

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE
HANOVER • NEW HAMPSHIRE

September 6, 1960

FROM L. M. Rieser, Jr.
TO Files
RE Conversation with Dr. Hannah Croasdale

cc: Parkhurst files

After repeated requests from Professor Arnold I managed to meet with Dr. Croasdale for an hour and a half Friday afternoon, September 2, and it seems worthwhile to record a few comments from this conversation as it bears on many aspects of biology at Dartmouth. Arthur Jensen is more familiar with the history of this curious situation than I and perhaps can provide further information.

Dr. Croasdale came to Dartmouth about 25 years ago as a technician in the Department of Zoology. At that time she had a PhD but was appointed as a skilled technician in the general field of histology, slide-making, etc. At the same time she was and, of course, is now, a recognized scientist and algologist. Several members of the department have implied that in her field she is very well recognized. I know that she is called upon to review applications for research made by others to the NSF. She has also been supported on one occasion by the NSF. These remarks are merely to establish her competence as a scientist in her field and to emphasize that her reputation is at least as strong as that of most scientists at Dartmouth.

Until several years ago when Arthur Jensen moved in on the situation, Dr. Croasdale at age 50 was receiving a salary under \$4,000 and, despite her competence, was serving primarily as a technician and assistant to the other senior members of the department. In one sense this is completely fair since that^s the basis on which she was hired some 25 years ago and she had accepted it all along. She managed to survive from the royalties which accrued from the book published by Professor Wilson of which she was illustrator.

Her reason for wanting to see me was that she was desperate to find time for her own research and desperate to become a dignified member of the biology group at Dartmouth. She indicated that Professor Ballard requires her to make slides for his own research, even during vacations; that Professor Arnold, in part from habit, expects her to supervise the shelving of microscopes, the feeding of mice, and all other jobs of the department. She has accepted this for two decades, hoping she would have some teaching opportunity and a chance to carry on research at Dartmouth. She indicated that the employment of a new technician in the department has saved her life in the sense that some of these chores can now be pressed onto him, although usually through her supervision. She has on occasion taught a course on technique which several members of the department consider inappropriate at the undergraduate level but which students have found very stimulating. She would love to give a course in algae but this is botany and has no place in zoology, she finds. She gave a course jointly with Professor Barratt in this field a year or so ago and claims to have done 2/3 of the work. This claim is only a matter of fact and in no sense a grudging one.

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She feels very pushed around by the senior members of the department, particularly Professor Ballard. She would like to participate in the Life Science course in which she has helped some but not as an official member of the staff. Yet the departments complain that they are understaffed and need more manpower. She desperately wants to carry on her own research instead of being a paid technician for other people and feels she has a valid claim. She therefore has requested two terms of a leave of absence for next year as a sabbatical. The department, in a letter from Norm Arnold, has supported this request. I have indicated that we would certainly provide one term's salary for her but that I would review the whole situation inasmuch as her appointment as research associate is with the rank of assistant professor. This implies that she is on a 12-month appointment. I actually believe we should cover what would correspond to a semester's compensation in that she has been here 25 years without a sabbatical leave, although she has had a leave of absence with NSF support.

I am afraid that some advantage has been taken of this individual, although she could have resigned at any time. Her roots are very deep now -- she supports her mother who lives in Hanover and she is not really in a position to walk out. When one talks with her in her basement laboratory, the whole thing is rather Dickensonian. My hope is that we can apply for funds from the NSF, setting up a three-year research program covering her summer salary and salary for one term of the academic year. This will guarantee her time for her research if the grant is awarded. It will free funds for a replacement technician and it will be a start in slowly establishing her position as a scientist among her colleagues, a position which I suspect is recognized outside of Dartmouth in her specialized field.

A real puzzle to me is that if the impression one gets from her is correct, how have her colleagues failed to assist her in gaining recognition here? Again we see the shortcoming of a split between the Botany and Zoology Departments when an individual is assigned to one department ^{his or her} when specialization is in the field of the other department, and teaching opportunities are therefore minimal.

Dr. Croasdale had asked me specifically whether she had tenure at Dartmouth. Officially she does not in that she is appointed with the rank of assistant professor. I think we should clarify this point since she is worried that if she struggles to obtain more research time and reduces her technical contributions, she might be fired out of hand. It seems to me that anyone who has faithfully served Dartmouth for 25 years is in a fairly strong position as far as continued employment for the next 13 years is concerned. I believe she seeks no special favors but rather equality commensurate with her scientific ability and reputation.

LMR:sfs