

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### *Reply to "Prediction of $\alpha$ -Helices in Glucagon"*

*by Schiffer and Edmundson*

Dear Sir:

In their letter, Schiffer and Edmundson (1970) have considered their own procedure for predicting helices and tabulated what they describe as the "comparisons of predictions of  $\alpha$ -helices in glucagon" (Schiffer and Edmundson, 1970, Table I). In that table and in the text, Schiffer and Edmundson describe us as having predicted (Low, Lovell, and Rudko, 1968) that there would be no  $\alpha$ -helix in the structure of glucagon. This statement, unfortunately, is completely erroneous and represents a serious misunderstanding of the work we have done.

The procedure for the prediction of  $\alpha$ -helical regions we have described is simply that and nothing else. It was made explicitly plain that we had not developed criteria for the prediction of nonhelical conformation and that, therefore, if we did not predict that a specific sequence was helical it was because we made no prediction whatsoever concerning its conformation, whether it might or might not be  $\alpha$ -helical. Our comment on glucagon belongs, therefore, in the class, "Don't know."

One single exception to this was discussed in our paper. We did predict a nonhelical region in the papain 190-198 sequence.

Our criteria were developed to give conservative estimates, it being, in our view, more important to make the fewest possible mistakes, rather than to make the greatest number of predictions.

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## REFERENCES

- LOW, B. W., F. M. LOVELL, and A. D. RUDKO. 1968. *Proc. Nat. Acad. Sci. U. S. A.* **60**:1519.  
SCHIFFER, M., and A. B. EDMUNDSON. 1970. *Biophys. J.* **10**:293.

BARBARA W. LOW  
F. M. LOVELL  
A. D. RUDKO  
Department of Biochemistry  
College of Physicians & Surgeons of  
Columbia University  
630 West 168th Street  
New York, New York 10032