

This case was brought to the attention of OIG by a June 4, 1992 telephone call from Drs. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] (the complainants) of the College of [REDACTED] University. The complainants also stated their concerns in a letter dated [REDACTED]. They charged that Drs. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] (the subjects) of [REDACTED] University had failed to cite relevant publications by the complainants and others in their article, "[REDACTED]" which appeared in [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] on pages [REDACTED]. The complainants alleged in their telephone conversation, but not in their letter, that the subjects' article contained ideas stolen from them. In a [REDACTED] telephone conversation, the complainants clarified that they were not alleging intellectual theft.

OIG's inquiry revealed that the failure to cite was inconsequential and that citation, though perhaps desirable, was certainly not required. The article by the subjects has a somewhat different intellectual focus from the work of the complainants. While the work of the complainants and others may, in a general way, have influenced the subjects' perspective about the importance of certain processes, citation in such matters is not mandatory and failure to cite in such instances does not constitute misconduct in science.

OIG also concluded that there was no evidence of intellectual theft. The arguments and data in the subjects' paper are their own. Neither the complainants' letter nor the response to the subjects' article that the complainants submitted for publication claims otherwise.

The normal channels for scientific discourse and publication provide adequate opportunities for the complainants to seek recognition for their contributions. The subjects in this case had no obligation to highlight the complainants' work.

OIG found no evidence of misconduct in science. This case is closed and no further action will be taken.

[REDACTED] 7/19/93
Staff Scientist, Oversight

Concurrence:

Peggy Fischer 7/20/93
Peggy L. Fischer
Acting Deputy Assistant Inspector General,
Oversight

James J. Zwolenik 7/20/43

James J. Zwolenik
Assistant Inspector General for Oversight

P L Sunshine

Philip L. Sunshine
Deputy Inspector General

cc: Assistant Inspector General for Oversight
Inspector General.