

CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

1755 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N.W., SUITE 300, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036 • [202] 234-5703

TO: COSSA Members, Affiliates, Contributors and Friends

FROM: Roberta Balstad Miller, Executive Director

COSSA LEGISLATIVE REPORT

October 29, 1982

This Week . . .

House Committee Supports Social Science Research at NIMH
Training Stipends May Increase by 5%
Lack of HHS Appropriation Stalls NIH Grants
NSB Commission on Science Education Issues First Report
No News on NSF
New Law Creates Alternative Research Funding Opportunities
Social Science Indicators
National Archives Update
Legislation for a Commission on the Bicentennial of the
Constitution
Social Science in the Press

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HOUSE COMMITTEE SUPPORTS SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH AT NIMH

The recently released Report which accompanies the House appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education contains the following paragraph on research at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH):

"While the Committee understands the need to assure that scarce resources are allocated to research relevant to mental health concerns, projects from all disciplines that could meaningfully contribute to scientific progress in this area should be encouraged. In this respect, social research in the field of mental health, which holds to rigorous scientific methodology, should be encouraged by the Institute."

COSSA was pleased to see this language in the Report. Last spring, COSSA met with the staff of each of the members of the Subcommittee about the stricter relevance standards that were being applied to social science research proposals at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). COSSA proposed language for inclusion in the full Committee Report urging that the best

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUPPORTS SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH AT NIMH (cont.)

research be funded in each field and that to do this, all research proposals be evaluated by similar relevance criteria. This idea was incorporated into the Committee Report, which was released at the end of September.

TRAINING STIPENDS MAY INCREASE BY 5%

Officials at The National Institutes of Health (NIH) and at the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA), of which the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is a part, confirmed that a 5% increase in the level of training stipends is being considered. The proposal is awaiting the approval of the Assistant Secretary for Health and the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The proposed increase represents a mixed blessing. The House has approved increased funds for research training at NIH, but has reduced research training funds at NIMH from \$15.4 million in FY 1982 to \$14.4 million for FY 1983. This reduced funding will mean that even fewer research trainees will be able to be supported by NIMH.

Details regarding the increase in stipends will not be available until the proposal is officially approved.

LACK OF HHS APPROPRIATION STALLS NIH GRANTS

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) will make awards only for continuation and renewal grants until Congress formally approves an appropriation for NIH for FY 1983. NIH is operating under a continuing resolution, a stopgap funding measure, which will expire on December 17, 1982. For further information, see Attachment 1.

NSB COMMISSION ON SCIENCE EDUCATION ISSUES FIRST REPORT

The Commission on Precollege Education in Mathematics, Science and Technology of the National Science Board (NSB) met in Washington on October 20 and issued its first report, "Today's Problems, Tomorrow's Crises." The report sets out the problems in precollege science education in very general terms. Representatives of COSSA and its member organizations have already met with Dr. Richard S. Nicholson, the Executive Director of the Commission, to urge that curricula in the social sciences be included in the deliberations of the Commission. (See COSSA Legislative Report, July 30, 1982.)

NSB COMMISSION ON SCIENCE EDUCATION ISSUES FIRST REPORT (cont.)

COSSA has been asked by one of the four task forces established by the NSB Commission to evaluate an NSF-supported study that reports on the current status of social studies in the nation's schools and makes recommendations for improving the social studies curriculum.

For a copy of the Commission's first report, call the COSSA office (202/234-5703).

NO NEWS ON NSF

This issue of the COSSA Legislative Report was delayed in order to provide information about the final FY 1983 budget of the National Science Foundation (NSF). At this point, however, Foundation officials are still determining budget levels, and the final figures are not yet available. We hope that information on the FY 1983 budget will be made public before the next issues of the Legislative Report.

NEW LAW CREATES ALTERNATIVE RESEARCH FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Small Business Innovation Development Act, which the President signed into law recently, will provide social and behavioral scientists with new sources of funding for their research. The new law was designed to stimulate innovation, cost-efficient research and development (R&D), and the commercialization of successful R&D efforts.

The law will require all major federal R&D agencies to establish Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Programs and to set aside a designated portion of their extra-mural R&D budgets to fund them. Budgets of the SBIR Programs will eventually reach 1.25% of the extramural R&D budgets of parent agencies. SBIR Programs can fund research via grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements.

