

Message from
Boyd Haley, PhD,
Professor and Chair, Department of Chemistry,
University of Kentucky, in response to the June 30, 2005 statement by
Dr. Harvey Fineberg, President of the Institute of Medicine,
on the Immunization Safety Review Committee (available at
<http://www.iom.edu/news.asp?id=27733>).
Dr. Haley's response, made on July 1, 2005, is posted here with permission.

I don't think this statement really addresses the issue. I and other scientists have not charged the IOM members with being 'paid' shills of the vaccine industry, but rather think they are individuals who have a vested interest in protecting the mandated vaccine program which they and their colleagues supported and maybe even practiced. It must be very embarrassing to the AAP physicians to know that it was parents that 'uncovered' the autism epidemic, not the AAP or other physician groups. I also do not claim that the IOM committee did not read the biological science that was presented to them, they just dismissed all of it without any justification and they were presented with some very convincing research. For the IOM to recommend no further research on the thimerosal-autism hypothesis was exceptionally poor judgment by any scientific standard. So I think this report is like setting up a 'strawman' and then kicking it down. If you can't win an argument, change the argument.

Specifically, I accuse the 2004 IOM committee of poor scientific judgment in that they dismissed all the science that showed that thimerosal is the most likely cause of the autism spectrum disorders epidemic and I stand by this accusation. I did not and do not accuse them of being paid or having vested financial interests regarding vaccines as I have no data to back this up.

Additionally, I accuse the IOM committee of placing unwarranted emphasis on the Verstraten, Danish and English epidemiological studies in their decision making. All of these CDC funded epidemiological studies have procedural failures that render them unreliable for any decision concerning the thimerosal-autism hypothesis. For example, if the Danish studies were correct regarding removal of thimerosal increasing autism (by about 20 fold using the data in the Madsen report) you would think the Danish, Swedish and English governments would immediately reinstate thimerosal in their vaccines. They haven't, and the English removed it after the study done in their country was made public. So medical authorities in England, Denmark and Sweden do not hold the 2005 IOM designated 'well designed' epidemiological studies in high regard either.

So let's keep the argument clear. There is no sound scientific way the 2005 IOM committee can justify their decision to remove thimerosal as being involved in the recent autism spectrum disorders epidemic. Why this committee committed intellectual suicide is a matter of debate that I don't feel compelled to address---but this committee made a big error and this is easily proven.