

Frackland

Critical comments on unconventional exploration by fracking in the UK and Europe

Home

Academic freedom of expression denied by corporate lobbying

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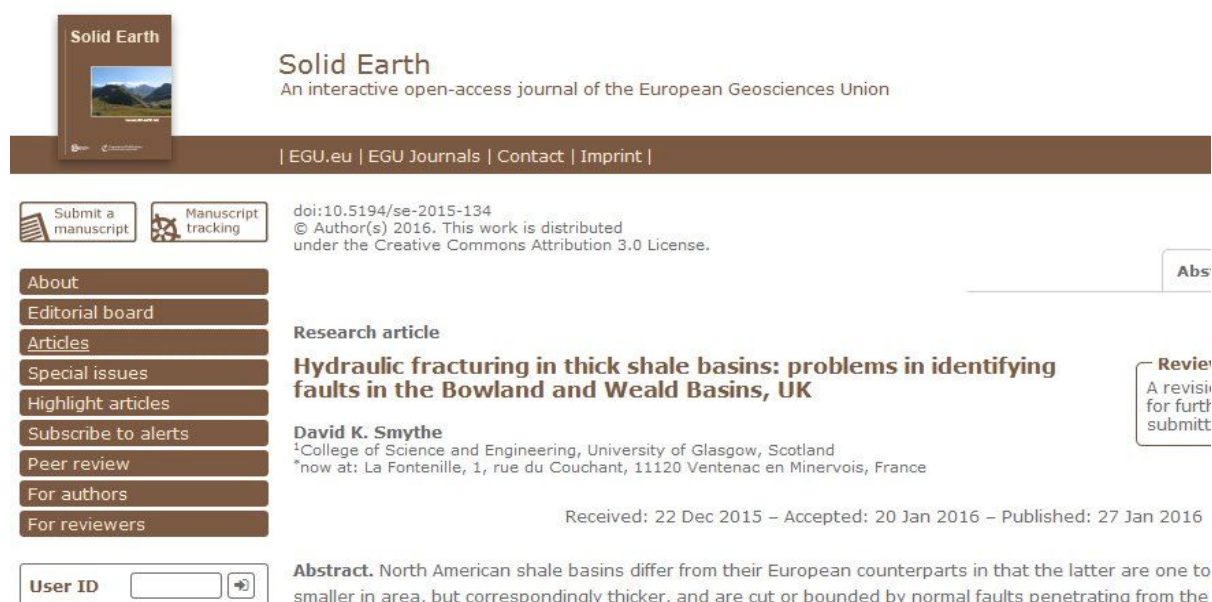
Posted on [15th August 2016](#) by [Professor David Smythe](#)

A lot has happened since my last post, which was over one year ago. It began:

“*Has David Cameron [who?] instructed DECC [what?] to omit his Witney constituency ...*”

But I shall be writing more regularly now for a while.

Last year I got my head down to try to get some of my fracking research into so-called peer-reviewed journals. I started with a long article submitted to *Solid Earth Discussions*, a respected journal published by the European Geoscience Union. But at the end of January, some three days after my discussion article went online, my university online access was suddenly terminated, without warning or explanation, after 17 years of trouble-free access.



The screenshot shows the journal's interface. At the top left is the journal logo. The main header identifies the journal as 'Solid Earth', an interactive open-access journal of the European Geosciences Union. Navigation links include EGU.eu, EGU Journals, Contact, and Imprint. A sidebar on the left offers options like 'Submit a manuscript', 'Manuscript tracking', and various article categories. The central content area displays the article title, author name, and affiliation. A 'Review' box on the right indicates a revision for further submission. At the bottom, there is a User ID field and an abstract snippet.

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Research article
Hydraulic fracturing in thick shale basins: problems in identifying faults in the Bowland and Weald Basins, UK

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Abstract. North American shale basins differ from their European counterparts in that the latter are one to smaller in area, but correspondingly thicker, and are cut or bounded by normal faults penetrating from the

Review: A revision for further submission

User ID

A batch of internal emails from the University, which I got released under a Subject Access Request, reveals that since 2014 Professor Paul Younger has been waging a campaign to have my rightful links to the University suppressed. Furthermore, the emails show that there is a direct link between the publication of the paper and the termination three days later.

The issue at stake here is not just the technical arguments for or against the **risks of fracking**; it is the more fundamental issue of **freedom of academic expression**. Professor Younger may not like it, but I am a lifelong member of the College of Science and Engineering. I have the right to use the title *Emeritus Professor of Geophysics, University of Glasgow*, and to use the University address (but only when publishing academic papers). As can be seen above, I listed this as the College, but asterisked by a ‘Now at’ giving my home address in France. All normal procedure in academic publishing, as is the supply of an

email address (I quoted my now-defunct university email address).

The University has since supplied self-contradictory and devious reasons for terminating my online links. But there is good evidence from the released emails that corporate pressure was being applied *via* Professor Younger. After several months of fruitless negotiation with the help of a lawyer I now have no alternative but to launch a legal action. I have set up a [legal crowdfunding page](#) to raise the funds necessary to fight an action and to get my rights restored. If you are interested in open inquiry and critical debate, please read the crowdfunding page and, for access to the evidence, my own [web page](#) about this affair.