MICRO WAVE NEWS
A Report on Non-Ionizing Radiation

Four Reasons Why David Grimes's RF-Cancer Review Must Be Retracted

Open Letter to Editor-in-Chief, AMA Journals

January 18, 2022
Last updated April 21, 2022

Phil B. Fontanarosa, MD, MBA
Interim Editor-in-Chief
Journal of the American Medical Association and the JAMA Network

Dear Dr. Fontanarosa,

As you are already keenly aware, on December 9th, *JAMA Oncology*, part of the AMA family of journals, published what purports to be a review of radiofrequency (RF) radiation and cancer by David Robert Grimes.

Grimes's paper is rife with distortions and omissions. It is a disservice to the AMA and to all those who care about public health. I urge you, as the current editor-in-chief of all AMA journals, to retract this paper.

Here are four reasons why you should set the record straight as soon as possible:

- Grimes gets the science wrong.
- Grimes is not qualified to write the review.
- Grimes's affiliation with the University of Oxford is tenuous, at best.
- Grimes misreports his statements on behalf of the telecom industry in the published conflict of interest (CoI) disclosure.

1. The Science

First and most important, Grimes makes a hash of the science of RF radiation and cancer. I spelled out some of Grimes's errors — both of commission and of omission— in a December 14 letter to Dr. Nora Disis, the editor of *JAMA Oncology*. In short, Grimes misrepresents RF epidemiology and toxicology. Even Grimes's handling of the physics of RF mechanisms of interactions is so simplistic that it would be out of place in an introductory-level college course.

Dr. Disis replied that JAMA journals "reserve retractions for articles that have been fabricated, falsified or plagiarized," and that, "There does not appear to be evidence of such misconduct in this article."

I believe that Grimes's review is so one-sided that it qualifies as both falsification and fabrication. It might as well have been plagiarized from a telecom industry position paper.

2. The Qualifications

I cannot understand why *JAMA Oncology* would select a person trained in physics to review the complex medicine and biology of RF interactions for an expert or a lay audience. Grimes has no apparent qualifications in epidemiology or toxicology. He has cultivated a much higher profile as a crusading journalist than as a research scientist.

As I pointed out in my letter to Dr. Disis, Grimes makes assertions that run counter to statements from organizations widely considered to be gold standards in this field, including the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and the U.S. National Toxicology Program (NTP).

Grimes's dismissal, without a citation, of NTP's $30 million RF-animal study —which concluded that there is "clear evidence" of a link to cancer— is as inexplicable as it is inexcusable.

3. The Oxford Affiliation

Grimes represents himself as affiliated with the Department of Oncology at U.K.'s University of Oxford. Repeated efforts —by myself and others— have failed to confirm this.

University officials at Oxford have remained silent on the question of Grimes's status. When I asked the press office, no one responded. I am aware of similar requests for clarification sent to senior academic officials, including Professor Mark Middleton, the head of the oncology department. These too have gone unanswered.

On his LinkedIn page, Grimes states that he was a postdoctoral research associate at Oxford for nearly five years ending in February 2017, when he transitioned to what he calls a "Visiting research Fellow." I have been unable to find a public acknowledgement of this appointment on the Oxford website or anywhere else.

During his postdoc, Grimes was mentored by Mike Partridge of the Oxford Institute of Radiation Oncology (OIRO). Partridge left Oxford some years ago and at last word was surveying bird colonies in the Orkney Islands, off the northeast coast of Scotland.

If it exists at all, my guess is that Grimes's visiting fellowship is some kind of courtesy title, perhaps allowed by Partridge in 2017 as a favor when Grimes left Oxford, a perk from the old-boy network.

Today, close to five years after the end of his postdoc, is it appropriate for Grimes to be using an Oxford affiliation? If not, does this qualify as a "fabrication"? It should.

To see if there might be some justification for Grimes's use of this affiliation in *JAMA Oncology*, I consulted Oxford's "Publication and Authorship" policies. It states, in part:

> "Only staff or students of the collegiate University, or those who have a formal affiliation to the University or a College (or those who were University staff or students, or had a formal affiliation when the research in question was conducted), should state in any journal submission that they are affiliated to the University or a College."

Grimes would need to have had a "formal affiliation" with Oxford during the first part of 2021 when he was preparing his review for *JAMA Oncology*. If he did have such an affiliation, why has no one at Oxford stepped forward to clarify Grimes's status?

