

April 5, 1991

Ms. Rita Scheman
Raven Press
1185 Avenue of the Americas
New York City 10036

Dear Rita,

I am responding to your request for advice regarding the publication of the 1990 ACNP Satellite Conference proceedings on the development of new antipsychotic medications. I am well acquainted with the organizers of the meeting and with most of the participants. I believe that this symposium was Sandoz-supported (possibly with contributions from other drug manufacturers). As such, the main thrust was an exposure by laboratory researchers of their newest putative antipsychotic entities. These substances have been selected for their similarities in pharmacology to that of clozapine, which is being touted as a major advance in psychopharmacology [which it is not].

As is generally true for such proceedings, the better material will be published in refereed journals; the material in the book will be either re-hashes or so preliminary that it would usually not pass muster before responsible editors.

To answer your specific queries:

1. no comment
2. No.
3. Yes.
4. No. It is not clear from the outline for whom such a book would be intended. Libraries are cutting back on their purchases, and if I were asked by my librarian, I would surely not approve the purchase of such a melange. Especially, if I had to choose between such books and journal subscriptions (as I have been asked each of the past two years). I presume the main market is the researchers themselves (and their mothers) and industry libraries. Such a market seems limited, and such a book will probably require considerable subvention.

Two attitudes regarding publication seem reasonable.

A non-judgmental attitude would argue that such preliminary material may stimulate research and eventually lead to new drug therapies. But the critical publisher would know that the best material, the most illuminating and stimulating, will be published in the main journals, and that nothing will be lost by denying this publication in a book form, with limited distribution and limited (to no) indexing.

A more cynical attitude may also be taken. Since these articles were selected with the support and encouragement of the pharmaceutical industry, and since the industry will gain the most benefit from such a book [they will surely peddle it to the FDA and their Boards of Directors as evidence of 'scientific' validity], there is no reason why Raven Press should not publish the book **provided** the industry guarantees the purchase of sufficient copies for their use and distribution, or a sufficient subvention to justify this type of self-adulatory and limited interest publication.

I trust these comments are helpful. My best regards.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.
Professor of Psychiatry