The Small Business Innovation Development Act was drafted to aid small research firms staffed by scientists who are pursuing research careers outside of the university, big business, or the government. Only bona fide small research firms will be allowed to compete for SBIR funds. Prior to its passage, the bill was opposed by a number of universities. At this point, however, the bill has already become law. It would therefore be wise for social and behavioral scientists to begin to become familiar with its provisions. For example, because of the requirement that a proportion of all extramural research funds go to the SBIR program, the new law may increase the funds available for social and behavioral science research and also for the employment of social and behavioral scientists in small, private research firms.

NEW LAW CREATES ALTERNATIVE RESEARCH FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES (cont.)

It is expected that research proposals submitted to an agency under this program will be evaluated by the same mechanism that is used to determine the scientific merit of other grants. Nevertheless, the system of awards will differ. SBIR programs will have two phases: (1) Phase I awards will be made to small research firms whose response to an agency's solicitation is deemed to show the greatest scientific and technical merit. The initial award will underwrite study of the proposed project's feasibility. Awards will probably not exceed \$50,000 in Phase I. (2) Phase II funding decisions will be based upon (a) the results of the Phase I feasibility study, (b) the scientific and technical merit of the Phase II proposal, and (c) if several proposals have equal merit, commitments of non-federal follow-on funding.

COSSA has begun visiting different federal agencies to inform them that their SBIR program solicitations can and should include topics in the social and behavioral sciences. For example, research topics such as crime prevention and control, alcohol abuse, drug abuse, innovative labor/management relations, methods for enhancing productivity, and computer applications all have potential practical applications likely to attract support from outside private and government sources and are areas that can qualify for support under an SBIR program.

COSSA staff has already met with officials at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF). Conversations have covered such areas as how to solicit the small business community for research applications in the social and behavioral sciences and why solicitations for research should include the social and behavioral sciences and not be limited to the development of hardware for research.

If you would like more information on how to apply for these funds, or on what qualifies as a small research firm, or if you have suggestions about possible social or behavioral science projects that might be funded by an SBIR program, please contact the COSSA office. (202/234-5703)

SOCIAL SCIENCE INDICATORS

The employment patterns of social scientists have been changing since the late 1970's. According to unpublished data collected by the National Science Foundation, the proportion of doctoral level social and behavioral scientists employed in business and industry increased from 11% in 1977 to 15% in 1981. At the same time, the proportion employed in educational institutions declined from 68% to 64%.

The same trends can be observed if the NSF data are disaggregated. The NSF provides information on two categories -- social scientists (which refers in these data to economists, sociologists, and political scientists) and psychologists. Over

SOCIAL SCIENCE INDICATORS (cont.)

the four-year period, psychologists experienced a slightly greater increase than "social scientists" in business and industrial employment although the decline in employment in educational institutions was similar for both groups. In 1981, three out of four social scientists were employed in an educational institution.

Because the 1981 data were obtained in the spring of the year, they were probably affected very little by the Reagan budget policies introduced in February, 1981. However, in the four years preceding the beginning of the Reagan administration, the number of social scientists employed in the private sector had increased, as those in educational institutions decreased.

Employed Doctoral Level Social and Behavioral Scientists by Sector of Employment¹
 (in thousands)

	Social & Behavioral Scientists				Social Scientists				Psychologists			
	1977	(%)	1981	(%)	1977	(%)	1981	(%)	1977	(%)	1981	(%)
All Employers	76.4	(100)	96.0	(100)	42.7	(100)	52.9	(100)	33.7	(100)	43.1	(100)
Bus. & Ind.	8.1	(11)	14.8	(15)	2.6	(6)	4.7	(9)	5.5	(16)	10.1	(23)
Ed. Inst.	52.0	(68)	61.0	(64)	33.4	(78)	39.2	(74)	18.6	(55)	21.8	(50)
Fed. Gov't.	3.8	(5)	5.1	(5)	2.6	(6)	3.9	(7)	1.2	(4)	1.2	(3)
State & Local Gov't.	2.5	(3)	3.4	(4)	1.2	(3)	1.7	(3)	1.3	(4)	1.7	(4)
Hosp/Clin.	5.5	(7)	6.3	(6)	0.1	(.2)	0.1	(.1)	5.4	(16)	6.2	(14)
Non-profit	3.3	(4)	3.9	(4)	4.0	(5)	2.2	(4)	1.3	(4)	1.7	(4)
Other	1.2	(2)	1.5	(1)	0.8	(2)	1.1	(2)	0.4	(1)	0.4	(1)

