

Vaxxed: The powerful new documentary the CDC wishes would just go away

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Emmy award-winning medical journalist, Del Bigtree.

Del Bigtree is an Emmy award winning medical journalist with experience in producing medically-themed television talk shows on a wide variety of topics. Not one to back away from controversial issues, Mr. Bigtree became interested in the possibility of a potential link between vaccines and autism after receiving numerous viewer requests over the years for media involvement in covering the topic. The release of audio recordings in August, 2014 of conversations between autism parent and researcher Dr. Brian Hooker and senior CDC scientist Dr. William Thompson which highlighted autism research fraud at the CDC left parents of vaccine-injured children hopeful that at last the vaccine/autism link would be widely publicized. However, the mainstream media blackout on this link has continued despite the black and white nature of Dr. Thompson's revelations.

When Mr. Bigtree became aware of the content of the Hooker/Thompson conversations, he made some life-changing decisions, ultimately collaborating with Dr. Andrew Wakefield in producing the documentary *Vaxxed: From Cover-up to Catastrophe*. *Vaxxed* has been accepted into the 2016 Tribeca Film Festival and is scheduled to be shown on Sunday, April 24 with its New York premiere set for the first week in June. *Autism File* executive editor Rita Shreffler spoke with Mr. Bigtree recently on the challenges in bringing the truth about vaccine injury and CDC autism research fraud into the mainstream consciousness.

Rita Shreffler: Can you tell our readers a little about your background and how you became involved in the vaccine/autism controversy?

Del Bigtree: I spent the seven years prior to working on this film as a producer on *The Doctors*, a nationally syndicated daytime medical talk show. The shows were energizing, covering life-changing events. I'd find myself scrubbing in with physicians in the OR, then coming back to Paramount Studios to edit the pieces. I enjoyed the whole process especially because the topics often focused on advancements in medicine and surgery that were incorporating, what used to be thought of as alternative approaches, such as lasers and acupuncture.

Early on, we were covering a controversial story about rickets because a number of families had their children taken away from them for what looked like child abuse. I wanted to include a radiologist on the show who could confirm that rickets in infants could cause the kind of fractures that were being mistaken for abuse. The man I talked to said, "Del, you don't want me on your show." He went on to explain that he was considered a "quack" because of his belief that vaccines were linked to autism. We did end up having him on the show and all went well. His comment about vaccines and autism stuck with me as the show was consistently getting requests from parents asking that we investigate the autism/vaccine link, but it was clear that until something changed in the overall discussion, we wouldn't be taking it on.

RS: It's always been nearly impossible to get any kind of mainstream news coverage when it comes to a potential link between vaccines and autism despite the fact that thousands and thousands of parents have the same story of typically developing children who regress following vaccines. Why do you think that is?

DB: There are several factors that are probably at work. For some reason that's hard for me to fathom, vaccines are considered the Holy Grail by many in mainstream medicine and in a lot of the general public as well. Even among my friends who understand the dangers of GMOs and speak out against Monsanto, most seemed shocked that I would question the safety of vaccines.

I challenge people to, the next time they watch TV, try and count how many times they do *not* see a pharmaceutical ad during a commercial break. I remember the days when you'd only see prescription drug ads while in waiting rooms in doctors' offices. That box in all of our homes has become one big pharmaceutical ad, and the profit motive keeps getting bigger. With the Gardasil push alone, now targeting 9-26 year-old girls and boys with three shots each, \$30 billion dollars could end up in the hands of Merck and a lot of politicians. That kind of money has to be watched. Another factor may have to do with the revolving door between the CDC and the pharmaceutical industry. It says a lot that Julie Gerberding, former head of the CDC, is now the president of Merck's vaccine division.

One other thing I find disturbing is the number of doctors I'm hearing from who tell me that they know that vaccines are linked to autism but that coming forward with the truth will destroy their careers. They literally say, "I don't want to get Wakefielded."

RS: I'm also struck by the fact that anyone who even questions vaccine safety is immediately labeled as "anti-vaccine" which tends to paint people as fringe lunatics. All the parents I know who have vaccine-injured children were at one time very pro-vaccine.

DB: I think there's a loss of humanity and common sense here. If it's determined that the bars of baby cribs are too far apart, there's a recall. If Toyota produces cars that may have an issue with brake pedals, there's a recall. If there's a piece of plastic found in a Snickers bar, there's a recall. But when tens of thousands of parents come forward wondering if vaccines may have played a part in their kids' regressions into autism, we're told that they are "misinformed".

RS: How was it that you came to collaborate with Dr. Wakefield?

DB: In August of 2014, I received a call from the same doctor we'd had on the show for the rickets topic who told me in two weeks a whistleblower from the CDC is going to "come out" and say that the CDC had committed fraud on the MMR autism study. They knew the vaccine was linked to autism and they covered it up. Two weeks later, Brian Hooker's taped phone conversations with senior CDC scientist William Thompson hit. On *The Doctors*, we'd typically viewed people with the CDC as our friends as they often provided us with story ideas, letting us know what topics were becoming newsworthy so this was shocking to me.

A month or two later, California's SB277 became an issue as it would end all religious and personal belief vaccine exemptions. I'd always been taught by my parents to question authority, and I couldn't even imagine that the government would be given the authority to decide what would be injected into my child's body. Legislation like this marks the end of freedom as we know it. In the blink of an eye, the freedoms our founding fathers tried to ensure can be taken away from us.

