

March 14, 1970

Dr. Allen Mirsky
Boston University School of Medicine
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Allen,

The publisher of the *Clinical Handbook of Psychopharmacology* asked me to write a testimonial, and I was about to do so without reading (the excellence of the cast was sufficient), but was interested in your chapter. Alas, you must have dashed it off in your early period, for surely the views are not yours today. Or, are they?

The use of animal EEG data and single dosages leads to such statements as "Fig. 3 and Fig. 4 illustrate the relatively simple affect [sic] that chlorpromazine has on the EEG, as compared with the variety of effects seen over time with secobarbital". Chlorpromazine is no more simple in its EEG effects and as dose x time sensitive as secobarbital.

"It is not the case, however, that there will always be concordance between the behavioral and EEG effects of drugs." Reference to Wikler emphasizes again the fact that the EEG may not be related to motor behavior, especially in dumb beasts. The dissociation seen by Wikler and emphasized by Bradley is not the case in man, for behaviors that may be relevant to psychiatry, and this statement in a clinical volume presents the wrong view of human data.

The selection of Tables 1 and 2 increases this erroneous view. Bradley's 'excited', 'drowsy' and 'normal' reflect no behavioral measurement or task, but simple observation of motor behavior. Do you really believe that 'excited' after LSD and after atropine are the same [even in the unspecified species described by Bradley]?

Table 2 is dose dependent, and these relationships may hold for some doses, but not for others.

There is more, but this should be enough to show where I disagree. I have quoted your work in animals, as you know, as examples of what can be learned by careful EEG analyses plus careful and relevant behavioral measurements. How can you quote Bradley's 1957 data in 1970, after your own work ? Or, even after our review, that is, Bradley's and mine, of 1968 (*Anticholinergic Drugs and Brain Functions in Animals and Man*, volume 28, *Progress in Brain Research*, Elsevier) ?

Perhaps, we should review the problem of EEG and behavior anew. Dissociation or Association are in the eye of the beholder, but presenting the view of dissociation, based on animal data [without specifying species !] in a volume devoted to man [*CLINICAL HANDBOOK . . .*] should be done cautiously and humbly, not carelessly, for the students for whom the volume is intended, will be unable to assess the correctness or incorrectness of the text, and may be misled.

My best regards.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.
Professor of Psychiatry

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