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Prof. dr. F. Kuipers, Decaan,  
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7th August, 2015

**Professor Peter Kinderman**  
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Dear Professors Donaldson and Kuipers,

Re: Professor James C Coyne

I am writing in connection with Professor Coyne, whom I understand is an employee of the University of Groningen and a Visiting Professor at the University of Stirling. It has come to my attention that Professor Coyne has posted a number of offensive messages or tweets on the on-line social networking services Twitter and Facebook. I have reproduced in an appendix to this letter a small number of many examples of these tweets and postings.

I consider the content of these tweets and postings to be offensive. They may also be characterised as an attempt to bully and harass the individuals named (or identifiable) within the tweets or postings. I have taken legal and professional advice and am advised that the tweets may be defamatory, as they would tend to lower the reputation of the individuals named in the eyes of right-thinking members of the public.

This behaviour is also in violation of the “Code of Conduct concerning Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Aggression, Violence and Discrimination” of the University of Groningen, 2009 [<http://www.rug.nl/about-us/organization/rules-and-regulations/vertrouwelijkheid-klachten-bezwaar-beroep/siagd-gedragcode-09?lang=en>] as it creates “a threatening, hostile, insulting, humiliating or offensive environment”, the “Anti-bullying and harassment policy” of the University of Stirling [<http://www.stir.ac.uk/media/services/calendar/rules/rules-and-regulations-anti-bullying-and-harassment-policy.pdf>] and the British Psychological Society’s “Code of Ethics and Conduct” [[http://www.bps.org.uk/system/files/documents/code\\_of\\_ethics\\_and\\_conduct.pdf](http://www.bps.org.uk/system/files/documents/code_of_ethics_and_conduct.pdf)] for the same reasons.

As Professor Coyne is an employee of the University of Groningen and a Visiting Professor at the University of Stirling, you will be aware that you may be liable for any actions arising as a result of these tweets. You may also face reputational damage as a result of Professor Coyne’s online behaviour.

Whilst I am very much in favour of free speech and full and frank academic discourse I am afraid that these tweets have crossed the boundaries of common decency. I have no desire to initiate more formal complaints proceedings at this stage and I would therefore request the following remedies:

- you remind Professor Coyne of his duties as an employee of the University of Groningen and a Visiting Professor at the University of Stirling,
- you ask Professor Coyne to remove these tweets and postings immediately,
- you ask Professor Coyne to give an undertaking that they will not be repeated.

I should be grateful if you would reply to this letter as a matter of urgency.

Best Wishes,



Peter Kinderman



Professor of Clinical Psychology  
University of Liverpool



President-Elect,  
British Psychological Society

## APPENDIX – selected examples of unacceptable online behaviour

Blog posting: April 22, 2015:

<http://blogs.plos.org/mindthebrain/2015/04/22/busting-foes-of-post-publication-peer-review-of-a-psychotherapy-study/>

Referred to a colleague as “You congealed accumulation of fresh cooking fat”, as well as a variety of other similar insults, including the suggestion that colleagues “rigged” certain public debates. It is relevant that the blog is signed with the disclaimer that; “Jim Coyne has sole responsibility for the final content”.

with you as a Special Editor in your quintessential role as biostatistician.

### Douglas Turkington's call for a debate



Professor Douglas Turkington: “The effect size that got away was this big.”

Doug, as you requested, I sent you a link to my Google Scholar list of publications. But you still did not respond to my offer to come to Newcastle and debate you. Maybe you were not impressed. Nor did you respond to Keith Law's repeated request to debate. Yet you insulted internet PPPR Tim Smits with the taunt,

Dear Tim,  
I wonder if you would attend a face to face debate at Newcastle University to debate the issues. Your colleagues McKenna and Laws have already been **slaughtered** in London.  
I look forward to your excuse.  
Douglas

[Click to Enlarge](#)

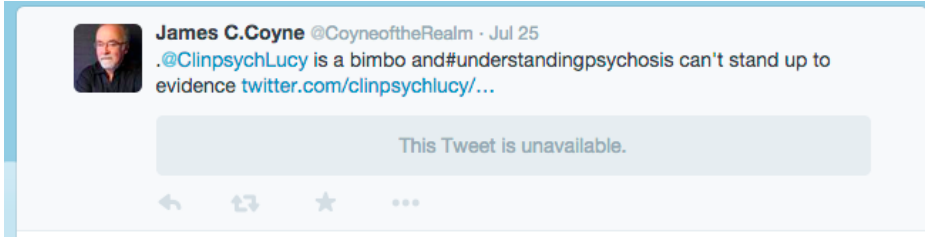
You congealed accumulation of fresh cooking fat.

I recommend that you review the recording of the Maudsley debate. Note how the moderator Sir Robin Murray boldly announced at the beginning that the vote on the debate was rigged by your cronies.



Twitter:

25<sup>th</sup> July 2015 Reference to a colleague as a “bimbo”

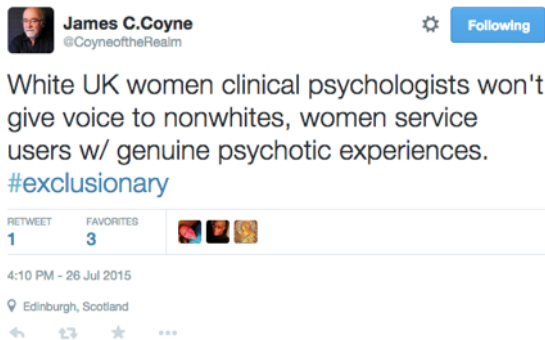


26<sup>th</sup> July 2015 Reference to a colleague as an “arrogant fool”

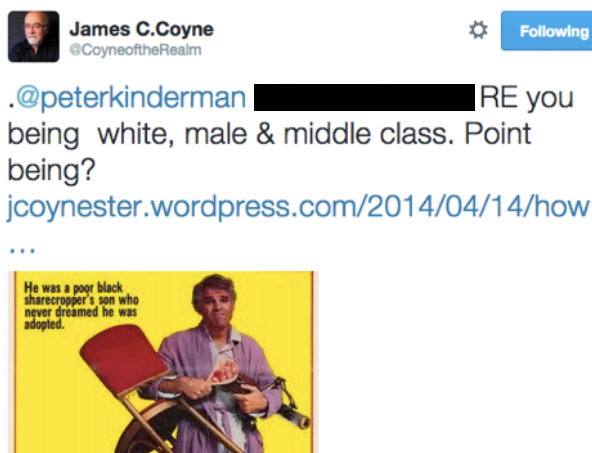


Suggestions that individuals and clinical psychologists as a whole are racist:

26<sup>th</sup> July 2015:



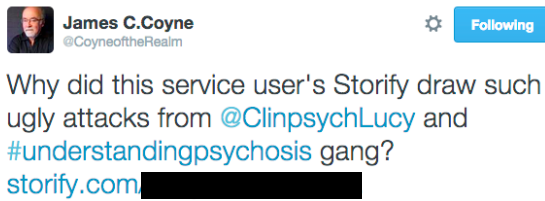
16<sup>th</sup> April 2014 (note the attached image):



and (referring to either or both colleagues as “Bwana”):



Suggestions that individuals and clinical psychologists as a whole are bullies:  
26<sup>th</sup> July 2015:



24<sup>th</sup> July 2015:



In which context, it is important to note that no such attacks actually occurred

