

THE ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE
FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

66TH STREET AND AVENUE A
NEW YORK

June 13, 1921.

Dear Mr. Rockefeller:

As I had already replied to you concerning Miss Davis' and Mr. Zinn's proposals before Dr. Exner's letter was received, I thought that perhaps it would be as well to send the letter just as I first wrote it.

The impression which Dr. Exner's letter makes upon me is that he seems to value very little all the studies and writings already made and published on the various aspects of social hygiene.

I do not of course know Mr. Zinn, so that I cannot form a judgment as to the way in which he is likely to approach the many-sided questions which have been presented.

I wonder whether I could not help you more if I could talk over with Mr. Zinn or Dr. Exner just what they would like to do and the manner of their going about the study. I shall be very happy to see them at a time convenient to them.

Then I should also like to know the names of the scientific men with whom they would seek to cooperate. It will be a pleasure to me if I can help you with the work.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Flexner

Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.,
26 Broadway, New York, N.Y.

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June 13, 1921.

Dear Mr. Rockefeller:

I have your letter relating to Miss Davis' proposal and containing Mr. Zinn's outline, which is being returned herewith.

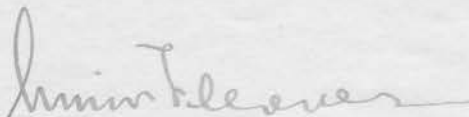
I have been a member of the National Research Council since its establishment and have served on the Medical Division. I know Dr. Mc Coy very well, and I believe that the subjects presented in Mr. Zinn's outline are quite outside his special field of knowledge.

Many of them are outside my field also, but I question somewhat whether Mr. Zinn can know the field very well if he proposes to restudy so many subjects which have been and now are under active discussion. With reference to them I should not be sanguine that anyone except a person very gifted in assembling and analyzing data could possibly reach fair or valuable conclusions. From the point of view of scientific research in general, I should consider Mr. Zinn's scheme as being too comprehensive and general.

As regards the question of the value of personal conferences, I am inclined to the view that as those best equipped to deal with the subjects given in Mr. Zinn's plan have already written extensively and are now writing on them, more might be expected from a digest of the world's best literature than from interviews. But I repeat that the general field is one quite remote from my real experience.

If you should think of advising the Bureau of Social Hygiene to consider the undertaking and if you have the time, I might add in conversation something to what I have said above.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.,
25 Broadway, New York, N.Y.