

172

CORRESPONDENCE *May 1-14, 1953*

N. WIENER · MC 22

Digitized



The President and Trustees  
of  
Tufts College  
request the honor of your presence  
at  
the Commencement Exercises  
on Sunday, June the fourteenth  
at three o'clock  
on the Tufts College Campus  
Medford, Massachusetts

Please reply to the  
Provost, Tufts College  
Medford, Massachusetts

[ans 5/28/53]

Reception  
at the President's House  
immediately following  
the  
Commencement Exercises

CERCLE d'ETUDES CYBERNETIQUES  
-----

Paris, le 18 Mai 1953

Monsieur et cher collègue,

Nous avons l'honneur de vous annoncer que nos prochaines réunions auront lieu les :

Samedi 30 Mai à 16 h 30  
Samedi 6 Juin à 16 h 30  
et Samedi 13 Juin à 16 h 30

à l'Institut d'Histoire des Sciences 13, rue du Four, PARIS (VI°),  
Métro : Mabillon.

La réunion du 25 Mai, annoncée antérieurement, se trouve supprimée. Nous vous prions de nous en excuser.

PROGRAMME DES SEANCES -

- 30 Mai : Réseaux séquentiels et applications (première partie)  
par Jean RIGUET, Docteur ès-Sciences
- 6 Juin : Réunion consacrée à des questions de définition et de terminologie en cybernétique
- 13 Juin : Réseaux séquentiels et applications (seconde partie)  
Par Jean RIGUET.

SECRETARIAT -

SET. Cerole d'Etudes Cybernétiques, 2, rue Mabillon



Dear Norbert:

My Cambridge spies report  
that your MIT talk of ~~the~~ night~~s~~  
several nights ago was ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~  
"provocative as usual".

We are at a Jersey seaside  
resort called Normandy Beach. Have  
an oceanfront cottage. If you are in  
New York and have a day to spare,  
come and spend it with us. We'll  
be back in Belmont June 18.

Best wishes,

Howard Freeman

Saturday

[ca May, 1953]

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
DEPARTMENT OF  
ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

Dear Norbert:

Your book is vivid and warm. Not only an admirable account of your life and times; it's wonderfully mined with wisdom for all, prodigies and no. I enjoyed it. See you, we hope, in June.

Howard Freeman

Saturday

[ans 6/1/53]



[ca. May, 1953]

100

SISTERHOOD OF TEMPLE EMANUEL  
MAY AND CHANDLER STREETS  
WORCESTER 2, MASSACHUSETTS

Prof. Norbert Wiener  
M. I. T.  
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Professor Wiener:

In planning our organization's program for next year, we have become interested in the possibilities of an "Author Meets the Critics" panel for our November 10th meeting. This would not require a formal speech, but rather informal give and take with three of our members as the critics of the discussion.

We would like very much to know if you would be available on that date, and if so, what your fee would be.

I would appreciate hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

*Hannah Laipson*

Mrs. Myron Laipson, Program Ch.  
25 Pomona Road  
Worcester, Massachusetts

[and 5/28/53]

who were always so  
much interested in our  
idea (in friendly conversation,  
& before) aware of part  
of his intelligent and gentle  
advice & personality. I am  
great for him that you have  
done this.  
Sincerely yours,  
Henry D. Frost

2000 [ca. May, 1953]

43 Abbott Road  
Wellesley Hills  
Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Wiener,

I want to send you  
these few words of gratitude  
for what you have said  
publicly about William J.



Sidis, whom I knew as a friend for a number of years until his death. I kept in touch with his sister, Hilera for a while after that, but have lost contact with her now.

I have wished that I had the ability and the prestige to make "the public"

[ca May, 1953]

1787 Cambridge St.  
Cambridge.

Dear Dr. Wiener:

I've just finished reading your "Ex Prodigy" and am irresistibly moved to tell you that in my life this book stands out as an unforgettable landmark. Even now while the epigrams are resounding in my ears (I am a musician) it brings understanding and consolation to me. You see, my father's name in Russian was Tokorewsky and he forced my debut as a concert Pianist at the age of 8. My wife (who is not Jewish) and I, have lived thro' your experiences and recognized thro' all the differences, a universal set of problems. Altho' I am now 44 I only begin to find a little peace of mind and genuine acceptance of my role as teacher at M.I.T., Harvard and the Longy School. Composition is again slowly emerging and an independent identity takes shape.



The long view expressed in  
"Ex Prodigy" and the simple humanity  
of it endears the book to me and  
I have no doubt of its enduring  
influence in the future - not  
only for those Jews who have to  
some extent trodden a similar  
path but to all others of good will.

With grateful appreciation,  
Gregory Tucker.

[ans 6/1/53]



[ca May, 1953]

OEG, Hedron 1 (G-3)  
Hq, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing  
FMFPac, FPO San Francisco, Cal.

Dear Norbert:

Just before leaving for my present field assignment, I had a chance to read "Ex-Prodigy". I should like to tell you how much I enjoyed it. My wife also found it fascinating. I found it a thoroughly honest and enthralling story, and was particularly glad (though not surprised) that it never degenerated into an emotional striptease. I wish I had been more familiar with the background it reveals during our period of association of M.I.T., since it clarifies much of the emotional conflict you obviously felt in the war and immediately post-war period.

The book had a further interest for me, since my father's period of graduate work at Harvard included yours, and ~~the~~ your account of the period illuminated many things he had casually mentioned to me. I was also pleased by your mention of Griffith Evans, under whom I wrote my doctoral thesis. His kindness to Sidis was utterly characteristic of him.

Thank you very much for writing the book.

As for my own circumstances, I am presently on a six months field assignment in Pohang, Korea, as operations analyst to the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. The separation from my family isn't enjoyable. However, field work is an inescapable responsibility in the work I am doing. That being so, I ~~can~~ think of no better group to work with than the Marines, who treat their undesirable but necessary assignment in a completely professional and efficient fashion. I regret the need for the present conflict, but if it is to be carried out (and I think it must), then I'm glad to think I can contribute a little to getting it done at less cost to us in lives and property.

