was all ready for submission and the larger paper was nearing completion. Zeke made sure the conference paper was in the proper format and was about to send it in for consideration when he received an e-mail from Dr. Gower, saying that he wanted to be the one to submit the paper because he had a friend who was acting as a track chair for the conference. Zeke thought this was a great idea—it meant less work for him and improved the chances of the paper being accepted at the conference. Zeke told Dr. Gower to go ahead and then continued working on the journal article.

Two weeks later, Zeke received an e-mail telling him that the conference paper was being reviewed, but he noticed with dismay that the note referred to the authors of the paper as Gower and Adamson! Zeke could not believe that his professor had made himself first author. Even second author was a stretch, as Dr. Gower had never even graded the paper. Zeke asked around and found out that this was standard procedure in the school and that having his name as second
author to someone like Dr. Gower was good for Zeke's reputation and ensured that the paper would be accepted at the conference.

Zeke was not happy, however. He wondered what to do about the journal article. He felt that he needed the professor's input, but the idea that he would have to be second author on his own work gave him a knot in the pit of his stomach. He wondered what to do.

Questions
1. What should Zeke do? What are his options?
2. Is there anything Zeke could have done to prevent this situation in the first place?
3. Whose responsibility is it to bring up issues of authorship of academic papers?
4. What is the best way to determine order of authorship?
5. Do you think this is something that a code of ethics for graduate study might address?
Adapted from Robin Levin Penslar, *Research Ethics: Cases and Materials* (Bloomington: Indiana University), 190-191.

**Footnote Mining**

Edwards's dissertation was on nineteenth-century Georgia. He has been revising his dissertation and hopes to publish it with a major university press. Thomas, a scholar who, though in the same general field as Edwards, works on a different topic, has just published a book. Thomas's new book, on farming in the South before the Civil War, departs from his usual line of research. Edwards reads the book and finds to his initial satisfaction that his work has been cited. On reading further, however, he finds that his dissertation was cited only once, for a rather obscure point, but that Thomas has extensively cited the sources Edwards used. Edwards's feeling is that Thomas simply "mined" his thesis for sources, but only gave him credit for the one detail. He thinks that, at best, Thomas went back to the archives and at worst, Thomas stole Edwards's work, citing sources he had never seen. In either case, Edwards thinks, Thomas should have cited him as his source.

**Questions**

1. Did Thomas do anything wrong? If so, what?
2. Is it relevant that Edwards's work is a dissertation rather than a published book or article? Why or why not?
3. What, if anything, can Edwards do?