

December 18, 1969

Dr. Alfred Freedman  
Department of Psychiatry  
New York Medical College  
5 East 102nd Street  
New York, New York 10029

Dear Al,

I have just completed two sessions with the second year medical students in a laboratory demonstration in psychopharmacology. The students were cooperative and the demonstration was successful in eliciting the powerful effects of set and expectation on the evaluation of drug effects.

The schedule allowed time for discussion and in an open inquiry period, I became concerned that the students who did express themselves, indicated attitudes that are inconsistent with human clinical psychopharmacology, as I view it. They suggested that modern drugs were ineffective, or effective only as placebos; the dosage ranges they discussed were subthreshold for the mentally ill in our institution; and there was an inordinate emphasis on the toxic effects of psychoactive drugs.

Some of these attitudes may be derived from their present lecturers, most, if not all, being animal pharmacologists with limited clinical experience. I am reviewing training programs in psychopharmacology for the ACNP meeting in February, and as I review our programs, both undergraduate and graduate, I wonder if a more clinical, or clinical-experimental view could not be provided.

My best.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.  
Professor of Psychiatry

MF:kp

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Dr. Alfred Freedman  
New York Medical College  
Department of Psychiatry  
5 East 102nd Street  
New York, New York 10029

Dear Al,

I would like to recommend Dr. Alex Karczmar for your consideration for an appointment in the Department, as an experimental pharmacologist, for the research units at the New Community Mental Health Center. His curriculum vitae and publication lists are attached.

I know him principally from his participation at the ACNP and CINP meetings. He is a valuable and expressive speaker, and has a good grasp of experimental psychopharmacology. He seems to relate well to clinicians, and I have found him cooperative and interested in the same subjects that interest me, particularly cholinergic aspects of behavior.

While it may be premature to nominate candidates for the laboratories, I am aware that it takes up to 2 years to separate a good candidate. Alex has expressed an interest in an opportunity in New York.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.  
Professor of Psychiatry

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