By the way, the local library here at Wing Headquarters has a copy of Bernard Wolfe's "Limbo"--a mordant picture of one possible cybernetic perversion. I seem to catch overtones of discussions with you and Giorgio. Did you have any special reaction to it?

My best to your wife; also to Barbara and Toby, when you see them.

Sincerely

Bill Whitmore



DOUBLEDAY & COMPANY, INC., Publishers



575 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK 22 - MURRAY HILL 8-5300

May 1, 1953

Dear Mrs. Baldwin:

Thank you very much for your letter of April 28th suggesting that I come to visit Professor Wiener during the week of May 4th or May 11th. If I may I should like to choose the week of the 11th, and if you will confirm this, I will be there then. The mornings are certainly all right with me.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jason Epstein".

Jason Epstein  
Editor, Anchor Books

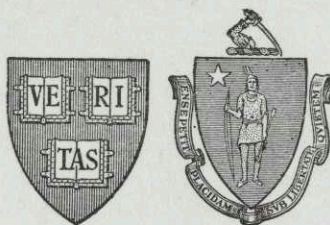
Mrs. George Baldwin  
Department of Mathematics  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge 39, Massachusetts

JE:nr

[ms 5/9/53]



Harvard Medical School  
Department of Psychiatry



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Department of Mental Health  
*Boston Psychopathic Hospital*  
74 Fenwood Road, Boston 15

HARRY C. SOLOMON, M.D.  
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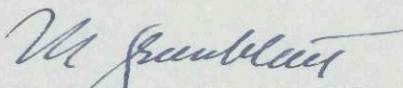
May 1, 1953

Dr. Norbert Wiener  
Mass. Institute of Technology  
Department of Mathematics  
Cambridge 39, Massachusetts

Dear Professor Wiener:

Thank you for your kind interest in Dr. George Devereux.  
Your recommendation will be of considerable importance in  
reaching a decision.

Sincerely,

  
Milton Greenblatt, M.D.

MG/rd



BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY  
WALTHAM 54, MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

May 1, 1953

Dr. Norbert Wiener  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dear Dr. Wiener:

Your participation in our course General Education S was one of the highlights of the University season. The influence of what you had to say spilled over into classrooms, luncheons and dinners. We wanted this course to have a livening influence and you lived up to our highest expectations.

Max Lerner wants to add his own gratitude for the job you did here with the students and faculty alike, and his hope that we did not exhaust you unconscionably.

With every good wish,

Cordially yours,

  
A. L. Sachar

als/eb  
enclosure

39 Baker St.,  
Foxboro Mass  
May 2/53

Robert Weiser:-

I have read recently in Boston Globe some articles about your early life. Haven't noticed any mention of your days in Cambridge - near Harvard Square, you were probably too young to remember those days.

I will remember you & your family when I used to visit my grandparents, the Hunnewell's on Hilliard St., Cambridge & I used to remember seeing you when I was at my cousin Ruth Priest's on Ash St. Place Cambridge.

I always remember what a nice lady your mother was. Where are your parents now & sister? Where do you live & did you marry a Cambridge girl?

Saw in one of your articles that your family lived in Foxboro awhile that is where I have lived since I was married.



The pictures of you in paper  
with side whiskers & moustache  
make you look much older than  
you are. I think you are much  
younger than I am as "we children"  
remember your family coming to  
Cambridge & you were quite young <sup>then</sup>.

I used to be Gertrude C. Fitts  
& lived on Mass. ave., cor. White St.  
I am now Mrs. Walter H. Fitts.

Sincerely  
(Mrs.) Gertrude C. Fitts

[ans 6/1/53]





Hauston Texas.  
May third -

Dear Professor Keiser -

Certainly read your book  
"By Prodigy" with keen interest - I  
knew you when you were very young,  
can recall you reading the letters  
of the alphabet as your father marked  
them in the sand at Winthrop Beach  
I was at Dallas by then and upon  
my graduation my dear mother and  
sister Helen were down on the shore  
and of course your father and mother  
and you were our special attraction.  
there



you and your family - my kind greetings to them and  
yourselves Love from Liekesten

To Mrs. L. Morris  
1407 Walker Ave.  
Houston Texas.

[ans 6/1/53]

When at my Class Reunion two years  
ago I phoned your home but you  
were abroad with your family -

I would like to know if your  
dear mother is still living - if so  
please extend to her my special  
love, also sister Minnie May's -

In your book there was one  
error - your grand father had a  
clothing store in Kansas City - it  
was my father Aaron Kahn who had  
the clothing store in St. Joseph.

Since there are several of your  
friends connected with the Rice  
Institute, perhaps some day in the  
near future you will come here  
and it would be splendid to meet



JE

354 North Underwood St.  
Fall River, Mass.,  
May 3, 1953.

Professor Norbert Wiener,  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology,  
Cambridge, Massachusetts.

My dear Professor Wiener,

On April 18, 1953 the Association of Teachers of Mathematics in New England observed its 75th anniversary. You will probably recall that you have addressed us on more than one occasion.

At that time, the past presidents of the Association, of whom I happen to be one, felt that we would like to make some special gift to Professor William R. Ransom, (retired) of Tufts, who was present at the first meeting and who has been very active all these years in its affairs, and in looking about for a suitable gift, it has come to our attention that he is looking forward with great eagerness to reading your autobiography, since you were one of his students - one of his "boys" - at Tufts whose progress he has watched with pride.

We are therefore, planning to present him with a copy of your book and



wondered whether you would be willing to autograph it for him. I feel quite sure that, in his modesty, he would not himself ask you to do it so I am taking the liberty of asking you.

