

HV

8/13/58 HV

JCB

WW

VCS

OLP

VA

8/14/58

JCB		JCB
WW	8/14/58	WW
VCS		VCS
OLP		OLP
VA		VA

INTERVIEWS: JMW

June 23-27, 1958

SSRC meetingSkytop, Cresco, Pennsylvania

SEP -3 1958

Skytop Conference, under the auspices of the Committee on Preventive Medicine & Social Science Research of the Social Science Research Council, was composed of an equal number of selected social scientists and people in the field of medicine and preventive medicine. The committee had hoped that the meeting itself might come up with concrete suggestions for research in the field of social science related to public health and medical problems. One would hardly say this was accomplished and it became clear during the meeting that the SSRC committee had overestimated the security of the social science group in terms of their working with concrete and applied problems of medicine. However, the meeting brought about a considerable degree of understanding of each other's problems and in this respect alone was well worth the effort.

Among the social scientists, Robert Merton, John Adair, and George Foster were outstanding and were the only ones who got up and gave concrete proposals for research in answer to questions posed by their medical colleagues. Lester Breslow posed the problem of social science research in terms of motivating the lower class population in California to participate in a detection program for carcinoma of the cervix. Two of the social anthropologists gave detailed explanations as to why it could not be done and emphasized the point that cultural patterns, etc., etc., were very difficult to change. Dr. Guillermo Arbona of Puerto Rico became the star of the show when he got up to say that the population of Puerto Rico in general is similar to that group under consideration in California and that social scientists had given him the same response as they were now giving re the California group. He felt compelled to point out that although in Puerto Rico they wanted only about 5,000 people to participate in the survey, they were overwhelmed by over 10,000 people when they put an add in the paper stating that the service was available. This stopped further discussion of the matter.

JMW:EEK

Original: JCB, WW, VCS, OLP, VA

Copies: JMW

EEK