

OPINIONS

Not suspected of research fabrication

CHRISTOPHER GILLBERG
PROFESSOR/SPECIALIST DOCTOR

I received an e-mail from you the other day, where I was asked to answer some questions. I replied with consideration and also sent my complaint papers sent to the Court of Appeal concerning the hand over of confidential material to the Crown Court as well as a report handed to the Councilor of Justice by two professors of medicine, unknown by me (which concludes that what has happened to me is a court scandal and a miscarriage of justice). Dagsavisen has, by e-mail, thanked me for the reply and for the documents, which they emphasized, they found very interesting. This proves that you received all the information needed to write a balanced article. Despite this, everything that Dagsavisen continues to suggest in their untrue article is wrong or misleading.

The article depicts me as a suspect of research fabrication. I have got the authority's decision (from three years ago) confirming that I am not suspected of research fabrication (this is clearly stated in the documents I sent you). Other suspicions of research fabrication are ones that the authority disregarded and that I never have been tried for. The only accusations that ever took place (and that in 2003, after some investigation, was finally, in line with current law, found groundless by the Swedish government) were those made by scientologists, Eva Kärfve and Leif Elinder, who have no experience in this field of research. It is untrue to say or even suggest that someone who has been investigated and cleared from any suspicion is a suspect. It is a lie to say that someone who has been investigated in relation to current laws and cleared is not "in the clear".

The convictions you write about have NOTHING to do with research fabrication, except from the fact that I and my research group were protecting the promised oral and written confidentiality agreements made with patients. Agreements that the Swedish state, through the University of Gothenburg Ethics Committee, obliged us to make with hundreds of participants of a medical research project concerning ADHD/DAMP/MBD. The form these confidentiality agreements took was in no way unique for our study. If I, and my colleges, have gone too far in keeping these promises, then so have thousands of other Swedish medical researchers (obliged by the government of the state, and not guided by their own initiative).

The reason for the witch-hunt pursued against me by the scientologists, and by Leif Elinder and Eva Kärffve, is based on two convictions from the court of Gothenburg. These convictions have been heavily criticized publicly (also in serious factual papers), by the most respected Swedish judges in the field, as doubtful/wrong. The convictions have, for formal reasons, never been challenged by me, as I was not charged as an accomplice in the case (!), which is why they were left laying around and then lead to criminal convictions (in the district court and the court of appeal) of myself and the rector at the University of Gothenburg. We did not play any role in breaking the—for doctors, unbreakable—agreements of confidentiality, and therefore did not hand over any patient journals that could be identified to members of the public, Leif Elinder and Eva Kärffve. The convictions go against, in a very upsetting manner, the principle of doctor's confidentiality.

Professor/Specialist doctor Carina Gillberg is one of three individuals who, unknowingly by me, destroyed work papers (12–27 year old information) from the study. She is herself a research doctor. It is not because she is my wife that she destroyed her papers, but to protect the confidentiality in relation to the children and their parents, that she had given—ordered by the state—a binding contract. In these written promises that she (and other researchers involved with the project) had given, it was clearly stated that information that could identify individuals never should be handed to anyone outside the group of researchers.

If Carina Gillberg (together with individuals that are not related to me) did not destroy the material, it would have been handed out to two members of the public, despite the fact that almost everyone involved (the children and their parents), in writing, confirmed that the material under no circumstances could be handed out. In this acute situation, where the rector of the University of Gothenburg was ordered by his superiors to, within a few days, hand over all the keys to all the confidential material to Eva Kärffve, there was no guarantee that research papers were safe simply by moving them.

Dagsavisen had all this information when writing the very damaging article on the 23rd February 2006. It is officially seen as good journalistic practice to edit clear mistakes but not to change essential information provided directly from the person in question.

The damage you have caused me is possibly irreparable. Your article has also damaged the ethics of the press, but by publicizing my response that can, possibly, though only to a limited degree, repair some damage.

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