



闹大了：作者因9篇论文被撤回 起诉出版社为哪般？

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作为科研人员，若自己发表的论文被期刊撤回，个人学术声誉乃至职业生涯都会遭到严重影响，甚至致命打击。例如论文被撤，尤其因学术不端行为被撤，研究人员的科研生涯都可能因此终结，并且会成为一生无法抹去的污点。而今天的主人公，癌症研究者 Mostafa Jarahian 博士，在短短一天内失去了 9 篇论文，这对他来说是难以接受的。而导致该结果的原因是 Frontiers 出版社最近正在清理“出售作者署名”的论文，而他的 9 篇文章正好在该清理计划的名单中。他告诉 Retraction Watch 记者，他和他的合作者将会迅速采取法律行动，对出版社提起诉讼（图 1）。

今年 9 月，Frontiers 出版社公布了一项消息，他们的诚信研究团队发现了 38 篇已出版的论文存在作者署名被交易的情况，因此决定撤回这些论文（图 2）。据了解，这些论文的“代理人”曾在特定网站和社交媒体上发布论文署名出售的广告。

在 Frontiers 所撤销的 38 篇研究文章中，有 9 篇文章的共同作者的是来自德国海德堡的德国癌症研究中心（DKFZ）的前成员 Jarahian 博士。Jarahian 博士指出，这 9 篇文章之所以被期刊考虑撤回，是因为 DKFZ 向期刊编辑部表明，Jarahian 博士并非其机构的成员（图 3）。

当 Jarhian 博士还在 DKFZ 的毒理学与化疗研究小组工作时，该小组的领导者 Martin R. Berger 得知撤稿消息后，给出版商 Frontiers 发了一封邮件，对撤稿提出了质疑。Berger 指出，Jarhian 博士自 2001 年开始在 DKFZ 工作，直到 2017 年加入了他的研究小组，并在 2020 年离开。这 9 篇被撤稿的文章是在 2021 年投稿的，分别在当年或 2022 年正式发表。

Berger 写道：

“As I understand the situation, the only allegation, which is correct, is that the article(s) under concern was (were) labelled with his old affiliation. On the other hand, there is some period after leaving an institution, during which it is normal to use the old affiliation, as the work originated and was carried out there. In addition, during the period in question, Dr. Jarahian did not have a new position / new employer. In this situation, he used his private email address, which clearly differs from official DKFZ email addresses.”

“根据我对情况的了解，唯一正确的指控是所涉及的文章标注了他的原单位。但是，在离开一个机构后的一段时间内，使用原来的单位是正常的，因为工作是在那里开始和进行的。此外，在此期间，Jarahian 博士没有新的职位 /

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Cancer researcher with nine retractions says he'll take publisher to court

A cancer researcher who lost nine papers in one day as a publisher purged articles offered in “authorship-for-sale” schemes told Retraction Watch he and his co-authors “will soon defend ourselves legally.”



Mostafa Jarahian

Last month, the publisher Frontiers announced it had retracted 38 papers after its research integrity team found links to the practice of buying and selling authorship positions. Brokers list advertisements for authorships of scientific papers on dedicated websites as well as social media.

图1 Retraction Watch报道癌症研究者Mostafa Jarahian因9篇论文被撤稿将起诉出版社的事件 (截图来自Cancer researcher with nine retractions says he'll take publisher to court – Retraction Watch).

新的单位。在这种情况下，他使用了自己的私人电子邮件地址，这显然不同于 DKFZ 的官方电子邮件地址。”

“Finally, the science of the article(s) is not being disputed. In addition, the co-authors have not been involved in any accusation regarding science integrity. Therefore, it does not seem appropriate, to harm all authors because of a minor mistake of one author. If you deem it necessary to establish justice in this regard, I suggest that you allow Dr. Jarahian to write a short erratum.”

“最后，文章的科学性没有受到质疑。此外，共同作者也未涉及任何有关科学诚信的指控。因此，因为一位作者的小错误而损害所有作者的利益似乎并不合适。如果您认为有必要在这

方面公正裁决，我建议您允许 Jarahian 博士写一份简短的勘误。”

“If you can follow this suggestion, you would solve the underlying problem with distinction and grace and avoid the punishment of many co-authors. In the case, in which a PhD is pending on a publication, this would seem clearly unfair and exaggerated.”

