

SCANDINAVIAN LOBOTOMY GENEALOGY

Who introduced, performed, referred, regulated and criticised lobotomy in Denmark, Norway and Sweden (plus Finland), as a family tree of lines of transmission.

Source: Jesper Vaczy Kragh, Lobotomy Nation: The History of Psychosurgery and Psychiatry in Denmark (Palgrave Macmillan, 2021). "p." means the printed book page.

READ THIS FIRST

"Genealogy" here means lines of transmission: who brought the operation to whom, who operated, who sent patients, who set the rules, who objected. The book contains no biological family trees. The book is about Denmark. Norway, Sweden and Finland appear only briefly (p.8-9, 175, 185-187, 337, 364, 394, 418), so those branches are short. Nothing from outside the book has been added. Patients are anonymous in the book. The only named Scandinavian lobotomy patients are Sigrid Hjertén (Sweden) and Ellinor Hamsun (Norway), both on p.394. Notation: "->" means passed the method on to / sent patients to / influenced. Dates are the first documented operation or statement.

1. SCALE AND FIRSTS

Denmark: at least 4,500 psychosurgical operations 1939-1983, more than 4,000 of them lobotomies, with a population of about 4 million in 1945 (p.9). The author argues this is the highest figure per head in the world.

Sweden about 4,400, Norway about 2,500, Finland about 1,550 operations (p.8).

First operations: Denmark Dec 1939, St. Joseph Hospital, Aarhus (p.175-176). Norway 1941, Gaustad hospital, Oslo (p.175). Sweden Aug 1944, Serafimer Hospital, Stockholm (p.175; note 19 on p.145). Finland 1946 (p.175).

The usual literature puts Norway first; the author makes a strong claim that Denmark was the first Nordic country (p.175).

2. THE COMMON ROOT (OUTSIDE SCANDINAVIA)

Egas Moniz (Portugal), leucotomy 1935; Nobel Prize 1949

- Eduard Busch was one of nine nominators of Moniz for the Nobel Prize (p.8)
- Walter Freeman and James Watts (USA): frontal lobotomy, book Psychosurgery (1942) (p.127, 171)
 - Freeman lectures at the Third International Neurological Congress, Copenhagen, 24 Aug 1939 (p.127-130) -> DENMARK (section 3)
 - Freeman's transorbital technique -> NORWAY, Valen hospital (section 4)
 - Link Freeman <-> Mogens Ellermann: Ellermann visited Freeman in Washington in 1930; Freeman toured St. Hans Hospital in 1939 (p.130)
- William Beecher Scoville (USA): "selective cortical undercutting", shown at Lisbon 1948 -> Busch's Copenhagen group (p.195)
- First International Psychosurgery Congress, Lisbon, 4-7 Aug 1948. Danish delegation: Eduard Busch (the only Dane to lecture), Einar Geert-Jørgensen, Mogens Ellermann (p.8)

3. DENMARK

3.1 THE SURGEONS (who operated)

- Haagen Jessen, senior consultant, neurological department, St. Joseph Hospital, Aarhus. Had studied brain surgery at hospitals abroad, including Paris (p.130, note 26). Attended the 1939 congress. Approved the earliest known Danish frontal lobotomy, Dec 1939 (p.130, 175-176)
 - Frederik Bom, psychiatrist. In a 1950 interview said he and Jessen introduced the treatment at St. Joseph in 1939 (p.176)
- Eduard Busch, Denmark's first senior consultant in neurosurgery; department in the former Military Hospital, Tagensvej, under Rigshospitalet, Copenhagen (p.126-127, 146). Heard Freeman in 1939 and noted the audience was not unsympathetic (p.130)

- First lobotomies of state-hospital patients: late Dec 1944, a young man from Vordingborg (p.158, 177)
- Consultant in neurosurgery to the National Board of Health; held that lobotomy must be done in specialist neurosurgery departments, not mental-hospital theatres (p.180-181)
- Told the Medico-Legal Council (1952) he would never operate without patient or relative consent (p.305)
- 1952 study of 154 patients with psychiatrists from the Zealand hospitals, using Scoville's undercutting (p.195-196)
- Wrote the chapter "Psychosurgery" in Herbert Olivercrona (ed.), *Handbuch der Neurochirurgie* (Berlin 1957-58) (note 24, p.145)
- Colleagues in his department:
 - Richard Malmros (close colleague) -> chief physician of the new neurosurgery department at the Municipal Hospital, Aarhus (opened 1 Apr 1943); frontal lobotomy there from 1945. First agreed to an operating theatre at the Aarhus mental hospital, then backed Busch against it (p.130, 177, 180-181, 193)
 - Bendt (Bent) Broager, Rigshospitalet. Opened the 1946 Scandinavian Psychiatrists' Congress: 90 patients operated, 5 deaths (p.130, 185-186)

