

Mr. Marcus wrote a blog in 04.26.2012 regarding one of my paper published in January cytokine in 2007 and later retracted in June 2007. There were three notices published for reason of retraction and final one published in 2012 which says that retraction was due to admin error as agreed by both authors. But Adam Marcus has explained in his blog very differently and accusing me for the reason of retraction after taking to one of the editor of cytokine journal. Information in the blog is incorrect, defamatory and affecting my present and will definitely affect my future career. I wrote several email to him and requested to either remove the blog or correct it, but he is not ready to accept my request. So in last I have no option left but to go legally. Followings are the links of retraction notice of the paper and blog.

1. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1043466607000324?via=ihub>
2. <http://retractionwatch.com/2012/04/26/authors-public-dispute-over-retraction-notice-in-cytokine-ends-in-a-draw-bruises-journal/>

Name of the blog site: retraction watch

Name of the Blogger:

Adam Marcus

Managing Editor

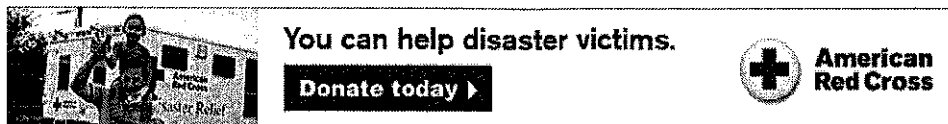
McMahon Publishing

545 W 45th Street

6th Floor

New York NY 10036

adam.marcus1@gmail.com



Tracking retractions as a window into the scientific process

Retraction Watch

Authors' public dispute over retraction notice in Cytokine ends in a draw, bruises journal

without comments

Cytokine had an interesting retraction notice this year that points up the pitfalls — perhaps necessary, perhaps not — that journals can step in when they give authors the benefit of the doubt.

Here's the story: A doctoral student named Varun Keshewani was working in the lab of [Ajit Sodhi](#), a U.S.-trained and well-published cell biologist at Banaras Hindu University. Keshewani's [LinkedIn page](#) lists him as a postdoc at the University of Nebraska.

The two were co-authors on a 2007 paper in Cytokine, "Quantitative role of p42/44 and p38 in the production and regulation of cytokines TNF- α , IL-1 β and IL-12 by murine peritoneal macrophages in vitro by Concanavalin A." (That paper has been cited nine times, according to Thomson Scientific's Web of Knowledge, including by the retraction notice.)

But it seems Keshewani, who was listed as the paper's corresponding author despite his junior status, did not have his mentor's blessing when he submitted the manuscript.

According to [Scott Durum](#), an editor of Cytokine, Sodhi saw the publication online and complained to the journal. Not only had Sodhi's student failed to inform him of the article, Durum told us, he had not received permission to use the data, some of which had previously been published by the pair and some of which already was in submission.

He wanted the paper retracted. But we have the rule that all the authors must agree.

Keshewani objected, saying that such a step might hinder his prospects of future publication. And he was probably right on that score: We're guessing not many lab heads would be thrilled with the idea of hiring a researcher with a history of submitting data without permission and forging author names.

What followed was more than four years of bickering and he-said — he-said between the two scientists, with the journal caught in the middle.

After Sodhi's complaint, the journal issued a retraction notice in June 2008 which tried to clarify the issue. But Keshewani again complained, and convinced the journal to print another notice — modified by an erratum — but again he felt the notice was prejudicial.

Said Durum:

For a while it was a standoff. If they don't agree to the text of the retraction notice, what's the right thing to do?

Well, more on that in a moment.

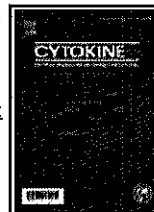
Unfortunately, neither of the earlier notices seems to be available online anymore, having been replaced most recently by the following:

The Editors-in-Chief would like to confirm the retraction of this article at the request of both authors, as it duplicates data that had already appeared in Nitric Oxide, 16 (2007) 294-305, doi:[10.1016/j.niox.2006.11.001](#) and J. Interferon Cytokine Res., 27 (2007) 497-506, doi:[10.1089/jir.2007.0166](#), or had been submitted to International Immunopharmacology, later to appear in Int. Immunopharmacol., 7 (2007) 1403-1413, doi:[10.1016/j.intimp.2007.07.004](#). The authors would like to apologize for this administrative error on their part.

Note that nothing here mentions the disputed authorship. And Sodhi, for whatever reason, accepts an equal share of the blame, in the form of the vague "administrative error."

It certainly is reasonable for journals to adopt policies like the one Cytokine, an Elsevier title, has in place for disputed retractions. But we don't think they're as much at the mercy of antagonistic authors as this episode might indicate.

Journals have a responsibility to authors up to a point. But when they have to reverse themselves because authors squabble over the wording of a retraction notice, we think they have a right to step in and break up the fight. If not, they wind up being like the hapless ref who take a shot in the eye because he's lost control of the bout.



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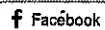
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Written by amarcus41
April 26th, 2012 at 9:30 am

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Dan Zabetakis April 26, 2012 at 12:17 pm
It seems to me there are two issues in this case.

First is whether there is duplicate publication. The Journal should be able to make a determination of that and take the initiative to retract without the author's consent.

The second is that of disputed authorship and submission. When this cannot be resolved by consent with the authors I doubt that journals have the resources or authority to make a decision. I think the best course would be to ask the authors to refer the matter to the university administration. The university has the ultimate responsibility for the faculty and students and has the authority to correct or sanction the individuals. If the university concludes there was misconduct then the journal can act on that finding. If they find no misconduct or fail to act, then the journal should not retract.

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WB April 26, 2012 at 2:39 pm

I agree with Dan (above) that if there is an issue about duplication then author consent should not be required for retraction. The journal should be able to enforce that decision whether authors agree or not as originality of the data is the prerequisite for any publication. The Editor of Cytokine should have been able to assess whether there was any data duplication or not and should have decided accordingly long time back.

As for the other issue of authorship once again if some one has been included as an author without their permission then too it is a clear violation of authorship guidelines and should have been reason enough for retraction. Did either of the parties provide any evidence in support of or to refute that communication of the manuscript had been agreed upon by both the authors at some point of time? But this would have been a secondary and non-issue if the data had already been published or communicated in other journals.

I do agree that in such cases of authorship dispute the system is biased against the student/post doc as in most of the places (in my knowledge) the university rules would stipulate the PI as having the final authority.

There was no reason for this issue to have dragged on for so long.

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varun keshherwani April 26, 2012 at 7:52 pm

The statements from the editor comes as a shock to me since in over three years of my communication with the journal staff these acquisitions were never made to me. I have asked journal for the clarification on this.

As evident from the progress of the retraction of the paper one can easily understand that matter was complex and final decisions were taken by journal based on evidences. This matter has already jeopardized my career and reputation and is refueling it yet another time. I therefore request to put this article on hold until journal gives any clarification.

Varun Keshherwani

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Ressci Integrity April 26, 2012 at 8:24 pm
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