If you are willing, I have arranged for my nephew, Walter L. Milne, who is in the News Bureau at M. I. T., to have a copy for you to autograph, one day this week. I hope that you will feel that you can for I feel very sure that it will please Professor Ransom very much.

In case you do not care to do this, I trust that you will forgive my audacity, and that I will understand your stand in the matter. If, by chance, you have happened to send Professor Ransom, a copy already, will you be kind enough to tell Walter Milne so that we will not be seeming to "wangle" another autographed copy from you?

Very sincerely

Margaret E. Macdonald

# WEEI

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MARIE H. HOULAHAN  
Publicity Director

cc. Boyle + Tullent

May 4, 1953

Prof. Norbert Wiener  
Massachusetts Institute  
of Technology  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dear Prof. Wiener:

Our studio equipment is now in condition to permit  
us to record your "This I Believe" script.

Would it be convenient for you to come to our studios  
at ~~12 noon~~ on Tuesday, May 12.

Sincerely,

Marie Houlahan

ml

Edna Bly  
135-140 ask to  
write White-

201



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*in the City of New York*  
*at*

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622 WEST 168TH STREET  
NEW YORK 32, N. Y.

May 4, 1953

After May 20, please address  
Jerold Lowenstein, M.D.  
Stanford University Hospitals  
Clay and Webster Sts.  
San Francisco, California

Prof. Norbert Wiener  
Dept. of Mathematics  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Professor Wiener:

My interest in Cybernetics antedates my entrance into medical school-- I corresponded with you very briefly in 1949-- and now that I am graduating I have decided to summarize my ideas. Since I have used (or misused) some of your concepts, I am enclosing a copy of this paper for the record. Naturally, I would be most flattered to have your comments or criticisms.

I am an alumnus of MIT, worked in experimental physics at Los Alamos, worked in the Washington office of the Federation of American Scientists, and assisted Walter Gellhorn in gathering material for his book Security, Loyalty, and Science.

Yours truly,

*Jerold Lowenstein*



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May 4, 1953

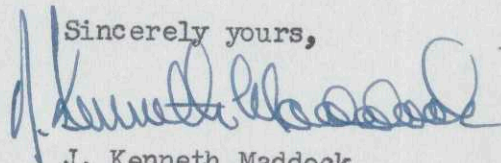
*res. art yet  
finished*

Professor Norbert Wiener  
Department of Mathematics  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge, 39, Massachusetts

Dear Professor Wiener:

I have had some recent discussions with Jerome Rothstein of the Signal Corps Laboratory at Fort Monmouth concerning his interest in doing a book entitled, "Communication, Organization, and Science." I wonder, since I am aware that you are acquainted with Dr. Rothstein and his work, whether you would give me your candid opinion of his plan as outlined in the inclosed copy of one of his letters. In addition, I am most anxious to know how his proposal compares or conflicts with the book you are now doing for us. Needless to say, I shall be most grateful to you for your comments.

Sincerely yours,



J. Kenneth Maddock  
Editor

JKM:BS  
inc.

*Comp 5/6/53*



81  
Physics

Communication, Organization  
+ Science

Copy of a letter from Dr. Rothstein

I am sending you a group of reprints, preprints, and copies of talks I have given before the Physical Society relating to information theory and related subjects. I am convinced that the information concept, developed along lines I have indicated, will afford a formulation of scientific methodology (including statistical inference) which is both rigorous and useful. I propose to discuss this at length and to show how the basic concepts of science and of mathematics (in its application to the real world) stem from our sensory perceptions. Our sensory apparatus is a communication system and a measuring system, in fact the last two are essentially the same. Language and symbolism of any kind are also means of communication. An important chapter will thus be on the relations between semantics and the operational viewpoint in physics, science as a language, and the possibility of constructing a well-engineered artificial language.

Art too, involves communication, and science has its aesthetic side. We propose to discuss this also.

We have been able to prove that a machine capable of acquiring and using information (and such machines have been built), if sufficiently complicated, can be made to carry out any specifiable behaviour no matter how complex. We propose to show how this makes a kind of biology possible in principle, with all concepts couched in purely physical terms. We hope to indicate possible directions in biochemical research heuristically suggested thereby.

We will give an informational characterization of the concept of organization and show how it can be applied to the design of complex systems such as the quasi-biological one just alluded to, to problems of system engineering design in general, the problems encountered by management in running any large organization, and see how strategy and game theory come into play when competing systems interact.

We expect to make the entire book self-contained, presupposing nothing but intellectual maturity on the part of the reader. A large number of fields of mathematics, physics, engineering, etc., will be touched on. The book will of necessity be something of an introduction to all of them.

I haven't yet decided on a title but "Communication, Organization, and Science", the title of an article now in preparation, may be suitable. Some problems of philosophy, and excursions into the social sciences can be briefly touched on without departing too much from the spirit of the book. I think it important that this be done



if for no other reason than to help combat the cramping effect of specialization which is turning scientists into technicians rather than natural philosophers. The intellectual atmosphere will be broadly humanist or philosophical rather than narrowly technical.

I cannot say when the book will be done. The papers I am sending would, in some cases, be almost chapters in themselves, or parts of chapters. They cover considerably less than half of what I have in mind, are rather condensed, and, of course, with little continuity from one to the next.

Professor Norbert Wiener of MIT is familiar with the material I am sending.



NEW YORK UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING  
UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS, NEW YORK 53, N.Y.

DEPARTMENT OF  
INDUSTRIAL AND MANAGEMENT ENGINEERING

TELEPHONE: LUDLOW 4-0700

May 4, 1953

Mrs. George Baldwin  
Secretary to Professor Wiener  
Department of Mathematics  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge 39, Mass.

Dear Mrs. Baldwin:

A few weeks ago, you sent me two letters which were addressed to Professor Wiener and which he asked me to answer in his stead. Now I have to bother you with one of these, namely Mr. Ovshinsky.