In the midst of the SB277 situation in California, I received a call from a friend asking if I knew who Andy Wakefield was and whether I'd like to meet him. I was bothered that almost 10 years after *The Lancet* retracted Dr. Wakefield's MMR paper, the whole topic was still coming up again and again. At a certain point, the fact that people just can't let the issue drop makes the whole thing become a red flag.

So I ended up attending a private function in Hollywood Hills and met Andy Wakefield for the first time. He told me that he was working on a documentary about the CDC whistleblower and

as we talked, because of my work in TV and medical issues and my growing interest in the vaccine/autism topic, the whole thing began coming together.

I flew to Austin shortly afterwards and saw the film Andy had been working on. I realized I was looking at the biggest story of my lifetime. I'd spent the last eight years of my life producing medically-themed shows and felt that I'd been trained for this moment.

RS: Did you have to give up your work on *The Doctors* to get involved in Dr. Wakefield's documentary?

DB: At that time, the show went into hiatus so I could lock into the project to research and call doctors to discuss it. More than one told me that I was making a career-ending move by aligning myself with Andy Wakefield.

RS: Weren't you concerned about that possibility? That you might be forever giving up such a great career that you obviously enjoyed?

DB: If I decided to look the other way and not tell this story, and my kids or grandkids got sick, I'm not sure how I could live with myself.

When I watch Billy Tommey, I see the potential of so many. These kids weren't injured by falling off the roof. They were injured because parents trusted their doctors. These kids lost the future they and their parents had every right to expect. And the rates of autism continue to skyrocket. This year, roughly 100,000 kids born will develop autism. Each year, we're filling up a city the size of Athens, Georgia with kids diagnosed with autism. We can't ignore what could lead to the demise of our society.

I'd always kept the parent stories I received while working on *The Doctors* in my mind. Now we have a senior level CDC scientist telling us, "We lied," about the safety of the MMR. The moment I looked at Dr. Thompson's data, I knew I had to tell this story. If you see a wave of events like this and do nothing, that's criminal.

I couldn't *not* give up my job. If this is the last film I ever make, I'll be okay.

RS: What were your main objectives in producing *Vaxxed*?

DB: I want the media to be held accountable for the weeks and weeks of covering a measles outbreak at Disneyland, terrifying people when only 644 people were affected. That's .000002% of the people in this country which effectively translates to zero, when one in 45 kids is now diagnosed with autism. I'd like the media to explain why it won't cover the story of

a top CDC scientist who admits they committed fraud on the MMR study when they discovered a causal link between the vaccine and autism, a disease that is accelerating so fast it could spell the end of our society. If that's not a story what is?

I also hope the film will be a tipping point that will allow tons of doctors to come forward and admit they've long known there's a link between vaccines and autism. It should create questions among mainstream audiences about the whole nature of safety testing in medicine. Drugs have to undergo rigorous studies which are far more expensive than the limited safety work done with vaccines. I want parents to realize that their kids' vaccines are not being appropriately studied—they haven't been studied nearly as well as Viagra. We've been playing Russian roulette with the health of the children in this country.

RS: Do you have any concerns about reactions or repercussions once the film is released?

DB: My friends and colleagues who had gotten in my face about questioning vaccine safety have had the same reaction. Every single one of them has said, "Oh, my God. I had no idea."

The reaction among parents is especially important. I've seen other documentaries that never really made it past the people who already know a lot of this information and they're already upset. I don't want to upset them further with a film that doesn't do more than preach to the choir.

I think there will be a huge push from several directions that will say to people, "Don't go into that theatre." But I think there are a lot of people that are sick and tired of being controlled by corporate interests. They see it in their politics. They see it in their GMO food. They see it in their polluted water source. They are over it. These people will want to know why Andy Wakefield is still here working on the same issue. They'll want to know, as I did, why he didn't just walk off into the sunset. They're going to see that this is a man who's been fighting for our kids, despite being vilified in the press and being called a "baby killer" all because he was actually listening to parents who were telling the same story: there was no autism before their children received vaccines. The fact that he was beginning to look into the concerns of parents ended his career.

Audiences will, I hope, be hit with the realization that one of the greatest scientific minds of our time was bold enough to stand up to collective science and suffered for it, much like others throughout history. Remember that Galileo was imprisoned for putting forth the notion that the earth revolved around the sun, which of course was later confirmed. I have to wonder if we're ever going to stop this pattern of trying to silence the best minds that we have.

One of the most important things I've learned through this process, and that I think the film reflects, is that the parents involved are true heroes. They go through unimaginable difficulties as they care for children whose lives have essentially been taken away from them, even as the lies about vaccine safety continue. But the truth will ultimately come out. It's just a matter of time.

GET INVOLVED

Before the credits roll at the end of *Vaxxed*, viewers are asked for help in ensuring that our federally elected officials do the right thing by our nation's children.

For the sake of our children, contact your political leaders and demand the following:

- 1. That Congress subpoena Dr. William Thompson and investigate the CDC fraud.*
- 2. That Congress repeal the 1986 National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act and hold manufacturers liable for injury caused by their vaccines.*
- 3. That the single measles, mumps, and rubella vaccines be made available immediately.*
- 4. That all vaccines be classified as pharmaceutical drugs and be tested accordingly.*

Source: <http://www.autismfile.com/uncategorized/vaxxed-the-powerful-new-documentary-the-cdc-wishes-would-just-go-away>