
CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

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This Week . . .

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and Behavior Research
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PEACE INSTITUTE: A SMALL FIRST STEP

Almost ten months after Congress created it and four months past the date required by the law, the President has nominated the first seven members (out of fifteen) to serve on the board of directors of the United States Institute of Peace. The law which Reagan signed last October 19 required him to name the full board by April 20. The Peace Institute has received a \$4 million appropriation from the Congress for FY 85 to sponsor research and education on the causes of war and peaceful conflict resolution. Without the board to give direction, none of the research and education money can be spent.

Those nominated so far include: Max Kampelman, chief U.S. arms control negotiator in Geneva; Kenneth Adelman, director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency; and Richard N. Perle, assistant secretary of defense for international security policy. These were named under the part of the law that requires four board members be officials of the State and Defense departments, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and the National Defense University.

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Risa I. Palm, *President*

David Jenness, *Executive Director*

The law further stipulates that eleven members must come from the private sector. Those four selected from this area so far are: Sidney Lovett, senior minister of the First Church of Christ Congregational in West Hartford, CT; Richard John Neuhaus, director of the Rockford Institute Center on Religion and Society in New York City; W. Bruce Weinrod, director of foreign and defense studies for the Heritage Foundation; and John Norton Moore, director of the Center for Oceans Law and Policy.

It seems clear that the administration has delayed as long as possible the functioning of an Institute whose creation it vigorously opposed -- proving once again that administrative delay can easily thwart the will of Congress on a low visibility issue.

HEALTH INSTITUTE DIRECTORS AFFIRM COMMITMENT TO HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR RESEARCH

A special session at the recent annual meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA) featured a discussion of the role of three federal agencies in supporting research on health and behavior. Taking part in the panel were Dr. Shervert H. Frazier, Director of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), Dr. Duane Alexander, Acting Director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), and Dr. T. Franklin Williams, Director of the National Institute on Aging (NIA). The session was organized by Dr. Matilda White Riley, president of ASA and associate director of NIA for the Behavioral Sciences Research Program.

All three Institute directors emphasized the importance of the social and behavioral science components of their programs, supporting the idea that an individual's health, lifestyle, and social functioning are inescapably intertwined. There was also consensus that recent strides in the field of neuroscience had opened the door for further research on health and behavior. The speakers agreed that a cutting edge of research in health and behavior is the interrelationship between behavior, neuroscience, and endocrinological and immunological research. Dr. Frazier commented that he recently has been spending about 50% of his time on AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). Using AIDS as a model, Dr. Frazier illustrated the multi-levels of inquiry necessary for understanding the disease, including basic psychobiology, individual and family processes, and cultural and environmental influences. Dr. Alexander pointed out that the leading cause of death between ages 1 and 45 was accidents, a factor that can be greatly reduced by social and behavioral interventions. Dr. Williams applauded the efforts of social and behavioral scientists in the field of gerontology, the results of which have produced a greater understanding of the elderly and new definitions of effective functioning in old age. He also commented that there was a desperate need for more scientists and teachers in gerontology.

* * * *

...BUT ATTACKS ON SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH AT NIH CONTINUE

While the general tone of the ASA session was encouraging, and while the scientific community welcomes the affirmation of continuing support for research on health and behavior from the directors of NIMH, NICHD, and NIA, it comes in the face of recent press attacks on and Congressional challenges to social and behavioral science research. Since Update first covered his activities (July 26, 1985), syndicated columnist Donald Lambro has continued his campaign against research at the National Institutes of Health that is not (in his judgment) directly related to health. On August 5 he published a long recitation of previously voiced complaints in the national weekly, Barron's. With permission of that publication, his piece is reprinted on the following two pages. COSSA's response, published in Barron's on August 26 (also reprinted by permission), is shown directly below.

* * *

PRESCRIPTION FOR WASTE?

To the Editor:

"Trivial Pursuits: Examining the National Institutes of Health" by Donald Lambro in the Aug. 5 issue was a distinctly unuseful contribution to the public dialogue on allocating scarce federal research dollars. The author does not understand the scientific research process.

