

March 1, 1970

Professor Alan Kraft  
Department of Psychiatry  
Albany Medical College of Union University  
Albany, New York

Dear Professor Kraft,

I have known of Dr. Keeler's work for many years, and since July, 1969, I have had more direct contact with him in this Department of Psychiatry. His record in North Carolina is well known and his work there was of the caliber to receive recognition both by NIMH in its Career Development Program and by the University where he was promoted to full Professor. His reasons for leaving North Carolina seem to have been personal-- a desire of a New Yorker to raise his family in New York-- and not professional.

Since coming to New York Medical College, he has been unable to make use of his abilities-- in part, because of the limited clinical facilities at his disposal, and in part because of the expectations that funds were already available, which were indeed not yet awarded. He has carried out a teaching program with psychiatric residents and this has been done well, for both he and the students have been enthusiastic and they have requested an increase in their exposure to his teaching.

I believe him to be a good researcher, capable of undertaking programs in substance abuse and schizophrenia-- two subjects of mutual interest. He writes well and his conceptualization of a study program in cannabis was well presented. We understand that the project was recommended for support by the study section at NIMH but remains unfunded because of the continued lack of a budget for HEW, rather than any inherent problem with the presentation.

His personality can best be described as reserved, unassuming and moderately insensitive. He is forthright and cooperative with his juniors and has exhibited the ability to relate to other staff members, particularly those in the training divisions.

We have not had an opportunity to evaluate his role as administrator.

I have found him likeable and cooperative in personal matters, but uncooperative in his professional relationship with me. In part, this resulted from the unfortunate assignment as a member of this Division without an independent clinical base, requiring him to relate for patient matters with my staff, most of whom are loyal to my principles and interests. Reassignment to him was difficult, and it soon became obvious that such a partition of the limited clinical material was not acceptable to me ; and a collaborative relationship with another Professor was not acceptable to Martin. In large part, I cannot blame him for his disappointment, and I believe that his abilities have not had the opportunity in this Department to express themselves.

I believe that he would do very well as a clinician and a researcher in a separate and well defined clinical facility. His projects will be well presented and even in this competitive climate, should achieve recognition and support. He relates well to students and his teaching will be accepted with enthusiasm. It was on my recommendation that Dr. Freedman appointed him to this College, and I believe that if the facilities were adequate for two parallel programs, he would have been happy and have carried out his work with distinction.

He should be given another opportunity, and I am confident that if he is given the facility and the authority, he will be able to achieve the potential described in his work in North Carolina.

I trust these comments have utility. My best wishes for the success of your program.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.  
Professor of Psychiatry

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