

CLOSEOUT FOR M94010001

On January 26, 1995, Dr. [REDACTED], Program Director for [REDACTED] in the Division of [REDACTED] in the Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences, informed OIG of a letter he had received from Mr. [REDACTED] (aka [REDACTED], the complainant. In his letter the complainant described problems a consultant had experienced with the subject, Dr. [REDACTED], an Assistant Professor in the Department of [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] University. The consultant had worked with the subject on her research project and, partly as a result of her work with him, the subject had submitted NSF proposal [REDACTED] entitled, "[REDACTED]". Apparently the consultant was strongly interested in working on the subject's NSF research project and was angry that she was using consultants other than him and that she had reduced the contractual amount she was willing to pay him for his services. Allegedly the subject had offered the consultant co-authorship on a book that was to be written but the consultant was concerned that he might not now be named as a co-author. The consultant alleged that the subject was mishandling her grant funds and reneging on her contractual agreements with him.

OIG reviewed the subject's award jacket, correspondence she had with the program officer, the financial records for the award, and the complainant's letter and its supporting documentation. OIG learned that the subject and consultant had worked together for about 14 months before the proposal was submitted and for 23 months before it was awarded. This relationship began to deteriorate and finally broke apart at the time the NSF award was made. The subject's proposal specifically described her work with the consultant and his anticipated contribution to her research project. However, when the subject asked the NSF program officer, he told her the proposal did not commit her to work with the consultant. The program officer told the subject that her use of other consultants was "encouraged" because it would "enhance the project." The proposal also identified four other individuals as potential consultants. Unlike the consultant some of these individuals received payments under the award, indicating that the consultant's and subject's relationship had terminated before work on the NSF award began.

OIG concluded that the issues raised by the complainant had arisen before the NSF proposal was submitted. The relationship between the subject and consultant had severed at about the same time the NSF award was made and no NSF funds were provided to the consultant. The subject's proposal did not contain any explicit commitment for working solely with the consultant, and the NSF program officer had encouraged the subject to work with other individuals who would advance her research. The NSF program officer's actions were appropriate. The proposal stated that one of the goals of the project was to publish papers in

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scholarly journals and a dictionary; however, the proposal did not contain a list of co-authors or specify that the consultant would be a co-author, and the book has not been published. The consultant's concerns about alleged agreements made many months before the NSF proposal was submitted were not within NSF's jurisdiction. In addition, OIG could not find evidence to support the consultant's concerns and also concluded the subject's actions would not be considered misconduct in science even if they were within OIG's jurisdiction.

This inquiry is closed and no further action will be taken.

cc: Staff Scientist, Deputy AIG-Oversight, AIG-Oversight, IG