

F. Litten

November 25, 1976

Dr. David Avery, M.D.  
VAH- Palo Alto  
California 94305

Dear Dr. Avery,

Thank you for sending me the preprint of your report, "Electroshock: A Lifesaving Treatment Shrouded in Myth". It is well written, and makes good points in the issues that have confused the public. I am not sanguine that Psychology Today will publish it, but perhaps their editors are less biased than I think.

I am impressed by the figures that are included. I presume these come from the manuscript on the efficacy of ECT and antidepressants. The figures should have the actual articles cited from which the data are derived. If these are not from that article, then they should be prepared for the psychiatric press rather than the public press.

I could not find citation 36: it seems to be in error. Some of the others are incomplete, but completeness is not necessary for the lay journal.

Let me also congratulate you on the fine review that has recently appeared in the Archives. The analysis of deaths with EST and antidepressants is most useful and is already cited in two of my reports in press.

I do hope that you will continue your interest in EST. The APA Task Force on Convulsive Therapy has been reviewing the evidence for safety and efficacy of EST, and we have found a number of problems for which the evidence is lacking. It would be good to have another unit carrying out the kind of careful studies of EST suggested by these reports. If you come East on a visit, come and visit us at Stony Brook. We are developing a study team for EST research and we would enjoy meeting you.

My thanks for the opportunity to read the report and for your other good efforts. When the antidepressant review is available, please send me a copy. My regards.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.  
Professor of Psychiatry