

# Local research scandals ....and Research Integrity Watchdog

<https://retractionwatch.com/category/by-country/singapore/>



## Harvard researcher's PhD revoked, former group earns three more retractions

A research fellow at Harvard has lost his PhD from a university in Singapore after being found guilty of falsifying data, and his former group leader's contract has been terminated by his institution.

But that's not the whole story. This tangled mess involves not only the Harvard researcher, Sudarsanareddy Lokireddy, and his former boss, Ravi Kambadur at the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore, but an as-yet unnamed colleague of theirs who, we're told, has admitted making up data in three papers, on which Lokireddy and Kambadur are co-authors. Bear with us as we walk you through this tale.



## Singapore university revokes second researcher's PhD in misconduct fallout

Last year, the fallout from a misconduct investigation at Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore resulted in the university revoking the PhD of a Harvard research fellow, and a senior researcher losing his job. In July 2016, NTU told us another researcher who could not be named at the time had also come forward and confessed to making up data.



Now, Retraction Watch has learned that Sabeera Bonala — the researcher who couldn't be named due to ongoing disciplinary procedures last year — has also had her doctorate degree revoked by the NTU.

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## Heart study bleeds into three papers, one retracted and one withdrawn

With the increasingly hectic pace of modern life, everybody is always on the look out for time-saving tricks and tips.

Scientists at the National University of Singapore and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University certainly found one, but we really can't recommend it: doing one randomized controlled trial (RCT) with several outcomes, and publishing them as three separate 2014 papers with "considerable overlap."



So far, one paper has been retracted, and another withdrawn.

## Data "irregularities" prompt retraction of palliative care papers

A group of researchers in Singapore has lost two 2013 articles in *BMJ Supportive & Palliative Care* for problems with their data.

One of the articles was titled "Patients with Dysphagia: Encounters in Taking Medication," the other, "Issues Associated with Delirium Severity Among Older Patients." In both cases, the first and second authors were Rajaram S and Chua HC, of Khoo Teck Puat Hospital.



# NUS: Melendez committed “serious scientific misconduct,” but don’t expect to get any details

Alirio Melendez, a former National University of Singapore immunologist whose story we've been following here [since a retraction in September of last year](#), committed misconduct on an “unprecedented” scale, according to the university, involving more than 20 papers.



*Nature's* Richard van Noorden [has the scoop:](#)

*After a 19-month investigation, the National University of Singapore (NUS) today says that it has determined that one of its former scientists, the immunologist Alirio Melendez, has committed “serious scientific misconduct”. The university found fabrication, falsification or plagiarism associated with 21 papers, and no evidence indicating that other co-authors were involved in the misconduct, it says.*

Melendez has retracted five papers so far, as [we've reported](#), but NUS wouldn't give the whole list. They tell *Nature*: [Continue reading →](#)

# Magnets paper fails to stick as plagiarism leads to retraction

A group engineers from Iran and Singapore have been forced to retract a paper in the *Journal of Magnetism and Magnetic Materials* after the article was found to contain incidents of plagiarism.

The article, “Magnetic properties of iron-based soft magnetic composites with MgO coating obtained by sol–gel method,” appeared in April 2010. Sometime later (we’re getting near the three-year mark from the date of publication) it seems, the journal learned that something was amiss with the paper.



# No small matter: ACS Nano journal growing alarmed by self-plagiarism

Is self-plagiarism — perhaps best referred to as duplication of your own work — a big problem in nanotechnology research?

The American Chemical Society (ACS) Nano journal retracted a study, “Retraction of Nanoembossing Induced Ferroelectric Lithography on PZT Films for Silver Particle Patterning,” late last month because of such duplication:



*This article was withdrawn at the request of the Editor-in-Chief, with agreement by the authors, due to unacceptable redundant text and figures with a previously published article by the same authors (Langmuir 2011, 27, 5167-5170. DOI: 10.1021/la200377b).*

 Follow

**Self-plagiarism ?!?**  
**a.k.a.**  
**duplicate publication**

# Let us take a look at 2 important concepts

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## Plagiarism

## Self-plagiarism

**This module is not about teaching you how to recognize plagiarism but to highlight this ethical issue in academic research. Courses and information on how to identify or avoid plagiarism will available from the CIT, NUS library or online resources. NUS provides two plagiarism prevention services: Turnitin and iThenticate.**

See <http://www.cit.nus.edu.sg/plagiarism-prevention/> for more details

# Concepts associated to Plagiarism

Contents of the next few slides are extracted from

<http://juris.nationalparalegal.edu/intellectualproperty.aspx>



## (1) Working with Scholarly Information

Because information is readily available to many of us within seconds, we see more and more that our moral and ethical boundaries about using this information are being challenged. It is not uncommon to see names of famous journalists and writers, such as Maureen Dowd and Fareed Zakaria, both linked to somewhat minor cases of plagiarism, turning up in the news for borrowing information. Even the beloved primatologist Jane Goodall's most recent book was pulled from the shelves because of “borrowed” material. Goodall claimed she had not kept adequate notes, and the book was rereleased after corrections were made. Still, given these breaches in proper attribution of information, we know we are facing confusing times...

# Concepts associated to Plagiarism

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## (2) Intellectual Property

As good scholars and writers, we must be vigilant about understanding and applying the rules of working with source material. This material is the intellectual property of its creator, and intellectual property rights exist and exist for a reason: to protect the creators of these original works. These works might fall under but are not limited to the areas of journalism, literary writing, art, music, photography, scientific discovery, etc. Intellectual property is protected by law in many forms, including through trademark, copyright, and patent. This protection ensures that the creators of such works are recognized and financially compensated for their original and unique efforts. Thus there should be no “borrowing” of material in academic research and writing without proper attribution. Borrowing—or stealing —information by not attributing the work to its original author (also called citing) is equivalent to plagiarism.

# Concepts associated to Plagiarism

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## (3) Plagiarism

In research and writing, students are often engaged with the work of other scholars. Students are examining or supporting an argument; asking a difficult question and looking for multiple perspectives; crafting a literary review and summarizing an article or a case—all of these are possibilities where a student might be working with information that comes from another scholar. If a student chooses to misrepresent the work of other scholars as his or her own and/or without the correct citation or attribution, this is considered plagiarism. The consequences of plagiarism vary across academic institutions, but most institutions penalize the student by failure in a course. Serious violations can result in suspension or removal from the institution.

# Concepts associated to Plagiarism

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## (4) Paraphrasing and Quoting

When working with scholarly information, students might find it necessary to paraphrase the argument of a scholar or directly quote from the scholar when the student cannot adequately paraphrase the information. In both paraphrasing ideas and directly quoting other scholars, in order not to plagiarize information, students must provide citations in the correct style of the discipline being represented. When paraphrasing, students must avoid using language and sentence structure that too closely models the work being paraphrased. The paraphrase should capture the student's ability to distill the most important information from the scholar and present it in a new and interesting way, using correct documentation. When directly quoting information, the student must use beginning and ending quotation marks around any of the author's language taken directly from the text. The amount of language used in a direct quotation should be as lean as possible. The quotation should also be properly documented. Students must be careful not to add any additional language to the quotation and/or omit language.