4. The CoI Disclosure

There is no better example of Grimes's propensity to mislead than his disclosure on conflicts of interest (CoI) appended to his *JAMA Oncology* review. It states, in part:

> "Dr Grimes has … also appeared in an informational video for Vodafone UK countering the fallacious connection between 5G and COVID-19 and donated these fees to Médecins Sans Frontières."

As I wrote to Dr. Disis last month, this CoI statement is a misrepresentation to the point of deception. The "informational video" does much more than counter baseless links between 5G and COVID.

The video, titled *5G and Health: Everything You Need To Know*, features only Grimes. Just 20 seconds of the video is on 5G and COVID. What follows over the next two minutes is full-blown endorsement of the safety of 5G wireless technology.

"There have been thousands of studies looking into this and the global consensus is that 5G poses no threat to health," Grimes says to the camera. This is a total fabrication. It's nothing more than industry propaganda.

The fact is that there are very few studies on 5G and health. Not thousands, not hundreds, not dozens, just a handful of preliminary reports.

Indeed, on January 7, 2022, soon after I wrote to Dr. Disis, a paper on 5G and health was posted online by the *International Journal of Radiation Biology*, a leading journal in the field. The authors point out that they were unable to find a single human experimental study on the effects of 5G radiation. There is an "urgent need for theoretical and experimental investigations of health effects by 5G," they conclude.

Dr. Disis has refused to publish my four-page letter to the editor, offering instead an opportunity to publish a maximum of 400 words —which Grimes could then rebut with 500 words. A decision you reiterated in a January 4th follow-up email.

I declined. I simply cannot correct Grimes's many distortions in a short letter.

You and Dr. Disis have both told me that if I don't submit such a letter, you will consider the matter of Grimes's review closed after January 9th, 2022, a month following its publication in *JAMA Oncology.* I hope you will reconsider.

At the very least, Dr. Fontanarosa, I ask you to contact Oxford and watch the Vodafone video. I can understand your reluctance to wade into the 50-year scientific controversy over RF radiation and cancer, but Grimes's misrepresentation of both his Oxford affiliation and his work for the telecom industry strike at the heart of what you describe as your "journal's standards."

After all, would *JAMA Oncology* have entertained a review of the RF controversy by an assistant professor at a mid-level Irish University —one who has cultivated a reputation as a combative journalist rather than as a objective scientist— had Grimes not played the Oxford card?

I continue to urge that *JAMA Oncology* retract Grimes's paper and that the JAMA Network initiate a formal investigation of the peer review process that led to its publication.

Sincerely,

Louis Slesin
Editor, *Microwave News*

P.S. I should note that Grimes has refused to respond to my questions about this or anything else.

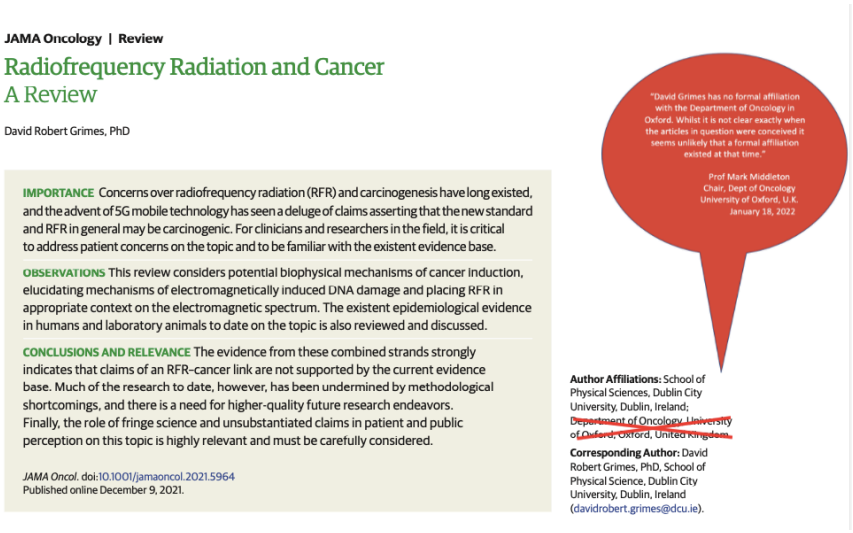
Grimes Not Affiliated with University of Oxford

January 19, 2022

Microwave News has now learned that David Grimes is not currently affiliated with Oxford University.