Science is built on small steps, on the accumulation of evidence gathered widely, on the serendipity that results from sustained efforts across many fields. Seemingly quick, dramatic cures for polio and smallpox have been preceded by years and millions of dollars of basic research in immunology, virology, molecular genetics and social science and public health. Most biomedical experts understand this. Senator Weicker understands this. The Congress understood this when it established the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and specifically the National Institute on Aging and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development with a peer review process that allows scientists, not politicians or even journalists, to determine the merit of research projects.

Lambro, defining worthwhile health research in strictly

biomedical terms, is apparently unaware that the Institute of Medicine has reported that 50% of mortality from the 10 leading causes of death in the U.S. can be traced to lifestyle. That is why, in science today, health and behavior is a major research enterprise.

He insists that federal research money be directed toward "painful maladies that plague millions of people." Where has Lambro been? Such conditions as uncontrollable eating disorders, alcoholism and drug abuse, sexual and other compulsions; incontinence and sensory impairment in the elderly; stuttering and other speech and hearing disorders; youthful depression and suicide—that is just a short list of disorders that make life hell for millions, cost untold money to society, and in some cases are life-threatening. Spending federal research dollars to better understand these behavioral problems is not a waste.

In these difficult times, the health of the population is often dependent on the health of the society. Does Lambro not realize that the intact traditional family is no longer the norm in our country, that more than half of all children will not live with their natural fathers throughout childhood? Does he not understand that studies of grandpar-

ent-grandchild relations are called for, as well as research on racial attitudes in children, adjustment among immigrants, and other topics of social importance?

The relation of child development to socio-environmental factors is an important element in adult health. For example, there is strong suspicion in the research world that some illness that has a higher incidence among minorities, especially cardiovascular illness, is related to stress.

The author insists that the NIH must battle against currently incurable disease. So it must. But what about all the conditions (illness due to smoking is an example) that *can* be improved or prevented by behavioral and social means? The real issue is that Congress has repeatedly directed NIH to pursue the kinds of research that Lambro thinks are useless. Writers like Lambro may understand health needs. Scientists, in addition, understand opportunities. They should be allowed to get on with the job.

DAVID JENNESS
Executive Director,
Consortium of
Social Science Associations
Washington, D.C.

* * *

By DONALD LAMBRO

Reproduced with permission from Barron's, August 5, 1985

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COSSA Washington Update

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WHEN it comes to federal spending, no agency gets more unquestioned Congressional support than the \$5.1 billion National Institutes of Health. Responsible for vital biomedical research in areas ranging from cancer treatment to Alzheimer's Disease, NIH has become the government's ultimate sacred cow.

Yet three months of investigation into NIH reveals that this hands-off approach allows wasteful and duplicative research to go undiscovered and countless grants of doubtful scientific merit to go unchallenged.

In a time of tighter federal budgets, when NIH is able to fund only three out of every 10 approved research grants, each dollar wasted is one that won't be spent searching for a cure for cancer or discovering treatments for any number of other life-threatening diseases and painful maladies that plague millions of people.

One area where tens of millions of dollars are spent by the NIH in redundant research is smoking behavior studies. Although just a few miles separate the government's two biggest smoking research operations—the National Cancer Institute and the National Institute on Drug Abuse—the hand that signs the research checks at one agency doesn't always know what the hand signing the checks at the other is doing.

For years each institute has spent millions of dollars studying ways to discourage people from smoking. Since 1979, almost \$57 million has been spent by NIH on smoking behavior research. This year, the National Institute on Drug Abuse will spend \$2 million on smoking behavior research; the National Cancer Institute will spend \$9.6 million; the National Heart, Lung and Blood

Institute, \$5.3 million; and the National Institute on Child Health and Human Development, another \$1.3 million.

What's more, NIH has just launched a new five-year anti-smoking assault, carrying a price tag of more than \$100 million. The Cancer Institute alone will spend over \$64 million applying existing stop-smoking techniques to large populations. The Heart, Lung and Blood Institute will spend \$30 million to get patients with decreased lung capacity to stop smoking and \$5 million more on a three-year project to persuade high-risk patients to stop.

The rather ambitious goal that NIH officials seem to have set for themselves is to eradicate smoking not only from the U.S. but from the world. Dr. Sydney Parker of the Heart, Lung and Blood Institute told my research assistant, Tracy Fletcher, that her agency won't stop "until we get everyone in this coun-

try to quit. Then we will move into other countries."

