

21 July 2017

To: Officers of the Animal Behavior Society (except the President<sup>1</sup>)

From: Donald Kroodsma, Fellow, ABS

Re: My Resignation as a Fellow of ABS

It is deeply troubling when a scientific society elects to its highest office someone who cannot abide by that society's own ethical guidelines (see "Ethics in Publishing," <https://www.elsevier.com/journals/animal-behaviour/0003-3472/guide-for-authors#5001>), which states the following:

*Professional integrity in the conduct and reporting of research is an absolute requirement of publication . . . , as is a willingness to share information with other members of the scientific community.*

Equally troubling is the current ABS president's dismissal of NSF's policy on Dissemination and Sharing of Research Results (see <https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp>):

*Investigators are expected to share with other researchers, at no more than incremental cost and within a reasonable time, the primary data, samples, physical collections and other supporting materials created or gathered in the course of work under NSF grants. Grantees are expected to encourage and facilitate such sharing.*

Rather than comply with these basic principles, Jeff Podos has threatened me with criminal harassment charges, delivered by the University of Massachusetts Police, if I inquire about how he conducts his research. Such behavior is unacceptable by anyone in the ABS (or in any scientific discipline, of course), but especially unacceptable by its elected leader (someone wondering how these threats arose can read all the evidence in the attached file "Criminal Harassment").<sup>2</sup>

As I write in my commentary for Animal Behavior (attached), these kinds of behaviors can persist only as long as the benefits outweigh the costs. I realize that it is no great cost to the ABS to erase me as a Fellow, but resigning as a Fellow is what I as an individual can do, however small the cost imposed. For me, "Business as Usual" is not an option, nor should it be for the Animal Behavior Society, especially given the parallels that are transpiring on the national scene.

Sincerely . . . Donald Kroodsma

---

<sup>1</sup> Per order of the University of Massachusetts Police, I am not allowed to communicate with Podos, a faculty member in my own Department of Biology at UMass

---

2 And there's so much more: 1) My attempt at a public dialogue in *Biology Letters* about Goodwin and Podos (2014), for example, was quashed by a confidential letter from the University to the journal. All I have been able to glean from *Biology Letters* is that this secret letter was submitted by Podos, from the dean of the graduate school. "Per university rules," wrote the dean, I was not allowed to know the contents of this letter (in contrast to how I encouraged *Biology Letters* to forward any of my correspondence with them on to Podos, because I could not do so directly). Although *Biology Letters* believed that the dean wrote the letter, the dean had "no idea" (quotes from his email to me) who wrote the document, had "no idea" who submitted the document, and had no role ("none") in preparing or writing the document. (Nor was he interested in finding out.) 2) Or consider how lobbying by Podos et al. (including two former ABS presidents) led a former editor of the *Journal* to reject my proposed Forum article before it was even submitted. . . . All this effort has been an attempt to suppress an open discussion of the research that I have now addressed in my published Forum (Kroodsma, 2017—see commentary).