



Stephen C. Neal  
T: +1 650 843 5182  
nealsc@cooley.com

Via E-Mail to: tbaker@stanforddaily.com

February 15, 2023

Theo Baker  
Staff Writer, The Stanford Daily  
tbaker@stanforddaily.com

Dear Mr. Baker:

I am responding to the letter you sent to President Tessier-Lavigne yesterday afternoon. Your letter is replete with flagrant and seemingly deliberate distortions and disregard of the information presented in my letter of February 9, **Third-Party Material Redacted** and the scientific record.

In substantial part, your questions were already addressed in my February 9 letter. I previously informed you that Dr. Tessier-Lavigne is not aware of any internal investigation of the 2009 paper published in Nature and, on behalf of Dr. Tessier-Lavigne, I categorically and unequivocally reiterate the same now. **Third-Party Material Redacted**

**Third-Party Material Redacted**

**Third-Party Material Redacted** Although Dr. Tessier-Lavigne is not familiar with this review, he is intimately familiar with the RRC, which, **Third-Party Material Redacted** is a routine process for substantially all of Genentech's drug discovery projects. Your effort to conflate the RRC's routine work with an internal investigation leads to the equally false conclusion that virtually all projects at Genentech have been "investigated."

Against all evidence, you again make the outrageous and false assertion that "lab data had been falsified" in connection with the 2009 Nature Paper. Again, this was fully addressed in both my **Third-Party Material Redacted** February 9 communications to you. My letter stated clearly that no one involved in the experiments described in the Paper forged gels, falsified assays or fabricated experiments. **Third-Party Material Redacted**

**Third-Party Material Redacted**

You also ask about revisions to conclusions in the 2009 Nature Paper by later papers on which Dr. Tessier-Lavigne was the senior author. In my letter, I explained this as well. I informed you that the results of the 2009 Nature Paper were accurately reported, but that further experiments, discoveries and analysis by Dr. Tessier-Lavigne and his co-authors led them to propose a new model for how DR6 and APP interact at molecular level, and to propose that Caspase-3 participates in degeneration. As I explained, this is how science works. As new information became available, in this case including by the use of knock-out mice rather than reagents that were later determined to have off-target effects, the team modified its conclusions.

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<sup>1</sup> You inquire about possible duplications in some of the figures in the 2009 Nature Paper. Dr. Tessier-Lavigne first saw reference to those allegations yesterday, when he saw the new post in PubPeer. Dr. Tessier-Lavigne is looking into those issues.



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The Simon and Olsen papers, referenced in my letter, explain this evolution in detail. Your suggestion that this reflects something nefarious evinces a complete misunderstanding of the normal march of science or the deliberate misconstruction of the clear scientific record. In the event it is the former, Dr. Tessier-Lavigne has prepared a detailed technical explanation providing context on the 2009 Paper. I am attaching that to this letter, along with a statement by Dr. Tessier-Lavigne.

You also already have the answer to your question about why Dr. Nikolaev was not included on any of the follow-up papers. **Third-Party Material Redacted** Dr. Nikolaev left Genentech in April 2011 and, accordingly, was not part of the scientific team that published the Simon or Olsen papers in later years.

I concluded my letter with a series of questions to you. I note that you have chosen to ignore those too, as you do with the factual record. One of the questions I posed was whether you and the scientists with whom you are conferring studied Dr. Tessier-Lavigne's follow-on articles, including the Olsen article, and articles by other researchers who have built on his work, including the Mishra article. I ask that you consult with these scientists on this important body of work, as well as on all the points laid out in Dr. Tessier-Lavigne's technical explanation attached to this letter.

We are deeply disappointed that you appear to be persisting in the publication of a brazenly false and distorted story. The record here is clear. We urge you to review it before proceeding with a reckless publication.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen C. Neal".

Stephen C. Neal

Attachments

cc: (Via Email)

Sean Johnston, Sr. Vice President, General Counsel, Genentech (johnston.sean@gene.com)  
Sam Catania, CEO, Editor in Chief, the Stanford Daily (eic@stanforddaily.com)  
Martin S. Schenker (mschenker@cooley.com)

281891567