3.2 THE PSYCHIATRISTS (who referred patients)

- ZEALAND -> Busch / Broager at Rigshospitalet (Vordingborg, Nykøbing and St. Hans sent patients to Copenhagen, p.179)
 - Vordingborg (Oringe) mental hospital
 - Vagn Askgaard, chief physician. Sent the first two patients (1944, 1946); expected 10-15 a year (p.157-162)
 - Olaf Østergaard Jensen, house physician. Reported 49 lobotomised patients, 1949 (p.189)
 - Nykøbing Sjælland mental hospital
 - Otto Jacobsen, chief physician 1939-1970. First doubted hospital operating theatres, later supported one (p.182, 347)
 - Jørgen Ravn. Reported 48 patients, 1949; later chief physician at Middelfart 1952-1970 (p.189, 192, 347)
 - St. Hans Hospital, Roskilde (lobotomy from 1945, p.177)
 - Jens Chr. Schmidt, chief physician (spelled Jens Christian Smith elsewhere in the book). Urged Busch to operate on St. Hans patients, 1945 (p.186)
 - Mogens Ellermann, staff physician. First 14 men, all disturbed schizophrenia patients (p.186)
 - Johanne Ellebjerg. First 27 women; 1949 article on 46 patients (p.186-188)
 - Arild Faurbye, staff physician. Brought electroshock to Denmark; wrote the first Danish review of lobotomy, 1949 (p.132, 188-189)
 - Kolonien Filadelfia (private hospital, lobotomy from 1945): H.I. Schou, chief physician (p.177, 190)
 - Herstedvester (institution for psychopathic criminals, from 1946): Georg Stürup, head psychiatrist; six patients lobotomised; warned against being "the apostle of the knife" (p.177, 190)
 - Rigshospitalet psychiatric department: Villars Lunn, chief physician; prolific writer on lobotomy, called it the "last resort" (p.194, 347)
 - Institutions for the intellectually disabled (Andersvænge, Ebberødgård, Rødbygård): referring doctors are not named; children as young as six were operated (p.190, 348)
 - Reporting on results: Børge Tollund, Neurology Department, Municipal Hospital Copenhagen, reported 400+ psychiatric patients operated 1946-49 (p.191)
- JUTLAND AND FUNEN -> Malmros at the Municipal Hospital, Aarhus
 - Aarhus mental hospital
 - Aage Thune Jacobsen, chief physician until 1945 -> succeeded by:
 - Erik Strömrgren, chief physician 1945-1980. Initiator of large-scale lobotomy in Jutland. Saw neurosurgery on study trips abroad; pushed for an operating theatre at his hospital (1945-1954); said "no significant risk". His positive view also influenced the start of lobotomy in Switzerland (p.177-182, 347)
 - Later: Holger Voldby, Aarhus, said in 1969 the era of lobotomy was "not played out" (p.349)
 - Middelfart mental hospital: Sigurd Petersen (acting chief 1946, p.179); Valdemar Hendriksen (chief, ill in late 1940s, p.182); Ellen Vibeke Jensen (acting chief; 102 patients sent to Aarhus by 1950, p.182, 191); Jørgen Ravn (chief 1952-1970, p.192)

- Viborg: Anton Frøkjær Thomsen, chief physician 1938-1963; backed Strömberg (p.182, 347)
- Vester Vedsted: Knud Rosenstand; began referring in 1947 (p.180)
- Augustenborg: Poul Dickmeiss, new head 1946; reported in May 1950 that Aarhus had halted lobotomies because of deaths (p.192, 301)

