

## Psychologists counter publication bias with call to reveal negative study results

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The 'file drawer problem' refers to the fact that in science, many results remain unpublished – especially negative ones. This is a problem because it produces [publication bias](#).

Now, a group of Belgian psychology researchers have decided to make a stand. In a bold move against publication bias, they've thrown open their own file drawer. In [the new paper](#), Anthony Lane and colleagues from the Université catholique de Louvain say that they've realized that over the years, *"our publication portfolio has become less and less representative of our actual findings"*. Therefore, they *"decided to get these [unpublished] studies out of our drawer and encourage other laboratories to do the same."*

Lane et al.'s research focus is [oxytocin](#), the much-discussed "love hormone". Their lab has published a number of papers reporting that an intranasal spray of oxytocin alters human behaviour. But they now reveal that they also tried to publish numerous *negative* findings, yet these null results remain in the file drawer because they weren't accepted for publication.

In my view this is a very important paper, and a brave move by the authors. This kind of revelation of what goes on "behind closed drawers" could be an effective remedy for publication bias. I suspect though that prevention is better than cure, and that the best way to keep the file drawers [from filling up in the first place will be to reform the scientific](#) process itself.

**Read full, original post:** [Psychologists Throw Open The "File Drawer"](#)