An update on the classification of endometriosis.

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Further revisions of the current classification scheme are anticipated as the understanding of how endometriosis contributes to infertility and pelvic pain evolves. In any revision of the classification system, use of empirically derived weights and breakpoints to define disease stages based on outcome data in larger clinical trials should be attempted. It is also possible that additional factors such as CA-125 level or lesion characteristics may be shown to play an important role in progression. If so, these must be accounted for in the classification scheme. Careful and consistent use of the recommendations of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine classification of endometriosis subcommittee should allow for collection of data for use in future studies.

The current staging system for endometriosis: does it help?

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Further revisions of the current classification system are anticipated as the understanding of how endometriosis contributes to infertility and pelvic pain evolves. In any revision of the classification system, use of empirically derived weights and breakpoints to define disease stages based on outcome data in larger clinical trials should be attempted. It is also possible that additional factors, such as CA-125 level or lesion characteristics, may be shown to play an important role in progression. If so, these must be accounted for in the classification scheme. Careful and consistent use of the recommendations of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine classification of endometriosis subcommittee should allow for collection of data for use in further studies.

Why do these variations exist?

- Justifiable multiple publication of abstracts
- Publication in multiple languages
- Others?
### Rifai, Bossuyt, Bruns

**Table: Endometriosis and Duplication**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Total Articles 1975-2005</th>
<th>&quot;Déjà vu&quot; duplicates</th>
<th>RBB duplicates (verified)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New England Journal of Medicine</td>
<td>11779</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Chemistry</td>
<td>8867</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1 (2)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lancet</td>
<td>68948</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4 (8)*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Number in parentheses reflects both verified and potential, but unverified, duplicates.

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**Meta-Analysis and the Problems of Duplicate Publication and Plagiarism**

- "Meta-analysis refers to the application of quantitative methods to the problem of combining results from different analytic studies"
- "With the increasing use of meta-analysis, duplicate publication of original research is particularly problematic. Duplicate publication can result in an inappropriate weighting of the study results"


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**Synonymized Plagiarism (Spinning)**

- Today, computers can generate seemingly new content out of existing content
- This technology works better at following search engines than humans
- If you have a name like “Powers” or “Greene” – strange things can happen with a thesaurus

From Eric Best, former RAISE Student

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**Rifai, Bossuyt, Bruns**

There is no doubt that Errami and Garner’s undertaking is challenging and daunting, but one cannot help but wonder whether the publication of “A Tale of Two Citations” was premature. Safeguarding the integrity of biomedical research is essential, but one must also remember that the first rule in medicine is, “First, do no harm.”

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**And now...**

Something New, Creative, and Different

Eric Best
Assistant Professor Emergency Management
Jacksonville State University
Synonymized Plagiarism Example

• Original Report

Original Title: "Spun"

Original Interview Quote:
"Many of the loans are very small — a large proportion of them," said Erik Bent, an author of "The Student Loan Memo: How Good Intentions Created a Trillion-Dollar Problem." The largest debts are run up by people pursuing law, medical or graduate degrees, he said.

Synonymized Report

"Spun" Title: "Deja Vu 13: Learning & Life Can "Uncrash""

Synonymized Quote:
Former RAISE student Does not exist

Is there really something called “Self-Plagiarism?”

• Ethically?
• Duplicate Publishing
  – Is this ever justified?
  – Under what conditions might it be justified?
• Are we mixing up copyright and plagiarism?
• Plagiarism is fault of misattribution of ideas and actual words and is enforced primarily by institutional codes.
• Copyright infringement is the failure to get permission, if needed, and pay for the use of “original works of authorship.” Copyright is enforced by civil courts.

Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE; publicationethics.org)

• Established in 1997, primarily for medical journals.
• Now has 9000 members (journals, publishers, ethicists)
• COPE provides advice to editors and publishers on all aspects of publication ethics and, in particular, how to handle cases of research and publication misconduct.
• It also provides a forum for its members to discuss individual cases. COPE does not investigate individual cases but encourages editors to ensure that cases are investigated by the appropriate authorities (usually a research institution or employer)
• Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors.
• COPE produced an eLearning course for new editors

COPE

• Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors.
• COPE produced an eLearning course for new editors
• Flowcharts for cases of publication misconduct (duplicate publication, text recycling, changes in authorship, conflict of interest, fabricated data)
• Standards for information sharing between editors of competing journals.
• Goal: Rapid and uniform responses to publication misconduct (Flow Charts for Editors, Publishers, Authors, Peer Reviewers,...)
• Case Studies, for instruction (anonymized):

COPE Goal: Best Practices in Managing Publication Misconduct

COPE Flowcharts

• Responding to Whistleblowers
  – Concerns raised directly
  – Concerns raised on social media
• Suspected Plagiarism
  – In a submitted manuscript
  – In a published paper
• Redundant Publication
  – In a submitted manuscript
  – In a published paper
• Changes in Authorship before (or after) publication
  – Addition of an author
  – Removal of an author
• Undisclosed Conflict of Interest by Reviewer
• Suspicion of Fabricated Data
• Reviewer misusing confidential information
COPE Issues/Goals

