

# Flub Up, Cover Up and Inexplicable Reversal at “Logically”

Dear IFCN staff,

On Aug. 14, 2023, I reviewed a fact check on the topic of fetal pain published by Logically Facts, [listed as a verified signatory](#) of the IFCN’s Code of Principles under the name “Logically.” [That fact check was published on May 13, 2022.](#)

The fact check used two citations relevant to its claim it is “**False**” that a fetus feels pain during an abortion procedure. Both were from before 2010. One contradicted the conclusion of the fact check, finding, as Logically’s fact check phrased it, fetuses “could experience pain somewhere between 29 and 30 weeks after conception.” [The other citation](#), a secondary source transmitting the view of Dr. Stuart Derbyshire, expressed his view that the subjective experience of pain requires a level of consciousness not present until after birth. The fact check took Derbyshire’s view as factual, discarding without discussion the evidence from its other citation.

In [my research](#), I quickly discovered that [Derbyshire had reversed his position by 2020](#), well before Logically published its fact check. That’s something competent fact check research should have uncovered. Derbyshire’s reversal left the fact check with no reasonable support for its conclusion.

[I submitted a correction request to Logically](#) using the form it provides on its website. I cited Derbyshire’s reversal and pointed out the fact check relied squarely on Derbyshire’s 2006 paper. Logically promises a response to any complaint within 48 hours. After over a month I have no evidence Logically has made any attempt to contact me. But on the bright side Logically “revised” its fact check on [Sept. 15, 2023](#). Unfortunately that so-called revision was highly misleading. Though it appropriately revised the conclusion to “**Unverifiable**,” [it actively attempted to promote the false impression](#) that its original version was consistent with the science in May 2022.

## Fact-Check

### The Verdict [ Unverifiable ]

Studies argue that pain, especially the emotional component, is only possible once the cortex is developed and connected to the sensory nerve.

Claim ID bf725127

*(Editor’s Note: This story was originally published on May 13, 2022, and this revised version was published on September 15, 2023, with changes to reflect the updated scientific view around fetal pain, which is a dynamic, evolving topic of study. Our original report included a verdict and a headline that reflected the conclusion, which has also been updated.)*

[I submitted a second request to contact the editorial team at Logically](#) (the first was to inquire as to why the 48 hour promise is apparently meaningless).

After noticing no corrective changes since that Sept. 25, 2023 attempt to discuss the issue with Logically's editorial team, I started composing this formal complaint to the IFCN. And while documenting Logically's incredibly poor handling of this entire issue, I discovered that the revised version of the fact check has been [replaced with the original \(horribly\) flawed version](#).

My fondest hope is that this bizarre turn of events represents Logically's latest attempt to appropriately fix the mess, albeit with a step appearing to lead in the wrong direction. Of note, this latest switching of the two versions bears no editor's note informing readers of or explaining the changes to the article over the past month.

The fact check and the would-be corrective actions taken around this article by Logically Facts cannot jibe with any acceptable/ethical standard of practice in professional fact-checking. Sources should support a fact check's conclusion. Sources should be primary and closely contemporary where possible and practical. Corrections should admit, explain and correct errors, transparently. Logically Facts spectacularly failed in pretty much every respect. A promise to respond to complaints within 48 hours (see image, right) counts as meaningless if there is no detectable response within 48 hours. Codes of practice should not make empty promises.

Thanks for taking the time to consider this complaint.

Lest the International Fact-Checking Network fail to realize it, formal complaints from Bryan W. White/Zebra Fact Check are intended as tests of the IFCN's accountability system. IFCN performance, so far as it can be determined past the IFCN's tendency toward unresponsiveness, has set a very poor record thus far.

Perhaps this reminder about the purpose of these tests will encourage more transparency from the IFCN.

Sincerely,  
Bryan W. White  
Editor and publisher, Zebra Fact Check



**How do we choose sources?** ▼

**How do you manage corrections?** ▼

**How do I submit a correction request?** ▲

If you notice something published through our journalistic, research, or educational function which you believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or unfair, please submit a correction request through the form at the end of the page. Any complaints will be raised to our editorial leads and responded to within 48 hours. Any complaint found to have substantive merit will be publicly corrected, and the correction will be given equal prominence to the article in question. We offer anybody who was the subject of criticism in our reporting the right to reply, provided a prima facie case can be made that our criticisms can be fairly addressed. Reasons for any refusal to grant a right to reply will be published on our website.

If you believe Logically Facts is violating the IFCN code of principles, you can inform the IFCN directly [here](#)

