

John Krauss

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July 5, 1969

Dear John,

The holiday has given me a chance to catch up on my reading, and I have just re-read your "A Perspective on Heroin". It is a fine article, and gives a clear image of the history leading to our present inadequate legal situation. I was reminded of an interview I had in May with the committee of the New York Academy of Medicine, re-assessing for the n'th time the need for changes in the medical treatment of addiction. I told them of our experiences with methadone and cyclazocine, and when I expressed some enthusiasm for these pharmacological treatments was asked if I thought they were ethical. The mean age of the committee members was surely 75 years. I await their report with some anxiety.

I also read your AMA report and it is most straight-forward. It will probably be disregarded by everyone in the legal profession, but for us it will remain an important reference. Brotman and Freedman both expressed approval also.

By now, you should have moved to your new Department, and I trust that you will continue to be as productive there as you have in the state programs. Sidney has found a new home and moved in last week (111 Ferry Street, Barrington, R.I.), and is taking his family to South Africa for a visit this month. My son, Jonathan, has graduated high school and will attend Colby College in Maine this fall. Martha has enjoyed her teaching in Great Neck very much (quite a difference from the Port Washington school) and looks forward to continuing. For the summer she is taking the girls on their first European trip, on a mini-grand tour.

Our own work is progressing slowly. The methadone program continues to be successful; cyclazocine also, although more care must be exercised in treating the patients. We have looked at the problem of detoxifying those patients on methadone for more than 2 years, and who may be making a good adjustment. We tried to do this with the agreement of the subjects and the staff, and failed. We are now transferring patients from methadone to cyclazocine (blind) and have begun to decrease the cyclazocine dosage. So far, no withdrawal and no difficulties with anyone.

Naloxone continues to be a difficult problem. Its duration of action at 2.4 Gms/day is about 24 hours, but the company provides

John Freeman

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100 mg tablets only-- and have you ever tried to get addicts to take 24530 tablets at once ? daily ? voluntarily ? ? To get around this problem we are trying to develop a long acting form of naloxone, using the principle of embedding in a silastic vehicle. We have asked NIMH (Sidney Cohen) for a contract to proceed in this development, but he seems less enthusiastic than we would like.

Our principal effort for the present is in marijuana research. Al Freedman has appointed Martin Keeler to our staff, and he begins in mid-July. On a recent visit to Greece, I visited the laboratories of Konstantin Miras-- found them ever so much better than I anticipated, with fine chemistry facilities, excellent neurophysiological equipment (under the direction of Dr. Stefanis, an NIH trainee) and his own garden for growing cannabis. Dr. Miras is an expert in the plant growth, constituents, etc., and any project that works with his help, must be better than the trash being published today. (Have you seen the recent article on driving comparing 2 cigarettes of NIMH marijuana with 0.1 mg% blood level alcohol ?) Our desire is to formulate a study program in Athens and Al and I have proposed this to NIMH (again, Sid Cohen) as a contract. Of course, we are now anxious to undertake some extensive, long term studies here to assess the neurophysiologic, behavioral and psychologic effects of chronic marijuana use.

It has been a busy year, for in addition to the narcotic programs, I have continued studies in ECT, EEG and even in schizophrenia and anxiety. Any chance of a visit the next time you are in New York ?

One last comment. I attended a special open session on marijuana held in New York in June under the direction of Representative Koch (U.S. Congress). Brill, Fort, Cohen held the MD side and three lawyers the legal side. My first exposure to such sessions. Lots of name calling, arguments ad hominem, and most impressive, the repeated plea for more studies. Even the young people asked for more data, and only Henry Brill was sure that the drug was harmful, regardless of the data. It was a wild session, and Representative Koch expects to propose a bill to set up a study commission on cannabis (like a President's Commission).

Keep up the good work, and many thanks for the fine articles. We still have not obtained permission for our study of methadone in psychosis, but it is less important now that I have other interests, although it should be done.

My best regards to Deena.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.