

## To The Editor

To the Editor,

I am a non-active member of ASAP, but nonetheless continue to enjoy the benefits in reading your newsletters and value the information from ASAP that speaks to clinical discoveries affecting the adolescent psychiatric population. I applaud your commitment to adolescent health. My reason for writing to you at this time is this: I want to apprise you and other members of the society of some developments in a politicized psychopharmacological debate. This issue is conflict of interest. The debate is likely, however, to intensify prior to any possible resolution. I will address issues pertaining to neuropsychiatric drugs:

After much public pressure, some major pharmaceutical firms, such as Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline and Janssen have admitted that they 'selectively' released or sequestered information about their clinical drug trials. This 'selective' release has distorted some of their recommendations, minimized cautionary concerns and altered the approval and marketing practices of those drugs.

The Texas Medication Algorithm Project (TMAP) represents a template for prescribing psychotropic medications that began in 1995 as vigorous initiative of primarily, but not exclusively, faculty members from the U. of Texas-Southwestern Medical School in Dallas and wholly or in part, adopted by a number of states (TX, OH, PA, FL). It was, and continues to be, supported by Eli Lilly, Inc and Johnson and Johnson and other major pharmaceutical firms and has financial endorsement of the Texas State legislature and the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and the Bush administration. It has been recommended as an essential piece of the Bush's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health

Potential conflicts of interest are obvious. On July 1st, 2004, I filed a complaint in Federal court, in the Middle District of Pennsylvania, alleging that six drug companies (Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline, Johnson and Johnson, Eli Lilly, Novartis and AstroZeneca) have worked alongside some Federal and state officials, to facilitate and promote certain costly psy-

chotropic medications at the expense of public funding and to the detriment of children, adolescents and adults.

For my part, I am neither against the pharmaceutical industry nor the use of medications, neuropsychiatric or otherwise. I am, as I hope is true of ASAP, steadfast in the judicious and cautious use of medications and the research and promotion of non-medication alternatives to treat mental health and substance abuse disorders. I would appreciate any interest or support that you might have in this debate. I believe it to be an important one.

Respectfully,

Stefan P. Kruszewski, M.D., Harrisburg, Pa

[The above was written before the FDA hearings of September, the black box warnings, and the announcements by Merck and GSK that they will post all the results of their research.]

\*\*\*

## New Members

ASAP welcomes the following new members.

Mohan Nair, MD, Los Alamitos, CA

Joanne Als, MD, West Covina, CA

Chenwen Chris Heh, MD, Fullerton, CA

Joseph Kenan, MD, Beverly Hills, CA

M. Steven Sager, MD, Los Angeles, CA

Chandra Weerasinghe, MD, Haverford, PA

Jeffrey Mar, MD, Salt Lake City, UT

Richard D. Schenkman, MD, Bakersfield, CA

Gary Tharp, MD, Little Rock, AR

Ankur Saraiya, New York, NY

John F. Kempf, MD, Scottsdale, AZ

Stephen Mandelbaum, MD, Houghton, MI

Lynne Weisberg, PhD., M.D, Florence Park, New Jersey

## American Society for Adolescent Psychiatry Abridged Minutes of Fall Business Meeting Dallas, Texas,

Present: Robert Weinstock, MD Stephen B. Billick, MD Fabien Saleh, MD Richard Rosner, MD Adam Raff, MD Mark Wellek, MD Richard Ratner, MD Perry Bach, MD

Chief concerns were the declining membership.

Dr Rosner and Dr Flaherty will meet with Analytic Press to renegotiate the contract. Volume 29, which is set to be published in 2005.

Re the membership directory, not published since 2002. Consensus was not to print it but explore possible web site use with a members only section for access. Members without internet access will be able to request a print-out.

Drs Wellek and Ratner have worked tirelessly on the death penalty issue. AMA, AAPL and APA have signed onto our brief. Subsequently, Dr Wellek has spoken with several reporters on this issue. Dr Ratner was on a PBS show in Washington DC and Dr Wellek appeared on the Lehrer Newshour. The Supreme Court will be considering this at their next session. Four states have already moved to make 18 the minimum age.

Report from the President Elect: Dr Billick reported on the program for 2005. [see above] Friday night will feature the cocktail party and a reception. Dr Pedro Ruiz will be the Saturday luncheon speaker. The 2005 Schonfeld Award will be given to Richard Rosner, MD The 2005 Staples Award will be given to Perry Bach, MD

New Business: Dr Wellek reported from the APA Council on Children, Adolescents and Their Families. The APA has agreed to have a standing, permanent member from ASAP. APA Assembly: Dr Ratner, liaison to APA Assembly, reported that all of the district branches are represented at Assembly. The Assembly meets in November and Dr Ratner is a member of the Affiliation of Allied Organization Liaison, representing ASAP. ASAP has one vote in the Assembly with this representation. Dr Ratner has been appointed chair of a Reference Committee. Dr Billick moved that ASAP support the judicious limited use of anti-depressants with adolescents by psychiatrists with close monitoring of the patient by the psychiatrist.