

CLOSEOUT FOR M92090039

This case was brought to OIG by [REDACTED], a program officer in the [REDACTED] program, on [REDACTED], 1992. He had received a [REDACTED] e-mail from [REDACTED] (the complainant), who had reviewed a proposal and found a possible instance of plagiarism. The proposal was [REDACTED], entitled "[REDACTED]," submitted by [REDACTED] and Dr. [REDACTED], both of [REDACTED] (the subjects). The complainant alleged that four paragraphs constituting the section entitled "[REDACTED]" in the background section of the proposal (pages 8-9) were identical or nearly identical to the first four paragraphs of an article by the complainant, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] entitled "[REDACTED]". This article was originally published in the [REDACTED] (1988). The four paragraphs in question appeared earlier in [REDACTED] of the complainant's doctoral dissertation ([REDACTED]).

OIG examined the material in the proposal and the article and confirmed that they were identical or nearly identical. We wrote to the subjects asking for their comments and explanations. The subjects explained that the first author of the article (the complainant) had supplied one of the subjects with the paragraphs in question for inclusion in a collaborative proposal to [REDACTED]. Four weeks later, the proposal was submitted to [REDACTED] with the first author listed as a co-investigator. The first author reviewed and approved the text of the proposal and also signed it. The subjects incorporated material from the [REDACTED] proposal into their [REDACTED] proposal, including the four paragraphs referred to in the plagiarism allegation. After receiving the letter from OIG, the subjects contacted the first author and requested that he send us a letter confirming their account. He then did so.

OIG directed the subjects to revise their proposal to indicate that the copied material was supplied by the complainant and was excerpted from an article of which he was first author. They have now supplied corrected material to OIG and the NSF Division [REDACTED].

OIG wrote to the subjects and the complainant pointing out that problems such as this can arise when researchers do not

clearly specify in advance the terms of their collaboration and the rights of the collaborators to work produced or used jointly.

OIG has determined that there is no substance to the original allegation of misconduct. At most, the subjects were careless in reusing material developed by a former collaborator and supplied for submission in a previous collaborative research proposal without taking account of the origin of that material. This case is closed and no further action will be taken.

[REDACTED]

11/15/93

Concurrence:

Donald E. Buzzelli 11/15/93

Donald E. Buzzelli
Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Oversight

noted

James J. Zwolenik
James J. Zwolenik
Assistant Inspector General for Oversight

Montgomery K. Fisher

Montgomery K. Fisher
Counsel to the Inspector General

cc: Signatories
Inspector General

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