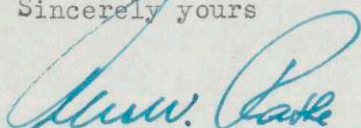
I apparently misunderstood his original letter because as you will note from his April 20 reply to my letter of April 8, he is not at all interested in the management aspects. In view of this, I do not know whether Dr. Wiener would have turned it over to me in the first place.

Would you be good enough to read the whole thing over and to decide if you feel that this should be brought to Professor Wiener's attention or if you would want me to answer it. I'll be most happy to do that, of course; I am not trying to pass the buck back to you.

Thanks so much.

Best regards.

Sincerely yours



Alex W. Rathe

encls (3)

He's interested in "an org. of citizens" who can "do  
something" about "the jobless" -

[copy 5/28/53]



C O P Y

April 8, 1953

Mr. S. R. Ovshinsky  
19935 Forrer Avenue  
Detroit 35, Michigan

Dear Mr. Ovshinsky:

Dr. Wiener wrote you a few days ago that he had forwarded your letter of January 2 to me for reply. I have read it with a good deal of interest, and I am wondering whether my thoughts as expressed below will give you the information you desire.

For quite a few decades by now, philosophers and practitioners in management have gradually become more and more aware of the impact of technical development on the social fabric. In our country, the earliest and still most poignant writings are those of Henry L. Gantt, which date back some forty years.

In Great Britain, Oliver Sheldon voiced similar sentiments in his classic "The Philosophy of Management," which was published some twenty years ago. And back again in the US, among the more important contemporary writings are those of Peter F. Drucker's books and articles. Dr. Wiener's "Human Use of Human Beings" certainly belongs into the forefront of current thinking.

Again ever more frequently, these thoughts find expression in meetings of the Society for Advancement of Management, the Management Division of The American Society of Mechanical Engineers, the American Management Association, and a few other groups.

I would feel offhand from my acquaintance with midwestern sentiment, that you will find many interested parties right in those organizations as well as undoubtedly others who do not belong to these societies.

I am including a reprint of a very recent speech which Dr. Wiener made here in New York a few months ago in which he also touched on some of the aspects which I believe you referred to in your letter.

If I misinterpreted the trend of your inquiry, please do not hesitate to write me.

Sincerely yours

/s/ Alex W. Rathe

[ans 5/20/53]



May 4, 1953

Mr. Jason Epstein  
Editor, Anchor Books  
Doubleday and Company, Inc.  
575 Madison Avenue  
New York 22, New York

Dear Mr. Epstein:

This will confirm that Professor Wiener will be able to see you during the week of the 11th. I shall expect to hear from you by telephone after you get to Boston.

To help you arrange your time in advance, I might add that Professor Wiener teaches from 9 to 10 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and that he has an engagement at Harvard on Wednesday afternoon, May 13. Aside from these appointments, his week is free at the moment.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. George Baldwin  
Secretary to Prof. Wiener

h

CYRIL CLEMENS, Editor  
MARK TWAIN QUARTERLY  
WEBSTER GROVES, MO.

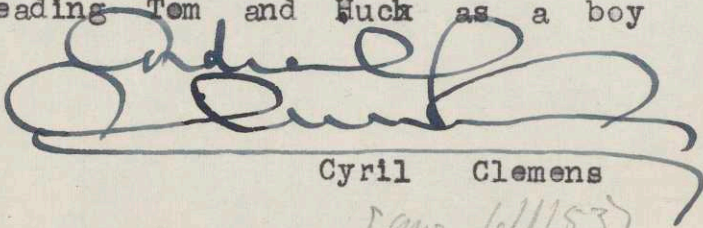
5 May 1953

Dear Norbert Wiener:

You may not have seen the enclosed review which we take pleasure sending.

It may interest you to know that I am editing the anecdotes of Mark Twain. You may have one or two that you could send.

You doubtless have recollections of reading Tom and Huck as a boy



Cyril Clemens

[ana 6/1/53]



# From the Bookshelf

Education of a Genius

By Robert C. Cowen

**Ex-prodigy: My Childhood and Youth**, by Norbert Wiener. (New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc. 309 pp. \$3.95.)

This is a story of the training of genius. It is effectively and beautifully told. But it modestly avoids the most important issue—namely, that its author is a genuinely great man. More than a scholar whose scientific achievements resound in many fields, he has a warm feeling for humanity and the world that marks him as a man to be loved as well as respected.

Norbert Wiener was a prodigy—a precocious child who entered Tufts College at the age of 11, was graduated at 14, and earned his Ph.D. from Harvard at 18. He tells of the harsh training he received from his father—a grueling experience that would have broken a weaker boy. Yet he tells it with objectivity, and writes of his father with affection.

"My father could give me only what my father had: his sincerity, his brilliance, his learning, and his passion. These qualities are not picked up on every street corner.

"Let those who choose to carve a human soul to their own measure be sure that they have a worthy image after which to carve it. . . ."

All of this is interesting largely as a prelude to his manhood achievements, for he has become a mathematician and natural scientist of the first rank. But Dr. Wiener scarcely refers to this. He is too modest.

Unlike some other infant prodigies, he has not failed in later life nor cracked mentally under the strain. When he finished his studies at Harvard he found himself in a turmoil of conflicts and confusions. He had an adult intellect in a child's body. He was immature, awkward with people, and unable to make his own decisions. But he faced these problems boldly and conquered them all.

That was only half the battle, for he must make his mark professionally, too. Because of his history as a wonder child, nothing less than high achievement would suffice. Anything else would have been failure. But he did not fail,

and today his ideas are among the most dynamic impulses in modern natural science.

His theories have, in large part, made possible the new high-speed electronic computers that are actually crude brains working by electronic rather than chemical means. Dr. Wiener has brought his theories together in the new science of cybernetics—the study of control and communication in man, machine, and animal. It unites physiology, psychology, and electrical engineering in a single system that has paved the way for automatic factories—where a few technicians can run an entire plant—and for machines that can relieve men of the stultifying burden of routine mental tasks, as they have already been relieved of much direct physical labor.

