

A Very Disingenuous Doctor and a Very Large Elephant (not a story for children)

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By Lisa Blakemore-Brown, Psychologist

Fourteen years after New Zealand TV researchers travelled to England to interview Dr David Southall, Dr Paul Johnson, myself and various parents, after contentious allegations of Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy (MSBP), he is again featured in a TV documentary in this country. It is the second in 2 years entitled "[A Very Dangerous Doctor](#)", Channel 4, 12 May 2011. The TV3 20/20 New Zealand documentary "[Lies Lies and Diagnoses](#)" never saw the light of day in the UK.



Dr David Southall, avoiding serious questioning

This documentary reveals that the same experiences of many mothers who had been accused of MSBP by Dr Southall as were raised on this new documentary were evident all those years ago. It was sent directly to the then New Labour Government, newly in office, who did nothing.

Dr Southall was clearly heavily protected by New Labour during their 14 years in office, and many colleagues. He has managed to avoid serious questioning about what he was *actually* doing with many children whose parents he accused of MSBP, and *why* he was doing it, in just about every context in which he has been scrutinised that I can think of since then. These contexts include the General Medical Council (GMC); the High Court, the Police station and TV documentaries. This new documentary at least allows us to look at documentation known to many of us who have been concerned about Dr Southall's ways of working for many, many years and raises the curtain on *what* he was doing, though not *why*.

Protocol 85/02 – Where Is The Written Parental Consent?

We saw a letter many of us have seen, in which Dr Southall writes that he didn't need written consent from parents to undertake trials on their children. When questioned on this, Dr Southall said asking parents was enough. But of course it would be his word against the parents if anything went wrong and he wanted to deny their child was in the trial. In a way this was proven by what happened next. Dr Southall was asked about Protocol 85/02 (meaning the protocol for a trial/experiment was written in February 1985) being in Ben Hollisey-Mclean's file. He vigorously denied that the presence of this Protocol in Ben's file meant that he had actually been in the trial and, slightly agitated, he demanded in the tone of a barrister: "Where's the evidence?" that Ben or others were in that study. He then tried to carry on drilling the point home and the Director, Leo Regan, went in search of lawyers to try to "prove" it. Of course this is very convenient for Dr Southall as he knows full well he did not gain written consent from the parents and that had he done so, there would be the evidence he was now demanding – "proof" of who was in the trial. In Ben's case this isn't necessary – they had a photo of him on Dr Southall's monitors and more evidence alluded to in this documentary. Of course Dr Southall himself knows full well who has been in his trials and he alone holds the "evidence" he was calling for.



Young Ben Hollisey-Mclean, hooked up to Dr Southall's machines

Other parents, to my certain knowledge, have found files named s/c files which Dr Southall has kept on their children away from their general hospital notes pertaining to his research on mainly newborns.

My first "MSBP" Dr Southall case starting in 1995 in which I was also an Expert witness, featured in the [New Zealand film](#) above, is one who was told by the GMC in 2006 that there was also an s/c file on her twins. So that finally emerged 10 years after she lost all four of her children after Dr Southall went to Court to accuse her of MSBP in 1996, when the twins were almost 11 years old, and almost 21 years after the twins had been born and taken to a London hospital immediately after their very premature birth, many miles away from where they were born, never even held by their mother.

From this information about the file, we now know they were in one of these trials as newborns. Yet not once, in a trial lasting three weeks in a case which cost £3/4 million to the tax payer back in 1996, was this mentioned. Yet it may well explain the Autistic spectrum/ADHD behaviour of those identical twins and why Dr Southall was so keen to pin MSBP on the mother when she threatened to sue the system about her children as they grew older. Perhaps it also explained why he was so adamant that they were "perfectly normal" which is what made me extremely concerned as they were clearly not. Of course the "system" is merely made up of people who speak to each other and I am sure news of her efforts to sue would have soon reached Dr Southall's ears. Children in medical

trials are often “tagged” with other professionals involved with them around the country for many years. That mother was “found” guilty of MSBP and of fabricating the difficulties the then 10 year old twins experienced, in the draconian UK Family Courts. The twins must have been in the same trial as Ben Hollisey-Mclean. They left the Westminster Hospital in February 1985, sent back to their mother with no support. Identical twins are gold dust for any research in any field and mothers expecting multiple births were indeed a variable in the list of criteria for research into infants “at risk of cot death” during that period. The mother in that case had no clue she had been targeted antenatally or that her children had been placed in a trial after they were born.



Professor Roy Meadow, previously struck off the Medical Register for playing loose with the facts

Over the years since then it has become clear that Dr Southall worked closely with Sir Roy Meadow who are both known for their claims about MSBP and they were both involved in destroying the Sally Clark family. Both had a period of being struck off over the Sally Clark case. Whist Sir Roy Meadow accused Sally of killing her infants, Dr Southall accused her husband Stephen after she had been convicted and jailed, disingenuously saying he was concerned there had been a miscarriage of justice. An Appeal was about to happen and Stephen Clark had spoken in a TV documentary about a nose bleed his first son had in a hotel a week before he died. Dr Southall watched the documentary and immediately contacted the Crown Prosecution Service claiming that Mr Clark must have smothered the child for its nose to bleed – so probably killed him a week later, not Sally.

Vaccines



Stephen Clark, accused by Doctor Southall of murdering his two children on the basis of a TV interview he saw

Vaccines featured in the run up to the deaths of those tragic infants and both of those medics damned the parents over a number of years. In the end, despite being freed, Sally had been

destroyed and died a couple of years later. There are a number of other cases in which possible vaccine damage features, leading to innocent parents going to prison or damned to a life of hell without their children and prevented from keeping or having any others.

