

CFSAC Testimony

*Submitted on behalf of Kyal Shepard
Adelaide, Australia, October 11, 2010*

INTRODUCTION: The following submission is made on behalf of Kyal Shepard, a 22 year old patient, severely ill with CFS for 5 years. Kyal has given permission for this excerpt from his blog to be submitted as CFSAC Testimony. By way of introduction:

“Since the onset of my CFS in June 2005, my health has steadily declined, almost uniformly. I now spend 23 hours a day in bed (the other 1 hour lying in a chair next to my bed) and struggle to leave my home for 5 minutes without ‘crashing.’ I have over 40 symptoms and I cannot walk 100 metres without ‘crashing.’ Prior to my illness I was an elite middle and long distance runner, I was almost 18 and I was about to study astrophysics at university.”

Many patients and indeed XMRV/MLV/CFS researchers share Kyal’s concerns that severely flawed negative studies are casting a chilling pall on both funding and interest for further XMRV/MLV research. Adding to this concern is the disproportionate degree of publicity which these dubious studies and flimsy arguments are receiving in the media.

As one patient noted, in one of many forums vigorously deconstructing the Contamination Theory (<http://www.forums.aboutmecfs.org/showthread.php?7800-McClure-s-XMRV-Contamination-Conversation/page4>)

“Caution and skepticism are necessary in science, but not to the point that they begin to paralyze the science itself, and not if arguments that do not stand up to scrutiny are repeated ad nauseam with limited and diminishing basis and without a practical experimental proposal that will answer the questions raised.”

The following analysis of the “Contamination Argument” is a brilliant example of what’s wrong with this unbalanced media coverage – and what’s right with the human spirit. Specifically, this inspired work by Kyal deconstructs – argument by argument – the fallacies of the Contamination Theory, and provides a measure of insight into the holes in the contamination argument, as vigorously marketed by Professor Myra McClure..

It is worth noting – although hardly a surprise to the ME/CFS community – that Kyal wrote this meticulous piece at great personal expense to his own health. Not surprisingly for those of us in the ME/CFS community, Kyal has subsequently “crashed”, however has graciously given his permission for this piece to be shared with CFSAC as his testimony.

CFSAC committee members are urged to read this document, and thereby gain some perspective on one of many scientifically thin arguments- the Contamination Theory - that is seriously holding back vital XMRV/MLV research.

Kyal’s full testimony can be viewed here:

<http://livingwithchronicfatiguesyndrome.wordpress.com/2009/08/30/cfsac-testimony/>

It is well worth the read.