

CLOSEOUT FOR M98090025

On September 28, 1998, Dr. [REDACTED] (the program officer) of NSF's Division of [REDACTED] brought OIG an allegation of plagiarism concerning [REDACTED], a proposal submitted by Dr. [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] (the subject).<sup>1</sup> The program officer received the allegation from a proposal reviewer, Dr. [REDACTED] of the Department of [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] (the reviewer). The reviewer alleged that the subject had plagiarized approximately seven lines of background material from a published article.<sup>2</sup>

OIG examined the proposal and the article. We determined that the subject referred to the article at the end of the first sentence he took from it, but did not indicate that that sentence and approximately five lines of text that followed it were taken nearly verbatim from the article. There was no evidence of additional inadequately attributed copying from that article. OIG concluded that the amount of material that the subject used without proper attribution, the background function of this material in the subject's proposal, and the inclusion of a citation to the article, taken together, made this matter insufficiently serious to be misconduct in science.

OIG contacted the subject. We informed him of our conclusion that what he had done was not sufficiently serious to be misconduct in science. We explained to him that NSF "expects strict adherence to the rules of proper scholarship and attribution" (Grant Proposal Guide, NSF 99-2, page 1) and discussed with him how he could have complied with those rules in this instance. We noted that NSF has made findings of misconduct in science against scientists who have done somewhat more extensive unattributed or improperly attributed copying from the work of others and urged him to familiarize himself thoroughly with the standards of proper scholarly attribution.

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

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<sup>1</sup> The proposal is entitled [REDACTED]. NSF declined to fund it.

<sup>2</sup> The article is [REDACTED], and [REDACTED], "[REDACTED]" [REDACTED].