

# *How to Get Your Work Published and the Peer Review Process*



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Faculty of Dental Medicine & Oral Health Sciences  
McGill University  
April 4, 2025

# Skeletal mechanobiology

## Mechanical regulation of bone (re)modeling and regeneration



Overloading



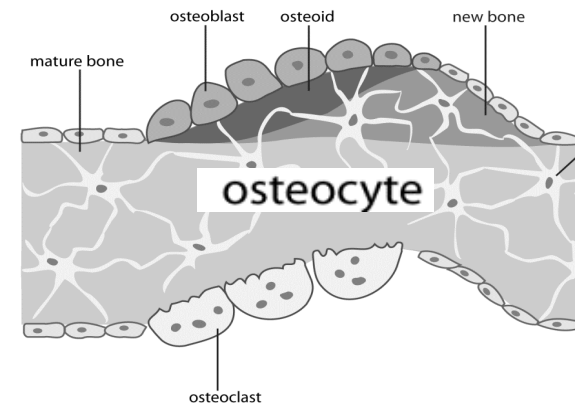
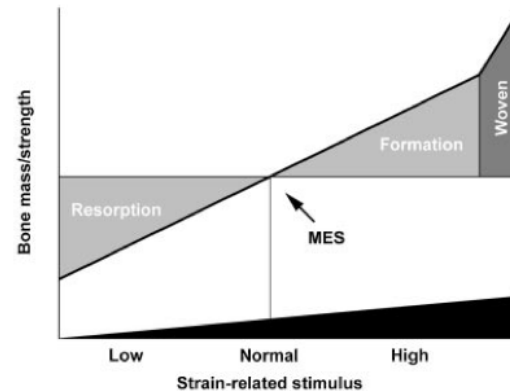
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Daily activity



Unloading



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# Outline

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- How journal select papers: citations
- Find the best journal
- Manuscript Content & Style
- Getting through the gatekeepers
- Revising and responding
- Promoting your paper



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# Citations & Impact factor

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The New England Journal of Medicine 79.258

Lancet 53.254

Chemical Reviews 52.613

JAMA - Journal of American Medical Association 47.661

Nature Reviews Cancer 42.784

Nature Reviews Immunology 41.982

Nature 41.577

Nature Reviews Genetics 41.465

Science 41.058

Chemical Society Reviews 40.182

Nature Materials 39.235



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# Impact factor

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- Invented in 1965
- Issued by Thompson Reuters every summer
- Used as indicator of the prestige of a journal
- Average number of citations (by indexed publications) received per paper published in that journal during the 2 preceding years
- IF can be inflated by review articles



# Citations & Impact factor

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Most important factor influencing editorial decision to publish your paper is:

Conceptual advancement, highly significant, impactful, novel findings

Translation= Will it be highly cited?

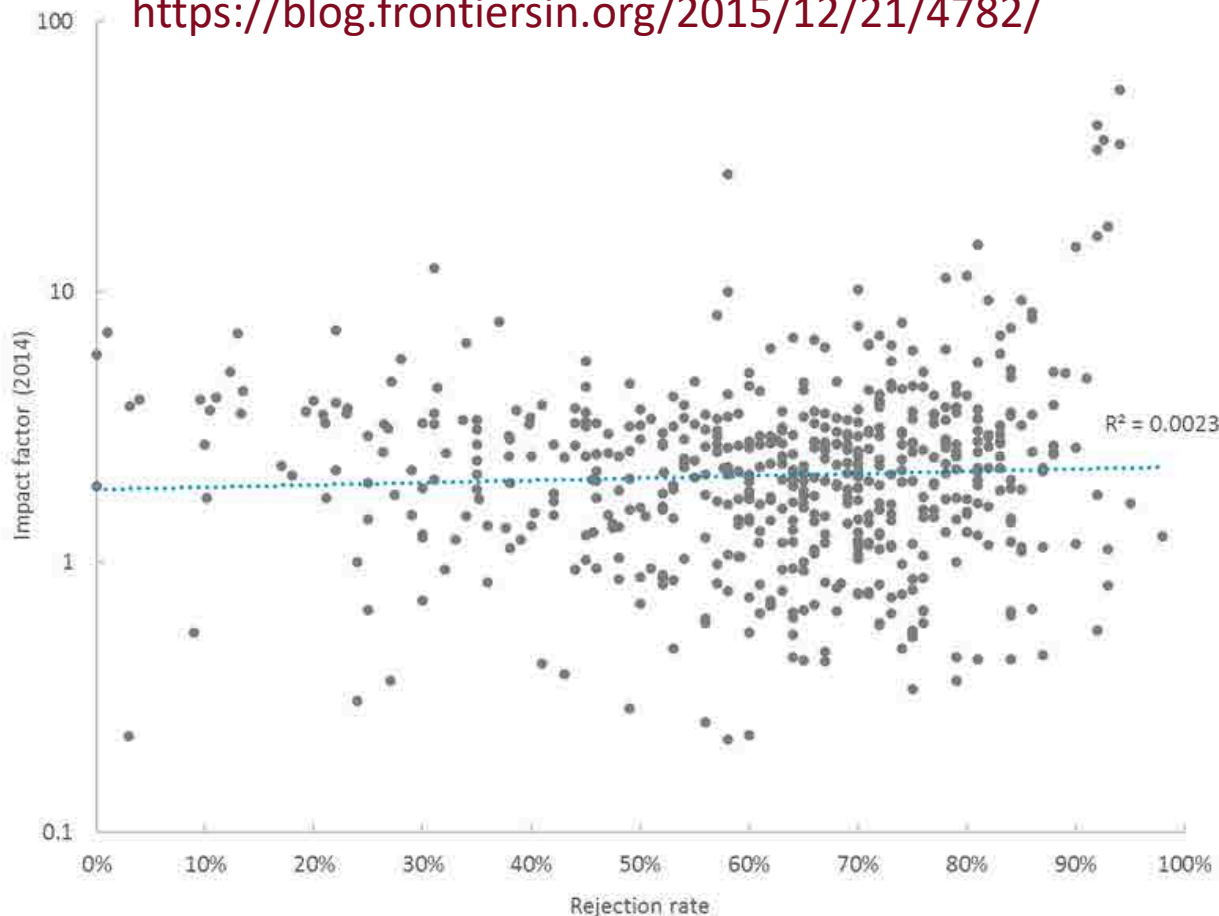
Scientific Reports: “technically sound and scientifically valid... The importance of an article is determined by its readership after publication.”