¹Source: National Science Foundation, Survey of Doctoral Recipients 1981, unpublished.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES UPDATE

Because the FY 1983 appropriation for the National Archives and Records Service (NARS) was not completed by the end of the Congressional session in September, NARS will be funded through a continuing resolution until December 15, 1982, or until an appropriation passes both Houses. Both Senate and House appropriations for NARS in FY 1983 provide increases over the FY 1982 budget of \$75 million. The House recommended a budget of \$87.6 million and the Senate, a budget of \$86.0 million.

The Senate appropriation report also warns the General Services Administration (GSA), which administers NARS, that it opposes any additional staff reductions at the Archives. The report specifically states that the Senate Appropriations Committee will "monitor further staffing levels at NARS to insure that no further reductions are made, and that necessary increases in staffing which reasonably reflect the increased funding for NARS take place."

LEGISLATION FOR A COMMISSION ON THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE
CONSTITUTION

On the last day of the Congressional session, the Senate passed a bill to establish a commission on the bicentennial of the Constitution (S.2671). This bill will next be considered by the House Subcommittee on Census and Population of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee. The House Subcommittee, under Representative Robert Garcia (D-NY), may hold hearings on the bill, but probably not until the 98th Session of Congress begins in 1983.

The Senate legislation provides for a 13-member commission that would plan activities to commemorate the Bicentennial. The legislation specifically states that these activities should give due consideration to "the need for reflection upon both academic and scholarly views of the Constitution and the principle that the document must be understood by the public." The Commission would be required to prepare a report of its activities two years after enactment of the legislation and annually thereafter. Included in the report should be recommendations for publications, scholarly projects, and conferences to commemorate specific historical events. The Commission will be active until 1989.

COSSA has written members of the House Subcommittee on Census and Population (see names below) to urge that action on a House version of the bill take place quickly and that its provisions be similar to most of the Senate bill to expedite its passage. Substantively, COSSA is asking that the emphasis on education and scholarship be strengthened and be made integral to the Commission's mandate.

Letters on this issue from interested scholars should be sent to the following people:

Robert Garcia (D-NY), Chairman, Subcommittee on Census and
Population
William D. Ford (D-MI), Chairman, Committee on Post Office
and Civil Service
Gus Yatron (D-PA)
Mickey Leland (D-TX)
Mary Rose Oaker (D-OH)
James A. Courter (R-NJ)
Daniel Crane (R-IL)
Wayne Grisham (R-CA)

The address for all Members of the House of Representatives
is:

The Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

SOCIAL SCIENCES IN THE PRESS

The social and behavioral sciences have been the subject of a great deal of press coverage in recent weeks. Newspapers around the world reported on Tuesday, October 19, that American economist George Stigler had been awarded this year's Nobel Prize in Economics for his work on regulation. In addition, the Washington Post recently reported on the reinstatement of several statistical and publication programs at the Census Bureau, and the New York Times printed a story describing research on social and cultural influences on stress. Copies of these two articles are enclosed as Attachments 2 and 3.

Other articles on the social and behavioral sciences include an October 19 article in the New York Times on the behavioral implications of the use of color and an article in Science magazine (October 22) on the recent work of economist Mancur Olson. Copies of these latter two articles are available on request from the COSSA office.

Finally, the British Social Science Research Council (SSRC), the major source of government support for social science research in the United Kingdom, has undertaken an inquiry into possible bias in social science research. The inquiry is a direct result of the Rothschild report (see COSSA Legislative Report, June 11, 1982) which strongly endorsed social science research and the SSRC program but also alleged that there might be some bias in SSRC sponsored research in the Industrial Relations Unit of Warwick University. An article from the London Times Higher Education Supplement is enclosed (Attachment 4).

