

February 8, 1988

Librarian
Smithtown Public Library
1 North Country Road
Smithtown, New York 11787

Dear Sir:

As a subscriber to the library, I was surprised to see the volume: "Electro-Shock: Its Brain Disabling Effects" by Peter Breggin among the new books. The book was published in 1979.

Peter Breggin has taken the position that the treatment is both ineffective and dangerous. His position is considered idiosyncratic. The treatment is used widely throughout the world, and is available to patients in this county at University Hospital as well as private and public psychiatric hospitals.

Patients and families who may be considering the treatment are likely to look to your resources for advice and help. It is unfortunate that this volume may be considered timely, when in fact, it is out-dated. In 1985, the NIH held a Consensus Development Conference on this topic. Peter Breggin was one of many witnesses. The Consensus commission did not accept his views of the treatment and recommended its continued use.

Alternatively, the library may consider making the book "Electroconvulsive Therapy" published by the American Psychiatric Association (1400 K Street, N.W., Washington D.C. 20005) equally available. That report appeared in 1978.

I enclose a copy of the Consensus Conference statement. Perhaps it would be a service to your readers to append the report to Peter Breggin's book?

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.
Professor of Psychiatry