# Citations & Impact factor

Rejection rates for a sample of 570 journals with impact factors

<https://blog.frontiersin.org/2015/12/21/4782/>



**Figure 1:** 570 journals with publicly stated rejection rates (for sources, see below and to see complete data, click [here](https://blog.frontiersin.org/2015/12/21/4782/)). Impact factors from Thomson Reuters Journal Citation Reports (2014). (Y-axis is on a Log scale).

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# Find the best journal

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- Reach most relevant audience
- Peer-reviewed published journals
- Impact Factor: 95% rejection rates for highest impact journals
- Open access journals
- Avoid predatory journals
- Consult with university librarian (Jingjing Li: jing.li19@mcgill.ca)



Services are available to find target journal:

<https://journalfinder.wiley.com/search?type=match>



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# Avoid Predatory Journals

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- Consult with university librarian (Jingjing Li: [jing.li19@mcgill.ca](mailto:jing.li19@mcgill.ca))
- <https://thinkchecksubmit.org/> - check list
- <https://ulrichsweb-serialssolutions-com.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/> -Database for checking if a journal is peer-reviewed and where it is indexed.
- <https://doaj.org/>
- <https://www.mcgill.ca/library/services/open-access/legitimate-journals-> List of legitimate open access journals
- If you have already submitted to a predatory journal-what to do?
  - Do not pay publication fee
  - Do not sign copyright agreement
  - Write to journal to withdraw/ retract submitted/accepted manuscript
  - Publish responsibly in future



# Find the best journal



## Find the journal that's right for your research Beta

Not sure where to submit your article? Our Journal Finder Beta can suggest Wiley journals that may be relevant for your research. Simply enter your title and abstract and we'll create a list of potential journals for you to consider. We also recommend reviewing the journal's Aims and Scope before deciding where to submit.

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# Finding the best journal

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100 search results

Open Access:

	<b>Journal of Bone and Mineral Research</b> <i>American Society for Bone and Mineral Research</i> Edited By: Roberto Civitelli	Impact Factor <b>6.314</b>	2017 ISI Ranking <b>14/138</b> (Endocrinology & Metabolism)	Open access <b>Optional</b>	Relevance <div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
	<b>Journal of Orthopaedic Research®</b> <i>Orthopaedic Research Society</i> Edited By: Linda J. Sandell	Impact Factor <b>3.414</b>	2017 ISI Ranking <b>16/76</b> (Orthopedics)	Open access <b>Optional</b>	Relevance <div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
	<b>Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences</b> <i>New York Academy of Sciences</i> Annals Editor-in-Chief: Douglas Braaten Ph.D.	Impact Factor <b>4.277</b>	2017 ISI Ranking <b>8/64</b> (Multidisciplinary Sciences)	Open access <b>Optional</b>	Relevance <div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
	<b>Journal of Cellular Physiology</b> Edited By: Gary S. Stein, Harvey M. Florman and Constance E. Brinckerhoff	Impact Factor <b>3.923</b>	2017 ISI Ranking <b>16/84</b> (Physiology) <b>68/190</b> (Cell Biology)	Open access <b>Optional</b>	Relevance <div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
	<b>Journal of Cellular Biochemistry</b> Edited By:				

