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**Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology**

September 8, 2014

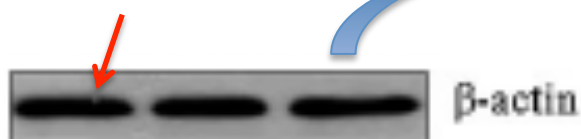
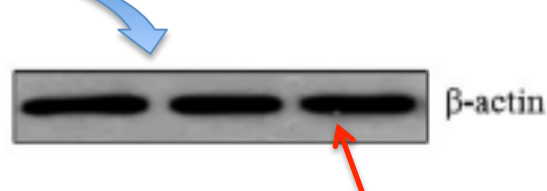
Subject: Concern about two publications in *Tumor Biology* and *Molecular and Cellular Biochemistry* journals

To Editors of *Tumor Biology* and *Molecular and Cellular Biochemistry* journals:

We are writing to express our concern about a couple of publications that were recently published in your respective journals. The first paper was published by Zhong et al. in the journal *Tumor Biology* in February of 2013 and is titled “**Effect of TRAF6 on the biological behavior of human lung adenocarcinoma cell**” ([www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23055197](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23055197)). The second paper was published by Peng et al. in *Molecular and Cellular Biochemistry* in May of 2013 and titled “**TNF receptor-associated factor 6 regulates proliferation, apoptosis, and invasion of glioma cells**” ([www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23358926](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23358926)).

While reading these two manuscripts, we were quite surprised by the striking level of similarity in the layout and content of the two publications, given the fact that they do not seem to share a single common author. In a lot of aspects these two papers look just like carbon copies, but focus on the role of TRAF6 gene in two different biological settings.

More disturbingly, we noticed what seems to be a duplicated and manipulated figure panel that is used in both publications. In Zhong et al. this actin normalization panel can be found in Fig. 6a of the manuscript, while in Peng et al. it can be found rotated 180° in Fig. 7I (see below). We base our conclusion of image manipulation solely on the visual appearance of the two panels and cannot exclude a possibility that our assumptions are unfounded.

**Fig.6a of Zhong et al.****Fig.7I of Peng et al.**


However, we feel strongly that the unusual level of similarity between the two manuscripts and potential manipulation of data warrant further investigation by your journals.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nathaniel Magilnick', written in a cursive style.

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Boldin', written in a cursive style.

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