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CENTER FOR ADVANCED STUDY IN THE BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

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April 22, 1966

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Dear Joshua:

I very much appreciate your gracious note of April 18, together with the Supplement to Pediatrics for January 1966 containing "The Study of Child Behavior and Development in Primitive Cultures," by E. R. Sorenson and D. C. Gajdusek, NINDB. It is an excellent job. This and similar series are a good beginning for the all important contrast data required to bring some order into the study of human signal systems, child-rearing practices, family dynamics, transmission of tradition over 3-4 generations, development of internal and external control systems, etc. I am delighted to see this work, for it increases my hope that serious study of human behavior at the microlevel will be accelerated in this decade.

I do not recall the occasion for our discussion of G. H. Hardy's "A Mathematician's Apology" but will hazard the guess that it might have occurred in association with the imaginative character of mathematics, and by extension, all science, or perhaps the similarities between the pure mathematician and the artist-poet. You will recall our mention of Henri Poincaré (Emil Fisher, Kekule), and Jacques Hadamard and similar books on creativity.

I have been stimulated by our conversation to think more on those aspects of behavioral science which might grow indigenously out of medical experience. To date, this manifests itself principally in public health type studies using epidemiologic techniques for prevalence and incidence studies, social class or occupation and illness. Valuable as these may be, and I would guess that there are more than about 35 with which I have some acquaintance, they fall short of expectations. Undoubtedly in the decades to come new explorations in depth and new correlations will appear, but it seems to me that much more could be done now in studies of motivation, learning, critical periods of CNS development, individual differences, integrated behavior in a social matrix,

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psychophysiological correlates, aggression and prejudice if talented young men and adequate facilities were available. Heretofore, we have grossly underestimated the magnitude of the task.

I would like to hear your views on potential patterns for improving investigation in these areas in the medical school and the university. I have always felt that chemical and population genetics were essential groundwork. Obviously we cannot merely proliferate conventional courses in both the "hard" and "soft" sciences even in a six-year medical curriculum. What areas of investigation deserve high priority in our effort to understand human behavior? Do you have a prospectus? I would be pleased to meet with you at your convenience at the Medical School to learn your current views and explorations.

Cordially,



Henry W. Brosin, M.D.

HWB:jw

P.S. - I have not forgotten your wish for a follow-up on A. N. Whitehead's "purpose of discovery," but have not had any leisure to search for it.

