



Case 2: Continuation of a Previous Student's Work

A graduate student in Professor Jones' laboratory recently completed a series of ten experiments designed to test a model proposed by the Professor. The model was originally proposed to explain an unpublished experimental result generated by a former graduate student.

The current graduate student wrote up her results and submitted the manuscript for publication, with the Professor as a co-author. The reviewers recommend the paper be published, but only if the original experimental data are included. The original data can be obtained from the old notebooks of the former graduate student, which are still in the laboratory.

The former student left after a year of conflict with the Professor and is currently enrolled in medical school. Both authors believe the former student would refuse to have his data used in the paper, as he would like to make things as difficult for them as possible. They decide to include the data without contacting the former student for permission.

- Was this the appropriate action on the part of the co-authors? Why or why not?



Case 2: Variations

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The following variations of this case can be used to discuss the issues further.

- What if the departed student refused on the grounds that he feels that his work is somehow misrepresented, perhaps selective results were omitted?
- What if two graduate students, one not affiliated with the lab but with needed expertise, write up some results from an experiment, but the Mentor/Professor refuses to give the unaffiliated student authorship?
- What if the departing student had taken his notebooks with him?