- Rapid retraction and removal of papers found to violate accepted principles of research publication
- Sharing of information between journals/editors while maintaining confidentiality of submission/review process
- Unauthorized use of data
- Legal documentation of entire COPE review process for all cases
- Publication of circumstances of ethics cases
- Community decision making (COPE Forum)

Recent (2015) Activity COPE

Springer confirms that 64 articles are being retracted from 10 Springer subscription journals, after editorial checks spotted fake email addresses, and subsequent internal investigations uncovered fabricated peer review reports. “We have strong reason to believe that the peer review process on these 64 articles was compromised. …Attempts to manipulate peer review have affected journals across a number of publishers… Springer has made COPE aware of the findings of its own internal investigations and has followed COPE’s recommendations, as outlined in their statement, for dealing with this issue. Springer will continue to participate and do whatever we can to support COPE’s efforts in this matter.”

Recent (2016) Activity COPE

- Best Practices in Use of Journal Impact Factors based on distribution of the number of citations: “The journal impact factor is calculated from the arithmetic mean of a highly skewed distribution…that obscures a “high degree of overlap between most journals.” Larivière, V., Y. Kiermer, C.J. MacCallum, M. Münch, M. Patterson B. Pulverer, S. Swaminathan, S. Taylor, S. Curry, 2016: A simple proposal for the publication of journal citation distributions. bioRxiv http://dx.doi.org/10.1101/062109
- Author impersonating corresponding author: An article apparently written by seven authors from two universities was accepted and published after an uneventful peer review process. The journal received an email from the corresponding author to say that the paper had been submitted without his, or his co-authors, knowledge or permission, claiming that the first author of the article submitted the article under the corresponding author’s name. What actions should the editor take to address these claims?

Retraction Watch

- The Center for Scientific Integrity
- Adam Marcus, Managing Editor of Gastroenterology and Enterology News and Anesthesiology News (BA, History, U. Michigan; MA Science Writing, Johns Hopkins)
- Ivan Oransky, Vice President and Editorial Director, Med Page Today. Instructor, Medical Journalism, New York University.

Retraction Watch Leader Board

1. Yoshitaka Fuji (total retractions: 183)*
2. Joachim Boldt (94)
3. Diederik Stapel (58)
4. Adrian Maxim (48)
5. Peter Chen (43)
6. Hua Zhong (41)
7. Shigeki Kato (39)
8. James Hunton (37)
9. Hendrik Schö (36)
10. Hyung-In Moon (35)
11. Naoki Mori (32)
12. Tao Liu (29)
13. Cheng-Wu Chen (28)
14. Gideon Goldstein (26)
15. Scott Reuben (25)
16. …
Leader Board now reports top 30

Un-Retraction Watch?!?!

- In July 2015, Peter Chen of ETH Zurich and colleagues recapitulated an experiment largely similar to one that Nobelist Georg Wittig (Chemistry 1979) had performed — and subsequently retracted — decades earlier. Their findings suggest Wittig may actually have gotten it right the first time.
- Wittig asked student Dietlinde Krauss to replicate the findings, but when she “could not reproduce the 1960 results under any set of conditions, Wittig, in 1964, explicitly retracted the claim.
Questions concerning the Management of Plagiarism in Research Publications

- Is self-plagiarism sometimes acceptable?
  - What should be the standards of practice?
- Should plagiarism by managed by editors and the research community (COPE Model), or by Granting Agencies?
- Under what conditions should duplicate publications be condoned or is it always unacceptable?

ORI Plagiarism (2012)

- “ORI interpreted its definition of plagiarism to apply to the theft or misappropriation of intellectual property and/or the substantial unattributed textual copying of another’s work. ORI’s interpretation does not include authorship or credit disputes or ‘self-plagiarism’ of one’s work from one paper to another or from a paper to a grant application.”
- “ORI will continue to exercise a standard that is notably more forgiving than the standard in general use at institutions.”
- “Institutions may have internal standards of conduct different from the HHS standards for research misconduct under this part. Therefore, an institution may find conduct to be actionable under its standards even if the action does not meet this part’s definition of research misconduct.”

ORI Self Plagiarism (2012)

- “ORI often receives allegations of plagiarism that involve efforts by scientists to publish the same data in more than one journal article. Assuming that the duplicated figures represent the same experiment and are labeled the same in both cases (if not, possible falsification of data makes the allegation significantly more serious), this so-called ‘self-plagiarism’ does not meet the PHS research misconduct standard. However, once again, ORI notes that this behavior violates the rules of most journals and is considered inappropriate by most institutions. In these cases, ORI will notify the institution(s) from which the duplicate publications/grants originated, being careful to note that ORI had no direct interest in the matter.”

Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)

- <publicationethics.org>
- Elsevier, Wiley–Blackwell, Springer,
  *Fistor* & *Vitriol*, *Plagiarism Manifesto* and *Writers Round*
- COPE Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors
- Flowcharts on how to handle common ethical problems
- Other COPE guidelines (e.g. on retractions)
- Sample letters (to adapt for use)
- Database of all cases discussed at COPE Forum (including podcasts of the discussion (where available), the advice given and the outcome of cases)