

## CLOSEOUT FOR M-98030011

On 17 March 1998, OIG received allegations of misconduct in science from the complainant.<sup>1</sup> The complainant specifically identified the subject<sup>2</sup> as the person who allegedly plagiarized (intellectual theft) the complainant's research work in a published paper (in Journal 2) authored by ten people.<sup>3</sup> The complainant explained that, although the complainant was one of the co-authors on the paper, he had not been involved in its preparation and he had not consented to be a co-author. In addition, the complainant alleged that the subject's science was "suspicious."

The complainant explained that he had participated as one of the ten co-authors in the preparation of a manuscript for Journal 1.<sup>4</sup> Before this manuscript was submitted to Journal 1, the complainant was removed from the subject's research group. The manuscript was rejected by Journal 1. The complainant said that the rejected manuscript was resubmitted to Journal 2. The complainant provided a copy of a letter he had received from the editor of Journal 2, which states that the manuscript rejected by Journal 1 had been resubmitted to Journal 2 along with copies of three of Journal 1's *ad hoc* reviews. The editor of Journal 2 explained that the manuscript was accepted for publication without additional external review, contingent on the completion of revisions suggested by Journal 1's reviewers.

The complainant, who initially told OIG that he would provide specific information related to his allegations against the subject, subsequently informed OIG that he would not be providing this information. OIG concluded that the complainant participated in the initial preparation of the manuscript for Journal 1 and that this same manuscript was submitted to Journal 2. Because the complainant was a co-author on the published paper, there is no substance to the allegation that the subject plagiarized the complainant's research work in the paper. OIG also noted that the resubmission of the same manuscript by the subject to Journal 2 without the complainant's permission is, in this case, not a serious deviation from accepted practices and, hence, not misconduct in science.

OIG learned from the complainant that the subject's "suspicious" science involved disagreements over the subject's interpretations of data, not about the quality of the data. Disagreement over interpretations, as described by the complainant in this case, is not misconduct in science.

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

cc: Staff Scientist, Attorney, AIG Oversight, IG

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Footnotes Redacted