

## New Yorker editor among many who stand by criticism of Vandana Shiva

A [profile of the anti-GMO activist Vandana Shiva](#) in *The New Yorker* in August by Michael Specter has drawn a [blistering, 5,000-word rebuttal](#) from Shiva, who accuses Specter of “character assassination,” a “tool used by those who cannot successfully defend their message.”

The New Yorker’s editor, **David Remnick**, [shot back in turn with a rebuttal](#) in which he concedes a few minor errors but otherwise completely dismisses Shiva’s criticism. It begins:

This is in reply to the letter you sent and subsequently posted on the Internet earlier this week. It is not for publication in any way or on your website, but I thought you were asking for a serious reply. So here it is: I should say that since you have said that the entire scientific establishment has been bought and paid for by Monsanto, I fear it will be difficult to converse meaningfully about your accusation that the story contained “fraudulent assertions and deliberate attempts to skew reality.” But maybe I am wrong; I’ll try.

Remnick then went on to give a point-by-point reply to Shiva’s objections.

Shiva charges that Specter’s profile “contains many lies and inaccuracies that range from the mundane (we never met in a café but in the lobby of my hotel where I had just arrived from India to attend a High Level Round Table for the post 2015 SDGs of the UN) to grave fallacies that affect people’s lives.” Perhaps, she continues, “the article was intended as a means to strengthen the biotechnology industry’s push to ‘engage consumers.’”

**Faye Flam** thought quite the opposite. In [a late-August post on Specter’s piece](#), she wrote that it is “a textbook lesson in how to write about someone who is misguided in some science-related arena without succumbing to the perils of false-balance.” She noted that when Shiva claimed an association between autism, GMOs, and the herbicide glyphosate, Specter did not simply ask a scientist for balancing comment. He reported that the association was meaningless.

**Read the full, original article:** [Anti-GMO activist accuses The New Yorker of ‘grave fallacies that affect people’s lives.’](#)