Dr. Wiener is a man who can see a hundred roads to the future and explore each one of them. He is continually probing beyond the bounds of what is known while other men develop what he sent forth 20 years ago. But he is no cloistered specialist. His is the vision to perceive the impact of natural science on humanity and the compassion to be personally concerned with it.

He sees that his work points the way to an era when men could be freed from dull routine to use their creative talents—an era of new richness of living for the so-called average man. Yet he has many times warned that the threats of technological unemployment, of hydrogen bombs and germ warfare, and of the other grim prospects that modern scientific advances have raised must be faced squarely and solutions found. Otherwise mankind may be underwriting its own doom.

These are the problems that Professor Wiener has taken on himself along with his task of creative research. He has often said, "The scientist must be a citizen of the world"—and that is preeminently what he himself has become. The dramatic struggles of an extraordinary youth have given way to the genius of a true manhood that is enriching the world as it finds its own fulfillment.

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CYRIL CLEMENS, Editor  
MARK TWAIN QUARTERLY

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May 5, 1953

Dr. Norbert Weiner  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge 39, Massachusetts

Dear Dr. Weiner:

It was very gracious of you, some weeks ago, to spend some of your time with Dr. Galston helping me plan a series of radio programs about medical research. It was even more gracious for you to indicate to your publishers that you would be willing to participate in the series. I had wanted to get in touch with you immediately but, as it turned out, some of the programs had to be cancelled and I had already invited a sufficient number of people to fill up the series. It would have been much better had you been able to take part, I know.

For your own information, the list of participants is enclosed.

Sincerely yours,



George D. Crothers

GDC:as  
Enclosure

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**John H. Tucci, M. D.  
Brockton Hospital, Brockton, Mass.**

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**George R. Hargreaves, M. D.  
World Health Organization**

**Selman Waksman, Ph.D.  
Department of Microbiology, Rutgers University**

**John Gibbon, M. D.  
Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia**

**Byron Stockey, M. D.  
Neurological Institute, Columbia University Medical Center**

**Lawrence Slobody, M. D.  
New York Medical College, Flower Fifth Avenue Hospital**

**Gray Walter, M. D.  
Burden Neurological Institute, England**



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May 5, 1953

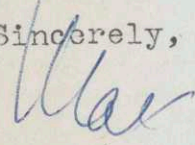
Max Lerner

Dear Dr. Weiner,

Thank you for your very good letter. We all enjoyed your visit with us. I am enclosing a clipping of a column I wrote on your book which may interest you.

I am asking Dr. Saul Cohen, who is the Chairman of our School of Science to get in touch with Dr. Siegel, since the School of Science handles its own appointments. And it is good of you to send me the material about Dr. Devureux. I am sending it on to the Chairman of our School of Social Science, Professor Svend Larsen. I should guess that at some point we shall be expanding in the fields of anthropology and psychoanalysis and looking for someone to add to our staff. It is difficult to say now what the time will be, but it certainly is good to know about Dr. Devureux' interest. I shall return the material to you as soon as my colleagues have seen it. And if we see our way clear we will get in touch with him directly. Thank you very much for thinking of us.

Sincerely,

  
Max Lerner  






## The Prodigy Who Came Through

By Max Lerner

I spent several days last week with Norbert Wiener, professor of mathematics at M. I. T., and a man around whom legends gather. He came to talk to my students at Brandeis University. The course is an exploration of character and career, and the point is to get a number of Americans who are remarkable for both, and persuade them to talk about their lives and ordeals. The idea behind it is that in building character, as in anything else, students learn best by example.

Wiener is a fabulous man, who looks like Sidney Webb, speaks a dozen languages, has ransacked all the sciences, and seems to be the last man who knows everything. He has written the story of his childhood and youth in a book of great charm and insight called "Ex-Prodigy" (Simon and Schuster). He is famous for mathematical discoveries which have made possible the electronic calculators—the "machines that think"—and also the emerging automatic factory.

But the important fact about him is that he was once a child prodigy and has not been ruined by it. He is that prodigy among prodigies—one who managed to come through.

The problem that child prodigies face is that of the grossly uneven development of their mental and emotional lives. In the way their brain works they are men before they have stopped being children, but in the way their affections and their hungers and dreams grow they are children who sometimes never become men. The odd statistical chance that makes them fast starters in mathematics—or music or poetry—enables them to gallop through whole libraries or perform miracles of virtuosity, but Nature evidently doesn't recognize any short cuts in the agonizing process of growing up.

The result is that they often break down, or—as Wiener puts it—"go under." In Wiener's case the problem was complicated by two other factors. One was his father, Leo Wiener, a professor of languages at Harvard, who took over his son's education and pushed him hard every day and every minute. The other was a mother who thought that she could keep him in ignorance of the fact of his Jewishness, so that at adolescence he had to confront the realities of anti-Semitism totally unprepared for them.

There are three British books that deal with situations somewhat similar to the Wiener father-son relation. The greatest, of course, is the Autobiography of John Stuart Mill, whose father educated him as an experiment in the theories of the Utilitarian school of philosophers. A second is Edmund Gosse's more bitter autobiography, "Father and Son." And the third is Samuel Butler's novel, "The Way of All Flesh," which is a thinly disguised story of his own education and his conflict with his father.

The theme running through all of them is the effort of the son to break away from the father-tyrant and find his identity.

John Stuart Mill has given us a classic description of what so often follows—the sense of loneliness and emptiness that suddenly came over him, the despair that was all the worse because the brilliance of his intellectual achievement sharpened the poverty of his emotional life. Mill had a bad breakdown, from which (as he saw it) he was saved by reading Wordsworth and the other poets.

