

# **An Open Letter to Brian Deer Rebutting His Article— “Families duped by a sad smearmaster of MMR fabrication and hatred”**

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## **Abstract**

I published my essay *The Complainant* about Brian Deer’s role in the GMC fitness to practice hearing against Dr. Wakefield, Professor Murch and Professor Walker-Smith during a recess in the hearing. Following his name calling of me as a ‘dribbling idiot’, Deer posted an article about me on his website. The article was venomous and full of very personal insults. After some thought, I decided to reply with a rebuttal. Such attacks present complex problems for independent campaigners who consider that they are working on behalf of specific groups and do not have the support of institutions or publication and are unable to answer within an academic context. Some campaigners disagreed with my evaluation of this situation, feeling that the nature of Deer’s attack exposed his real nature and there was little need for a rebuttal. However, I think that campaigners should take every opportunity to answer publicly voiced criticisms even when they are as low and ignorant as those expressed by Deer. Otherwise allegations sink into the campaigning fabric to be repeated as gossip in the future. If I had to quote an authority for this view, though not for my very subjective style of rebuttal, it would be the late Serge Lang, who in his seminal book *Challenges* (Springer 1996) lays down with beautiful exactitude the process by which one answers attacks and propaganda.

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