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Dr. C. P. L. Freeman
Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry
University Department of Psychiatry
Royal Edinburgh Hospital
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Dear Dr. Freeman,

In my meeting with Dr. Crammer last month, I did review the teaching activities in ECT in this country. I have organized a workshop at the next meeting of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology (December 13, 1983; Caribe Hilton Hotel, San Juan, Puerto Rico). The session is focussed on similarities of biochemical measures in ECT (and ECS) and antidepressant drugs.

At the 1983 meeting of the Society of Biological Psychiatry meeting, I gave a special address on the history of convulsive therapy, anticipating the 50th anniversary on January 24, 1984. The next president of the Society, Dr. Sarwer-Foner plans another special lecture be given at the 1984 meeting, to be held in San Francisco in May. He has invited Professor Jan-Otto Ottosson to review the history of theories of the mode of action of convulsive therapy.

Each year, at meetings of the American Psychiatric Association, we have held a panel on clinical issues. The sessions have been organized by different leaders (Trevor Price of Dartmouth University and Richard Weiner of Duke University in 1983). I do not know what is planned for May, 1984 in San Francisco. I believe that Trevor Price and Ari Albala (University of Michigan) are planning a teaching workshop. There is usually room for volunteered papers, either in the regular program, or in the special sessions of the Society of Biological Psychiatry.

The section of psychiatry of the New York Academy of Medicine is organizing a special 50th anniversary meeting on ECT on February 2, 1984. Richard Abrams, Fred Frankel, Lothar Kalinowsky, Sidney Malitz, and I are among the invited speakers.

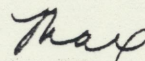
This is the schedule of meetings, as far as I know it. There is nothing scheduled for November, 1984 that should be in conflict with your program. If you are interested in coming to the U.S., let me know when you believe your data will be in good shape, and I will try to recommend an appropriate forum.

In talking with Dr. Crammer, in reply to my question regarding texts for ECT, he said that you had written a manual for ECT, published and distributed by Smith Kline & French Laboratories. He did not have a copy, nor was one available at the Maudsley Institute of Psychiatry library. Is it available in the U.S. ? If not, how can I get a copy ?

The furor about ECT is now muted, and more and more, I find the medical and lay communities approaching the use of ECT with a reasonable, questioning, attitude. There is more research interest, both by clinicians and basic scientists, and we are optimistic that research funding will be available without the thorny issue of ethics muddying the review process. Our principal concerns are not the electricity/seizure issue, but the efficacy of unilateral electrode placements and brief pulse stimuli. The Royal College report by Pippard and Ellam has been very helpful, in suggesting that usage in the U.S. is not (relatively) excessive, and that technical questions, particularly the monitoring of seizures, need special attention.

Thank you for your letter, and my best regards.

Sincerely yours,



Max Fink, M.D.
Professor of Psychiatry