Agency officials seem oblivious to the duplication within and between their programs. For example, an examination of official grant documents from the Institute on Drug Abuse and the Cancer Institute found there was no significant difference between two major grants going to a University of Southern California researcher.

The researcher is receiving a \$2.1 million, five-year grant from the Institute on Drug Abuse to "test the effectiveness of different approaches to implementing a comprehensive smoking prevention/cessation program designed to reduce the number of children who will become cigarette smokers."

At the same time, the Cancer Institute is giving this very same researcher \$139,000, his first payment of a five-year grant, to test virtually the same thing.

A 1982-86 Drug Abuse Institute grant totaling \$2.4 million was awarded to a UCLA researcher to study ways to prevent cigarette, alcohol and marijuana use by adolescents. The Cancer Institute awarded this same researcher \$757,749 for the first year of a five-year grant using the same age group to study a strikingly similar research subject.

When confronted with these instances of grant duplication, one Drug Abuse Institute official admitted, "There are clear indications of multiple funding and overlap" in their smoking prevention grants.

No one in Congress is willing to openly criticize wasteful spending on smoking behavior research. Observes a Senate staff member with oversight responsibility for health programs: "Everybody's against smoking. We almost have to take it on faith that the investment is worth it."

This same act of faith, leaving oversight to the scientists and NIH officials, permits millions of dollars in other dubious grants to slip quietly into the NIH research portfolio.

One of America's biggest health problems arises out of the fact that the number of people over the age of 65 is growing faster than any part of the population. As the ranks of the elderly swell, so will the pressures of dealing with growing health problems that age brings.

But a glance at some of the research being done by the National Institute on Aging (NIA) triggers concerns about its value and effectiveness. Since its founding in 1974, NIA has spent approximately one-fifth of its annual research budget on behavioral research. This year, NIA behavior studies will cost taxpayers \$18 million. Here's a sample:

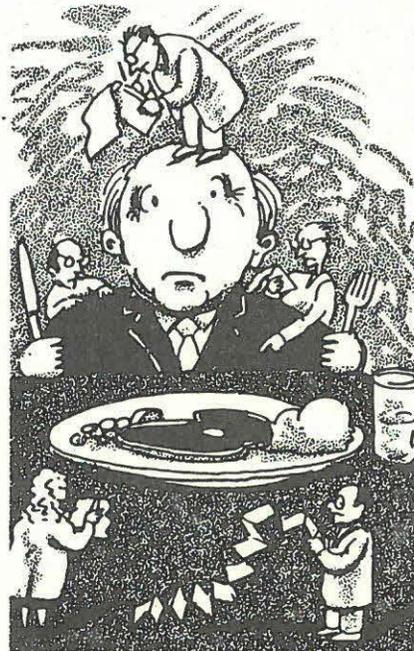
- A group of University of Michigan researchers are studying changes in the political attitudes of people who graduated in the high school class of 1965 and their parents. The researchers will look at how politically active each group is, what their public policy concerns are, and how these have changed over a 17-year period. Cost: \$351,138.

- A three-year study of how people of different ages interact in restaurants. The researcher will observe the habits of each age group, including their eating habits, and whether they sit together. The information will be used to analyze how people of different ages can be brought together at meal time, yet at the same time, how they can be guaranteed a degree of privacy when in the same restaurant. Cost: \$113,369.

- A three-year study using the personnel records of 40,000 insurance company employees to trace the patterns of employment in a large bureaucracy. Cost: \$85,397.

- A three-year study of the elderly's comprehension of prose. The chief research finding: Increased reading helps older people to remember what they read. Or, in the researcher's words, "when it comes to reading skills, use it or lose it." Cost: \$107,460.

- A University of Missouri study



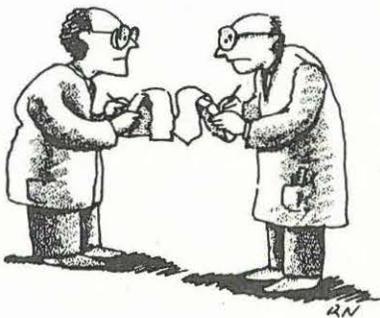
Donald Lambro is a nationally syndicated columnist and the author of Washington—City of Scandals, published by Little, Brown & Co.

into age-related decline in typing skills among older adults. Cost: \$48,888.

