

JANUARY 15, 1968EDWARD W. MERKELFOREWORD

The Unripe Fruit is an appraisal of the social sciences, in the nature of a scolding, expressing a deep-seated slow burn. I had intended to attack in my usual satirical vein. My protagonist was to be a cultural anthropologist on a field trip in Africa, who gets into a three-sided racial imbroglio among the Bantu, the bushmen, and his own group. As he was to have a sociologist, a social psychologist, and an economist with him, everything was going to come out fine - except, of course, for the political scientist who was to be entangled in a net of red, white, and blue semantics.

In concept the plan was fun, but in detailed working out it proved impractical, like cooking meat, potatoes and dessert in one pot. The reason was peculiar. As satire has to plant one of its feet firmly in reality, most of my social scientists had to be latter-day liberals, and I found I would be satirizing modern liberalism (or what is left of it) as much as social science. The failure of the social sciences and the failure of modern liberalism are intertwined; indeed, they are so intimately inter-related that neither failure can be adequately discussed without reference to the other. Nevertheless, it is my conviction that they do not equate, and a treatment of either subject which makes the equation, even by implication, would be incorrect.

For one thing, the social scientists of the last few years are showing signs of open-mindedness, disinterested objectivity, and a real possibility of embracing the scientific spirit. Whether they will be successful remains to be seen, but at least in direction there are signs of fruitful viability. Modern liberalism, on the other hand, is a variety of theology akin to Marxism and Fabianism, with its prophets, its demonology, and its body of revealed truth. Though it too has evolutionary characteristics, its direction is largely tangential, perhaps like the biological evolution of the great apes. I would surmise that the reason for this is liberalism's heavy emphasis on economic man, which in turn, is based on economic assumptions which

have little relevance in today's economy or economic thinking. The story of recent American liberalism is fascinating in itself, with its early bright promise ending in cliché, dogma, and bureaucracy - but that is a different paper. So I gave up my African social science satire and decided to speak from the other half of my head.

I had better add that a member of my family is a social scientist in a state of becoming, as the Greeks worded it. He read a draft of this paper and made several suggestions, some of which have been accepted, but to me the most remarkable feature of his reaction was its mildness. Most social scientists of recent vintage would agree with almost all I have said, he thinks, but would insist on a generational distinction. "For your generation you're perfectly right, Dad; it isn't quite sound to say you're beating a dead horse, though. Really, you're beating an infant horse, but neither you nor the horse accepted it as an infant until recently". And for those of you who remain sceptical I can also say that the earlier draft is speckled with margin notes reading "Plenty of documentation for this if you want it".

THE UNRIPE FRUIT

Every civilization has its ears - ages marking its periods of development or decline; periods, usually complex, but dominated by a single characteristic, a single conflict, so overwhelmingly important to the life cycle of the society that it constitutes a crisis. In our Western Society, the age which terminated with the Second World War was the age of the drive toward a mature, industrial society. It was the age which developed, for the first time in history, a society of broadscale abundance.

That we do not know exactly what to do with this abundance is, I suppose, one of the cosmic jokes society plays on itself from time to time. The fact is, our culture cannot really come to grips with abundance until it has dealt with a few of its more immediate conflicts.

Our age is the age of conflict between collective man and individual man, between collective action

and individual action, between the coercion of the mass man and the freedom of the single human being. This is the great conflict of our time, unresolved, disorderly, often contradictory, often self-deluded, but always with us.

I think I will not bother to document all this. If you want further conviction on the nature of the age our society has just completed, read a book or two by W.W. Rostow, J.K. Galbraith, or for that matter almost any reasonably observant contemporary historian. And if you want further conviction on the central conflict of our age, read the papers. I have over-simplified of course; no age consists solely of its dominant characteristic. I have stated vast generalities, and put them at the wrong end of a telescope, not to discuss them - maybe I'll write a book - but to describe the somewhat difficult context in which I ask the major question this essay: Where, in all this, are the social scientists?

I hasten to say I do not know. Several are in a dim corner exhibiting confusion, be it said to their credit. I am afraid, however, that many more are out in the wide, wide world, in places where the learned congregate, all saying, "Here I am, and I have a program". The trouble is, none of the programs is the same as any of the others, and most are inconsistent with each other.

