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Dear Sirs,

I am hereby filing an academic misconduct complaint against Stephan Lewandowsky, Klaus Oberauer, Gilles Gignac and John Cook in respect to Lewandowsky et al 2013 (Psychological Science) ("*Hoax*") and Lewandowsky et al 2013 (Frontiers) ("*Fury*").

I refer to the following definition of misconduct at the University of Western Australia (<http://www.research.uwa.edu.au/staff/research-policy/procedures>):

"Misconduct" or "scientific misconduct" is taken here to mean fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or other practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the scientific community for proposing, conducting, or reporting research.

together with the following UWA policy
(<http://www.hr.uwa.edu.au/policies/agreements/academic>):

A researcher or reviewer shall not with intent to deceive, or in reckless disregard for the truth:

- state or present a material or significant falsehood
- omit a fact so that what is stated or presented as a whole states or presents a material or significant falsehood.

I submit that the claim by Lewandowsky et al in *Hoax* (and as further disseminated by emails and in *Fury*) that a link to their survey had been published at the Skeptical Science (SKS) blog (www.skepticalscience.com) was a “material or significant falsehood” that was used to supposedly rebut criticism that their methodology had failed to actually survey “skeptics”; and that the falsehood in the published version was not made inadvertently, but either intentionally or in reckless disregard for the truth. Further details are summarized below.

This is not the only misconduct involved in this incident, but it is both clearcut and egregious and therefore this complaint is filed separately.

The Material Falsehood

In Table S1 of *Hoax*, Lewandowsky et al asserted that the Skeptical Science blog (www.skepticalscience.com) was one of eight blogs that received an invitation to post a link to the survey and that posted a link to the survey. In the section of the *Hoax* SI entitled “Prevalence of “skeptics” among blog visitors”, Lewandowsky et al carried out an extended discussion of the alleged SKS link to their survey as follows [my bold]:

Prevalence of “skeptics” among blog visitors

All of the blogs that carried the link to the survey broadly endorsed the scientific consensus on climate change (see Table S1). As evidenced by the comment streams, however, their readership was broad and encompassed a wide range of view on climate change. To illustrate, a content analysis of 1067 comments from unique visitors to **www.skepticalscience.com**, conducted by the proprietor of the blog, revealed that around 20% (N = 222) held clearly “skeptical” views, with the remainder (N = 845) endorsing the scientific consensus. At the time the research was conducted (September 2010), **www.skepticalscience.com** received 390,000 monthly visits. **Extrapolating from the content analysis of the comments, this translates into up to 78,000 visits from “skeptics” at the time when the survey was open** (although it cannot be ascertained how many of the visitors actually saw the link.)

For comparison, a survey of the U. S. public in June 2010 pegged the proportion of “skeptics” in the population at 18% (Leiserowitz, Maibach, Roser-Renouf, & Smith, 2011). Comparable surveys in other countries (e. g., Australia; Leviston & Walker, 2010) yielded similar estimates for the same time period. The proportion of “skeptics” who comment at **www.skepticalscience.com** is thus roughly commensurate with their proportion in the population at large.

However, the assertion by Lewandowsky and co-authors that the SKS blog had carried a link to the Lewandowsky survey was and is false.

First, despite repeated requests, neither Lewandowsky nor Cook have been able to produce any evidence of the existence of such a link. Links to the Lewandowsky survey have been identified at the other seven blogs in Table S1 of *Hoax*, but no link has been identified at SKS. No such link exists in the present blog archives. Cook has admitted in correspondence with Geoff Chambers, one of the “subjects” of *Fury*, that there is no evidence of the past existence of such a link in SKS blog records or archives. In response to controversy last September, Tom Curtis, a SKS editor, conducted a search of SKS archives and failed to locate a link.

Second, correspondence between Lewandowsky and Cook relating to the SKS link has been obtained by Simon Turnill under an FOI request. The correspondence of August 28, 2010, the supposed date of the “missing” blogpost, shows unequivocally that Cook agreed only to send a tweet (which he did and which has been located) and that he did not agree to post a link at SKS. See the more detailed discussion of this correspondence at Climate Audit (see <http://climateaudit.org/2013/03/28/lewandowsky-doubles-down/>).

Third, the “Wayback Machine” archive recorded the SKS homepage on August 30, 2010 (and again the following week). The archived homepage as at August 30, 2010 shows all blogposts for dates bracketing August 28, 2010 and there is no blogpost linking to the Lewandowsky survey. Nor does the archived homepage taken the following week.

