



BRAIN-DAMAGING EFFECTS OF ELECTROSHOCK THE FACTS

Anyone who has seen electroshock (ECT) performed knows this procedure has all the marks of physical torture that belongs in the armoury of a Gestapo interrogator. Electroshock is up to a brutal 400 volts of electricity sent searing through the brain to induce a grand mal seizure. Psychologist Dr John Breeding says, "It is prima-facie common sense obvious that ECT causes brain damage. After all the rest of medicine, as well as the building trades, do their best to prevent people from being hurt or killed by electrical shock. People with epilepsy are given anticonvulsant drugs to prevent seizures because they are known to cause brain damage."

The same ECT machine that is used for "therapy" is used to torture political prisoners. Consider also that after the exposure of the electrical shock methods used on prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, the US Congress included provisions in the Department of Defense Appropriations prohibiting "cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment" with regard to persons kept in detention by the Department of Defense and in the custody or control of the United States Government worldwide. We do not condone the use of electrical shock of prisoners of war, and we shouldn't condone its use as "therapy" on the mentally disturbed. It never addresses the cause of the person's problems and offers no cure.

Psychiatry deceptively cloaks electroshock with false medical legitimacy: the hospital setting, white-coated assistants, anesthetics, muscle paralyzing drugs and sophisticated-looking equipment. But the scientific principle behind ECT is no more advanced than the principles behind neighborhood bullying. ECT is dangerous, cruel and inhumane.

HISTORY OF ELECTROSHOCK

Electroshock was developed in 1938 out of a Rome slaughterhouse, where pigs were electroshocked to make it easier to slit their throats in order to kill them. A psychiatrist, Ugo Cerletti, had been experimenting with electric shock on dogs, placing an electrode in the dog's mouth and another in its anus. Half of the animals died from cardiac arrest. After seeing the pigs being shocked, he decided to use this on humans.

In Australia in the early 1940s one of Australia's first ECT machines was constructed by Birch, the Superintendent of Mental Institutions for South Australia. He first tested the ECT machine on rabbits and then used it on patients in August 1941 at Parkside Mental Hospital in Adelaide.

SIDE EFFECTS

ECT can cause severe and permanent memory loss, brain damage, suicide, cardiovascular complications, intellectual impairment and even death. The 2006 Western Australian E.C.T. Consent Form, states: "In some people, memory loss may be severe and can even be permanent."

A 2010 study by John Reed from the University of Auckland and Richard Bentall from Bangor University in Wales on the efficacy of ECT concluded there is no evidence at all that it prevents suicide and that there have been significant new findings confirming that brain damage, in the form of memory dysfunction, is common, persistent and significant and that it is related to ECT rather than depression. Further they stated, "The continued use of ECT therefore represents a failure to introduce the ideals of evidence based medicine into psychiatry."

Psychiatrist Lee Coleman says, "the brain, for a while is so injured (even children know that electricity is dangerous for them and other living things) that the patient is too confused to know or remember what was troubling him. Unfortunately when the brain begins to recover somewhat, the problems usually return since electricity has done nothing to solve them."

In 2000, psychiatrist Harold A. Sackeim a major proponent of ECT when addressing the frequency with which patients complain of memory loss stated, "As a field, we have more readily acknowledged the possibility of death due to ECT than the possibility of profound memory loss, despite the fact that adverse effects on cognition [consciousness] are by far ECT's most common side-effects."

A 2001 Columbia University study found ECT so ineffective at ridding patients of their depression that nearly all who receive it relapse within 6 months.

THE ELECTROSHOCK MACHINE

In January 2011, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommended that devices used to deliver ECT remain in the high risk category (Class III), reserved for the most dangerous medical devices and not be downgraded to a lower risk category.

In doing so, it recommended that companies which manufacture ECT devices be required to prove that ECT is both effective and safe in order to remain in use.

The early 2000s Graylands W.A psychiatric hospital's Medical Policy and Procedures Manual gave instructions on how to administer ECT. It explained how to turn the ECT machine on and then stated, "At this stage the electrode set is as lethal as a loaded gun, and should be treated as such!"

NUMBER OF ELECTROSHOCK TREATMENTS GIVEN IN AUSTRALIA

Today, psychiatry shocks and tortures the brains of more than 1 million individuals every year worldwide. Most people think it is banned in Australia. In fact as of June 2011, there are no restrictions in Australia to ban it from being given to children, the elderly or pregnant women.

During 2010 in Australia, nearly 25,000 'treatments' of ECT were given funded by Medicare. Of these 25,000, Queensland psychiatrists gave the highest number of electroshock in 2010 with 7,433, followed by Victoria at 6,400, N.S.W. at 5,733 and W.A, at 2,184. This is not the total numbers of ECT given in Australia. For example in 2007/08, Medicare funded 5,327 treatments in Victoria. A Freedom of Information Request by CCHR revealed that for 2007/08 there had been 17,720 treatments in total given in Victoria alone.

The elderly can be a target for ECT; In Australia, in 2010, over 4,700 electric shocks were given to people between the ages of 65 and 85 funded by Medicare.

In June 2011 it was reported that patients in N.S.W. had been anaesthetised for more than 2 days to undergo court ordered ECT. Psychiatrist Jonathan Philips said he was concerned that such treatment could be the start of the "slippery slope" for even more radical treatment.

Anaesthetising someone for 2 days to administer electroshock has parallels to Chelmsford Hospital in NSW where deep sleep treatment (patients were put into a drug induced coma and given electroshock) was administered and 48 people died. A Royal Commission was held in the late 1980s into Chelmsford Hospital and subsequently saw deep sleep therapy was banned.

DOES PSYCHIATRY KNOW HOW ELECTROSHOCK WORKS?

Psychiatry admits it still doesn't know how ECT "works." Psychiatry has over 50 theories but when one psychiatrist was questioned under deposition in a California ECT legal suit about what the 460 volts of electricity does to the brain, he said he wasn't an expert, go ask an electrician!

Imagine a heart surgeon claiming he doesn't know how the heart works but has dozens of theories—and no scientific fact—about why a coronary bypass operation should be performed. You'd sue him for malpractice, which is what should be done to any psychiatrist damaging a patient with ECT today—and the colleges that taught him, as well as the psychiatric associations still endorsing it.

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CCHR was established in 1969 by the Church of Scientology and Professor of Psychiatry Dr Thomas Szasz with the sole purpose of investigating and exposing psychiatric violations of human rights.
