

Case 1: Authorship

Actors:	Dr. Abigail Phillips	female assistant professor, communication
	Dr. Brian Quinn	male full professor, biomedical sciences
	Candace Reed	female graduate student, biomedical sciences
	David Suzuki	male graduate student, communication (non-speaking)

Introduction

Dr. Abigail Phillips is an assistant professor in Communication, whose tenure review is coming up soon. She is collaborating on an interdisciplinary, mixed-method project with **Dr. Brian Quinn**, a recently promoted full professor in biomedical sciences. The project is studying the communication of neuroscientists with each other and with patients. Dr. Phillips is the primary investigator, and worked successfully together with Dr. Quinn on a previous project; the two generally get along well.

There are two graduate students working on this project. First, **Candace Reed** is a doctoral student in biomedical sciences. Dr. Quinn is her major professor. She has cleaned much of the quantitative data that was collected via survey questionnaires for the project. Second, **David Suzuki** is a doctoral student in communication who helped to design the study and has also helped Dr. Phillips, his major professor, conduct qualitative interviews of a small sample of neuroscientists.

In the last project meeting, Dr. Phillips agreed with everyone that she would start to write up the results of the study, in the hope of publishing an article in the *Journal of Communication* before her tenure review. David is also helping to write the manuscript, and the two have already agreed, with Dr. Quinn's blessing, to have David be listed as third author on the paper (after Dr. Phillips and Dr. Quinn).

About a week after the meeting, Dr. Phillips receives an e-mail from Candace ...

Scene 1: Candace's E-mail

Candace: Dr. Phillips, I wanted to make sure that you will include me as an author on the manuscript you are writing. As you know, I have contributed by cleaning the data that was collected from the surveys. Please be sure to include my middle initial (B) as well. Thank you.

Scene 1: Questions for Discussion

- On the face of it, are Candace's e-mail and request reasonable?
- What considerations should Dr. Phillips take into account here?

Facing difficulty in knowing what to do next, Dr. Phillips decides she should meet with Dr. Quinn to discuss the matter.

Scene 2: Dr. Phillips and Dr. Quinn Discussing the Matter

- Phillips: Hi Brian, I need to discuss an e-mail Candace has sent me.
- Quinn: Hmm? Is there a problem?
- Phillips: I'm not sure actually. She is asking to be an author on the manuscript we're writing.
- Quinn: Yes, Candace is very excited about having contributed and is glad she'll have a publication so early in her doctoral degree. What's the issue?
- Phillips: Well, at least in communication we would not normally consider data cleaning to be sufficient grounds for authorship.
- Quinn: Interesting. In biomedical science we often do consider that to be enough. And I'd especially encourage you to put Candace as the fourth author in this case, since it will *really* help her career get off the ground.
- Phillips: I realize that, sure ... but I thought we were planning on publishing in the *Journal of Communication*? And David has put *so much effort* into helping us design the study and collect the data, and he's really looking forward to helping me write the article. I'd hate to devalue the work he's done and is going to do.
- Quinn: Well remember we wouldn't be writing the article yet if it wasn't for Candace's efforts cleaning the data! I'd strongly encourage you to include her, although of course it's your decision as PI.
- Phillips: (*sighs*) Alright. I guess I'll have to think about it. It's just that the editors and reviewers of the *Journal of Communication* will probably think her contribution isn't enough to be listed.
- Quinn: Well hopefully you can come to the right decision. See you at the next meeting, Abigail.
- Phillips: See you then, Brian.

Scene 2: Questions for Discussion

- Did Dr. Quinn provide responsible and ethical advice? Why or why not?
- Would placing Candace as fourth author be fair to David?
- Suppose you are a faculty member in communication and Dr. Phillips asked you for advice. What would you tell her to help her resolve this problem?
- What could have been done to prevent this problem from happening?

Case 2: Peer Review

Actors: **Dr. Brian Quinn** male full professor, biomedical sciences
 Candace Reed female graduate student, biomedical sciences

Introduction

Dr. Brian Quinn is a peer-reviewer on several of his field's top journals. Being a reviewer on so many journals, he often gets more essays to review than he has time for. To help ease his time commitments and to give his students hands-on experience with the publishing process, he frequently lets his doctoral students review essays. Dr. Quinn receives an essay to review from the journal *The Biomedical Review* and he asks **Candace Reed** to evaluate the work. Candace is very excited at the opportunity, as this is the first time Dr. Quinn has asked her to review an essay.

As Candace begins reading the essay, she thinks that the research seems very familiar. When she was a Master's student, a member of her committee, Dr. Jones, worked on a project that is very similar to the project described in the essay. Even though this is an anonymous review, Candace thinks that Dr. Jones is the author of the paper. Dr. Jones gave Candace a hard time during her thesis defense, and she still feels bitter about it. Worried that there might be a conflict-of-interest she goes to talk to Dr. Quinn about the appropriateness of her reviewing the essay.

Scene

Candace: Dr. Quinn, I am worried that there might be a conflict-of-interest with my review of this essay.

Dr. Quinn: What seems to be the issue, Candace?

Candace: I'm certain that the author of this essay is Dr. Jones. I worked with him as a Master's student at Florida Panhandle University. He gave me a really hard time during my thesis defense and forced me to make revisions to my project before he would sign off on it. I still feel that those revisions were unnecessary and a waste of time. His uncooperative behavior almost made me miss the deadline for graduation.

Dr. Quinn: But the essay is submitted anonymously, so you can't be positive that the author is Jones.

Candace: Correct, but the projects are identical.

Dr. Quinn: Look Candace, I allow students to do reviews in order to give them experience. This could be a great opportunity for you, but if you don't think you can handle the responsibility . . .

Candace: Oh, you are misinterpreting me, I can handle the responsibility.

Dr. Quinn: Good, then there won't be a problem. Review the essay as you would any anonymous submission. You can't be sure it's Jones, so there is no conflict of interest. Now, if there isn't anything else I have to get back to work.

Further Events

Candace goes home and begins reviewing the manuscript. To her relief, there seem to be some legitimate issues with the paper's methodology. Focusing on these issues, Candace does not feel guilty about recommending to the journal that they reject the paper. Her review is harsh and mostly negative. Candace turns the review into Dr. Quinn during a particularly busy week. He scans the review and signs off on it without making any changes.

The other reviewer of the essay also noted the methodological problems in his assessment; however, he thought the project had real merit and recommended acceptance with revision. Based on the other review, the editor was surprised at Dr. Quinn's harsh evaluation. In cases where the two reviewers disagree, the journal usually sends out the manuscript to a third reviewer. Yet, Dr. Quinn's reputation in the field and strongly negative review weighed heavily on the editor's mind and she ultimately rejected the paper.

Questions for Discussion

- Should Dr. Quinn allow his graduate students to review essays?
- Once Candace thought she identified the author of the paper as Dr. Jones, did she have a conflict of interest?
- What issues occurred during her conversation with her mentor?
- Did Candace write an unbiased review?
- Should the editor have rejected the manuscript based on Dr. Quinn's reputation?