

June 1, 1988

Dominick P. Purpura, M.D., Dean  
Albert Einstein College of Medicine  
1300 Morris Park Avenue  
Bronx, New York 10461

Dear Dr. Purpura,

I am puzzled by your letter of May 31, asking for an additional assessment of Dr. Gregory Asnis' qualifications. I will do what I can. The request is to 'expound on how much time and originality he contributed to these articles . . . '.

Dr. Asnis came to my laboratory fresh out of his residency at the Mount Sinai Hospital, where he had undertaken independent case material studies, sufficient to receive the annual award for the best 'resident' presentation.

Our first published study (his #5) was a survey of the use of ECT in metropolitan hospitals. The study was undertaken at my request. Sue Saferstein was a third year medical student, and Greg Asnis was her supervisor in the study. The commission came from the APA Task Force on Electroconvulsive Therapy. My recollection is that I developed the design of the study; Greg and Sue Saferstein carried it out, and wrote the initial reports; and that I edited the final report. I do not think that Greg was interested in ECT thereafter.

The second study (his #9) was an outgrowth of an interest in abnormal motor movements. Both Ed Sachar and Herb Meltzer had shown that active antipsychotic drugs elevated serum prolactin. I cannot recall whether the idea of a study came from Greg or another of our team, but my main contribution was to develop the relationship with Ed Sachar, obtain his agreement to undertake the assays, and make one trip to Columbia University to meet Mrs. Halpern, the technician who carried out the assays. Greg left Stony Brook after the samples were collected and the patient's status defined. The report was written at Columbia University, and I received a penultimate copy for my advice. I do not recall making a contribution to the analyses, nor do I know what processing went on at Columbia University.

Greg's experience at Stony Brook was marked by our unsuccessful attempt to organize a research unit at Central Islip Psychiatric Center. I was given that mission by Stanley Yolles, and it was a frustrating and unhappy experience. Because we could not provide a satisfactory site for research, I urged Greg to go to Ed Sachar (and I moved my research to the V.A.). That is one reason why his two years with us appears so unproductive in his record.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.  
Professor of Psychiatry