A minor hobby of mine for years has been what might be called eclectic reading in the social sciences - not programmed, not specialized very seriously, just general reading on subjects and in authors that interested me. I do have a professional interest in certain aspects of economics and government, but it did not direct my reading. In one memorable year, I let a knowing scholar give me a part-time program of books characterized as "really important contributions". In that year I found out what was really wrong with our society. This was supplemented in later years, and I now give you a partial list.

1. What is wrong with our society is the population explosion and the total ineptitude of our handling of it.

2. What is wrong is that we have ceased to be innerdirected and have become mass conformists.

3. What is really at the heart of our society's ills is our rotten educational system.

4. Our society will never be better unless our leaders learn better psychology.

5. What is wrong with our society is our leaders who have become a cynical bunch of vote-seekers.

6. No - what is wrong is that the mass communications media have made our leaders communication-type heroes instead of non-communication-type heroes like Washington.

7. What is wrong with our society is that the executive branch is usurping ever greater powers, largely at the expense of the legislative.

8. What is really wrong is that our society has become too complex; it is beyond human capacity to manage.

9. The main thing wrong with our society is its corruption of communications, its misuse of language.

10. What is really wrong is that we are too materialistic; other values have been thrown away.

11. The real wrong in our society is its inequitable distribution of income.

This is, as I say, a partial list. Practically all of the books were written by social scientists of some standing. Each book, read individually, is impressive and convincing. And if only I had stopped with the first two, I could have saved myself a great deal of confusion. It was when I tried to put all these together - and add some later reading to the resulting omelette - that I made the discovery which lies at the heart of this paper: the social sciences as a group are in a hell of a mess. They are, moreover, failing us at a time when we need them most - or so it seems to me.

To date it is clear - at least to me - that

the social sciences have been failures. The charge is probably not persuasive as a bare assertion. Documentation is in order, yet difficult to find in persuasive quantity. This for two principal reasons:

First - Situations are extremely rare in which social scientists - any kind of social scientists - have been given sole responsibility and authority to perform according to their gospels. In those situations where they have had such an opportunity, it cannot reasonably be said that they were howling failures. Nor can it be said they were howling successes either. Like you and me, they bungled along and ended up with a somewhat acceptable result. The field of intelligence testing may be an example, where on the whole the psychologists took over with apparent confidence, a convincing vocabulary, and a long-evolving battery of tests. It is now generally conceded that the tests tested something important, all right, but not intelligence.

Second - The second main reason why it is difficult to document social science failures is more troublesome. The fact is that social scientists are seldom given enough participation and authority in a given joint project to justify placing failure clearly on their doorsteps. Thus, for example, they can usually say, "Wasn't our fault; we weren't given enough money"; or "our hands were tied by the limitations in section (b) of Title Five", or "we could only advise; the local politicians were in charge of actual distribution"; or "the situation had already gotten out of hand by the time we got there". This response comes down to a statement made by a former law professor of mine (James M. Landis) in a study of our transportation system for the President. He said, and I cannot quote exactly, "Whenever a regulated industry is sick the cry of the regulators is always for more regulation - never less". In short, where the social scientists have had a hand in our social failures, they can always claim - and often with some justice - that they weren't permitted to go far enough; - that they hadn't really had a chance.

Documentation of the failure of social scientists who never really had a chance - documentation by a deadly piling of disaster on disaster, the traditional documentation of social science literature, is therefore not feasible. I might in passing, however, mention one

gleam in this darkness, in the field of economics. The so-called New Economics specializes in direction-finding at the economic cross-roads where the private economy meets the public, the purpose of taking the right direction being the creation of a well-tuned, prosperous economy. Up to now, the New Economics has worked well, and it must be admitted that the economists have not only done a good job (so far) but refrained from very loud crowing. With reason: the real test is coming this year, which makes crowing premature, and Congress is scowling hard at the economists' program. So maybe they too will some time soon have a chance at the usual, "They wouldn't do what we advised". Pending developments, however, we must concede at least one limited success.

Aside from the example - on - example kind of documentation - which won't work here - there may be another kind. A kind of negative documentation, summarized in the question to the pilot of the ship, "Where were you when we rammed that barge?"