Windows taskbar: 4:27 PM 23/05/2019

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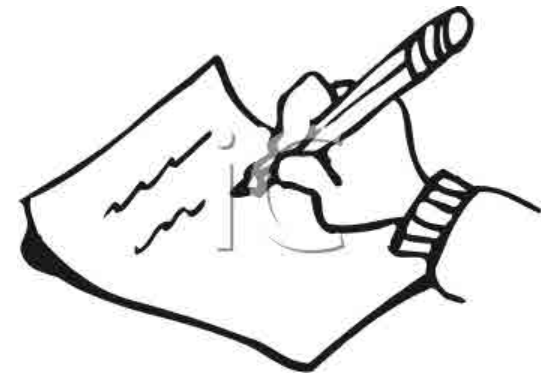
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# Before you draft your manuscript

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- When you design your experiment/study think about how each paper would look like
- Identify authors and roles
- What analyses do I need to do to test my hypothesis?
- How will your results be displayed in Figures and Tables



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# Drafting your manuscript

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- Know your audience, pick an appropriate journal
- Create a compelling, clear and concise story
- Good title, abstract, cover letter, figures
- What is the most important result?
- Do I need to perform additional analyses to tell the story/test the hypothesis?
- Don't:
  - overstate your findings
  - ignore the work of others
  - hold back data



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# Manuscript Content & Style

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- Content: conceptual advancement, novel findings
- Tell a compelling story
  - Well defined research questions & hypotheses
  - Sound study design and methodology
  - High quality data
  - Significance to field
  - No more than 3 key messages
  - Make it accessible to reader
- Well written



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# Figures

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- Meaningful and accessible information
- Visually represent your findings
- Convey underlying message
- Consider alternatives to bar graphs



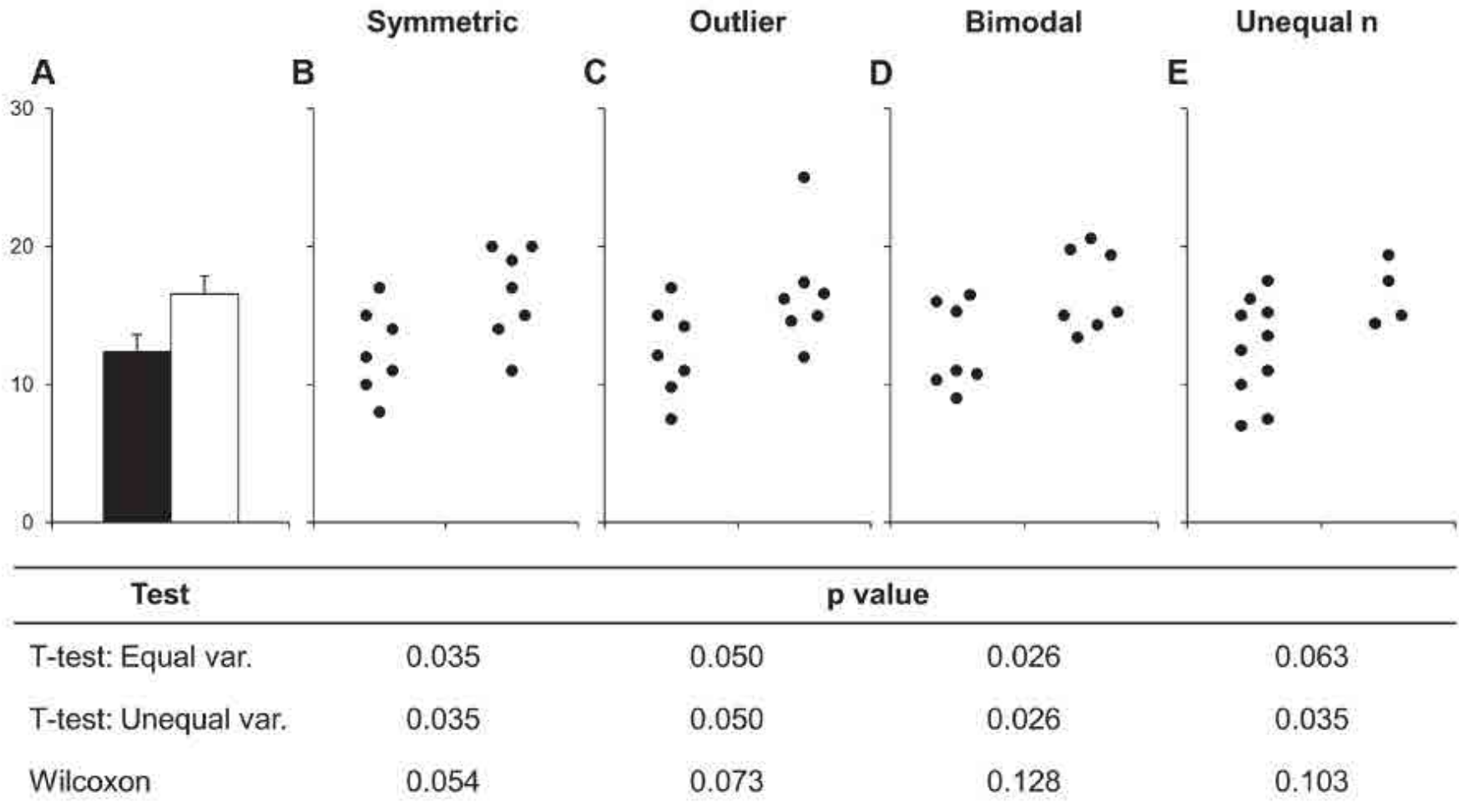
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# Alternatives to bar graphs

