

December 14, 1987

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Dear Herb,

The letter by Lieber in the American Journal of Psychiatry seems to have been a spontaneous letter, not submitted in response to an article in the Journal. It looks like an old-fashioned testimonial. For my part, it argues for a complex polypharmacy whose worth is not known but whose risks are formidable.

I have written to Morry Lipton as attached; and am sending you a copy as one of the two established psychopharmacologists on the Editorial Board. Should the Journal not publish a disclaimer noting that the recommended methodology is not substantiated either by published studies or established practice?

In the past few years, I have been asked by lawyers to review the records of patients treated by polypharmacy; patients who have had significant damage (including two cases of death) which could be ascribed to such practice. One well established practitioner gave up his practice when faced with charges of abuse of practice largely due to polypharmacy. Should we not respond to the Lieber letter?

This is another small annoyance, like the arguments of Johnstone and Crow, which we heard in San Juan.

My best regards.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.
Professor of Psychiatry