

**From:** Frederick Fenter [mailto:frederick.fenter@frontiersin.org]  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 17, 2016 5:19 AM  
**To:** J. Marvin Herndon  
**Cc:** Frontiers Editorial Office  
**Subject:** retraction of your article  
**Importance:** High

Dear Dr Herndon,

Thank you for your reply.

We have received multiple complaints regarding the article, and found there to be requisite grounds for retraction. In accordance with our complaints policy, and with the agreement of the chief editors, we will proceed with the retraction.

We cannot publish the full author statement that you recommend, but have modified the statement to be published according to your feedback:

The journal retracts the 30 June 2016 article cited above. Based on information discovered after publication and reported to Frontiers in July 2016, the article was examined, revealing that the complaints were valid and that the article does not meet the standards of editorial and scientific soundness for Frontiers in Public Health. The retraction of the article was approved by the Field Chief Editor of Frontiers in Public Health and the Specialty Chief Editor of Environmental Health. The author considers the retraction to be unwarranted and therefore does not agree to the statement.

Best regards,

Fred Fenter

Frederick Fenter, Ph.D.  
Executive Editor

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On 16 Jul 2016, at 23:34, J. Marvin Herndon <[mherndon@san.rr.com](mailto:mherndon@san.rr.com)> wrote:

Dear Dr. Fenter,

As Executive Editor at Frontiers your prime responsibility is to maintain integrity in all aspects of Frontiers' publishing. Yet your actions in the present instance stand in stark contradiction. The Journal you serve promotes itself as being open and transparent, yet you fail to rise to that standard; specifically, you act on a complaint, treat it as if it is credible and true, but never disclose the identity of the complainer, nor do you disclose the complaint, nor do you give me the opportunity to respond. This is shameful behavior for anyone who claims to be trained in science, which is all about truth and integrity. <http://www.nuclearplanet.com/1967.pdf>  
But there is even more reason for concern by those who cherish the wellbeing of people and the creatures of our planet.

The published paper you choose to retract provides three independent lines of evidence that toxic coal fly ash is being sprayed into the air we breathe on a near-daily basis over a large portion of the Earth. Moreover, and significantly, the paper warns of public health and environmental health dangers. The fine-grain size of the pollutant being sprayed into the air we breathe, when inhaled, becomes trapped deep in the lungs where the heavy metals and radioactive elements can cause cancer and a host of other problems, especially affecting the most vulnerable among us: pregnant women, children, the elderly, and those with compromised respiratory and immune systems. Yet you choose to hide this information from the public and from the scientific community by your sham retraction, a retraction without complaint-disclosure to the author. Do you have no sense of responsibility for the health and wellbeing of people? No one has the right to poison people, and no one with a grain of humanity should aid and abet such an activity, which is what this retraction does. Where is your humanity? Where is your courage?

There is reason to believe that mainly a single complainer, presumably acting on his employers' orders, was responsible for Frontiers initiating your retraction action. Andras Szilagyi was the individual who made the false statements to the Current Science editor in an effort to cause that paper to be retracted, some falsehoods of which I describe in my response to the Current Science editor: <http://NuclearPlanet.com/csresponse.pdf>

I suspect that an investigation will show that Szilagyi also had a hand in the MDPI retraction. I know the lies told to Current Science. I think you are afraid to provide verbatim the criticisms made to Frontiers, because I will expose them as blatant lies, pejorative allegations without substance or merit.

Your claim, that my paper should have been rejected on the basis of remarks made by the 2<sup>nd</sup> reviewer, is likewise out of step with the concept of open reviews

and exchanges that Frontiers uses. I answered that reviewer's comments and modified the manuscript in accordance with them. You might like to find some justification for what is a wholly unjustified retraction, but you will not find same. The paper is scientifically sound; what is unsound is your trumped-up retraction action.

As Executive Editor at Frontiers you should realize it is your responsibility to provide corrective leadership when your subordinates have made bad decisions. Clearly, in the present instance you were thrust into an untenable situation by the knee-jerk actions of your subordinates. If you stand back and consider with some objectivity, you might be able to see that the concerted pattern of attempts to have my published papers about aerosolized coal fly ash retracted is indicative of an organized effort to hide from the public and from the scientific community a serious, global threat to public health and environmental health. You do yourself a grave disservice by continuing to support the unwarranted retraction-action your subordinates initiated. When the dust settles, you alone will be left to account; and you have no moral or scientific grounds upon which to stand, quite the contrary. And, you may understand that the action of retraction will only be the beginning.

I have a long record of scientific discoveries and technological management experience: <http://www.nuclearplanet.com/JMH%20Biography.html>  
If I were advising you as a client, I would remind you that you are pursuing the retraction-action with a grossly unsound basis. You are putting your own reputation and Frontiers' reputation on the line, perhaps even your job. For a brief moment, you have the opportunity to end this farce, to exhibit good leadership that will reinforce the integrity of Frontiers. You should put an end to this retraction action.

If you choose to make the retraction final, I would like the following author statement published, which I write in red: **The author considers this retraction unwarranted, made upon the basis of undisclosed allegations that appear to be part of a concerted effort to hide evidence of a serious, global threat to public health and environmental health as explained in the correspondence about this retraction posted at <http://www.nuclearplanet.com/retraction.html>.**

Sincerely,

J. Marvin Herndon, Ph.D.

**From:** Frederick Fenter [<mailto:frederick.fenter@frontiersin.org>]  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 16, 2016 9:58 AM  
**To:** J. Marvin Herndon  
**Cc:** Frontiers Editorial Office  
**Subject:** Re: Unwarranted negative publicity, both for me and Frontiers in Public Health  
**Importance:** High

Dear Dr Herndon,

Please allow me to present myself — I am the Executive Editor at Frontiers.

Following the receipt of a complaint, I worked together with Dr Soulière and her team, along with the Editors-in-Chief, to evaluate the paper and the review process.

The paper should have been rejected on the basis of the remarks of reviewer 2, who quite adequately summarises the issues involved.

Please let the office know if you would like us to consider a comment for publication in the retraction statement (which would concern the sentence highlighted in red), copied below my signature for your convenience.

Very best regards,

Fred Fenter

Frederick Fenter, Ph.D.  
Executive Editor

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