Memo/Reply From
JOSHUA LEDERBERG

TO: Ken Prewitt ↓ 1

JAN 28 1980

Biology & Social Science

Dear Ken

Your letter of Jan 11 is indeed a tall order. I feel I could more helpful attune myself to your needs in dialectic than soliloquy. Should we shoot for a quiet lunch in the next month or two?

Staggering to me is the breadth of definition of "social science"!

Yes, soon we will have to cope with the materiality of hard data on the genetic foundations of human diversity. Twin + sibling analysis is such a feeble tool ..... but now coming up is a comprehensive mapping of the human genome. It will be easy to sort out which grandparents' chromosomes are represented

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in each of the F2, and muddy questions like the genes for IQ will become (all too) clear. How do you think social scientists will respond to these tools?

Perhaps because psychosomatic medicine, etc., is so well represented at the R.U. (e.g. Neal Miller) I have not been too worried about the "bio-behavioral interface in my own ambience.

More urgent, in my view, is better understanding of the process of (biology) science — an applied sociology of science if you like. Connected issues are career patterns and modelling (incl. minorities + women). The peer review system has hardly been

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scratched (space for one): viz. the study section as a case in small group dynamics. And what nat'l arrangements will enhance scientific creativity? Do we privilege our good students for that? for what?

Every biologist today is baffled and frustrated by political processes, e.g. how the public + the Congress perceive risk. Safeguards about research have multiplied pathologically, as you all know.

Your walk on aging is of course right on the button. Extension of life span is indeed the most revolutionary expected result of new biology.

Yours
Joshua

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