



STANFORD UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

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STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Department of Genetics
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Dr. Z.J. Lipowski
Department of Psychiatry
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Hanover, New Hampshire 03755

Dear Dr. Lipowski,

I appreciate your having sent me your manuscript and reprints March 17. The reasons for the delay in my response would ordinarily be appropriate for an apology, but are too congruent with your own theme to require one here! I hope my comments may still be useful.

Your 1971 paper (Beh. Sci.) ^{even} was more interesting to me than your new draft which I thought was so indiscriminating in the range of topics as to diminish its utility for the intended audience. Perhaps if you had placed your admirable theoretical formulation (p. 33ff) first, I would have been less impatient with the prior development which did indeed appear to be simplistically reductionistic. But if you use that framework, would you spend so much space on non-meaningful and aversive inputs? Science, on the other hand, is not the place for a detailed analytical justification of a theoretical system.

Please do not misunderstand: I accept the importance of your thesis and agree (p.37) that it warrants attention by scientists. Your 1971 paper is, I thought, closer to the appropriate vehicle. It would then profit from some tighter analysis - and perhaps more examples relevant to scientists' life style - that might distinguish different kinds of overload.

Your new draft seemed to place less stress on the intrapsychic stress of surfeit - an idea that seems introspectively quite sound. Was that calculated?

Theory in my unoriginal view is the main tool we have for coping with a surfeit of information. I guess I am urging that principle on you in these remarks about your draft, and that you undertake rather more responsibility in organizing and filtering "highly diverse and widely scattered reports" for the particular audience to which this paper is directed.

I will be most interested to hear of further progress in your work; and again, thank you for the privilege of seeing it.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg, Professor of Genetics

JL/rr

LT. J. P. KENNEDY, JR. LABORATORIES FOR MOLECULAR MEDICINE, DEDICATED TO RESEARCH IN MENTAL RETARDATION

MOLECULAR BIOLOGY

HEREDITY

NEUROBIOLOGY

DEVELOPMENTAL MEDICINE

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