

Bear both,

12/13/72

You two have had a siege of it!

Didn't know Jean was in the same high-risk occupation.

I spent four months in World War II guarding a locked ward in one of the largest Army pecho wards. They'd taken over Rockland State Hospital above New York. When my bad back pooped out I was given this sitting-down pest. Saw what the mentally ill can do, the incredible strength they can summon, the mercurial changes, etc.

A practical suggestion, in the event it has escaped you. She should be entitled to at least workmens' compensation. Some private employers carry insurance, in which event she might get more. Sometimes unions cover. If you have not checked into this, should. Pronto, to be sure benefits do not lapse. I suppose as long as she is under medical care they will not. But these things always have fine print.

The two things that can be said for your trouble is that it is one of which you'll have no further concern and while you are getting full physical strength back you'll have time for those things that delight the mind as you've not while working.

What limited experiences I've had with public legal bodies is discouraging, but I'll bear your advice in mind....One of my concerns is ~~xxx~~ illuminated by your recent experience.

How can I distinguish between the somatic and the psychosomatic when this thing has been so long neglected...My experience with GMA is that their regulations are whatever ~~xxx~~ they want them to be at any given time and that the bureaucracy is hung up on itself. I've finally decided that since I don't plan or want a malpractice suit the one thing I could do is make as much of a written record as I could. I've done this and let it go at that. Unless they respond, that is it, unless something does develop more than has. I think their neglect with my wife is criminal. I've taken another tack with "what should be done". We are in therapy, locally, by coincidence, but with a psychologist who is on their staff. He must be beginning to see things. Rather, be getting to where he can interpret. He has seen some of her reactions. I'll not be surprised if he winds up with further recommendations. Frankly, I've gotten nothing from it so far, which makes me worry for it may build my confidence in what I'd figured out for myself too much. I know that one who tries to plumb his own mind and emotions must be careful about the depths, may engaged himself-decent. So far there has been no progression past families. I suppose that is basic and never irrelevant, but I can't understand the science that ignores the fact for the art. There is a place for both, but one is objective, the other subjective, and my view is that ignoring the objective even for a while is wrong.

I've heard nothing from Newman of Lorenz. That was a virtuoso performance by Newman. Interviewing a Lorenz is a difficult assignment. That Lorenz would be so magnificent was no surprise to me. Only his command of English was. One of the great minds and men. His wife must be Griselda reincarnated! (Have you read King Solomon's Ring?)

What happened to the farm is nothing like what happened to us. One of the real frustrations is the lack of scientific interest, particularly when the prospect of converting medical into legal reality is so unique and so good. I mean, aside from the benefit, in one can use that word, to us. In some form or another this must have happened to countless people and will continue to. The possible benefit to others lies not alone in laying a basis for compensation. More important is laying a basis for stopping it. The one thing the U.S. has a chance of reacting to is MONEY. Especially private corporations. If it costs them more to hurt people than not to hurt people, there is a better chance they'll stop the hurting. Conscience and morals won't do it. There is no chance of meaningful law. The first thing EPA did is castrate the pending legislation, and it is still pending after a long time. Months after their hearings they are still in typescript. It is little work to prepare transcripts for setting in type. I've been there to get some. They couldn't even find what I told them existed, knowing from many sources that it does. I was particularly interested in a woman who sustained the same farout physical reactions as my wife, and from aviation stresses. I want this for my wife and for the lawyer in that case (Baltimore lawyer, Baltimore court because it is the closest federal court in Md.), so they can both understand...I've found some time for myself and have found some young people in ecological groups who seem interested.

Take care, both of you. Best regards, and thanks,

10 October 72

Dear Hal,

Yes, I'm sorry to say, a very long silence from this end. But it has nothing to do with your letters or inquiries. First, in June, Jean was hurt. She was at that time working in a private psychiatric hospital here in Omaha (between us we have nearly 20 years in this kind of work, without ever sustaining more than an occasional bump or bruise), and was struck by a patient: the base of a glass soda pop bottle against her right forehead. She kept her presence of mind, took the bottle, and made it back where she could get assistance, as her eyes were blinded from the flow of blood down her face. But she sustained a concussion and the wound was an ugly one which took some 40 stitches to close properly. Her experience and overall self-possession carried her through the incident remarkably well. Even so, she is still in the care of our physician and will ~~remain~~ continue to be for an unspecified time. An unfortunate episode, and one which I took less gracefully than Jean. I admit to being very, very badly shaken...and slow in recovering.

Then, toward the end of last month, a persistent pain in my stomach reveals itself as an infected appendix. None too soon, the surgeon removed it...but the infection made a sojourn in the hospital (7 days) unavoidable. However, I've been home a few days now and am mending well. Sigh. Hopefully, no more medical emergencies for awhile.

But a word about the problems you've described in detail in your most recent letters. (I assume you did receive my letter of 29 April.) Regarding the attorney, if it were me I would be tempted to consult the Legal Aid Society. As for the GHA, I would myself probably not challenge them or make any demands on them via personal letter or interview. You've tried that without much success. I think I would let an attorney, preferably Legal Aid, investigate the matter of just what medical records are now extant and precisely who is legally entitled to examine them. And it is important that you and the attorney who represents you be able to communicate well; a fair degree of mutual understanding is probably imperative. If it doesn't exist, try and switch attorneys. But stay with a public service attorney such as Legal Aid customarily provides, if at all possible.

The copy of your letter to Lorenz was most interesting (and yes, I would like to read a transcript of the Newman interview should you be able to obtain one), because of the background information it gave. I'm profoundly sorry, Hal, about what happened to your chicken farm and to your life as a result.

A further thought about the GHA. You ask my opinion about getting them to live up to their own rules and regulations.. I don't know. But it is clearly a job for an attorney. Go over the GHA regulations with your attorney and point out seeming inconsistencies and ask him what, if anything, can be done.

Must go on to mound of correspondence still to be done. Take best of care of yourselves and do keep in touch.

Reil