“如果您能采纳这一建议，您就能有区别地、客观公平地解决根本问题，并避免许多共同作者受到不合理的对待。”

而 Frontiers 的一位发言人告诉 Retraction Watch 记者，出版商坚持现在的决定，并表示迄今为止没有收到任何 Jarahian 博士对 Frontiers 提起法律诉讼的迹象。撤稿决定是 Frontiers 诚信研究团队进行彻底调查的结果。对于关于“出售作者署名”

Frontiers implements new policy to counter 'Authorship-for-sale'

Posted on September 4, 2023 by Frontiers Science Communications in Frontiers Announcements // 0 Comments

Frontiers has today published a **new author policy** designed to help prevent cases of "authorship-for-sale" among its research publications, a term used throughout the industry which refers to the unethical practice of buying or selling authorship on research papers.

"We recognize that there are legitimate reasons for the request of authorship changes after submission. However, to create real impact in reducing authorship-for-sale schemes, publishers must depend on responsible collaboration from our authors to ensure that their author lists are correct at the point of submission," says Dr Frederick Fenter, chief executive editor of Frontiers.

Under the new policy, requests for authorship changes will only be granted under exceptional circumstances and after in-depth assessment by the Frontiers' research integrity unit. A ledger of requests will be maintained to identify suspicious patterns and trends among these types of requests. As of today, Frontiers has identified and retracted 38 research papers linked to the practice.

"The updated policy and decision to retract these papers reflect our commitment to upholding integrity throughout our portfolio and ensuring that authorship is attributed based on genuine contributions to the research process," says Dr Fenter. "By taking this unambiguous stance, we aim to maintain the trust of readers, authors, and collaborators, while demonstrating to those tempted to engage in this unethical practice will be identified and reported to their institution.

"We recognize the potentially negative impact of the authorship-for-sale retractions on the credibility of any authors who genuinely contributed to these manuscripts. However, our commitment is and will always be to protect the integrity of the scientific record. This is an industry-wide issue and details have now been shared with the Committee on Publication Ethics. We also remain open to sharing details of our investigation and the methods we use to identify 'authorship-for-sale' papers with other publishers on request."

图2 Frontiers出版社将采取新的政策应对涉嫌售卖作者署名论文的问题
(Frontiers implements new policy to counter 'Authorship-for-sale'-Science & research news | Frontiers, frontiersin.org).

When we initially reported on the large batch of retractions, one of Jarahian's co-authors shared an article from Frontiers indicating the publisher had decided to retract the paper after "concerns were brought to our attention from the German Cancer Research Center regarding the authorship of the article."

A draft retraction notice included in the email said:

the German Cancer Research Center contacted the editorial office stating that the author Mostafa Jarahian is not an employee.

图3 电子邮件中包含的一份初稿撤回通知称：德国癌症研究中心与编辑部联系，称作者Mostafa Jarahian并非其工作人员（截图来自Cancer researcher with nine retractions says he'll take publisher to court – Retraction Watch）。

的担忧是通过 PubPeer 提出的，这是一个有效的社区反馈来源，涉及到了 Jarahian 博士的多篇论文的广告。同一作者团队在其他地方发表的文章中也出现了与作者身份相关的问题。

在与 DKFZ 的直接讨论后，该机构确认：

1. Jarahian 博士已不再是其员工（任期于 2020 年 2 月结束）；
2. DKFZ 不知道任何有关这九篇文章的情况，所有这些文章都是在 2021 年提交和发表的；
3. Frontiers 将自己调查的细节与国际出版伦理委员会（COPE）共享。委员会随后确认 Frontiers 遵循了与 COPE 期望一致的适当流程，以评估质疑并更正已发表的记录。

据调查，代理人在专门的网站以及社交媒体上发布广告，列出了科学论文作者职位以及售卖的信息（图 4,5）。这种行为不仅违背了科学研究的基本原则，也严重破坏了科研领域的公平竞争环境。

结束语

科研领域的诚信问题一直饱受诟病。尽管各大学、科研机构都明确规定，对于科研成果的署名权，必须严格遵循实质性贡献的原则，但在实际操作中，却经常出现违反这一原则的情况。一些学者为了提升

自己的学术影响力，甚至不惜通过非法途径购买作者职位。而这种行为，实质上是对其他真正做出贡献的研究者的不公和不尊重。

对于这次事件，首先要肯定 Frontiers 的打击论文署名售卖行为。它不仅积极调查，而且在发现问题后，坚决撤回了涉嫌问题的文章。这种坚决的态度，对于维护科研领域的诚信环境，起到了积极的示范作用。但如果 Jarhian 博士和他的研究小组领导人 Martin R. Berger 所言属实，那么，撤稿与否应该谨慎处理，因为研究者离开原单位但仍以原单位署名发表在原单位取得的研究成果是学术界广泛接受的，也是对原单位知识产权的尊重和保护。

从更深层次来看，解决科研领域的诚信问题，仅靠单一的出版商或者科研机构是不够的，有关部门和学术界需要制定更加严格的监管制度，更加公正的评价机制，科研人员更需要严格约束自己。

参考文献

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- [2] Frontiers implements new policy to counter 'Authorship-for-sale' - Science & research news | Frontiers (frontiersin.org). Available from: <https://www.frontiersin.org/news/2023/09/04/frontiers-implements-new-policy-to-counter-authorship-for-sale/>.

