

February 24, 1965

Mr. William E. Ball  
Associate Professor of Engineering Analysis  
School of Engineering  
Washington University  
St. Louis, Missouri 63130

Dear Mr. Ball:

I am pleased to respond to your letter of inquiry regarding Mr. Richard A. Dammkoehler.

In 1962, when I was invited to establish the Missouri Institute of Psychiatry as a research and training center for the Division of Mental Diseases, I had become acquainted with the potentialities of computer applications for the kinds of research that the Director of the Division and I wished to support. I approached Mr. Dammkoehler for assistance, and in the ensuing months found him to be most helpful in clarifying the projects and programs which could be established here, in recommending the configuration of computer equipment which would be helpful, and in recommending personnel to participate and establish this unit. His advice and support have been fundamental to the success of this unit. At all times, I found him understanding of the problems which I presented (including his grasp of subjects as electroencephalography, which were novel to his experience). During the initial year, I requested his help in the preparation of new digital computer programs. He devoted much of his own time to helping us, and prepared some programs for my former associate in New York as well.

In addition to my interests in direct applications to psychiatric research, I was interested in the problems of information retrieval. I found Mr. Dammkoehler very knowledgeable and his advice and recommendations in this area were, and have continued to be, most cogent and relevant.

In addition to establishing our center, I have always found him fully cooperative in providing me with the clarifications I needed in understanding programs, reports, and in providing me with the opportunity to work with him or his associates, including making the 7072 freely available. I found his explanations of problems

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straightforward and clear. During the first year, I audited one of the basic Fortran programming classes which he held. His lectures were prepared and his explanations were excellent.

Based on this experience, I consider it an honor and a pleasure to recommend him for appointment as a teacher in Computer Sciences. My experiences and all the comments I have heard serve only to enhance Mr. Dammkoehler's excellent reputation and his associations with this center.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.  
Professor of Psychiatry

MF: jm