

IARC © ® Has Threatened Us



By *Hank Campbell* — April 26, 2016

How do you know your science criticisms have gotten noticed? When a world body tries to bully you into silence.

This morning I got an email from the United Nations World Health Organization International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) © ® which, as you can guess by the name, does meta-analyses to find ways to call things cancer-causing agents:

It has come to our attention that our logo is being displayed on your website (<http://acsh.org/news/2016/04/18/whats-ailing-iarc-another-round-of-criticism-ensues/> [1]) and that you are using it without having obtained prior permission from the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the copyright holder.

Please note that the use of the official WHO or IARC logo is prohibited.

How odd. Petty, even. I have never been told such a thing before. I consulted the [Digital Media Law Project](#) [2] and they reaffirmed what I thought; it's not infringement to use a logo if an organization is engaged in reporting, commentary, criticism, and other forms of political, social, and artistic expression of the company or other organization. That is us.

As a general matter, if you are reporting on, commenting on, or criticizing a trademark owner, most ordinary consumers will not be confused about whether the company or organization is the source or sponsor of your work.

Certainly no one thinks IARC © ® is sponsoring our article, since it was critical of their latest attempt at scaring people about food. [The International Trademark Association](#) [3] also affirms we are in the clear, citing most recently *Architectural Mailboxes, LLC v. Epoch Design, LLC*, 99 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1799 (S.D. Cal. 2011).

Why go after us? The answer is obvious, in that someone there clearly wants to create an "icy chill" effect about criticism of their work.

There is a reason why we have freedom of the press. An organization like IARC © ®, which has a gigantic world-governing body standing behind it holding a legal hockey stick, could easily control media if they simply let the *New York Times* have a free pass rewriting IARC © ® press releases claiming sausage is as dangerous as plutonium, while simultaneously invoking a "right to control language" using intimidation and lawsuits in order to suppress commentary, criticism, and

unfavorable reporting.(1) No one reading our piece would think we are claiming IARC ©® is a sponsor of our science and health information by using their logo, we were instead clearly showing that their officials wrote a terribly flawed paper, put the word "risk" all over it ([and another 38 times in their Q&A](#) [4]) without actually assessing risk, and then after the backlash over their silly claims about meat suddenly backed off and assured the public they only calculate hazard, not risk.(2)

You know who actually informs the public about risk? The American Council on Science and Health. It's safe to eat a hot dog, even if IARC ©® contends it is as risky as inhaling mustard gas. Nonetheless, they must not like our work being trusted guides for the public because they have trumped up a reason to threaten us:

*Because you have used IARC's logo without permission, we request that you **immediately remove** it from your website.*

If the logo in question is not removed, IARC reserves the right to investigate and take appropriate legal action against you.



reuters.com

but its cancer arm IARC
855 × 612 - 120k - jpg



reuters.com

head of IARC monographs, have to wonder if Reuters got permission
428 × 279 - 50k - jpg

to use the IARC ©® logo in those pictures on the left,(3) or if its many defenses of the IARC ©® findings on meat and every other ridiculous claim the organization has made has earned them a free pass from United Nations legal retribution.

It's bizarre. I have been critical of plenty of terrible science papers in the last 10 years, those comments on IARC ©® are hardly the meanest I have been, and I have never been threatened with a lawsuit by any of the science organizations I have discussed.(4)

Maybe it is just the sort of mental and ideological immunity that comes from being part of the U.N. -- perhaps bureaucrats give their hand-picked scientific chosen the belief they really are above criticism.

Perhaps they think their findings will seem more evidence-based if they simply stop anyone who shows they are wrong from being able to speak to the public.

We haven't yet released our peer-reviewed book on IARC © ® claims that diesel emissions are causing cancer - if they don't like the American public being told the truth about sausage, they are really going to hate that one.

NOTES:

(1) They certainly will not threaten the American Cancer Society, since their headline was lovingly [World Health Organization Says Processed Meat Causes Cancer](#) [5]. Maybe the lesson is: Be deferential to giant governing bodies, even when they are wrong; act like they have some special scientific authority because they hand-pick committee members who select each other's papers for the meta-analysis, as long as they agree with the pre-determined result.

(2) Here are examples of [where they absolutely claim their paper is about risk](#) [6]:

“An analysis of data from 10 studies estimated that every 50 gram portion of processed meat eaten daily increases the risk of colorectal cancer by about 18%.”

And “studies suggest that the risk of colorectal cancer could increase by 17% for every 100 gram portion of red meat eaten daily.”

(3) Or if these 638,000 other IARC © ® logo users got threats:

About 638,000 results



iarc.uaf.edu
IARC logo sample. Download:
2999 × 2921 - 1409k - jpg



foodinsight.org
What is IARC?
800 × 575 - 91k - jpg



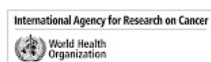
jbreslowdesign.com
IARC Logo - J. Breslow Design
900 × 900 - 38k - jpg



asbestosdiseaseawareness.org
IARC/WHO Issues Worl
2660 × 650 - 118k - png



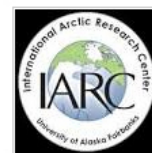
aexy.club
IARC Logo High Res
704 × 400 - 36k - png



km4dev.org
CONSULTANCY OPPORTUNITY
IN
2172 × 561 - 285k - jpeg



rowaytongardeners.org
International Ruling:
250 × 250 - 16k - jpg



iarc.uaf.edu
215px × 214px
215 × 214 - 105k - png



who.int
IARC logo
49 × 72 - 3k - jpg



research.iarc.uaf.edu
IARC logo UAF Logo.
95 × 70 - 17k - gif



acseduonline.com
Many of the courses we have
101 × 83 - 18k - jpg



nsidc.org
IPA logo IARC logo
169 × 86 - 6k - gif

(4) I have been threatened by non-scientists. Lisa Graves, the former Clinton lawyer who runs the Denier For Hire site called SourceWatch, [threatened me with a lawsuit for discussing her publicly available Form 990](#) [7] and its lobbying expenses and dark money, but IARC © ® is the first time an (ostensibly) science body has done so.

Source URL: <https://www.acsh.org/news/2016/04/26/iarc-has-threatened-us>

Links

[1] <http://acsh.org/news/2016/04/18/whats-ailing-iarc-another-round-of-criticism-ensues/>

[2] <http://www.dmlp.org/legal-guide/using-trademarks-others?source=acsh.org>

[3]

[http://www.inta.org/INTABulletin/Pages/NotAllIsFair\(Use\)inTrademarksandCopyrights.aspx?source=acsh.org](http://www.inta.org/INTABulletin/Pages/NotAllIsFair(Use)inTrademarksandCopyrights.aspx?source=acsh.org)

[4] http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/iarcnews/pdf/Monographs-Q&A_Vol114.pdf

[5] <http://www.cancer.org/cancer/news/news/world-health-organization-says-processed-meat-causes-cancer?source=acsh.org>

[6] [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanonc/article/PIIS1470-2045\(15\)00444-1/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanonc/article/PIIS1470-2045(15)00444-1/abstract)

[7] <http://www.science20.com/cool->

[links/another_mainstream_science_publication_calls_out_usrtk_and_its_media_enablers-157467](http://www.science20.com/cool-links/another_mainstream_science_publication_calls_out_usrtk_and_its_media_enablers-157467)