

Not Even Wrong: Seneff And Samsel Debunked By The Seralini Crew



By Hank Campbell — November 9, 2017



Credit: Stephan Neidenbach [1]

Upon seeing what he deemed a poorly-constructed paper by a colleague in physics, Wolfgang Pauli is apocryphally said to have, "This isn't right. This isn't even wrong."

By that he meant the author didn't even have enough command of the basics to be incorrect, it was just gibberish. This now applies to the work of MIT computer scientist Stephanie Seneff and whatever Anthony Samsel claims to have expertise in. When a collaborator of a true anti-science crank, Gilles-Éric Seralini, famous for weird claims like that GMOs are a "pesticide sponge" and who manufactured a (now retracted) paper claiming that rats somehow get cancer if they eat GMO feed, debunks you, you are "not even wrong" by people who are "not even wrong."

I don't even know what the term for a higher order "not even wrong" should be, so if you have an idea help me out in a comment.

Seneff is famous among biologists the way fellow computer scientist Mark Jacobson is among climate scientists: They would ordinarily appreciate any help, science is a big umbrella after all, but they wish they would either be correct or quiet.

It is not to be. And so it looks bad when a suspect junk scientist writes in [what some consider a pay-to-play predatory journal](#) [2] that you are not even qualified to be in their circle.

infertility and birth defects). The aim of this review is to examine the evidential basis for these claimed negative health effects and the mechanisms that are alleged to be at their basis. We found that these authors inappropriately employ a deductive reasoning approach based on syllogism. We found that their conclusions are not supported by the available scientific evidence. Thus the mechanisms and vast range of conditions proposed to result from glyphosate toxicity presented by Samsel and Seneff in their commentaries are at best unsubstantiated theories, speculations or simply incorrect. This misrepresentation of glyphosate's toxicity misleads the public, the scientific community, and regulators. Although evidence exists that glyphosate-based herbicides are toxic below regulatory set safety limits, the arguments of Samsel and Seneff largely serve to distract rather

Whew, "a deductive reasoning approach based on syllogism" and "at best unsubstantiated theories, speculations or simply incorrect" - those are fighting words in evidence-based circles, so I can't imagine what mud-slinging will happen in a group that thinks mainstream science is a conservative conspiracy against nature.

[You can read the whole thing here](#) ^[3] if you don't get the gist. They believe glyphosate is toxic despite all of the evidence against them but even they don't in word salads about toxicology and biology that might as well be magic. Samsel keeps his Internet comments private on Disqus but you can get a sample by his raving on [this article](#) ^[4].

They are not alone in dismissing the most fringe activists against agricultural science. Famed anti-GMO activist Michael Hansen of Consumers Union (parent of Consumer Reports) who has been on The Dr. Oz Show numerous times spouting his own conspiracy beliefs about science, thinks Samsel is so loony he should be avoided lest they lose what little credibility they have.

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In addition to be wrong they are truly nutty and have zero political sense. They testified together at the first hearing in Boston before the Joint Public Health Committee on the GE labeling bill, held June 10, 2013. It was a bit of a mad house. The place was packed, as there had been a rally and press conference beforehand (neither of them were allowed to speak at that). There were 70 people that testified and the only one in opposition was a GMA representative. That said, S & S got to be among the first to testify and were given 10 minutes (the rest of us got 2 min), since Seneff is at MIT. Any way, rather than speak to the substance of the bill, they instead spoke (Seneff did most of the talking) about the need for labeling because of the dangers of glyphosate (virtually whole testimony was about glyphosate), ending their testimony by saying that because glyphosate has been shown to reduce serotonin levels, this could explain the increased suicide and homicide rates in Boston and other cities in MA. It was truly unhinged. In testimony in Hawaii, Seneff has even suggested that glyphosate could potentially explain the Boston bombing!

As for Samsell, he called me two Thanksgivings ago. He asked if I had supported the Codex definition of GE (which is basically the definition used in all the state bills and ballot initiatives). He then proceeded to tell me that that definition is wrong because there are a number of GE crops (lettuce and tomato) that were produced through viral transduction and he had the patent documents to prove it. I told him if that were true and there was evidence of that, that we could always go back to Codex with this new information and potentially reopen the Task Force on Foods Derived from Modern Biotechnology. When I asked for copies/proof of what he was saying, he simply back tracked and said that the definition had come from the US State Department. I tried to reason with him, telling him that the Codex definition was based on the one in the Cartagena Protocol for Biosafety, which had been fully supported by all the NGOs and affiliated scientists. I asked if he thought that all the scientists in the global movement were wrong and he was right? Since then, he has been telling people that I am just a tool of the State Department. In other words, totally clueless.

While I normally ignore such loons, they are very dangerous since significant portions of the grass roots activists buy into their nonsense. One of them is Zen Honeycutt, founder of Moms Across America, a big anti-GE group. I got roped into going to an EPA meeting with her and a number of other members at the last minute (there also was a scientist from NRDC there). They opened the meeting with Honeycutt demanded that all the members at the table say how many kids they have and whether they have ever worked for industry. The top EPA official in the room

Teacher and pro-science-gadfly-for-activists Stephan Neidenbach created this graphic when he saw the paper.

<https://t.co/PDTRgT8NKN> [5] <pic.twitter.com/DJH8Mqw5eK> [6]

— *Stephan Neidenbach* (@welovegv) *November 8, 2017* [7]

I bet if Twitter had existed in Wolfgang Pauli's time he'd have done the same thing.

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Source URL: <https://www.acsh.org/news/2017/11/09/not-even-wrong-seneff-and-samsel-debunked-seralini-crew-12126>

Links

[1] <https://medium.com/the-method>

[2] <http://beallslist.weebly.com/>

[3] <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2017.00316/abstract>

[4] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2017/10/24/glyphosate-gate-iarcs-scientific-fraud-12014>

[5] <https://t.co/PDTRgT8NKN>

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