REQUIEM FOR THE RETRACTION

Why 'the honest retraction' and other proposed self-correction mechanisms will lead to fewer retractions.

Tim Kersjes

World Conference on Research Integrity 2024

SPRINGER NATURE GROUP

Retractions fix science, right?

Not everybody is so sure…

SCIENCE

Is Science Broken?

Or is it se

BY DANIEL E

Posted on January 9,

Home > Science of Science Communication > Science Media Monitor

> Science Media Monitor No. 4: Crisis and Self-Correction in Science

Science and Self

Why Science Is Not Necessarily Self-C

John P. A
Stanford Prev
Health Resear
of Statistics, S

Perspectives on Psychological Science
7(6) 645–654
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Where Are the Self-Correcting Mechanisms in Science?

Simine Vazire (iD) ✉ and Alex O. Holcombe (iD) View all authors and affiliations

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Abstract

It is often said that science is self-correcting, but the replication crisis suggests that self-correction mechanisms have fallen short. How can we know whether a particular scientific fie

2

Retractions fix science, right?

Not everybody is so sure…

Science Is Not Always "Self–Correcting"

Fact–Valu

Published: 01

Volume 21, p

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Nathan Cofnas ✉

Science is Self-Correcting – But the Record is Not. An
Exper
Scien

The illusion of self-correction

Julia Rohrer

April 13th,
2021

A self-correcting fallacy — Why

Correcting the "self-correcting" mythos of science

Douglas Allchin *

Abstract: In standard characterizations, science is self-correcting.
Scientists examine each other's work skeptically, try to replicate im-
portant discoveries, and thereby expose latent errors. Thus, while

3

As retra

Encouraging self-correction by authors

But they don't really want to

Retraction Watch

The

Open Access   Editorial

Why Research Retraction Due to Misconduct Should Be Stigmatized

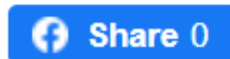by **Guangwei Hu** [1,*] and **Shaoxiong Brian Xu** [1,2]

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[2] School of Foreign Studies, Huanggang Normal University, Huanggang 438000, China

* Author to whom correspondence should be addressed.

in Share   Share 0

We need more retractions!

**Retractions, retractions and then some more retractions**

- Science should be self-correcting
- Retractions aren't great because they don't distinguish between honest errors and misconduct
- Science could be more self-correcting by making this distinction between honest retractions and retractions for bad things (like misconduct)
- This would encourage more self-correcting by authors

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What is a retraction, anyway?

The basics

COPE

Guidance ∨   Member resources ∨   About COPE ∨
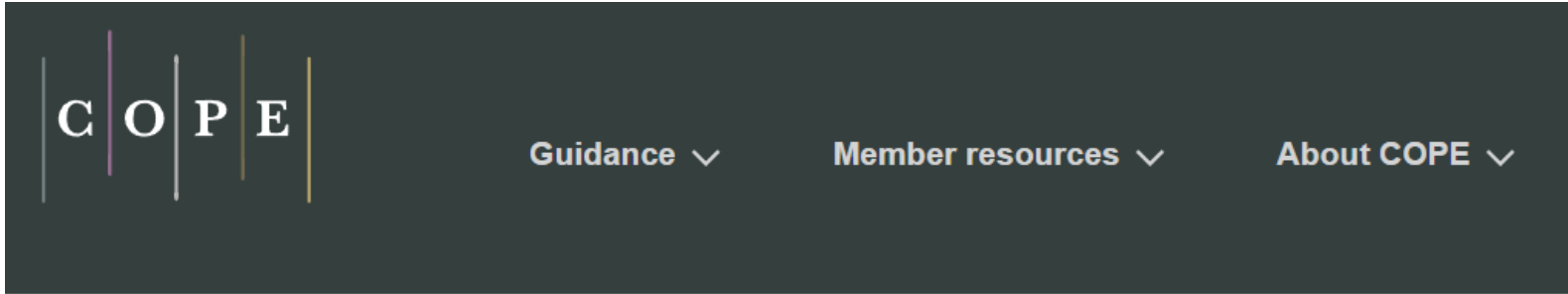
Home / Resources / Guidelines

Retraction guidelines

DOI: https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.1.4

What is a retraction, anyway?

The basics

THE PURPOSE OF RETRACTION

Retraction is a mechanism for correcting the literature and alerting readers to articles that contain such seriously flawed or erroneous content or data that their findings and conclusions cannot be relied upon. Unreliable content or data may result from honest error, naïve mistakes, or research misconduct.

(**Straight from the source:** https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.1.4)

To retract is an **EDITORIAL** decision!

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I will sue you, you will hear from my lawyer!

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Let's fix this!
Ok this might be a bit too much

So retractions are contentious, but now what?