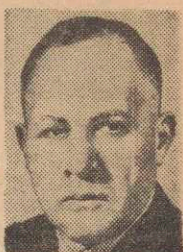
I asked Wiener what he meant when he spoke of the dangers of "going under." He answered that no other phrase could describe it, that it was a sense of drowning and of having to rescue yourself.

There are few prodigies. Yet the problem is wider than one might think. What family doesn't fondly believe that one of its children is a miracle of brilliance? What father is not tempted to cast his son in his own mold? The temptation to play God with a plastic life, because your own has come crumbly at the joints, is hard to resist. And the tendency to push your children and make them run is equally alluring. What we forget is that it is often the slow starters who come to the greatest maturity, and build up a lasting creativeness.

But there is this to say for the fast starters: They pack away so much so early that they don't have to waste precious manhood years learning the elementary things. And if they are like Norbert Wiener, they learn early an intellectual discipline that enables them to stretch their minds. The desolating fact about most contemporary education is that it is slack and sloppy and undemanding, and the only thing that stretches is the conscience.



## ...e's Policy



vital for the free world's defense against Communist aggression.

This viewpoint is forcefully presented in a special memorandum Morton is circulating among Ways and Means committeemen. The document was prepared by the State Dept, and personally approved by Secretary of State Dulles, who will testify before the committee next month after he returns from the NATO Conference in Paris.

Highlights of this private paper are as follows:

"The Kremlin's policy is to create weaknesses and disunity in the free world. Those who tend to pass off lightly the part that American trade policy plays in our over-all foreign policy should read the article that Stalin wrote before his death in the Russian magazine, *Boishevik*, for October, 1952 . . . Stalin argued that a 'general crisis of the capitalist system is inevitable' and that it would lead to a fierce trade con-

flict between the nations of the world.

"Those who are anxious to avoid providing the Communists with a weapon to beat us over the head must be concerned by the introduction of many restrictionist trade bills in this session of Congress.

"To cite one example of how the Communists use the trade issue: When a tariff quota was imposed on almonds, the Communists in southern Italy immediately went into action. Hardly had our restrictions gone into effect than a Soviet ship appeared in Italian ports accompanied by widespread publicity that the Soviet Union intended to increase its purchase of Italian products. It was a very effective gesture, especially when the Communists bought some boatloads of almonds and lemons."

## our World

By Seymour Freidin and William Richardson

### RUSSIA; WHERE'S PUDGY GEORGI?

What's happened to Georgi Malenkov? One of the biggest brain teasers perplexing Western governments is President Eisenhower's recent peace proposals. Evidence is being sifted to ascertain whether the power struggle in the Kremlin between Stalin's successors are only jockeying towards encroachment

...s been virtually no Pudgy Georgy, as we usually refer today to him, there has been a change of the top members of the Politburo in Russia. But, even on this point, there has been singularly

party secretariat when the new Praesidium was established. One of the face-saving devices that may have been afforded Malenkov was the party's published decision calling for collective responsibility, lest an autocracy be the result.

Collective responsibility, conversely, also could be interpreted as collective guilt in any given case.

Beria's purge of party officials in Soviet Georgia led to a spate of ironic comment in the

...gh praise and/or censure in the Soviet's foreign Commissar for Internal Affairs has gotten into the habit of saying a word, how-

...ope have already concluded that Malenkov has actually—**with a bullet**—been killed. The theory hasn't attracted much support. It's predicated on the fact that Malenkov has been purging officials presently at the behest of the Politburo. They are supposed to be appointees within



West that he is now responsible for purging his own purgers. What was overlooked at first glance, and what is being mulled over now, is the fact that Stalin always took a personal interest in his home province. Malenkov, the theoretician and assessors of Soviet affairs say, probably appointed his own Georgian henchmen with Stalin's approval.

...then it could only be a lead body. So the proponents of the idea of his career, Mausoleum



JOHN P. MARQUAND  
115 EAST 67TH STREET  
NEW YORK 21, N. Y.

May 5, 1953

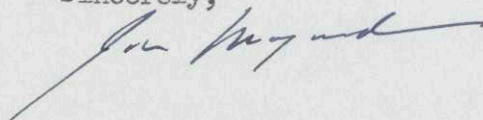
Mr. Norbert Wiener  
Department of Mathematics  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge 39, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Wiener:

Your letter of March thirty-first was forwarded to me in Nassau just as I was returning to New York, which accounts for my long delay in replying.

I, too, hope we may meet sometime in the future, and thank you ever so much for writing me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John P. Marquand". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Sincerely,".



john diebold

May 6, 1953

Dr. Norbert Wiener  
Department of Mathematics  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge 39, Mass.

Dear Dr. Wiener:

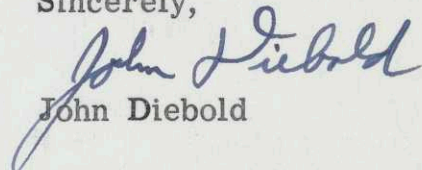
I have just returned from a rather extended trip and am very sorry to learn from your letter of April 22nd that you have already agreed to publication of your City College lecture.

No  
|  
Would it be possible for you to contribute another article, however short, to our first issue? To a considerable extent it is because of your pioneering work that this field has developed to the point at which a regular monthly magazine is possible, and I feel it altogether appropriate that we publish something written by you in our first issue (which we hope will be in July, but may be postponed a month).

At the time we talked in the Washington Air Port you mentioned having completed a manuscript for the Scientific American. Have you had it published elsewhere, or would it be possible for us to publish it?

With very best wishes, I remain,

Sincerely,

  
John Diebold

[and 5/28/53]



3232 Carlisle Avenue  
Baltimore 16, Maryland  
May 6, 1953

Professor Norbert Wiener  
Department of Mathematics  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge, Mass.

My dear Professor Wiener:

On page 35 of your recent autobiography you discussed a book you read in your childhood which was your first introduction to science. I think I know the book you mean. I have vague recollections of having read when I was in high school a book (not a school book) by Camille Flammarion called LUMEN.