Many different datasets can lead to the same bar graph:

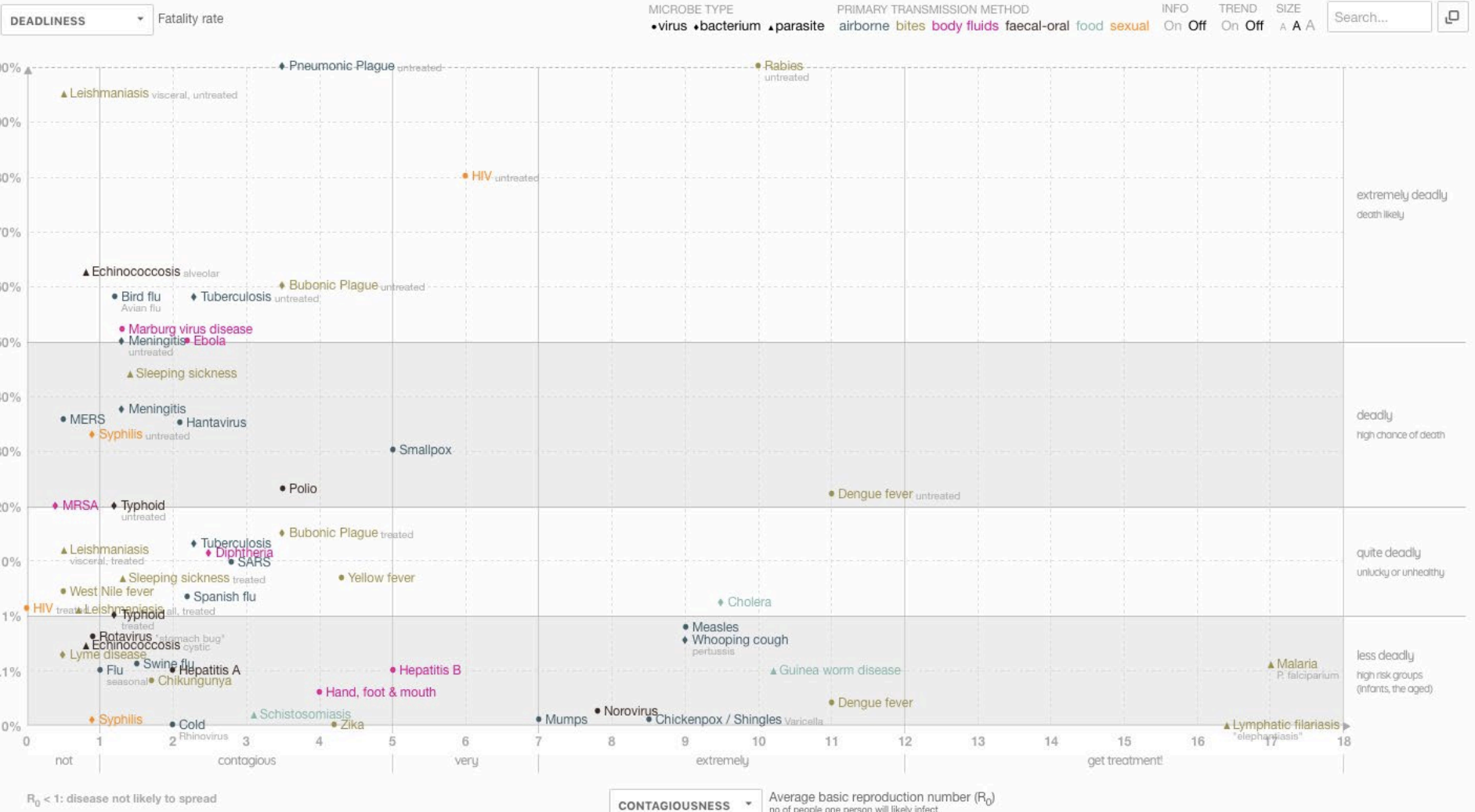
Weissgerber 2015



# Figures

Information is beautiful.net

## The MicrobeScope



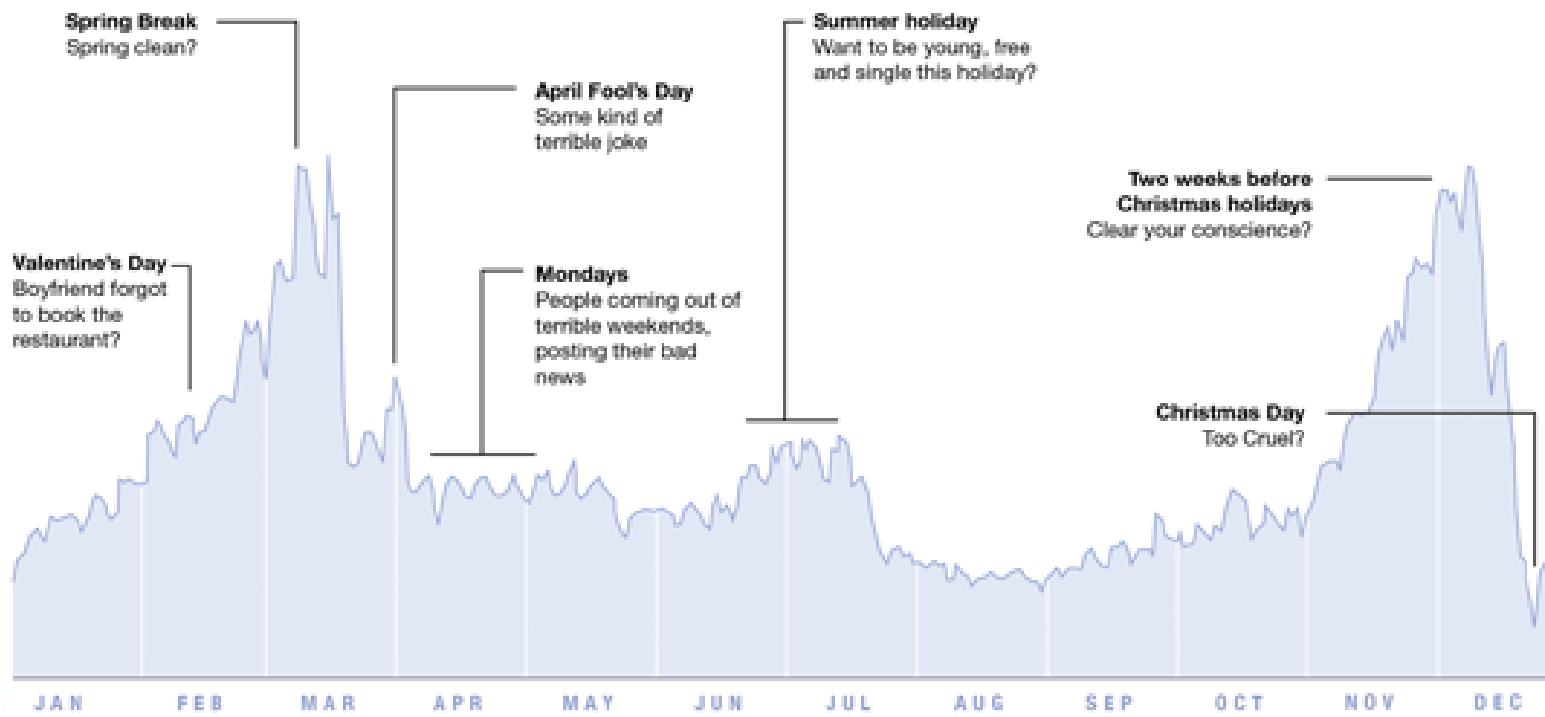
# Figures

Information is beautiful.net

## Peak Break-up Times

According to Facebook status updates

InformationIsBeautiful.net



# Figures

Information is beautiful.net



## Based on a True True Story?

Scene-by-scene Breakdown of Hollywood Films

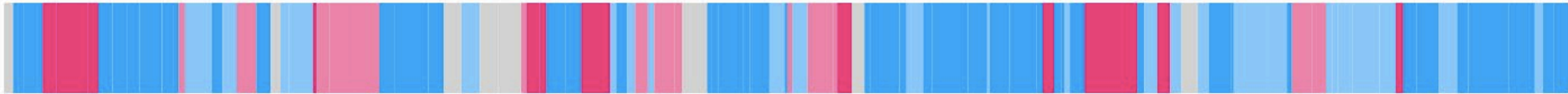
TRUE TRUE-ISH FALSE-ISH FALSE UNKNOWN