“David Grimes has no formal affiliation with the Department of Oncology in Oxford. Whilst it is not clear exactly when the articles in question were conceived it seems unlikely that a formal affiliation existed at that time,” according to Professor Mark Middleton, head of the Department of Oncology.

Still unclear is whether Grimes will now be forced to retract his review paper in *JAMA Oncology* or any of his other papers in which he also claimed an Oxford affiliation.



JAMA Oncology | Review

Radiofrequency Radiation and Cancer
A Review

David Robert Grimes, PhD

IMPORTANCE Concerns over radiofrequency radiation (RFR) and carcinogenesis have long existed, and the advent of 5G mobile technology has seen a deluge of claims asserting that the new standard and RFR in general may be carcinogenic. For clinicians and researchers in the field, it is critical to address patient concerns on the topic and to be familiar with the existent evidence base.

OBSERVATIONS This review considers potential biophysical mechanisms of cancer induction, elucidating mechanisms of electromagnetically induced DNA damage and placing RFR in appropriate context on the electromagnetic spectrum. The existent epidemiological evidence in humans and laboratory animals to date on the topic is also reviewed and discussed.

CONCLUSIONS AND RELEVANCE The evidence from these combined strands strongly indicates that claims of an RFR-cancer link are not supported by the current evidence base. Much of the research to date, however, has been undermined by methodological shortcomings, and there is a need for higher-quality future research endeavors. Finally, the role of fringe science and unsubstantiated claims in patient and public perception on this topic is highly relevant and must be carefully considered.

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"David Grimes has no formal affiliation with the Department of Oncology in Oxford. Whilst it is not clear exactly when the articles in question were conceived it seems unlikely that a formal affiliation existed at that time."

Prof Mark Middleton
Chair, Dept of Oncology
University of Oxford, U.K.
January 18, 2022

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Grimes No Longer On Staff at Dublin City University

January 26, 2022

As of December 2021, David Robert Grimes was neither a fellow nor a professor at Dublin City University.

“David Robert Grimes is no longer a member of staff here in DCU,” Thomas Kelly, a communications manager at DCU, told *Microwave News* in an email this morning.

Kelly wrote that Grimes is “currently an invited researcher at the School of Physical Sciences. That is not a staff position.” He was a “senior research fellow” at DCU, until November 2021, according to Kelly.

Grimes was appointed an assistant professor in August 2019, Kelly told me. He transitioned to his DCU fellowship in 2020.

Grimes has taken down his LinkedIn page. Pasted below is what appears when it was accessed this morning. Before that, the page stated that he was a DCU assistant professor.



An exact match for **david-robert-grimes-80554332** could not be found.

The LinkedIn profile you're looking for isn't public or doesn't exist. To search and filter 750 million LinkedIn members, log in or join LinkedIn today.

April 21, 2022

Grimes Issues Revised CoI

Today, *JAMA Oncology* published three letters —all critical— of David Robert Grimes's review of RF radiation and cancer. They are all open access:

- Olga Naidenko of the Environmental Working Group, Washington DC;
- David Carpenter, Lennart Hardell and Cindy Sage of the University of Albany (NY), Örebro University Hospital (Sweden) and Sage Associates, Santa Barbara (CA), respectively;
- Najmeh Jooyan and Mohammadjavad Mortazavi of the Shiraz University of Medical Sciences (Iran).

Together with a reply from Grimes.

Appended to his reply is a revised Conlflict of Interest Disclosure to include "relevant" conflicts, which were "inadvertently" omitted in the original publication. Here is the full text of the revised CoI:

> **Conflict of Interest Disclosures:** Dr Grimes reported receiving grants from the Wellcome Trust (funder had no role in research or approval/review of results) and has written articles on misconceptions and conspiracy theories surrounding radiofrequency radiation in scholarly and lay publications, but has not received industry funding for these articles. He reported having received payment for an appearance in an informational video for Vodafone UK countering conspiracy theories about 5G, specifically on purported links to COVID-19 and cancer, and donated these fees to Médecins Sans Frontières. He also reported receiving paid royalties for a popular science book (with multiple editions) that addresses health disinformation, appraisal of evidence, and critical thinking, and receiving fees and honoraria for contributed articles, fact-checking, public talks, and media appearances.

JAMA Network, JAMA Oncology, David Robert Grimes, Phil Fontanarosa, Nora Disis, University of Oxford, Dublin City University, Vodafone, Olga Naidenko, David Carpenter, Lennart Hardell, Cindy Sage, Najmeh Jooyan, Mohammadjavad Mortazavi,

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