October 27, 1982

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION • WASHINGTON

NIH to Stop Research Grants Until Congress Sets 1983 Budget

WASHINGTON

No new research grants will be awarded by the National Institutes of Health until its fiscal 1983 budget is set by Congress, under an interim policy established by the agency.

The effects of the policy will probably not be felt before December, officials say, and it may be modified after spending guidelines for the next two months are established by the Office of Management and Budget.

The N.I.H. budget for fiscal 1983, which began October 1, is still up in the air. Congress has approved only short-term financing for the agency, under a resolution that allows the institutes and other federal agencies to spend at fiscal 1982 levels until December 17. Officials say it is not yet clear whether, in the O.M.B.'s view, the resolution gives the N.I.H. a \$3.6-

billion budget—the amount appropriated in fiscal 1982—or a larger one to allow it to maintain current operations after inflation is taken into account.

Until Administration policy is finally set, the institutes will make awards only to researchers who apply for existing grants to be continued or renewed, said Richard Miller, an N.I.H. budget official. Those grants will include full reimbursement for institutions' indirect costs, he said. Early this year, the Administration proposed cutting indirect-cost payments by 10 per cent.

The policy of making no new awards should have little effect before December 1, Mr. Miller said, because N.I.H. usually makes very few new grants during the first two months of the fiscal year.

The Washington Post, October 22, 1982

Attachment 2

Wealth and Poverty Census Studies Are Reinstated

United Press International

Several major Census Bureau statistical programs that were lost to budget cuts over the past two years have been reinstated, including an important new study on wealth and poverty in America, officials said yesterday.

Bureau director Bruce Chapman said savings made in processing 1980 census data and recent actions by Congress and the Office of Management and Budget have allowed the bureau to plan to publish most of the 1980 census products that had been eliminated and to start the new income check.

Among the studies is a Survey of Income and Program Participation,

now forecast to start next October, that will provide data on personal and family income, assets, levels of participation in federal programs and other items used in analyzing government benefit programs, taxation and pensions.

Production of the survey will not by itself lead to any redefinition of poverty, but its data can be useful in drawing a picture of the relative wealth or poverty of Americans.

Other programs being restored by the bureau include part of its 1982 Census of Agriculture, a 1980 Census Neighborhood Statistics Program and the publication of some census products that previously were only going to be distributed on computer tapes.

Families Facing Recession's Stresses

By GLENN COLLINS

THE NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1982

DURHAM, N.H.

THE stress on American families now is of a different order than ever before," said Dr. M. Harvey Brenner, an economist and medical sociologist at Johns Hopkins University. "Their psychic pain is worse than that of families in the Depression or in the time of the Industrial Revolution, and yet, paradoxically, the country's level of material wealth is higher than ever."

Dr. Brenner was examining the effects of unemployment and recession on health at the first National Conference on Social Stress Research, a gathering of 140 psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, economists and public-health investigators, at the University of New Hampshire.

Although the conference had been planned months before last week's announcement that national unemployment had reached a 40-year high of 10.1 percent, many of the researchers' studies dealt with the toll of joblessness and economic calamity.

The peaceful russet-and-gold beauty of the New England countryside framed by the conference-center windows was an ironic counterpoint to the often grim findings revealed in the 37 research papers presented at a dozen panels and in addresses during the two-day meeting earlier this week.

The investigators also turned their attention to sources of stress on children and the elderly, stress differences between men and women and the way stress is linked to families, regional areas and societies. Along with the bad news, presenters offered new evidence of the adaptability and resiliency of families.

DR. BRENNER said American families have always been placed under great stress — for example, those caught in 18th-century crop failures and the enormous rural dislocations of the Industrial Revolution.

"But they could see their personal losses as conditions of nature," he said. "In the Depression, families felt that their situation was part of something more massive — they didn't feel such an individual sense of blame."

But the controlled economy of the post-war era, Dr. Brenner said, has encouraged Americans to feel that their families are more immune to the whims of economic or natural disaster. "And so, when they become unemployed," he said, "their sense of distress somehow derives from a sense of personal failure."