- Despite the proliferation of computer training classes and computer-use manuals nationwide, NIA is funding a small business grant to develop computer training manuals specially designed for the elderly. Cost: \$49,823.

- A study of the lessons learned from older persons who try to save abandoned buildings. Cost: \$312,211.

Many other NIA behavioral grants focus on limited economic or social science studies of arguable medical benefit to the elderly including a study of how divorce and remarriage affects relationships between grandparents and grandchildren. Recently, NIA awarded thousands of dollars to study retirement and old-age pensions; the life patterns and well-being of educated women; and aging problems among Mexican Americans.



One-fifth of NIA's budget is spent on these and similar behavioral research grants. The funds seemingly would better be spent on additional research into heart disease, cancer and dozens of other ills that especially affect the elderly.

And NIA Deputy Director Edward Schneider admits that some of the proposed research his agency must pass up, because of limited funding, includes "excellent grants ranging from molecular genetics to Alzheimer's Disease."

"The primary goal of NIA has to be the reduction of mortality and morbidity among our senior citizens," says Wisconsin's William Proxmire, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Appropriations health subcommittee. "If we don't have enough budget dollars to fully support this goal, how can we justify the use of scarce resources to explore patterns of living that have, at most, an indirect effect on the health of the elderly?"

NIA isn't alone in dropping scarce research dollars into dubious behavioral research. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development produces its share of research ringers:

- A one-year "small business" grant to develop "non-sexist" toys for children. The researcher at Play-Fair Inc. of Boulder, Colo., is seeking an additional \$105,000 to support further testing and development of such toys for another year. Cost: \$58,160.

- A five-year study of "interracial friendliness" among children in grades 4 through 7 in 10 northern California schools. Six times during the school year each student was asked to run down a list of his classmates and circle the appropriate term, ranging from "best friend" to "don't know", to describe each. Cost: \$325,581.

- A five-year study of the psychological and social effects of braces on adolescents. Cost: \$131,794.

- A three-year study of how kids choose what they will eat. The eating habits of 400 children, ages 11 to 12, and 15 to 16, were observed to determine how each decides what he or she will or will not eat. Cost \$215,450.

The last significant Congressional investigation into even one of the 11 NIH institutes took place nearly four years ago, when the Senate Labor and Human Resources subcommittee on investigation and oversight looked into the National Cancer Institute. That subcommittee has since been disbanded, leaving no Congressional committee with specific NIH investigative responsibility.

Auditors for the Inspector General's office admit they limit their investigations of NIH to contract procurement,



shying away from serious attempts to evaluate the scientific value or output of government-funded research. Says one investigator: "The natural reaction is that you don't want to go in and bother scientists looking for a cure for cancer."

The Government Accounting Office, Congress's investigating arm, no longer even maintains fulltime personnel at the expansive NIH facilities in Bethesda, Md.

Explaining the lack of oversight by his committee, Senate Appropriations member Lowell Weicker, too, defers to the expertise of the scientific community: "I don't want to get this committee in the business of determining which grants are funded."

"My job is one of creating the opportunity," adds Weicker. "Then it's a matter of medicine, not politics."

Legislation to create two new NIH institutes for Arthritis and Nursing is speeding forward at full-throttle in Congress. But the measure has drawn stiff opposition from NIH officials, biomedical researchers and President Reagan, who vetoed similar legislation last October.

The strongest push for adding a new Arthritis Institute comes from conservative Republican senators with a reputation for budget cutting: Orrin Hatch of Utah, Barry Goldwater of Arizona and

Steve Symms of Idaho. There is, obviously, a large and growing elderly constituency, a potent voting bloc, to please, but personal considerations may also enter into it. Goldwater's wife, Margaret, is a longtime sufferer of arthritis, as is Symms's wife.

But these and other lawmakers seem oblivious to the fact that arthritis research is already being funded to the tune of \$100 million a year through the Institute for Arthritis and Diabetes, Digestive and Kidney Diseases, one of NIH's most rapidly expanding programs.

In the last two decades, members have tried and failed to add dozens of new institutes to the NIH tree—from a "Population Institute" to a "Communications Institute."

