

CLOSEOUT FOR M95060024

This case came to OIG on June 19, 1995, when we received a letter from Dr. [REDACTED] (the complainant) of the [REDACTED]. The complainant alleged that [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] (the subject) had committed misconduct by claiming to be the inventor of a certain analytic method (the technique) that the complainant himself claims to have originated. The complainant alleged that the subject persisted in his false priority claim even after the complainant had pointed up the subject's error.

The complainant supplied OIG with numerous published works that, in his view, supported his priority claim. He also supplied relevant unpublished scholarly correspondence, copies of his correspondence with the subject on this issue, and materials from an inquiry performed by the subject's university in response to the complainant's allegation of misconduct. Included in the latter materials were the opinions of an unnamed expert scientist whom the university consulted.

In his discipline (to which the technique is more intellectually important than it is in other fields), the subject is widely credited with originating the technique and developing a formal account of its relationship to existing knowledge. He also popularized the technique in the discipline and gave the technique its name. The complainant, in an introductory textbook intended for students in another discipline, published some ideas and examples that in his view amount to the "invention" of this now important technique.

The complainant alleged that the subject's claims in a recent book¹ to be "inventor" of the technique and to have "introduced" it were serious deviations from accepted practices. The subject's university, aided by an expert consultant, concluded that the allegation lacked substance. OIG consulted another expert in the field, and he agreed with the university's expert. Both concluded that the complainant's work was a precursor of the subject's contributions, but that the subject's decisive advances were to highlight the general applicability of the technique and to tie the

¹The book is [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], [REDACTED] published in 1993. The book acknowledges NSF support, and the senior author has received numerous NSF awards.

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use of the technique to the body of theory in the subject's discipline. OIG decided that the subject's priority claim had sufficient factual basis that it could not be considered misconduct for him to persist in making it.

The complainant further alleged that the subject's book incorrectly described the complainant's early work relating to the technique. OIG determined that the alleged inaccuracy in the subject's citation of the complainant's work would not rise to the level of misconduct.

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