PEDANTRY Flexible - c'mon, it's movies! SORT Date Released

79.9% Bohemian Rhapsody 2018



74% Hidden Figures 2016



61.4% Lion 2016



52.7% Hacksaw Ridge 2016



# Figures

Information is beautiful.net

## Best in Show: The Ultimate Data Dog



Inexplicably Overrated



Bulldog

popularity

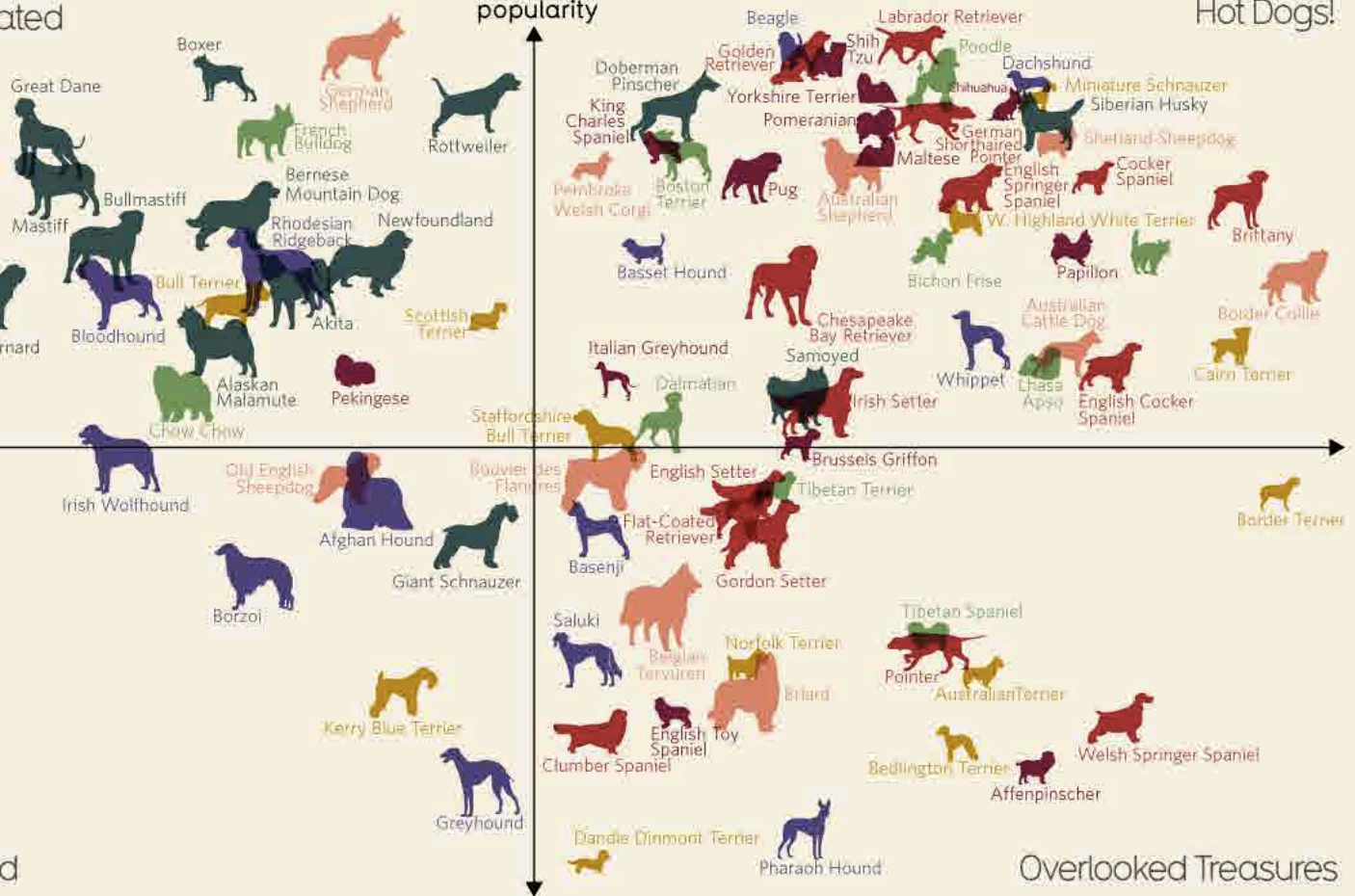
Hot Dogs!

our data score



The Rightly Ignored

Overlooked Treasures





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# Getting through the gatekeepers

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- Editorial office
- Editors
  - Triage
  - Review Process
  - Decision



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# Getting through the gatekeepers

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## Editorial office

- Have someone proofread your manuscript
- Use editorial services provided by journal (English language editing)
- Follow Journal submission guidelines
- Review checklists with submissions:
  - ARRIVE, CONSORT, STROBE, PRISMA
- Follow checklist when initially writing paper...not only at submission!



