

Centre for Bioscience Day conference

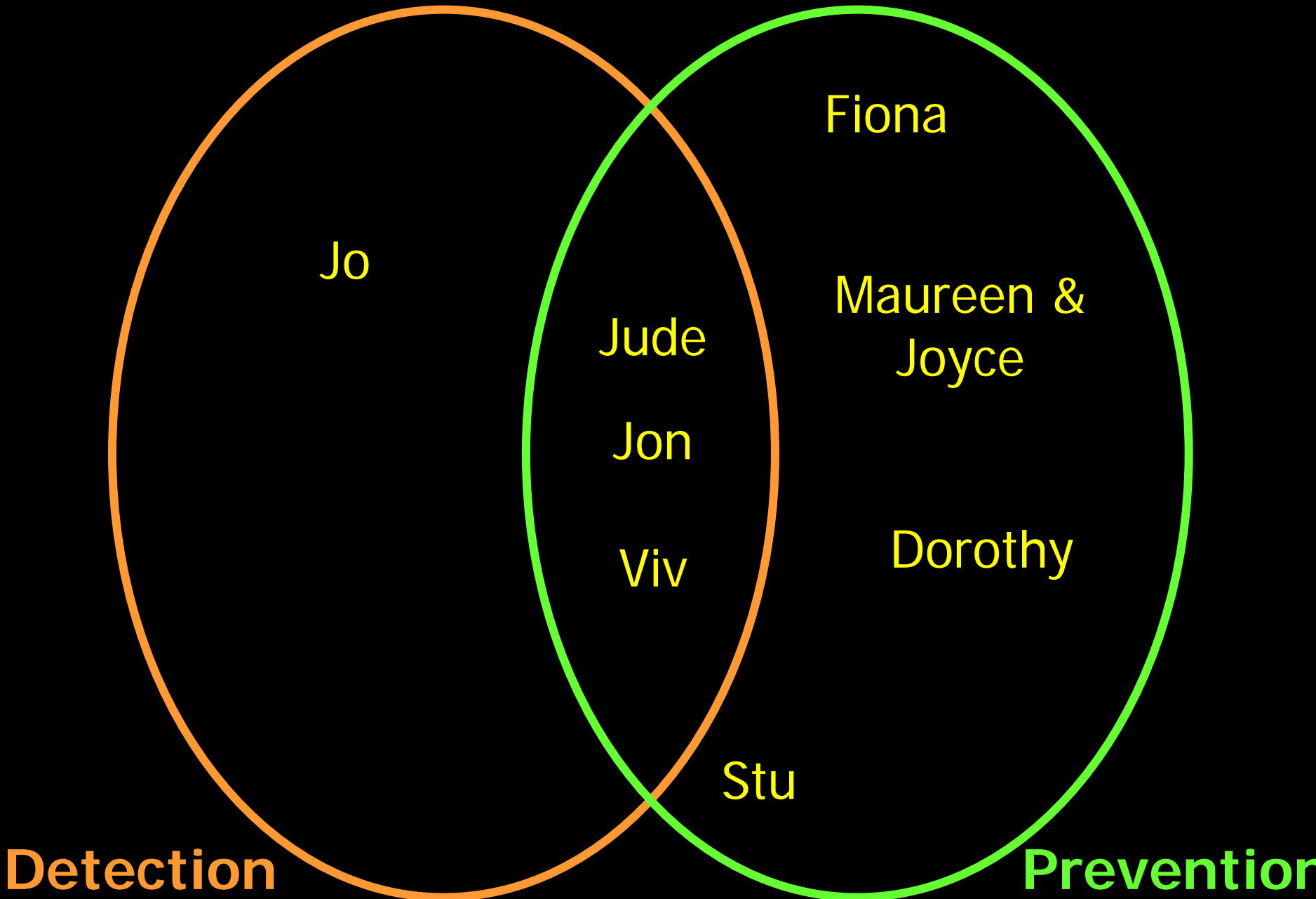
# Preventing and Designing out Plagiarism – some reflections

**Dr Chris Willmott**

Dept of Biochemistry,  
University of Leicester  
cjr2@le.ac.uk



University of  
**Leicester**



Jo

Jude

Jon

Viv

Stu

Fiona

Maureen &  
Joyce

Dorothy

Detection

Prevention

# Overall (and ongoing) issues

- What is plagiarism?
- Getting to grips with recipes v 'browning' mince  
Threshold concepts?
- Grey areas, where do you draw the line?
  - can't just pass task to software (10% match)
- Use of images? Good practice?
- Enforcement, ethics and engineering
- Students: "Frozen mash and tinned mince"  
Staff: "Here's one I used earlier"

# Overall (and ongoing) issues

- What is collusion?
  - Collusion, collaboration, groupwork
  - Memorising a shared essay?
  - What punishment for collusion?
- Scientific literacy
  - What is science?
  - When does something need to be cited?
  - "Surely we know everything now?"
  - Referencing habits
  - "body of knowledge" v "process of study"
- Plagiarism culture v Creative commons & mashups?

# Overall (and ongoing) issues

- “Plagiarism as an excuse to drop essays as they are too much like hard work for staff”
- Plagiarism as a tool for asking “what is learning?”
- Can’t prevent plagiarism, can deter it
- Misunderstanding, misuse, misconduct
  - misunderstanding – don’t know what
  - misuse – know what, don’t know how
  - misconduct – know what and know how

# Overall (and ongoing) issues

- You cannot sift your own course alone to plan against plagiarism – value of a fresh pair of eyes
- Do we plan our courses or set the outline and let it evolve?
- What do you design in?
  - academic apprenticeship
  - quick and dirty feedback, 6 staple-on sheets
  - activity is essential
- What do we design out?
  - Google exists, find and display is trivial
  - tasks that can be copied or faked

# Overall (and ongoing) issues

- Swapping from 'faking' to 'making'
- Focus on 'process' not 'product'
- Requests drafts to be kept
- Authenticate – observe, meta-task, viva
- Anonymous coursework?
- Policy evolution? Dept v Institution?
- Subjectivity: of reporting, of guilt, of penalty
- Turnitin as a training tool?
- Online tutorial - subject-specific