# Show Me the Studies!

## "The Nation" Resurrects an Old Controversy

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George Carlo is back. … Again.

He has a leading role in an exposé in *The Nation* magazine, where he is portrayed as the inside man who was hired to run a $25 million health research project for the telecom industry and was later fired when he found out that cell phones present a cancer risk.

At least that's what Carlo wants you to believe. The truth is a lot messier and a lot less favorable.

I tracked him through the 1990s and beyond and came to see him as an industry fixer whose only real concern was looking after Number One, that is George Carlo. His outfit, known as Wireless Technology Research, or WTR for short, was a front. WTR did very little original research. *That was the plan.*

Carlo only changed sides after the money ran out and his backer, Tom Wheeler, the CEO of CTIA, refused to continue supporting him. Wheeler had achieved his goal: near universal adoration of cell phones. He didn't need Carlo anymore.

Carlo was no whistle blower. Think of him as a jilted lover.

Now, 20 years later, two experienced reporters, Mark Dowie and Mark Hertsgaard are making a bit of a splash with their cover story, "How Big Wireless Made Us Think That Cell Phones Are Safe." They got seduced by Carlo's silver tongue. They see him as an industry insider who learned the error of his ways.

I tried to convince Dowie otherwise numerous times, but failed to make much headway. I've never had any contact with Hertsgaard, though I was asked by *The Nation*'s executive editor to review a draft of the article. He too seemed concerned about how Carlo was depicted. But not that much, as I found out about a month later when I read the finished article. Dowie and Hertsgaard had thrown

in a few cautionary quotes from me but otherwise portrayed Carlo as having been cast from the same mold as those who blew the whistle on global warming and tobacco.

Dowie and Hertsgaard rejected my argument that Carlo's project was a fake. They accepted his claim that WTR had commissioned *50 original cell phone studies*. I wrote a letter to the editor of *The Nation* pointing that the 50 studies were nothing more than "pie in the sky." Undeterred, Dowie and Hertsgaard fired back they have proof that the studies exist. That assurance, which must have come from Carlo, wilts under scrutiny. It did, however, convince the fact checkers at *The Nation.* For specifics, please see my "Further Response to Mark Dowie and Mark Hertsgaard."

There's an easy way to settle this. *Show Me the Studies.*

Fifty studies should have generated many more than 50 peer reviewed scientific papers. (Researchers will usually publish multiple papers on a funded project.) All the papers would have been indexed in the National Library of Medicine database, PubMed. It would take only a couple of hours to assemble a list of abstracts from the 50 studies.

Many have asked Carlo for such a list in the past and every one of them has come up empty handed.

While preparing this article, I wrote to Carlo for the list. "How about it?" I asked. Here's part of his response: "Of course it's a good idea to release a list. Why didn't I think of that? Of course I did.... so why isn't it out there? Who benefits from any suppression? Certainly not me. The WTR work stands on its own."

Carlo went on to say that he is travelling in Europe for the next few weeks and that we could have an "honest exchange" when he gets back.

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Hertsgaard and Dowie have reworked their story and it appeared in the U.K. *Guardian* a couple of days ago. They have doubled down on Carlo.

They repeat his unsubstantiated claim that the WTR commissioned 50 original studies and then add: "In the years to come, the WTR's findings would be replicated by numerous other scientists in the U.S. and around the world." Hertsgaard and Dowie do not offer any details about who did those replications and what they show.

Meanwhile, Carlo remains silent and has yet to provide a list of the 50 original studies.

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