

April 17, 1969

Miss Jane Brody
New York Times
New York, New York

Dear Miss Brody:

I am pleased to enclose two reports, soon to appear from this Department, which may interest your readers. The work is being done by two of our resident psychiatrists, Drs. M. Taylor and R. Levine, and is of significance in our understanding of the pathogenesis of post-partum psychosis.

Two observations are clear: the onset of acute schizophrenia in conceiving women inhibits (destroys) male offspring, for only female infants are born to mothers who conceived within one month of an acute psychosis; and, the onset of acute post-partum forms of schizophrenia is associated with the birth of male infants. Both observations are consistent with a concept of a hormonal or humoral substance which stimulates an acute psychosis, transfers from mother to fetus and is inimical to a male fetus. Further, this substance is antagonized (inhibited) by substances from a male fetus, and come into active play, soon after a male infant is delivered.

Two reports are enclosed - "Newborn Sex Ratios Associated with Pre- and Post- Partum Process Schizophrenia" has been accepted and is soon to appear in Science; "The Interactive Effects of Maternal Schizophrenia and Offspring Sex" has been submitted to the Society of Biological Psychiatry and will be read on May 3, in Miami Beach.

I am pleased to tell you also that the Section of Neurology and Psychiatry of the New York Academy of Medicine and the New York Society for Clinical Psychiatry cited these reports as the best psychiatric paper at the annual residents presentations in February; and the Society of Biological Psychiatry will award them the 1969 A. E. Bennett Clinical Science Research Award on May 3.

The work was undertaken in partial fulfillment of elective requirements in the Division of Biological Psychiatry of this Department. We may be reached at 369-8488 or 369-7900 (x 245) for further information.

I trust this is of interest.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.
Professor of Psychiatry

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