THERE is a second paradox, he said: "This is a time when there are more formal external resources for families under stress than before — more government-subsidized aids to the unemployed, more mental-health resources. But there is much less personal connection between people than in other eras of great stress. It's as if we've tried to substitute institutionalized supports for intimacy and affectionate bonds — which are much more powerful."

The conference, attended by some leading figures in stress research, produced a

fair quantity of scholarly — and occasionally stressful — debate. Traditionally, such researchers as Dr. Hans Selye of the University of Montreal studied the biology and physiology of stress, defined as an organism's physiological response to a demand placed upon it. Others focused on individuals' internal psychological coping mechanisms.

The conference, however, reflected a different tradition, in which researchers have sought to widen their concern from the individual to the social conditions that produce stress. They have also studied how systems — be they families, communities or primitive societies — respond to the demands that are placed upon them to adapt to new situations.

Theoretical discussions at the conference, however, were often grounded in human reality. The harrowing effects of joblessness were underscored in the work of a number of researchers. The results of a three-year study of 2,000 unemployed aircraft workers in Hartford were detailed by Dr. Paula Rayman, a sociologist at Brandeis University.

One in five of the unemployed workers studied reported temporary or chronic insomnia; one in four had headaches or stomach ailments; 28 percent began smoking, and 12 percent reported new alcoholism. Twenty-seven percent had been forced to leave bills unpaid, and 33 percent had survived lengthy unemployment only by depleting savings.

The primary stress-producing factor for Americans right now is family economics, according to studies by Dr. Hamilton McCubbin of the University of Minnesota and his colleague, Dr. David Olson. "We aren't talking only about the unemployed," said Dr. McCubbin. "Even among middle-class families, this is their primary concern."

Families' roles in affecting the level of stress on individuals are complex, many of the studies showed. "Families can buffer stress, or they can precipitate stress," Dr. McCubbin said. Often families are vulnerable to a succession of stressful events, a phenomenon Dr. McCubbin termed "stress pileup." Then a single stressful event that is not devastating in itself may destroy a family, he said.

Even a family's regional location may be an important source of stress. Dr. Arnold S. Linsky and Dr. Murray A. Straus of the University of New Hampshire presented a "State and Regional Stress Index" based on a state-by-state analysis of statistics involving such stressful events as criminal behavior, motor vehicle deaths, business failures and divorces.

The index showed that the most stressful state was Alaska, followed by Nevada, Washington State, Washington, D.C., and Alabama. Least stressful was Utah; New York, Kentucky and Ohio tied for 19th place.

However, the social scientists said, many people thrive in stressful situations, and stress is a basic condition of existence. "We should be aware, too, that stress is an integral part of family life," said Dr. Charles Figley of Purdue University. "Stress is a natural part of coping and change."

Some stresses are decidedly out of the ordinary, though. Dr. Figley and Dr. McCubbin have studied the difference between catastrophic stress on families and the predictable or "normative" stress that families endure over the life cycle. The latter events, like the birth of a baby or the departure of the last child from the home, can be anticipated.

"But sudden, unexpected catastrophic events," said Dr. Figley, "are often life-threatening to someone the family members care about. The survivors feel an extreme state of helplessness."

"Sometimes," said Dr. Figley, "stress can lead to a cycle of destructive reaction that can destroy a family. But I am always impressed with the power and effectiveness of families in adapting to changing levels of stress over time."

When bias can be binding

"All knowledge of cultural reality . . . is always knowledge from particular points of view". Max Weber in *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*.

Bias is very much on the agenda at present. The Open University stands accused of left-wing bias in four undergraduate courses, and is currently discussing the claims with the Department of Education and Science. Sociologists have been variously condemned as "ideological imperialists" by the Centre for Policy Studies, and as being "chronically afflicted" by bias according to Lord Rothschild.

Last month an official inquiry into alleged bias at the Industrial Relations Research Unit at Warwick University got under way. Three wise men, including the former head of the Government's Central Policy Review Staff, have been empowered by the Social Science Research Council to conduct an unprecedented inquiry into accusations that the unit has been "unfairly biased towards the trades unions."

Interest in the inquiry is bound to be high among academics, not least because for the first time the concept of "academic bias" will have to be officially pinned down. It is a curious term, at one level a trivial accusation for no one is ever entirely free of bias; at another level to accuse an academic of bias is like accusing a bridge player of using a code.