The falsehood is “material or significant”. The preprint of Lewandowsky et al had been severely criticized for attempting to survey “skeptics” at stridently anti-skeptic sites, such as Deltoid and Tamino, where skeptic comments are few and far behind, and that the survey was not representative of actual “skeptic” attitudes. It was further suggested by some that it was implausible that a survey only linked from Deltoid, Tamino and similarly extreme blogs would yield ~20% “skeptic” responses, adding support to the widespread allegation that some supposedly “skeptic” responses had been faked. While SKS is very critical of “skeptics”, it was not as openly hostile as the Deltoid and Tamino blogs and could much more plausibly claim some “skeptic” readership (though the claims by Lewandowsky et al in the *Hoax* SI of a potential “78,000 visits” is very farfetched).

The false assertion that there had been an SKS link to the survey (together with the related analysis of SKS readership) was “material” and/or “significant” to the efforts by Lewandowsky and associates to refute the allegations that they had failed to survey actual “skeptics” – hence its inclusion in the *Hoax* SI. The claim to have actually surveyed “skeptics” was, in turn, “material” and/or “significant” to *Hoax*.

Intentionality and/or Reckless Disregard

There is convincing evidence that the above falsehood was made intentionally or with reckless disregard to the truth. Lewandowsky knew or ought to have known that there were serious

questions about the existence of the SKS linking blogpost through emails, blogposts that he knew of and unequivocal warnings from an SKS editor, but recklessly disregarded these warnings.

In August 2012, Barry Woods, an interested blog commenter and one of the targets of *Fury*, emailed Lewandowsky requesting the location of the SKS link. Lewandowsky was unable to provide a URL (none existed), but falsely told Woods that he had personally seen a linking blogpost and had even “made a note of it”. Lewandowsky’s claim to have personally seen the SKS blogpost is impossible, since there never was any such linking blogpost.

In September 2012, Geoff Chambers, another interested blog commenter and another target of *Fury*, in comments at SKS and then in email correspondence with Cook, also sought the location of the supposed blogpost. Cook said that there was no evidence in blog archives, but claimed to have “forensic evidence” of the existence of the SKS link in the form of an email replying to Lewandowsky’s August 28, 2010 request, containing Cook’s “reply that I [Cook] posted it [the SKS linking blogpost] on the same day.” This claim is flatly contradicted by the correspondence itself which clearly shows that Cook only undertook to send a tweet (which he did.)

On September 12, 2012, I published a blog article (<http://climateaudit.org/2012/09/14/the-sks-link-to-the-lewandowsky-survey/>) summarizing the evidence then available. (The correspondence between Cook and Lewandowsky did not become available until later.) It included the compelling Wayback machine evidence against the existence of a SKS linking blogpost on or near August 28, 2010. Lewandowsky and associates were clearly aware of the Climate Audit blogpost summarizing the evidence against the existence of the SKS link, as this blogpost (9/14/2012) is cited in the *Fury* SI and is referred to in Table 3 of the *Fury* running text (as “14 Sep SMcI”) and three comments from the thread are cited in *Fury* (page 24). In the *Fury* SI, they even cited the following statement from Climate Audit clearly stating that SKS never published a link to the Lewandowsky survey, but classified this as merely among “SKS conspiracies”.

In my [SM] opinion, the evidence is overwhelming that SkS never published a link to the Lewandowsky survey. In my opinion, both Cook's claim to have published a link and Lewandowsky's claim to have seen it are untrue. But even if Cook did post a link and then destroyed all documentary evidence of its existence, the situation is equally unpalatable.

Following my post, Tom Curtis, an SKS editor, carried out a detailed search of SKS posts for the alleged linking blogpost. After being unable to locate the supposed link, Curtis notified Cook in unequivocal terms on September 29, 2012 that there was no linking post at SKS:

I've been looking into nooks and crannies with regard to the Lewandowsky survey. One of the things I have found is a continuous record of SkS posts from the 17th of Aug to 23rd Sept contemporary with those dates. Comparison with the SkS archive makes it

almost certain that notice of the Lewandowsky survey was not given on SkS during that period. At the same time, notice was given by you on Twitter on August 27th. It may also have been given by you on face book.

I'm letting you know so that you can notify Lewandowsky if you think he may have a need to correct any reference to SkS in his paper, and to ask if you had anything further to add, or whether you would accept that account (notification on twitter but not on SkS) as essentially accurate.

Curtis recently notified me that he also sent an email directly to Lewandowsky and Oberauer at the time putting them squarely on notice that Cook had only sent out a tweet.

Thus, by the end of September 2012, Lewandowsky and associates either knew or ought to have known that there was no SKS blogpost linking to the Lewandowsky survey. However, instead of correcting the claims in the preprint, Lewandowsky and associates added the entire section quoted above (*Prevalence of "skeptics" among blog visitors*) either "with intent to deceive" or "in reckless disregard of the truth".

Conclusion

I submit that Lewandowsky, Oberauer, Gignac and Cook, jointly or severally, have committed academic misconduct under the policies of the University of Western Australia. I request that the University of Western Australia and each of the journals investigate the above allegations according to their procedures.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SMcIntyre', written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen McIntyre
Climate Audit