3.3 THE REGULATORS (who set the rules)

- Directorate of the State Mental Hospitals
 - Georg Brøchner-Mortensen, director until 1951. Demanded that costs be cleared and every case reported (Sept 1946); required patient or next-of-kin consent (p.162)
 - -> Louis le Maire, lawyer and professor of criminal law, director from 1951; consulted Strömberg on consent (1952); wrote in 1957 that lobotomy had been of benefit (p.304-305, 348)
- National Board of Health: Eduard Busch as neurosurgery consultant (p.180)
- Politicians who named brain operations as progress in parliament (1946-47): Mogens Fog, neurologist and politician; Ejnar Kjær, Minister of the Interior (p.140-141)

3.4 THE CRITICS AND THE SECOND GENERATION

- Early, mild doubts
 - Knud Herman, neurologist, 1949 review hinting at criticism (p.193)
 - Ib Ostenfeld, psychiatrist, book Det besjælede Univers with a psychotherapy cure (p.193)
 - Villars Lunn: "we make them other people" (p.194)
- Consent investigation
 - Stephan Hurwitz, Denmark's first Ombudsman (1955); opened an inquiry into consent to shock treatment and lobotomy in Dec 1956 (p.298)
 - Lawyers writing on consent: Valdemar Hvidt, Adam Vestberg, Bo von Eyben (ch.11)
- After psychotropic drugs arrived (from 1954, p.347): resumed or new operations
 - Cingulotomy at Bispebjerg Hospital from 1957, at the initiative of Einar Geert-Jørgensen (Frederiksberg); 33 patients before 1965. Authors: Karen M. Olesen, B. Broager, P. Hedegaard, E. Geert-Jørgensen (p.350)
 - New neurosurgery departments in Odense, Aarhus and Glostrup, 1955-1960 (p.348)
 - First stereotactic operation 1959, a patient from Rødbygård; Leksell frame in use at Rigshospitalet (p.348, 364)
 - Glostrup re-lobotomies in 1965 (p.351-352)
- Late critics (1970s-1980s)
 - Joseph Welner, Municipal Hospital; called lobotomy a scandal after the 1976 film (p.370)
 - Niels Reisby, 1980 textbook chapter (p.370-371)
 - Heidi Hansen and three colleagues, 1982 psychosurgery report (p.371)
 - Bente Pakkenberg, Hvidovre Hospital; post-mortem brains of lobotomised patients, 1972-1984 (p.373)

4. NORWAY

Freeman and Watts (USA) -> technique

- Ørnulf Ødegaard (psychiatrist) with Arne Thorkildsen (surgeon): first operation, Gaustad, Oslo, 1941; Norway is usually named the first Nordic country (p.175)
- Søren Rimestad (psychiatrist), Valen hospital: followed Freeman, switched fully to the transorbital method, 85 patients 1953-1955 (p.337)
- Critics: some Norwegian chief physicians (unnamed) rejected lobotomy completely (p.418)
- Patient: Ellinor Hamsun, actress and daughter of Knut Hamsun; little benefit; post-lobotomy epilepsy (p.394 and its note)

5. SWEDEN

Freeman and Watts (USA) -> Sweden

- Nils Nielsen, general practitioner: five-line summary of Freeman and Watts in Nordisk Medicin, 1939; noted 5% mortality (p.127)
- First Swedish operation, Aug 1944, neurosurgery department, Serafimer Hospital, Stockholm (p.145, 175). The book names no individual surgeon
- Snorre Wohlfahrt, psychiatrist, Beckomberga Hospital, Stockholm: called lobotomy risky, irreversible, not to be routine (1946 congress, p.186)
- Gösta Rylander, psychiatrist: urged monitoring of personality change (1946 congress, p.186-187)

- Lars Leksell, neurosurgeon: his stereotactic frame was later used at Rigshospitalet, Copenhagen (p.364)
- Patient: Sigrid Hjertén, artist; died from a lobotomy in 1948 (p.394 and its note)

6. FINLAND

First lobotomy 1946; about 1,550 operations; never as widespread as in Norway and Sweden (p.8, 175). The book names no Finnish individual.

