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## Decision on your manuscript

Bob Uttl &lt;uttlbob@gmail.com&gt;

Fri, Feb 9, 2024 at 1:26 PM

To: Frontiers in Psychology &lt;psychology.editorial.office@frontiersin.org&gt;

Cc: Frontiers in Psychology - Peer Review <psychology.editorial.office@frontiersin.org>, sjaswal@cus.ac.in, axel cleeremans <axcleer@ulb.ac.be>, "psychology@frontiersin.org" <psychology@frontiersin.org>, production.office@frontiersin.org, Frontiers Support <support@frontiersin.org>, "henry.markram@frontiersin.org" <henry.markram@frontiersin.org>, "kamila.markram@frontiersin.org" <kamila.markram@frontiersin.org>, "mirjam.eckert@frontiersin.org" <mirjam.eckert@frontiersin.org>, "frederick.fenter@frontiersin.org" <frederick.fenter@frontiersin.org>, Lacey Gibson <gibsonlacey99@gmail.com>, Toria Violo <toriaviolo@gmail.com>, Peter Graf <pgraf@psych.ubc.ca>, Stewart Longman <stewart.longman@albertahealthservices.ca>

Dear "Frontiers in Psychology" (or whoever wrote the email):

Thank you for informing me, once again, that our manuscript "Meta-analysis: On average, undergraduate students' intelligence is merely average" cannot be accepted for publication in Frontiers in Psychology, section Cognitive Science." **Unfortunately, "Frontiers in Psychology's" statement is misinformation.** The manuscript clearly could be accepted "for publication in Frontiers in Psychology, section Cognitive Science" because it was so accepted on January 4, 2024, by Editor Dr. Snehlata Jaswal. Recall that you informed the entire world about it by publishing your acceptance together with the abstract online. This is now a historically documented fact that, according to Altmetrics, millions of readers know about (<https://www.altmetric.com/details/158097957>). Your removal of the published abstract from your website does not change anything on that fact either.

In the next paragraph, you say that "The reason for this decision is: The manuscript could not be sufficiently revised by the authors to address the concerns raised by the reviewers or editor during the review process." **Unfortunately, "Frontiers in Psychology's" statement is a bold falsehood, another misinformation.** The historical record documents that the manuscript was reviewed by four reviewers. Reviewer 1 failed to read the manuscript sufficiently carefully and made patently false statements in his review, for example, he responded to the question "Is a PRISMA flow diagram included?" with "No." Reviewer 2 responding to the same question responded "Yes" (accurately). We addressed Reviewer 1 comments, Reviewer 1 appeared unhappy with our response and recommended rejection on Dec 11, 2023. Reviewers 2, 3, and 4 all finalized their reviews recommending acceptance. The editor accepted the manuscript on January 4, 2024. Therefore, contrary to your reason for the decision, "The manuscript" was "sufficiently revised by the authors to address the concerns raised by the reviewers or editor during the review process." I add that the editor made that judgment on January 4, 2024. Your decision to reject an already accepted article did not happen during "the review process" but well after the review process was finalized, the final decision issued, the abstract published, and decision communicated to the whole world.

I note here that the Frontiers has been busy re-arranging historical records and fabricated new facts to pretend that the Interactive Review" was incomplete (the check mark disappeared), that the Review Finalized did not happen (the check mark disappeared), that the Final Validation did not happen (the check mark disappeared), and the Final Decision did not happen (the check mark disappeared). **By my count, that is at least four manipulations of the truth/four falsehoods.** Somewhat ironically, even the fabricated historical record shows that the reviews were finalized and "Article accepted for publication" but to discover that one has to scroll a little lower. This suggests that whoever was tasked with manipulating the historical record was either careless or not skillful enough. Please see the printouts of the Review Forum captured on Feb 6, 2024 at 13:16 MST (original, attached) and compare it to the manipulated Review Forum captured on Feb 9, 2024, at 05:25 MST (attached). Further manipulation occurred sometime later on Feb 9. The printout of the Review Forum captured on Feb 9, 2024 at 11:03 (attached) shows that over one

month after its acceptance on Jan 4, 2024, "Article rejected by Editorial Office Frontiers in Psychology".

In the next paragraph, you again refer to "a number of overstated claims were brought to the attention of our Research Integrity team" but you do not say what these "overstated claims" were and you have ignored my prior requests to disclose them. As to "the Specialty Chief Editor" who allegedly "highlighted issues with the reporting, methods and analysis and the scope fit for the journal" **weeks following the article's acceptance**, I addressed those in my email dated Feb 6, 2024, addressed to Catriona Leslie, and pointed out that the concerns were based on factually false facts, unreasonable interpretation of a word "merely" as being "a laden word", etc.. Catriona Leslie responded only today, Feb 9, 2024, after my repeated emails and only after the "Leadership" was copied on my email. She finally acknowledged my email but ignored its substance and did not respond to it in any substantive way. More critically, no one from the Frontiers has addressed the Frontiers' failure to follow its own policies when dealing with complaints or concerns raised by readers about already published abstracts or articles. Furthermore, Catriona Leslie (nor Frontiers) did not respond to my request for those allegedly "overstated claims", for "any letters sent to the Specialty Chief Editor regarding our paper" and for the name of the Specialty Chief Editor". Catriona Leslie also **pretended** that I did not address whatever concerns were "raised by the Specialty Chief Editor" – I did but she appears not to have read them. Instead, Frontiers in Psychology issued several patently false statements and boldly, although not very skilfully, manipulated historical facts.

As I pointed out in my Feb 6, 2024 email to Catriona Leslie, this matter is of public concern, undermines public trust in Frontiers review and publication process, and is worthy of public knowledge and investigation.

Best regards,

Dr. Bob Uttl

[Quoted text hidden]

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#### 4 attachments

-  **20240206-1316\_Frontiers-ReviewForum.pdf**  
209K
-  **20240209-0525\_Frontiers-ReviewForum.pdf**  
217K
-  **20240209-1103\_Frontiers-ReviewForum-Rejected-Accepted.pdf**  
220K
-  **20240209-0525\_FrontiersAbstract\_404NotFound.pdf**  
25K