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# Getting through the gatekeepers

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## Triage by editors

- A large proportion of submissions do not make it to peer review
- Editor's first impression
  - Cover letter, title, abstract, figures
  - Nothing raises a red flag
    - Not within scope of journal
    - Contains non-fixable flaws
      - flawed methodology
      - badly underpowered



# Cover letter

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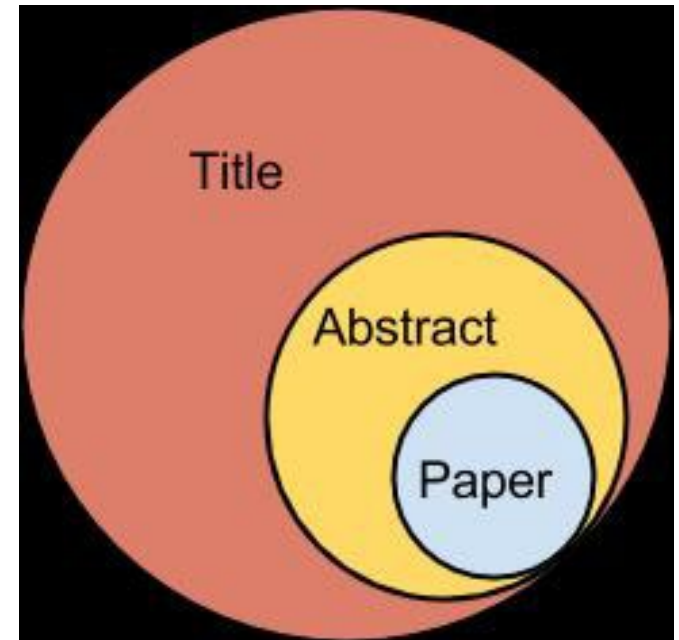
- Editors read the cover letter
- Address it to the editor in chief or editorial board member you want to handle the manuscript
- Keep it to 1 page
- Say why they should review it
  - Why fits in scope of journal
  - Why journal readership would find it important
    - Refer to relevant studies published by journal
  - Highlight novel aspects
  - Give the editors suggested reviewers



# Title

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- Concise (no more than 12 words)
  - Condense 1 main finding into one sentence
  - Use action verbs
  - Accurately describe study
  - Mention species/population studied
  - Contain relevant key words
  - Don't:
    - ask a question
    - use puns or metaphors
- 
- Your title is the most important determinant of how many people will read your paper
  - Relative number of reads (Nature jobs Blog)



# Abstract

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- Brief description of background
- Hypothesis and aims
- Study design and methods
- Main results
- What is new and why is it important
- Effective conclusion statement



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# Review process

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- Editorial office
- Editors
- Triage
- **Review Process**
  - At least 2 reviewers
  - Select reviewer suggested by authors in cover letter
- **Decision**
  - Major/minor revision: Revise and resubmit
  - Get a 3<sup>rd</sup> reviewer if differences between 2 reviews
  - Reject



# Revising and responding

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## Response to reviewers

- Be positive and polite
- Make at least a small change to manuscript text even when reviewer can be rebutted
- Copy changes made to manuscript directly into the response to reviewers, so fast and easy for editor/reviewers to see your changes



**How to  
Respond?**



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# Revising and responding

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- Editor decision will depend on:
  - Are reviews well performed and informative enough to make a decision?
  - High reviewer score?
  - Are there issues in paper that can't be fixed?
  - Final decision lies with Editor in chief



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# Promoting your paper

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- Communication and publicity plan
  - Work with press office at your institution
  - Share data, methods, code
  - Post on LinkedIn, X, etc..
  - Start your own blog
  - Register for an ORCID ID, research gate etc...
  - Make work available via open access



# Citation Metrics

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- Article-level metrics
  - # citations in scientific publications, Google scholars
  - Altmetric attention score-outside of academia
    - eg tweets/posts vs newspaper
    - [www.altmetric.com](http://www.altmetric.com)
- Scholar metrics
  - H-index: h number of papers, each of which have been cited h times
  - i10 index: # of publications with at least 10 citations





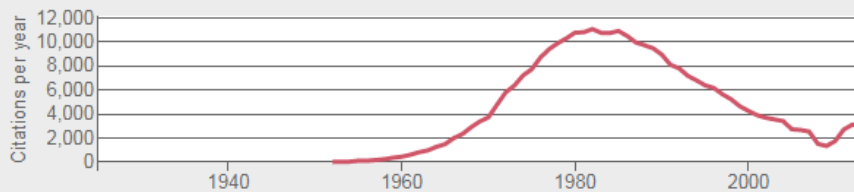
# Top cited papers of all time

Rank: 1 Citations: **305,148**

Protein measurement with the folin phenol reagent.