Let's start with the problem of poverty. I guess I admit that there is a poverty problem, even though I have just claimed for our society an economy of abundance. Scarcity can exist amid plenty, I know. However, it is a generally accepted statistic that the consumption standard of the average Soviet worker is below that of the average American on relief; perhaps we have a problem in definition. Put it this way: when our welfare population has a higher standard of living than that of the working population of the second or third most highly industrialized nation on earth, is it really true that our welfare population lives in poverty? (How, in these circumstances, is poverty measured? We add nothing to the sum of human knowledge by concluding that poverty is really a relative matter in each separate subculture; all that means is a definition of poverty as the lowest standard of living in any definable political or social unit - merely an elaborate way of saying the poor are always with us. This in turn means that the poverty problem will always exist in every society no matter what it does - like old age, the common cold, and relative stupidity.)

Nevertheless, I suspect we will all admit that we do have a poverty problem, and I hope that there are a few who will join me in asking what it is. Will

someone please describe this problem in objective terms, how widespread it is, and most important what should be done about it?

The Great Society we are pieces of is now engaged in a war on poverty, which by all semi-literate accounts I have read is being highly unsuccessful. There is, first of all, increased relief, which we are told is laughably inadequate. There is an Office of Economic Opportunity, hopelessly inept. There is a Job Training Program, a pitiable waste. There are other agencies - all of which are making no progress whatever in reducing or eliminating poverty. In setting these things in motion, I believe, we have listened to, and taken seriously, our sociologists and social workers. If the reason for the failure of the programs has been governmental or administrative, where were the political scientists? Or why didn't the sociologists talk to the political scientists and the social psychologists? Or if the programs were too pretentious for adequate financing, why didn't someone talk to economists?

The sadness of the snarl is further emphasized by inquiring what went wrong and how it can be fixed. Group A says, "They don't want relief, they want work". Group B says, "Boondoggle work is degrading. Useless or unneeded work is worse than idleness". Group C says, "We really need a guaranteed, minimum annual income". Group D says, "Handouts cause impoverishment, never cure it". Group E says, "Poverty is a way of life that some people just like". Group F says, "The whole trouble is the way social service workers act". All these answers bear some stamp of social science orthodoxy, and all surely contain some element of credibility. Yet the fact still stands, that in all these years, with at least one generation of experience, and with increasing concern and expenditure, the problem of poverty in our society is farther from definition, solution, or even rational attack than before.

I suspect, and perhaps I also assert, that a major reason for the mess is that those who deal with poverty have failed to grasp two highly significant elements in it: first, that a large component of poverty is subjective, and that on the whole it is inept to deal with a state of mind on a largely material basis; and second, that a substantial segment of human nature is

cussed anyway, and that on the whole it is inept to deal with self-pity and envy by feeding it. There are signs that these elements are now being at least perceived - but no evidence I have seen that anybody knows how to deal with them.

Or take another failure - urban planning and redevelopment. Twenty-five or so years ago, the cure was to tear down acres of slums, and replace them with neat brick apartment buildings set in grassy open spaces. That failed, largely because the displaced families moved the next step out and turned the new area into slums. Providing housing for those displaced by slum clearance was helter-skelter and improvident. The next theory favored rehabilitation of slum housing, "upgrading blighted areas". That has not been an unqualified success either, largely because the upgrading turned out to be uneconomic. Then expressways were seen to be a pressing necessity, with more relocation problems; and with the failure of urban mass transportation systems came core area deterioration, the outlying shopping areas, and the intermediate area business and professional office developments.

Our cities now are hodge-podges of obsolescent theories, onto which have been grafted the waywardness of human nature, the whole confection sliced and split by concrete ribbons. Planners are still planning happily away, I understand, and doing the best they can within a narrow specialty. They have recognized that cities are units of society, and that cities ought to function in a way that suits the people who inhabit them, but they cannot get very far, because the sociologists, social psychologists, urban economists and social service groups cannot be harmonized. Our society therefore continues to evolve sprawling, unlivable, unsatisfying, swarming, over-populated warrens without the help of those from whom help should most appropriately come - or perhaps I should say the planning goes on in a meaningless cacophony from the social science choir.

To move to another of our social failures, consider education. Around the turn of the century our society decreed universal secondary-school education, without decreeing what it was for or what should be taught. Up to that time secondary schools had existed for one principal purpose - to prepare its students for

college. When hordes of new pupils descended on them, the school systems responded the only way they knew - by simple enlargement. That this meant college preparatory courses for vast numbers who were never going to college seems to have occurred to only a few original thinkers, but they apparently had no megaphones. (When they suggested that the nature of education should be changed to meet the needs of those being educated, they made a bit of progress but for the most part they were ignored or were scolded for being snobbish and undemocratic. It is not fair to blame the social scientists for this (though our political thinkers had a hand in it), because the social sciences were then in their infancy.) For more than a generation we continued annually to turn out millions of college-prepared youngsters with nowhere to go.