If I remember it rightly, it was a fantasy roughly in the form of a novel in which a spirit from the Universe named Lumen acts as Virgil to the writer's Dante on a trip around the galaxy.

I hope this is what you are looking for.

Sincerely,

*Saul Gorn*  
Saul Gorn

*[Saul Gorn 6/1/53]*



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6th May, 1953.

Professor Norbert Wiener,  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology,  
Cambridge 39, Mass.

Dear Professor Wiener,

Thank you for keeping me informed  
of your correspondence with Dr. Mahalanobis.  
It is always helpful to follow up matters of  
this kind through such references on sub-  
sequent occasions. I am sorry that  
Dr. Mahalanobis has missed the opportunity  
of having you in India this year and I hope  
that you may still find it possible to go  
on a later date.

Yours sincerely,

*M.S. Sundaram*  
M.S. SUNDARAM.

MSS:lc



May 6, 1953

Dr. Stanley Cobb  
Massachusetts General Hospital  
Boston, Mass.

Dear Dr. Cobb:

Dr. Theodore Fischer Galati from Lawrence has called my attention to some interesting work that he has been in contact with and participating in on the effect of adrenalin in producing melanomas in the eye and body of the pigmented rabbit, and the effect of acetyl cholin in tending to dissipate such incipient growths. The material looks interesting, although of course I am unable to judge it. I am sending him on to you to see if you could help him with some suggestion as to what to do with his ideas.

With the recollection of our interesting discussion of a few weeks ago, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Norbert Wiener

hb



May 6, 1953

Dr. Seth Fessenden  
National Society for the Study of Communication  
University of Denver  
Denver, Colorado

Dear Dr. Fessenden:

I am flattered by your invitation to speak at your December convention, and I should like very much to accept it.

At the moment, I am very tired after a strenuous spring term. I anticipate, however, that a long summer's rest will revive me thoroughly, and that by fall I shall be back in form. May I, therefore, accept your invitation provisionally at this time, making no definite commitment until early autumn. I know that this kind of arrangement may not be possible in your program planning, and if it is not, please do not hesitate to tell me.

Sincerely yours,

Norbert Wiener

hb



May 6, 1953

Dr. Iago Galdston  
New York Academy of Medicine  
2 East 103rd Street  
New York 29, New York

Dear Dr. Galdston:

At the moment I am very tired, but I am quite confident that after a good summer's rest I shall be eager to speak to your group. The subject of the series is very interesting to me, and I should be delighted to give the first lecture on November 4th.

Meantime, greetings from the family, and best wishes.

Sincerely yours,

Norbert Wiener

hb



May 6, 1953

Mr. Theodore F. Jones  
New York University Libraries  
University Heights Library  
University Heights  
New York 53, New York

My dear Mr. Jones:

Thank you for your kind note about Ex-Prodigy. I am indeed happy to know that you have pleasant recollections of my father and of visits in our home.

I wish I could be of more help to you in providing the name of a nephew you ask about. The only person I can think of who might answer your description would be the son of my cousin Olga. Her husband's name was David Lehmann, and they lived in New York and had a son about the age of the young man you refer to. This may not be of any help to you at all, but it is the best I can do.

With every good wish,

Sincerely yours,

Norbert Wiener

hb



May 6, 1953

Dr. Robert Morison  
Rockefeller Foundation  
Rockefeller Center  
New York, New York

Dear Dr. Morison:

Dr. T.F. Galati of Lawrence, Mass., has just come into my office and told me some interesting information about the effect of adrenalin as a carcinogen causing cancer in the eye of the pigmented rabbit. He has also told me about acetyl cholin shows its antagonistic effect to adrenalin by tending to cause such cancers to regress. It looks like a good lead and could be of very great importance.

I am <sup>end</sup>committing Dr. Galati to your attention and asking you if you think it is worthwhile to put him in touch with sources of funds to enable this research to be continued.

Sincerely yours,

Norbert Wiener

hb



May 6, 1953

Dr. Arturo Rosenblueth  
Instituto Nacional de Cardiologia  
Calzada de la Piedad, 300  
Mexico D.F.  
Mexico

Dear Arturo:

Apparently acetyl cholin is in the news again. Dr. T.F. Galati of Lawrence, Mass., who has just visited me, tells me that it seems to have a dispersing and inhibiting influence on melanomas produced in the pigmented rabbit by the application to the eye of adrenalin. I am not, of course, in a position to evaluate the work, but I am having Dr. Galati write to you and I am sure you will see the possibilities implied by this research.

I got a nice letter from Emilio the other day, and I hear that Manuel is going to be in town in a day or two. I have been working hard and am all in, but I am getting good results in my work. Morris Chaffetz and the family join me in sending best wishes to all.

Sincerely yours,

Norbert Wiener

hb



May 6, 1953

Dr. Theodore Shedlovsky  
Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research  
York Avenue at 66th Street  
New York, New York

Dear Ted:

I am having Dr. T.F. Galati, of Lawrence, Mass., who has just visited me in my office, get in touch with you on some very interesting work he has been participating in which concerns the effect of adrenalin in causing cancers in the eye of the pigmented rabbit, and of acetyl cholin in inhibiting such cancers or causing them to regress.

Can you put the material in the hands of the right man at the Rockefeller? If the Sloan-Kettering people are the right ones for him to write to, will you put Dr. Galati in touch with the proper contacts there?

Many thanks for your good opinion of the book. I was warmly pleased by the care you took in making detailed comments.

Sincerely yours,

Norbert Wiener

h



May 6, 1953

Mrs. Alma H. Thomas  
99 Undercliff Road  
Montclair, New Jersey

Dear Mrs. Thomas:

Thank you for your recent letter inquiring about the work of James P. Holdt, and for the confidence you express in my judgment.

As you doubtless guessed, your letter finds me buried in end of term tasks, and I fear I must return your material to you with little more than a glance at it. Holdt's work does indeed look interesting, and I am grateful to you for directing my attention to it. It may be that in the future I shall have an opportunity to study it further.