Increasingly I was realising what this was all about and in 2006 there was an interesting revelation: Sir Roy Meadow, also described as a child abuse expert, and indeed Knighted by Tony Blair's Government in 1998 for it, was found through FOI to have been involved in the Adverse Reactions to Vaccination Committee at the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation at the Department of Health, discussing adverse reactions to vaccines such as the DTP and at the introduction of the MMR during the late eighties. See Professor Roy Meadow and Professor David Salisbury at the [Joint Sub-Committee On Adverse Reactions To Vaccines And Immunisation](#) held on 6 July 1987 at 10.30am in Room 1611/12 Market Towers, as an example. The meeting notes were headed as 'commercial' and 'in confidence'. MMR and DTP adverse reactions were discussed. A leading journalist at the time wrote to me "If this is true it's a MASSIVE breakthrough!!!!!!!!!!" . Of course this too has never seen the light of day and the public don't have a clue.

Many families whose children died of cot death, which is what Dr Southall and Sir Roy Meadow focused on in their early careers, speak about the children having just had a vaccine. Sally Clark's Harry had the DTP five hours before he died. See [HERE](#).

Others to my certain knowledge tell the same story and were also accused of MSBP or Shaken baby Syndrome (SBS) – by either or both of these men and/or their colleagues.

When a parent has suffered a cot death, cases are referred to the FSID (Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths) and the next baby is placed on what is called the CONI scheme – Care of the Next Infant. The scheme funds research and many other initiatives. Apnea monitors are given to parents, and health visitors monitor weight and other progress. Dr David Southall has always had a close involvement with the FSID and those within it. See [HERE](#).

Were vaccine trials woven into the research funded by FSID, especially if the first cot death followed a vaccine? The biggest breakthrough in cot death research, reducing deaths by 70%, did not come from Dr Southall research. It was a simple piece of advice - place infants on their backs to sleep. One therefore has to wonder about the acclaim attached to Dr Southall's cot death work. Maybe it's about him establishing that some mothers have harmed their children, through covert video, but that's hardly rocket science. Infanticide is not a new phenomenon.

What I cannot accept is that by establishing the guilt of some he so easily extends it to many where there is NO covert video evidence of any abuse, indeed in the many cases I have seen there is no evidence of abuse at all and no cameras at all. In many cases the accusing medics have not even met the mothers and leave out crucial pieces of evidence. Files often are tampered with or go missing. Allegations are pure speculation. Nor can I accept that it is acceptable to entirely omit the possibility that a child can react to a vaccine or medications.

Precisely What Is Dr Southall Doing In Africa?

Dr Southall, as part of a group called PACA (Professionals Against Child Abuse) who regularly rise to his defence in public, also works in Africa with African mothers and babies as part of this [organisation](#).

One medic who strongly defends Dr Southall in his views on child abuse is Dr John Bridson, and he is part of this group who work in Africa. Actually key individuals from PACA have also become part of the GMC Panel looking into Child Protection after Dr Southall was reinstated by the High Court and the GMC decided to look at new guidelines for medics. Are any of them involved in vaccine trials? Does the work in Africa involve the same breathing experiments we heard about on this recent Leo Regan documentary? Are children being harmed/abused by these procedures? Are they being saved too? I am sure the latter will be vigorously claimed and the former strenuously denied. Does anyone care? I doubt it. If families in this country and increasingly across the Western world have fought in vain for up to 20 years to get the truth out and see justice done for their child, such as Mr and Mrs Hollissey-Mclean, then what chance do African women have in the Third world. Most mothers, including those in this film and the New Zealand one, start by believing medics are there to help their children – hence their initial approach to them.

If a vaccine can kill or brain damage a baby – and the Vaccine Injury Compensation scheme proves that they can – then this is a form of iatrogenic child abuse. Why is it therefore never mentioned when parents are being accused in this narrow world of research into children’s breathing processes? Haven’t we gone too far adding insult to injury?

General Medical Council Child Protection Guidelines

I have just given evidence to a panel at the GMC (General Medical Council) looking at developing new Guidelines for medics in Child Protection, which includes a number of Dr Southall colleagues and members of PACA. I have provided a lot of written evidence and given oral evidence on two days on certain cases and my concerns about methods used in MSBP/SBS and have raised a number of factors which I hope will help them in the forthcoming development of the new guidelines. One factor concerns being overly dogmatic in one’s views, another concerns the use of pure speculation and failure to check files and associated with this is omission of crucial information as part of the differential diagnosis. If we entirely leave out a possible reason for a child dying or being ill/becoming autistic, having seizures etc, unless it’s drawn out under cross examination in the witness box (or maybe never sees the light of day), we are, as ex Attorney General Lord Goldsmith said back in 2004 in the wake of the Clark and Cannings’ rulings, “at risk of being seen as a charlatan”.

I have never left out the possibility in my mind that a parent may have abused a child – so why do so called Child Abuse experts *never* mention even the vaguest probability that a vaccine or prescribed medications may have caused damage to a child when we all know that they can?

Whilst we go round and round in circles with yet another Dr Southall MSBP Documentary featuring the same denials from both sides, destroyed lives over decades and no sign of a resolution – by these methods - the elephant in the room is completely hidden from view.

Maybe the next film maker who wants to devote money and a few years of his life to all this could aim to kick off by focusing on the elephant.

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Related Links:

* [Southall: A Very Dangerous Doctor](#)

Channel 4

* [David Southall, A Very Dangerous Doctor](#)

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* [The Consensus Report](#)

Family Law Reform