Then, however, society caught up with itself. Having decreed without quite realizing it, that everybody must be prepared for college, we took the next logical step and decreed that everybody should also go to college - which is where we now are. This second decree, unlike the first, was not in terms a matter of legal compulsion; it was social compulsion, but no less forceful. The colleges, typically, responded just as the high schools had done a couple of generations before - by simple enlargement - but this time with a difference. Instead of vastly increasing the number of institutions, as the secondary systems had done, the number was increased only slightly; it seemed simpler to expand the existing institutions by the needed multiple, then when physical expansion met its limits to divide amoeba-like into two, then four, and so on. The result can only be described as a monstrous bureaucracy in which the individual human student is without significance.

I do not, of course, decry education. In fact, I think we need all of it that we can get. I have the strong impression, however, that a great deal is wrong in academe. One need only mention the beats, the hippies, the flower children, L.S.D., the New Left and the Berkeley incidents to make the point. What is wrong? I am sure I have at least one partial answer, but the point is that I ought to be hearing some reasonably sound, reasonably persuasive answers from the social scientists. What I hear is not impressive; it is again

a cacophony of conflict and contradiction. And this time I think it is fair to lay some of the blame on the social scientists, as it is in our universities that they flourish with greatest lustre. If we have been creating institutions all these years which are hostile to, or destructive of, the very purpose for which they were created, the social scientists have some explaining to do, for they not only failed to warn, they actively participated.

Finally, to end this list of social failures, there are the race riots. I do not pretend to know their cause or cure nor do many others, but I do wonder unhappily why we are so ignorant. We read variously that they are caused by poverty not race, by deeply-felt racial hatred, by communists, by self-seeking demagogues, by young punks, by disappointment, by over-promising, by over-crowding. The word "ghetto" figures in all the literature, so widely applied that it has lost what little metaphorical meaning it originally had; it has become a meaningless pejorative for residential areas in which people riot, which explains nothing, communicates nothing, and suggests nothing rational. Yet the social science literature uses it ceaselessly.

Another favorite phrase is "power structure", which seems to have several meanings or none at all. To some it means the forces of law and order, like the mayor, the police, and the courts. To others, it means the forces which control the giving and withholding of jobs, like employers and union leaders. To still others it seems to mean a set of exclusionary social forces mainly associated with middle and upper-class ways of living. Sometimes the concept is anthropomorphized as in "I am going to make the power structure dance when I clap my hands" - which is not very helpful analytically either. The phrase actually seems to have originated as an abstract concept in the social sciences, and its current uses are plain perversions, whatever they mean. Yet more than a few sociologists and political scientists have accepted the current perversions in their racial context as if they had validity or meaning.

Then there is "black power", which gets a new meaning every day, but which means to its original popularizer, Stokley Carmichael, a Negro subculture of some kind. Even to him the phrase is elastic; it means,

first, Negro dominance; second, Negro apartheid, much as in South Africa; and third, conscious Negro pride of race.

All of this is puzzling. To comparatively intelligent but apparently obtuse people like me it seemed that we were doing all right about the negroes during the past eight or ten years. For the most part we were doing about what they asked, for example on school integration, voting rights, eliminating segregation in places of public accomodation, and such matters. It now turns out that we did it all wrong; first, it was not far enough or fast enough; and second, it was wrong anyway. This explains the riots.

Practically all our social thinkers, white and Negro alike, have been telling us that full, non-discriminatory integration - complete erasure of all racial distinction - was the only sound, long-range solution. Most of us accepted the principle and assumed we were dealing mainly with a question of time or velocity. Nobody thought that complete integration could occur in a few years; clots of resistance had to be overcome, and Negro competence had to be developed. The principle of integration or assimilation, I had thought, was accepted; differences concerned only the speed of its attainment. Thus, the word "tokenism" meant not that the direction was wrong, but that progress was too slow.

Then came the riots and "black power". Both attack the principle itself. Disappointment at the rate of assimilation cannot be the basic dissatisfaction which the riots express, for rioting cannot make it faster. Rioting can extort more concessions from society, but such concessions - if yielded in fear and based on race - do not aid assimilation; they add only another racist factor to cause later trouble. As for the concepts expressed in "black power", all its meanings seem to deny that assimilation is the right solution; in fact, they suggest a movement away from the degree of assimilation we have already achieved.