7. CROSS-LINKS BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES

Freeman <-> Ellermann (Washington 1930; St. Hans 1939) (p.130)
 Lisbon 1948: Busch, Geert-Jørgensen and Ellermann attended; Scoville's technique shown there inspired Busch's group (p.8, 195)
 Eighth Congress of Scandinavian Psychiatrists, Copenhagen, 29 Aug 1946, 400+ participants: Danes Broager, Ellermann, Ellebjerg; Swedes Wohlfahrt and Rylander (p.185-187)
 Twelfth Nordic Psychiatrist Congress, 1958: Villars Lunn says lobotomy now rests under "a veil of oblivion" (p.347-348)
 Strömberg -> Switzerland (p.178)
 Leksell (Sweden) -> Rigshospitalet's stereotactic work (p.364)

8. WHO'S WHO, A TO Z

Askgaard, Vagn [DK]: chief physician, Vordingborg; sent first state-hospital patients (p.157-162)
 Bom, Frederik [DK]: psychiatrist; Aarhus 1939 lobotomy with Jessen (p.176)
 Broager, Bendt (Bent) [DK]: neurosurgeon, Rigshospitalet (p.130, 185)
 Brøchner-Mortensen, Georg [DK]: director of the Directorate until 1951 (p.162)
 Busch, Eduard [DK]: neurosurgeon; Copenhagen line; Board of Health consultant (p.126-130, 180)
 Dickmeiss, Poul [DK]: chief physician, Augustenborg (p.192)
 Ellebjerg, Johanne [DK]: psychiatrist, St. Hans; women patients (p.186-188)
 Ellermann, Mogens [DK]: psychiatrist, St. Hans; visited Freeman 1930 (p.130, 186)
 Faurbye, Arild [DK]: psychiatrist; electroshock; 1949 lobotomy review (p.132, 188)
 Fog, Mogens [DK]: neurologist and politician (p.140)
 Geert-Jørgensen, Einar [DK]: psychiatrist; Lisbon 1948; Bispebjerg cingulotomy (p.8, 350)
 Hamsun, Ellinor [NO]: patient (p.394)
 Hansen, Heidi [DK]: psychiatrist; 1982 critical report (p.371)
 Hendriksen, Valdemar [DK]: chief physician, Middelfart (p.182)
 Herman, Knud [DK]: neurologist; 1949 implicit critic (p.193)
 Hjertén, Sigrid [SE]: patient; died from lobotomy 1948 (p.394)
 Hurwitz, Stephan [DK]: Ombudsman; consent inquiry 1956 (p.298)
 Jacobsen, Aage Thune [DK]: chief physician, Aarhus, until 1945 (p.177)
 Jacobsen, Otto [DK]: chief physician, Nykøbing Sjælland (p.182)
 Jensen, Ellen Vibeke [DK]: acting chief physician, Middelfart (p.182, 191)
 Jensen, Olaf Østergaard [DK]: house physician, Vordingborg (p.189)
 Jessen, Haagen [DK]: senior consultant, St. Joseph Aarhus; 1939 operation (p.175-176)
 Kjær, Ejnar [DK]: Minister of the Interior (p.141)
 Leksell, Lars [SE]: neurosurgeon; stereotactic frame (p.364)
 le Maire, Louis [DK]: lawyer; director of the Directorate from 1951 (p.304)
 Lunn, Villars [DK]: psychiatrist, Rigshospitalet (p.194, 347)
 Malmros, Richard [DK]: neurosurgeon, Aarhus (p.177, 193)
 Nielsen, Nils [SE]: general practitioner; 1939 note on Freeman (p.127)
 Ødegaard, Ørnulf [NO]: psychiatrist; first Norwegian operation 1941 (p.175)
 Ostenfeld, Ib [DK]: psychiatrist; author reviewed by Herman (p.193)
 Pakkenberg, Bente [DK]: researcher on lobotomised brains (p.373)
 Petersen, Sigurd [DK]: acting chief physician, Middelfart (p.179)
 Ravn, Jørgen [DK]: psychiatrist, Nykøbing then Middelfart (p.189, 192)
 Reisby, Niels [DK]: psychiatrist; 1980 critique (p.370)
 Rimestad, Søren [NO]: psychiatrist, Valen; transorbital (p.337)
 Rosenstand, Knud [DK]: chief physician, Vester Vedsted (p.180)
 Rylander, Gösta [SE]: psychiatrist; frontal-lobe researcher (p.186)
 Schmidt, Jens Chr. [DK]: chief physician, St. Hans (p.186)