Although there has been substantial literature on the subject, Weber still appears the best authority on bias. He wrote there could be no such thing as an "absolutely objective scientific analysis of culture or of social phenomena independent of special and one sided viewpoints". Yet he also recommended the exclusion of all "value judgments" from writing which was to be "scientific".

In the end Weber was appealing to academics to refrain from proclaiming their "views" on social facts. The question he ducked was whether this kind of ethical neutrality could be unwittingly broken. Absolute neutrality in the way Durkheim sometimes advocated or B. F. Skinner the behavioural scientist has attempted, was for Weber not possible.

Bias then if it means anything at all must mean more than "being less than totally objective", which all scholars must be guilty of. Bias could take three forms: it could mean an academic has been highly selective in the choice of topics studied; it could mean that the data, or facts, or questions, have been deliberately distorted to back some preconceived view; or it could mean the work was



Lord Rothschild: less than kind to sociology

biased towards a political party or group. In all cases it must be avoidable, and probably include some element of intention.

At a general level academics are always arguing among themselves putting claim against counter-claim. That is the stuff of scholarship and debate. But this kind of debate can merge into accusations of bias, as for example when the Marxist historian Christopher Hill was accused in the pages of the *Times Literary Supplement* by Professor Jack Hexter of Yale University of selective quotation from his sources. Hill vigorously defended his position.

The historian David Irving has been widely and repeatedly accused of having distorted his evidence to defend his thesis that Hitler did not really know the extent of the Holocaust against the Jews. A pitched battle has been fought in recent years between the National Childrens Bureau and the Black Paper authors Caroline Cox and John Marks over methods used for testing how children have fared in comprehensive schools.

The most sensational case in recent times has probably been over Sir Cyril Burt, long regarded as one of the founders of British psychology, but who was later found to have falsified his data. Another celebrated case was the Piltdown hoax when specimens supposed to have belonged to Piltdown Man more than 200,000 years old were found in a Sussex quarry, but were later shown to be much younger. In both cases bias had become fraud.

The most controversial recent case was probably the publication in 1977 of a pamphlet, *The Attack on Higher Education, Marxist or Radical Penetration*, by Professor Julius Gould, professor of sociology at Nottingham University. He distinguished between scholarly and radical modes of study, in effect claiming that radic-

als, with very few exceptions, could not be scholars. The pamphlet was immediately condemned by the Campaign for Academic Freedom and Democracy among others, as being politically motivated and whipping up "McCarthyist-intolerance".

The Glasgow Media Group has provoked a hail of controversy with claims that the way news and current affairs is presented by the BBC and Independent Television News is biased and distorted, particularly when dealing with trade unions and the Labour left. The group has in turn been accused of being blatantly politically motivated. The controversy is currently being extended to include coverage of the Falklands crisis. One result though has been the BBC's decision to set up an internal review of its news coverage.

The OU is currently disputing claims of left-wing bias in four courses, two of which have now discontinued in any case. More blatantly the right-wing Centre for Policy Studies in a recent book, *The Right to Learn* launched a bitter blanket attack on "politicized sociology taught as religious dogma."

Lord Rothschild in his review of the SSRC cleared the council of partisan support for any particular ideology, and rewrote there was no reason to assume social scientists would allow their political predilections to influence their conduct of their research. Since then there has been concern about higher cuts for Keynesian economic forecasting groups over monetarist counterparts.

Lord Rothschild is less kind to sociology, quoting extensively from an American sociologist from Seattle that it has "a disposition for pseudo-quantification and excessive concern with imitation of the methods of the natural sciences, overdependence on data from interviews, questionnaires and informal observations", and finally that bias is sometimes presumed a chronic affliction of sociology.

Lord Rothschild goes on to invent a peculiarly Weberian concept to describe social science of which he approves: *extrapolitical*, that is free from personal political prejudices. But one specific charge against the Warwick Unit is allowed to float free.

The criticisms of sociology and the uncertainty which have surrounded the future of the SSRC for 10 months give Lord Rothschild's recommendation for an investigation into the unit an extra edge. In some quarters it is being regarded as a test case for the continued independence of public funded research in politically sensitive areas.