Are we, then, having second thoughts? Or ought we? Even to ask the question raises the suspicion of biggoted segregationism, as I found out myself when I asked it in Washington not long ago. It is revealed

truth that all men are the same and are equal, and to question it condemns the questioner as a sly segregationist. I pointed out that the existence of differences did not imply inequality, as for example between red-haired and black-haired men, or for that matter between men and women. My friends thought I was baiting, so I went on to point out that every culture is evolved in an environment of some kind, and cannot survive unless its evolution has been adaptive; and that to move a group culturally adapted to one environment into a totally new environment required in effect an adaptation on top of a prior adaptation - which is perhaps what the negroes are attempting - a quite different process from taking over whole hog an indiginous group's wholly different adaptation, which is what intengrationists assume to be right. The group was silent a moment, than I got two answers. From the political scientists, a simple, sturdy, "Homo sapiens is homo sapiens; you can't change that". And from the sociologist, "Where'd you get all that? You been reading anthropology again? You can't inherit acquired characteristics, even the Russians accept that now". So we had another drink.

I had indeed been reading anthropology and something even stranger called "ethology". There is solid evidence that mixing cultures is extremely dangerous to the cultures mixed. "To kill a culture, it is often sufficient merely to bring it into contact with another", particularly if the second culture is regarded as higher. The people of the inferior culture abandon their own customs and ape those which they regard as superior. However, every culture is a complicated system of interacting behavior patterns, and it can seldom be predicted what will result from cutting out even one or two. The excision tends to disintegrate the whole culture, and even seriously jeopardizes the survival of its people. (Quotes and paraphrases are from Konrad Lorenz On Aggression). On the other hand, man is so constituted as to need, affirmatively need, complementing by a cultural tradition.

There is, then, some basis for the thought that mass importation of Negroes in colonial times operated to disintegrate the culture they had evolved; that, feeling the need of a cultural tradit on, they imitated the customs of the culture they regarded as superior; and finally that, after several generations

of trying, they have found an imitative, foreign-designed culture unsatisfactory. This analysis could be sound; if it is, integration is all wrong, and the best way out is indeed a sort of separate-but-equal Negro sub-culture.

I do not really believe this. I think assimilation is the best solution if it can be accomplished without so strong a reaction that the process will be undermined. But I know enough to know I can be wrong - very wrong. I would very much like to see a really open-minded, broadly-educated cultural anthropologist, or perhaps a group, give this subject a thorough airing. What I actually read, I am afraid, is hardly more than justification of preconceptions and closed-minded precommitment.

I think I need not go on. Probably more people than I realize have already accepted the failure to date of the social sciences as fully established - including not a few social scientists themselves. For example in the late spring of 1967 Harper's contained an article on the teaching of law, one section of which said something like this: Yale wanted to construct some of its legal teaching on the underlying sociology and political philosophy of our legal system, but had to give up, as the failure of the social sciences had provided nothing on which to build. This was a pity, as law is universally taught as a vocational training discipline and deserves better; it was plain, however, that the writer of the article had accepted the failure of the social sciences almost off-handedly as a foregone conclusion.

Many social scientists themselves have accepted past failure in their fields by a sharp change in the direction of their disciplines. They are using more and more an empirical approach to social phenomena, and are taking a deep plunge into the new generation's most characteristic technique, quantification. This, of course, can go too far, but probably that has not yet happened. At some future point, some of our developing social scientists will have to stop measuring things and piling statistics on statistics, and will have to put a few of their discoveries together. That variables are often measurable and often possess positive correlations does not mean they are casually connected - like the

celebrated correlation between the decline of the birth-rate and the decline of the stork population in Denmark.

But for the present it is as well that the new generation of social scientists is concentrating heavily on gathering facts, and looking with suspicion on reasoned conclusions. It was probably, in fact, our generation's intoxication with the scientists' search for rational causation which led the social sciences into their first great error: premature, oversimplified conclusions based on woefully inadequate facts. Social systems are enormously complex, and are often irrational. This is only now being accepted, and by only some social scientists. Simplified rationality is easier to deal with than clots of irrational facts. It leads to pat, simple answers, which fit neatly into the doctrinal structures to which so many of our social scientists have already committed themselves.