Lowry, O. H., Rosebrough, N. J., Farr, A. L. & Randall, R. J.

*J. Biol. Chem.* **193**, 265–275 (1951).



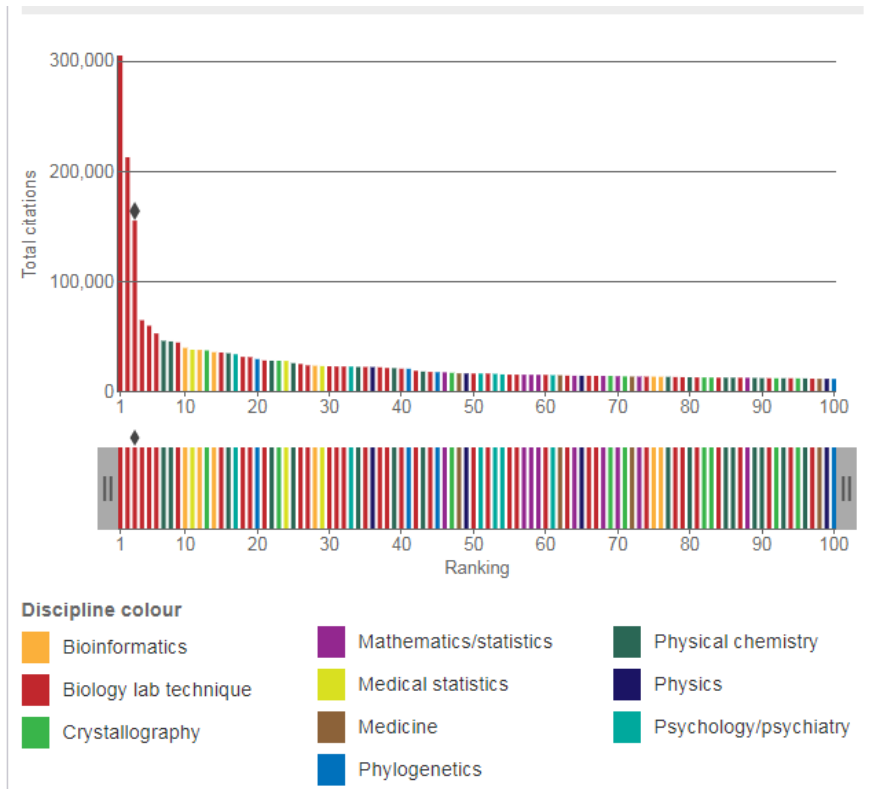
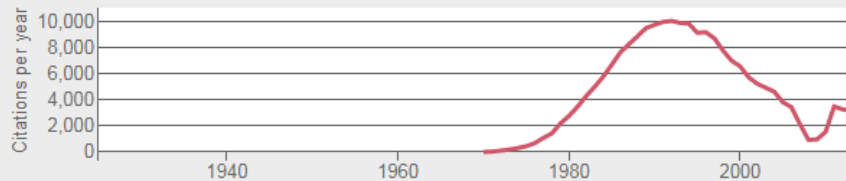
October 2017.

Rank: 2 Citations: **213,005**

Cleavage of structural proteins during the assembly of the head of bacteriophage T4.

Laemmli, U. K.

*Nature* **227**, 680–685 (1970).



- Assay to determine the amount of protein in a solution
- Top 100 dominated by biology lab techniques and statistical methods
- Watson & Crick on structure of DNA, 1953, only 5,207 citations



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<https://www.nature.com/news/the-top-100-papers-1.16224>

# Resources

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- Schriger and Cooper. Achieving graphical excellence. Ann Emerg Med 2001: 37:75-87.
- Schriger et al. From Submission to Publication: A retrospective review of the table and figures ...Ann Emerg Med 2006: 48:75-756
- Weissgerber et al. Beyond bar and line graphs Plos Biol 2015; 13: e1002128
- <https://youtube.com/watch?v=-dvPgvLyUz8> getting your work published
- <http://blogs.nature.com/naturejobs/2014/06/06/how-to-get-published-in-high-impact-journals-an-essential-guide/>
- <http://blogs.nature.com/naturejobs/2014/11/03/how-to-get-published-in-high-impact-journals-big-research-and-better-writing/>
- <http://www..wiley.com/legacy/wileyblackwell/images/2WritingGreatPapersIntlJournals.pdf>
- <https://www.asbmr.org/submitting-your-paper>
- <http://news.wiley.com/wileyresearcheracademy>



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# Merci Thank You



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