

# Brain Surgery Gains As Treatment for Anxiety

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WASHINGTON (AP) — A researcher says brain surgery is gaining new popularity for use on people suffering anxiety and tension, including overactive children and depressed mental patients.

"Well over 100,000 persons have already been subjected to psychosurgery around the world, including 20,000 in England, perhaps 50,000 in America, many more thousands in Canada," says Dr. Peter R. Breggin.

"We are now in the midst of a resurgence, including multiple forms of psychosurgery upon hyperactive children. It is time to take action before this revival takes on the proportions of the first wave that peaked in the 1950s," he adds in a 25,000-word copyrighted study inserted by Rep. Cornelius E. Gallagher, D-N.J., in the Congressional Record.

Breggin, 35, is on the faculty of the Washington, D.C., School of Psychiatry. He urges that all forms of psychosurgery be outlawed in the United States as they have been in the Soviet Union.

Breggin said his survey was based on material presented by

100 psychosurgeons who gathered in Denmark in the summer of 1970 for the Second International Conference on Psychosurgery.

The initial wave of operations, he said, primarily involved state-hospital patients with chronic disabilities, while the current one "is aimed at an entirely different group—individuals who are relatively well-functioning, the large majority of them with the diagnosis of 'neurosis,' many of them individuals who are still living at home and performing on the job.

"Women constitute the majority of the patients, with old people and children as other large groups. In Japan, Thailand and India, children have been large target populations for some time; but now in America, children are again being submitted to psychosurgery, particularly at the University of Mississippi, where O.J. Andy is operating on 'hyperactive' children as young as age five."

By psychosurgery, he said, doctors mutilate or cut out parts of the brain in seeking to "blunt the individual's emotions and make him more docile."

"Each technique attacks and

mutilates brain tissue that has nothing demonstrably wrong with it, and each does this within the delicately balanced limbic system of the brain which harmonizes the most highly developed human capacities, including emotional responsiveness."

Gallagher called the report "one of the most shocking documents I have ever seen," and said it is the first critical review of a wide-scale resurgence of the practice. He said Breggin performed "a distinct public service by bringing forward an immense amount of information which has hitherto been buried in somewhat arcane journals."

Breggin reported, for example, on a case in which, he said, doctors considered a psychosurgical operation on a depressed woman to be a success although the patient killed herself.

Experiments on electrical stimulation of the brain, Breggin said, often involve research into "pleasure centers." Another scientist, Breggin added, reported operating on at least 132 patients for various psychiatric problems.