Which brings us to their second major error; that they were more evidently social mythologists than social scientists, closing their minds to all aspects of reality which were inconsistent with their favorite myths. It is difficult to account for this anomaly, yet it has probably contributed more to the disrepute of the social sciences than any other one factor. The closed mind cannot encompass the scientific spirit; the incompatibility is almost absolute. Yet time after time we have seen sociologists, economists, psychologists - even historians and anthropologists - reject some facets of reality for the sole apparent purpose of leaving an attractive pre-conception undisturbed. Call this the error of the indoctrinated closed mind, typified by Marxists, Keynesians, and the British Labor Party theorists.

There is a third and much more complex, error; we can call it the 19th Century solecism. In a nutshell the 19th century looked hard at itself, with some powerful minds, and found much to describe and deplore. Unhappily the 19th century thought it was universal man, instead of merely 19th century man, and the first half of the 20th century took it at its word. The universals of the 19th century on close examination turn out all too often to have been 19th century specifics. That these specifics are sometimes superficial manifestations of underlying universals adds to the confusion, as the sorting-out process is usually painful, delicate, difficult, and

occasionally shocking. I have sometimes thought that the 20th century's most difficult intellectual problem has been getting rid of the 19th century - but that is another paper or perhaps a book.

To substantiate the point I need mention only a few items. Karl Marx whose thinking has been so powerfully projected into our times was analyzing and describing a society just over the threshold of industrialization, an economy at the start of a transition whose end product was totally unknowable; most of his premises have proved, in our society, to be irrelevances. A very similar misapprehension is evident in the work of the classical economists, from Adam Smith, through Bentham, to both Mills. Freud was largely diagnosing 19th century Vienna. Shaw and Ibsen must now be performed in costume to give their plays the dress of social history (which is what they are) rather than currently valid social criticism (which was their original intention). Even Darwin has needed supplementation; the basic concepts of social evolution are only now beginning to be perceived.

In any event, practically all of this century's social scientists up to, roughly, 1950 accepted the 19th century at face value, constructing theories and doctrines on what appeared to be universals but which are now turning out to be a grand mix of 19th century specifics, premature conclusions, false premises, a few real universals, and a great many prejudices. In accepting so much of the 19th century, our social thinkers swallowed whole one of the most obscure of all 19th century premises. Obscure because it was unspoken and usually unperceived, though it lay at the heart of 19th century social thinking. It is a premise as to the nature of man and society, the premise that man and society are both rational and perfectible. The premise drags behind it two implications: first, that man and society can appropriately be judged on a scale of moral values ranging from good to bad; and second that a rational proposition will be accepted, and acted upon, as correct or good.

Almost any present-day psychiatrists will state without qualification that man is an enormously complex animal, only dimly understood, and probably non-rational. And every reasonably alert cultural anthro-

pologist will add that any human society, from the most primitive to the most advanced, is an enormously "complicated system of universal interaction between a great many divergent" behavior patterns. Science is far from furnishing the insights necessary to determine what is a useless and what is an indispensable element in any man or in any society. It is still farther from the insights necessary to establish causal connections between the nature of man and his conduct, individual or social.

It is obvious that in this condition, the concepts "rationality", "goodness", and "perfectibility" have no place as applied to man or society. They erect a system of moral value judgments requiring acceptance or rejection of natural phenomena based on a good-to-bad scale which is irrelevant. Yet for generations our social scientists have in effect been making moral judgments of objective facts. They have accepted dogma with sufficient knowledge of its truth or its basis in fact. They have stultified the application of the scientific method to their disciplines. They have jumped to premature, ill-considered conclusions in their zeal to find rational causality where their data were inadequate. In short, they have been offering us unripe fruit; and, as a great naturalist has put it, "---- it is the unripe fruit of the tree of knowledge that proves to be dangerous".

And perhaps the greenest apple in the basket is the phrase "social science" itself. It remains to be demonstrated that the social disciplines are really sciences at all, in the sense in which, say, medicine, chemistry, and geology are sciences. It remains to be demonstrated that the scientific method can be applied to social phenomena in any meaningful sense. Meanwhile, by applying the science label to themselves, our social scientists have led us to expect from them much more than they can deliver, have laid claim to much greater authority than they can muster, and in many instances have pretended to an objectivity that they do not possess.

I can hope that the fruit will ripen. Even if it turns out to be beans instead of fruit, I will not care much. The stuff will at least be digestible.

Edward W. Merkel