Joan Sieber's Commentary on "All in the Interpretation"

Commentary On
All in the Interpretation

This is an excellent case because it illustrates the subtle and diverse pressures that may influence researcher behavior. It is a great example of COI, bias, career pressures, challenges of dealing with the press, and challenges of dealing with criticism. It incorporates all of the things that most researchers have encountered in one form or another. The best part of the case is that Kate is basically a moral person, and she had qualms from the very beginning. Yet, she has ventured down the slippery slope and is now is a position that is uncomfortable, yet safe because her present career direction is different from the one that took her down the slippery slope. The final question is whether she has an obligation to open herself up to criticism now that she is safely off on a different line of research. So she is still under subtle pressure not to do the right thing. And we can all empathize.

The case is designed to make the learner wary and uncomfortable because we can all identify with poor Kate. We all know Dr. Briggs and all know the career pressures Kate feels. Great case!