oben 71 1971. L.Okun V

10.000 Dr. K. Gordon Lark
10.100 Dept. Molecular Biology
10.200 University of Utah
10.300 Salt Lake City, Utah, 84112
10.400 In reference to Dr. Lawrence Ckun:
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I was privileged to be Dr. Okun's thesis supervisor when he pursued his Ph.D. studies in my lab.

Larry Ckun has one of the most incisive, critical, imaginative minds I have ever encountered. Paradoxically, this may give him some difficulty at the outset of his career. He knows his capacities, is ambitious, and he will not preoccupy himself with trivialities. He may then meander for a while until he gets a stroke of luck and connects with a problem that is at the same time important and amenable.

He is passionately interested in his work and pursues his experiments with skill and determination. He also has a very engaging personality and converses from a platform of broad-ranging and humanistic interests. It is especially appropriate that he should have graduated to an interest in neurobiology; for his training in molecular biology is an excellent preparation for the most fundamental innovative work.

If he enters a position that gives him the opportunity to exercise his remarkable talents, Dr. Ckun will, I foresee, emerge as one of the leading scientific thinkers of his generation.

12.800 One of Dr. Okun's most remarkable traits is a clear-12.900 sighted and aggressive self-criticism, coupled with very 13.000 high standards about the ideals of scientific work and 13.100 its publication. This goes almost too far, and accounts for his tardiness in pushing for the publication of his 13.200 13.300 Ph.D. thesis. This was a monumental volume of work.care-13.400 fully thought through, but through no fault of Ckun's 13.500 did no more than most dissertations to modify our funda-13.600 mental thinking in his special field. In a real world, he should be criticized for putting a higher priority on 13.700 13.800 learning new skills than in establishing his credentials 13.900 by "getting his work out". However, no one who reads his 14.000 actual thesis will blame him for any shortcomings in having 14.100 put out a formidable, articulate and meticulously organized piece of work. In the long run, his approach to science 14.200 14.300 will be counted as an egregious merit, and I have no reser-14.400 vations in recommending him as a colleague, a teacher, a 14.500 shrewd and dedicated investigator, and a human being of 14.600 rare grace and idealism. 14.700

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