x.... → 6/13/93 B. Wilds

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Dear Bart

Thank you for your lovely essay on the logic of Medicine.

I resonate very strongly with it – but for that very reason you may want to seek other perspectives on how much medical education needs to be reformed. At Stanford, while I was there, we had a good bit of what you advocate; and as well in the undergraduate Human Biology curriculum: viz. my own course on "Health". However, the social and population aspects of health do continue to get short shrift at the medical schools, even at Stanford. It violates the Willie Sutton principle.

More particularly to your ms.

p.15 "more attention to humanities..." I suggest that's a simplistic recipe. Are professors of literature more "humane" than physicians?

p.39 ff Unnatural acts. "Natural is good" is a heuristic but I'd emphasize some caveats. Smallpox is natural tho. Granted: Un-natural immunizations may not be the panacea we expect. Re breast ~~milk~~ milk – it's still just possible that we'll find a mammary tumor factor lurking there. And what's more natural than polygenous sex – and STD's. So I'd stress more caution about Nature's wisdom!

PZH/eml.

56. "Birth rank effects" Just what did you have in mind — you give no citations. The literature I know is full of confounding: family size, house SES etc., maternal age ...

Do you know of any intra-kindred studies of birth rank effects? (Besides birthweight).

71ff. What's your favorite disease? Can you tell me more?

I've seen hints of negative correlations of disease categories; but is there any hard evidence?

Allelic alternatives at HLA should contribute some.

And one speculates about autoimmune disease (hypervigilance) vs cancer, perhaps some infections.

In general principle, you can't optimize every dependent variable. But are there data?

Lewis is not pertinent to your theme.

Have you noted Dobzhansky - Man Bred Evolving; and more particularly Dubos, RJ Man Adapting. 1965.

Finally, if you go to a book it would be most valuable to enlarge on adaptivity. The functional roles of fever, inflammation, diabetes, psychosis (?), pain nausea ... ageing — even death. You do give a few examples. More on sexual selection.

What does medical care; humanitarian legislation, ... war do to the gene pool.

Other elements of modernity. Breakdown of isolates.

(Replacement of biology by culture).

You do touch on this ... Mea Cavalli Sforza etc.

Yours

J.

Do you know origin of phrase "Man is a man made species"? I've used it but doubt if its an invention.