

COMBINED ANTIDEPRESSANT THERAPY

DEAR SIR,

I read with interest the letter by Doctors Man and Aleem in the January 1972 *Journal* issue, p. 120, in which they state 'great danger indeed exists in combining the tricyclic drugs and MAOI's in large dosage'. This in reference to a comatose woman who had consumed beer and was self-medicating with 15 drugs including a laxative.

The only conclusion that I can draw from their letter is that the woman must have been one of the most unfortunate patients in Michigan. Why this 'attractive', 'white', 'blonde', 'schizophrenic' woman should ever have received MAOI's or tricyclic antidepressants or the rest of her smörgåsbord is beyond me. It is only surprising that she was robust enough to tolerate such mammoth amounts of noxious material. Why one could conclude 'this is a case of toxic psychosis which was the result of taking large amounts of MAOI and other psychotropic drugs' is also beyond me. It would seem just as appropriate to claim that this was a state of toxic psychosis produced by an anti-parkinson agent alone or in combination with a barbiturate or any permutation of the 13 other drugs.

My own opinion is that the combination of some of the terrible Mid-Western beers and a laxative would produce this nearly every time.

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PRISONERS OF XYY CONSTITUTION

DEAR SIR,

I have read with interest the findings of Griffiths (1971) and the subsequent letter of Eysenck and Eysenck (1972). It appears from the findings of Griffiths and the re-scoring using a different key from the Eysencks that the prisoners with an XYY chromosome constitution tend to be introverted both in terms of clinical assessment of their life histories and by achieving low extraversion scores.

We have been concerned with prisoners and security patients found to have sex chromosome abnormalities, and have routinely, where possible, administered the Maudsley Personality Inventory (MPI). In some cases the lack of intelligence or severity of the illness of the prisoner-patient made the administration of such a test impossible.

We have now identified 17 gonosomal abnormalities in males: 8 with the double Y constitution and 9 demonstrating the multiple X (one case of 48,XXYY

is considered as multiple X). Of these, 11 completed the MPI, and our findings are presented below with the earlier findings regarding the general prisoner population (Bartholomew, 1963). It would appear

	General prisoner population (N=150)	Double Y (N=5)	Multiple X (N=6)
Extraversion:			
Mean score	15.86	17.40	11.33
Standard deviation ..	3.78	3.87	2.98
Neuroticism:			
Mean score	15.25	10.20	12.00
Standard deviation ..	4.68	2.72	3.95

from our findings that 'in both the double Y and multiple X cases there is a not dissimilar neuroticism score which is below previously ascertained means for male prisoners. It is also apparent that the double Y cases have an extraversion score close to the prisoner norms, whereas the multiple X cases tend to be introverted, being some one standard deviation from the prisoner mean' (Bartholomew, 1971).

The number of cases investigated both by us and by Griffiths is, of course, very small, and one cannot be over-dogmatic on the basis of a mere 15 subjects. What is required is further research to clarify many unresolved questions.

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CLUSTER ANALYSIS

DEAR SIR,

In his recent paper on problems in using cluster analysis (*Journal*, February 1972, 120, 143) I note that one of the studies Mr. B. S. Everitt refers to is mine (*Journal*, March 1971, 118, 275). Lest by default I should stand convicted of naivety, I must point out that the main difficulties he discusses were also referred to in my paper. Amongst these are non-exhaustiveness of the procedures with risk of sub-optimal solutions; uncertainty as to the number of