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#2-med Optimizing the sgRNA design to ameliorate “off-target effects” of the CRISPR/Cas9 tool

Abstract: During recent years, clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeat (CRISPR)/CRISPR-associated protein 9 (Cas9) technologies have been noticed as a rapidly evolving tool to deliver a possibility for modifying target sequence expression and function. The CRISPR/Cas9 tool is currently being used to treat a myriad of human disorders, ranging from genetic diseases and infections to cancers. Preliminary reports have shown that CRISPR technology could result in valued consequences for the treatment of Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD), cystic fibrosis (CF), β -thalassemia, Huntington's diseases (HD), etc. Nonetheless, high rates of off-target effects may hinder its application in clinics. Thereby, recent studies have focused on the finding of the novel strategies to ameliorate these off-target effects, and thereby lead to a high rate of fidelity and accuracy. Meanwhile, there is clear evidence indicating that the design of the specific sgRNA with high efficiency is of paramount importance. Correspondingly, elucidation of the principal parameters contributed to determining the sgRNAs efficiencies is a prerequisite. Herein, we will deliver an overview regarding the therapeutic application of CRISPR technology to treat human disorders. More importantly, we will discuss the potent influential parameters (e.g., sgRNA structure and feature) implicated in affecting the sgRNA efficacy in CRISPR/Cas9 technology.

Keywords: Keywords: CRISPR/Cas9 tool, genome-editing, sgRNA, off-target effects.

Date of publication: Winter-Spring 2022 / Deadline: 22 August 2021

Journal title: available for those who has paid.

Region of the journal publication: Europe.

Scientific field: Biochemistry, Genetics and Molecular Biology, Medicine.

Indexing of the journal: Scopus (Q1-2); WoS (Science Citation Index Expanded, Q1) IF 6.83.

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图4 经过查找，上面这家名为Science Publisher的公司存在“广告位招租”现象（截图来自Publication support, science-publisher.org）。

Archived offer page	Offer ID (page-specific)	DOI of matching publication	Notable actors	Countries	Remarks
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https://web.archive.org/web/20211118071535/http://...	Chemistry # 1	https://doi.org/10.1039/D2RA03440A	Z Mahmoud	Indonesia, Russia, Iraq, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Australia, Iran	
https://web.archive.org/web/20211118071535/http://...	Chemistry # 2	https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mache.2022.109336		Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Egypt, Russia, Iran	
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https://web.archive.org/web/20211118233148/http://...	Engineering # 8	https://doi.org/10.12989/seem.2022...		Indonesia, Russia, Thailand, India, Iraq, Iran	
https://web.archive.org/web/20211118233148/http://...	Engineering # 9	https://doi.org/10.1165/20221921891		Thailand, India, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran	
https://web.archive.org/web/20211107140220/http://...	Food Science # 3	https://doi.org/10.1550/food.111721		Indonesia, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iraq, India	
https://web.archive.org/web/20211119114954/http://...	Chemistry # 1	https://doi.org/10.1080/00397911.2022.2056849		Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran	
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https://web.archive.org/web/20210907141327/http://...	Medicine # 1	https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gendis.2021.10.009	Jarahian (DKFZ)	Iran, Iraq, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Germany	
https://web.archive.org/web/20210907141327/http://...	Medicine # 2	https://doi.org/10.3389/fbioe.2021.775309	Jarahian (DKFZ)	Iran, Russia, Germany	Reviewer: Barani
https://web.archive.org/web/20210907141327/http://...	Medicine # 3	https://doi.org/10.3389/fbioe.2021.775309	Jarahian (DKFZ)	Iran, Indonesia, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iraq, Thailand	
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https://web.archive.org/web/20210907141327/http://...	Medicine # 6	https://doi.org/10.1186/s13287-021-02652-6		Iran, Indonesia, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Thailand	Not a perfect match, but no c
https://web.archive.org/web/20210907141327/http://...	Medicine # 7	https://doi.org/10.1186/s13287-022-01589-7		Indonesia, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Thailand, Iran	
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图5 根据打假学者爆料涉嫌在某互联网平台上售卖作者署名的论文统计表可以在PubPeer上找到 (图片数据来自PubPeer官网PubPeer - Search publications and join the conversation) .