To make NIH more efficient and effective in the battle against incurable diseases many research experts want Congress to restructure the Institute; its present structure they claim is outmoded and should be reorganized along lines of broader scientific inquiry. Reorganization on the basis of origins of disease, which involve scientific disciplines such as immunology, biochemistry and inflammatory processes, could well prove more valuable than imaginary dividing lines built on the names of diseases. This suggestion, however, has roused little interest on Capitol Hill. ■

*The quote in paragraph 7 above was attributed to Elaine J. Stone in the original article. Following protest from Dr. Stone (Barron's, 9/2/85, p.31), Lambro reattributed the remark to Sydney Parker. COSSA agreed to "strip in" the correction as a condition of receiving permission to reproduce the article.

GARDNER LINDZEY AT SCIENCE MAGAZINE

Earlier this year, Gardner Lindzey, Director of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford, CA, was appointed Deputy Editor (Social Sciences) of the weekly, Science. The appointment was made by the then-incoming Editor of Science, Daniel E. Koshland, Jr., specifically to help ensure that the journal would cover topics of broad interest in the social and behavioral sciences in 'front-of-the-book' articles a number of times each year.

Lindzey's role is to locate likely topics and writers, and invite the submittal of articles of approximately 5000 words in length. All Science articles are reviewed; in the case of manuscripts solicited by Lindzey, the writer can assume that the general topic is of interest to the editors. Communication across disciplines is sought, reflecting the broad and diverse readership (about 755,000) of the journal. In a recent letter, Lindzey commented:

"Even if the subject of the article requires specialized writing, at least a substantial portion of the introductory section should be understandable to scientists from other disciplines, and all or most of the article should be understandable to well-trained members of the broad disciplines, e.g. economics, political science, psychology."

Lindzey has told Update that he would be glad to receive, in writing, not only queries from prospective writers of lead articles but also suggestions from social scientists as to what topics deserve coverage and who might cover them.

NOTE: As Deputy Editor in the social science area, Lindzey plays no editorial role in what is or is not printed in other sections of Science (i.e. News and Comment, Research News, Book Reviews, or Research Reports).

SOCIAL SCIENCES AT MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY, ANKARA

Dr. Sabri Koc, Acting Director of the Institute of Social Sciences, Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey, visited the Consortium's offices on August 21. J. David Edwards, Executive Director of the Joint National Committee on Languages/Council for Languages and Other International Studies participated with COSSA staff in the discussion of the role and position of the social sciences in Turkish higher education. Of particular interest are the special problems faced by scientists in Turkey since 1980 due to the abolition of all professional associations by the current government. Koc indicated that his university is strongly interested in recruiting North American social scientists to serve as visiting faculty, especially in fields related to management science. English is an official medium of instruction at the university.

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

COSSA provides this information as a service, and encourages readers to contact the agency rather than COSSA for more information.

Group Psychology Program
(Office of Naval Research - Psychological Sciences Division)

The Psychological Sciences Division of the Office of Naval Research provides support for basic research in three areas: 1) personnel training, education, and learning (primarily cognitive psychology); 2) engineering psychology; and 3) group psychology. The Group Psychology program has recently replaced the organizational effectiveness program, with the new emphasis being on small-group task performance. The program examines variables that affect the performance of the group. Research should involve formal models and theory-driven, controlled experimentation on performance in small groups -- especially those which work under stressful conditions or are hierarchically organized. Examples of areas of interest in group psychology include: goal setting and motivation; cooperation vs. competition; social modeling, learning, and training; communication and information processing; and group composition.

The Division does not routinely issue requests for proposals. Prospective applicants may contact the staff to discuss their research idea or submit three copies of a brief concept paper. Proposals should be in the \$50,000 to \$100,000 range, including indirect costs, with a project period of 2-3 years.

FY 1985 Budget: \$1.3 million

Funding Mechanisms: Mostly contracts

Review Process: Internal staff review

Disciplines Funded: Primarily psychology, some sociology. Since the new program thrust is fairly broad, other disciplines (i.e. linguistics, communications) may be eligible.

Deadline: There is no set review or funding cycle. Proposals may be submitted at any time.

Contact: Bert T. King, Program Manager
Group Psychology Program/ONR
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202/696-4209

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