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ETHICAL CHALLENGES FOR PREPRINTS

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An author service – not ‘publication’

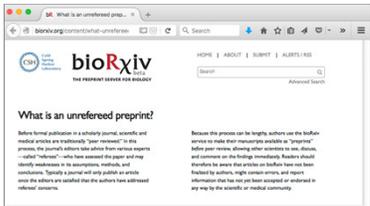


To what extent are ‘traditional’ publication ethics appropriate?

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Screening but no peer/editorial review

Preprint (n): an unpublished manuscript yet to be certified by peer review



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Much is taken on trust

***Author Approval** This manuscript has been seen and approved by all listed authors.

"bioRxiv reserves the right to identify and remove any articles that contain plagiarized material or describe experimental work that is not performed in accordance with the relevant ethical standards for research using animals or human subjects"

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Additional declarations for clinical preprints

- Competing interests
- IRB/ethics committee approval
- Patient/participant consent
- Clinical trial registration
- Reporting guidelines checklist(s)

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Screening criteria

- Is it nonsense?
- Is it non-science?
- Is it a paper?
- Is it research?
- Is it plagiarized?
- Is it a health threat?

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Screening issues

<p>Ethics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-science • Pseudoscience • Plagiarism • Patient identity 	<p>Public health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dual-use research • Vaccine safety • Infectious disease transmission • Drug regimens • Toxicity/carcinogenicity
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Either side of the line – “No”

What do clusters of similar HIV genetic sequences tell us about HIV risks in Africa?

“...most sex partners are in or close to home, genetic diversity showed little or no geographic structure in the three studies that looked at the issue. Evidence from these studies does not support the common view that sex accounts for most HIV infections in Africa. Studies did not do what they...”

Rejected from bioRxiv

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Either side of the line – “Yes”

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Nevertheless...

"It's the moment we've all been dreading... radiation emitted by cellphones can cause cancer"

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Signaling responsibly

Increasing the Mobility of EEG Data Collection Using a Latte Panda Computer
Linda Sotman, Kevin-John Black
doi: <https://doi.org/10.1101/0100048>
This article is a preprint and has not been peer-reviewed [what does this mean?]. It reports new medical research that has yet to be evaluated and so should not be used to guide clinical practice.

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Corrections

Authors may submit a revised version of an article to bioRxiv at any time.

But... once posted on bioRxiv, articles receive a DOI, are citable, and therefore cannot* be removed.

*Take-downs in rare circumstances

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Retractions?

- Journal driven: flag and link to journal **Retraction**
- Author driven: flag as **Withdrawn**, give explanation, retain original
- 3rd-party driven: server has made no certification claim, so...

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Withdrawals

Withdrawn

Analysis of P granules in vivo and ex vivo

James Smith, Cornell University
<https://doi.org/10.1101/284878>

This article is a preprint and has not been peer-reviewed (what does this mean?)

Abstract

This preprint should not be cited. RNA granules are RNA/protein condensates proposed to form in cells by liquid-liquid phase separation, a thermodynamic process that partitions molecules between two liquid phases without energy input. The *C. elegans* P granules are RNA granules that exhibit liquid-like behaviors. Using *in vivo* methods, we find that P granules are not simple liquids. P granules solidify outside of cells, becoming resistant to dilution and high salt. P granules also solidify in cells upon shift to high temperature or inactivation of the DDX8 RNA helicase. Solidification of RNA granules has been linked to neurodegeneration. Our findings suggest that active

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Takedowns

- Copyright infringement
- Fraudulent authorship issues
- Biohazard
- Serious ethical breaches

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