New article types and editorial policies all the way down (1)

Better self-correction with self-retractions?

World View | Published: 22 March 2016

Set up a 'self-retraction' system for honest errors

Daniele Fanelli ✉

Nature **531**, 415 (2016) | Cite this article

1166 Accesses | **19** Citations | **172** Altmetric | Metrics

Notices should make obvious whether a withdrawal of research is the result of misconduct or a genuine mistake, says Daniele Fanelli.

Let's fix this, but how?
New article types and editorial policies all the way down

Better self-correction with amendment notices?

(minor amendment, major amendment, complete amendments)

Check for updates

OPINION ARTICLE

Amending published articles: time to rethink retractions and corrections?

[version 1; peer review: 2 approved with reservations]

Virginia Barbour (iD) [1], Theodora Bloom (iD) [2], Jennifer Lin (iD) [3], Elizabeth Moylan (iD) [4]

+ Author details

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Let's fix this, but how?

New article types and editorial policies all the way down

Better self-correction with three retraction types?

(proactive, reactive, unilateral)

Home > Current Psychology > Article

A tale of three retractions: a call for standardized categorization and criteria in retraction statements

Published: 21 September 2023

Volume 43, pages 16023–16029, (2024)   Cite this article

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James D. Ivory ✉ & Malte Elson   INGER NATURE

Let's fix this, but how?
New article types and editorial policies all the way down

Better self-correction with even more (five!) retraction types?
(withdrawal, retired, cancelled, self-retraction, removal)

PERSPECTIVE

Improving the integrity of published science: An expanded taxonomy of retractions and corrections

Daniele Fanelli ✉, John P.A. Ioannidis, Steven Goodman

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So basically:

Here's what they have in common

A common denominator in these proposals is that there should be a clear distinction between retractions for <u>misconduct,</u> and retractions for <u>honest errors</u>.

If this exists, authors would then be more inclined to 'do the right thing'.
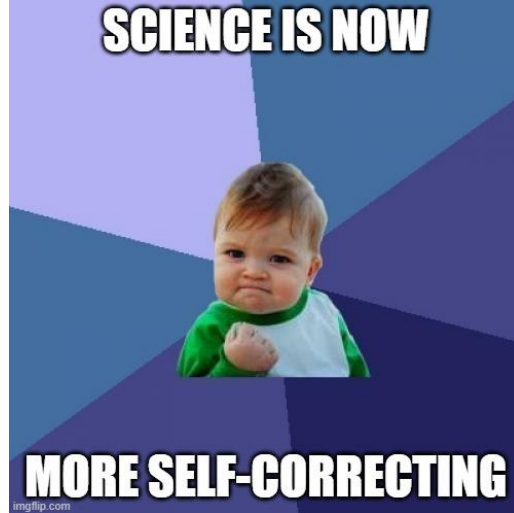
These are excellent ideas, but it may not work because….(1)
The editor doesn't know

I will sue you, you will hear from my lawyer!

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These are excellent ideas, but it may not work because….(3)

Retractions don't get any better

If the objective is to promote better (self-)correction of science,

these proposals are possibly counterproductive

- Having additional retraction types for honest errors will only **reinforce the stigma.**
- This will lead to further **discussions, arguments and pleas** for authors, possibly leading to further delays

- That's fine: authors can argue, but editors will be overwhelmed

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So unfortunately….
Hate to break it to you

If the objective is to promote better (self-)correction of science, these proposals are possibly counterproductive

1. Fewer retractions
2. More time needed to actually do retractions
3. Difficulty in setting industry standards (can be done, but it's <u>sooooooo</u> hard)

(also, have there been any success stories around this yet?)

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Retractions are designed to be a neutral tool to correct the literature

- Editorial decisions to retract are based on the reliability of the article, and whether an editor still has confidence in the soundness of the science
- Good retraction notices describe what's wrong with the article, not what the authors may or may not have intended to do

- Retractions are **not punitive, only corrective**

Also (or rather, that's why): retractions are a good thing!

Nobel winner retracts paper from Science

Did the right thing

A Caltech researcher who shared the 2018 Nobel Prize in Chemistry has retracted a 2019 paper after being unable to replicate the results.

Frances Arnold, who won half of the 2018 prize for her work on the evolution of enzymes, tweeted the news earlier today:

Frances Arnold

More retraction positivity, less retraction shaming

More and more and more

You want science to be more self-correcting? Stop retraction shaming!

- Retractions are a normal part of academic publishing and that it is **a good thing**

- Emphasize that retractions are a signal that editors and publishers are **taking their responsibility**

- **Be careful to jump to conclusions** when you see that an article is retracted

- Encourage editors to consider that retractions are **a great way** to correct the published record

- More importantly: emphasize to authors that they are **not being punished**

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THANK YOU

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