With many thanks for your letter, and best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Norbert Wiener

hb



May 6, 1953

Mr. J. Kenneth Maddock  
John Wiley and Sons, Inc.  
440 Fourth Avenue  
New York 16, New York

Dear Mr. Maddock:

In reply to your letter of the 4th, I know Rothstein very well and I have a high opinion of him. Naturally you don't want to buy a pig in a poke, and I can't say much about an uncompleted manuscript. But in view of Rothstein's knowledge and his ability, I suggest that you play around with him and send me a copy of the manuscript as soon as it comes into being. Obviously, in a live subject, the last thing I would want to do would be to discourage the publication of other books in anticipation of the publication of one of my own. I am quite confident that when the time comes to publish my treatise on Cybernetics, I shall have enough new things to say and enough new ways of saying them so that my manuscript will stand on its own feet.

Sincerely yours,

Norbert Wiener

hb

[and 5/12/53]



1716 Humboldt Street  
Manhattan, Kansas  
May 7, 1953

Mr. Norbert Wiener  
Belmont, Mass.

Dear Mr. Wiener:

On April 2, '53 I sent two mss.. to you. Did you receive them? Card enclosed. Just your initials will do. A stamped envelope was enclosed. I wanted you to see these manuscripts as they are so closely related to all of the awful trouble along the lines of mental illness. HOSTS of people could be turned loose from hospitals if they were taught they had NON-vibrating MIND, and vibrating physiques. The brain is the instrument between the two. Brain vibrates of course, it is a part of physique, but the NON-vibrating MIND that is Absolute Gravity is the real MIND.

Yours most sincerely,

*P. Z. Copenhafer*  
P. Z. Copenhafer,

[ans 5/28/53]



*National Society for the Study of Communication*

Committee on General Methodologies

Seth Fessenden, Chairman  
University of Denver  
Denver, Colorado

May 8, 1953

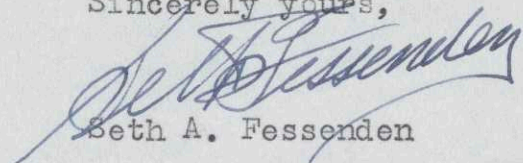
Dr. Norbert Wiener  
Mass. Institute of Technology  
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Dr. Wiener:

I have received letters from Miss M. Kendig and Dr. J. L. Moreno expressing willingness to participate on the Communication Theory panel at the national conference in New York next December. Each expressed a great deal of pleasure in the panel personnel. I wrote Major Kenneth Clark, who is in charge of the programming, about the plans. His specific comment concerning you was, "I certainly hope that he will accept the invitation. I know I share with many members of the Society a keen desire to meet him and see him in action."

I thought you might be interested in these reactions. I certainly hope that you will be willing to be a member of the panel.

Sincerely yours,

  
Seth A. Fessenden



OFFICE HOURS: 9:00 TO 6:00 DAILY  
AND BY APPOINTMENT

TEL. 4940

THEODORE FISCHER GALATI, M. D.  
EYE DISEASE : EAR, NOSE AND THROAT  
LAWRENCE: 709-10 BAY STATE BUILDING  
(FORMER OFFICE OF DR. MERRILL)

7 May 1953

Prof. Dr. Norbert Wiener,  
Dept. of Mathematics,  
M.I.T.  
Cambridge - Mass.

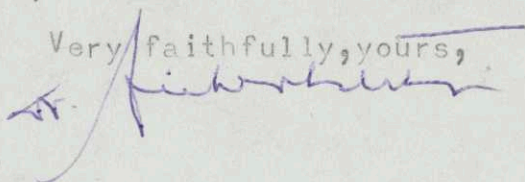
Dear Professor Wiener:

I wish to thank you again for all  
the courtesy and kindness you bestowed  
me and to express my regret to have abu-  
sed of your time.

Qui tout comprend - tout excuse.

With my sincere and respectful regards,  
I beg to remain,

Very faithfully, yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. Fischer Galati', written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.



CARNEGIE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
SCHENLEY PARK  
PITTSBURGH 13, PENNSYLVANIA

DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS  
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

May 7, 1953

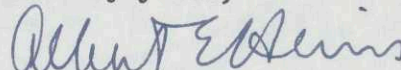
Professor Norbert Wiener  
Department of Mathematics  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge 39, Massachusetts

Dear Professor Wiener:

Your generous support of my Fellowship application has  
born fruit. Yesterday I received a letter from the Guggenheim  
Foundation stating that I had been awarded a Fellowship for  
the year 1953-1954. We shall spend the major portion of the  
year in Copenhagen and travel to England, France and Holland.

With many thanks, I remain,

Sincerely yours,



Albert E. Heins  
Professor  
of Mathematics

AEH/EB



Helmut T. Schreyer  
Rio de Janeiro-Tijuca, Brasil  
Praça Gabriel Soares Nº 7, Casa 9.

10/5/53

Dear Professor Dr. Wiener:

I have taken the liberty, to send you a book about "Electronic Digital Computers", which I have written last year. Unfortunately, the book is written in Portuguese, so it might be a little difficult to understand everything, but the book is a teaching book and specially written for the purpose of the "Escola Tecnica do Exercito" here in Rio. For getting a better idea, I translated the preface in English.

You probably will remember me, when I tell you, that you visited me in 1947 in Mosbach, Germany one afternoon. I have very much to apologize yet, that I did not give you enough informations about my work in computers, but you might understand, that in that time, closely after the war, every American was a little suspected of beeing an investigator, and I feel sorry now, that I did not know you yet at that time. But now I think it is my duty, to show you more about my work, especially after having studied your excellent book about Cybernetics.

After your visit, I received an invitation to come to the U.S.A. to work for the government, but the offer demanded, that my wife and child should stay at least half a year still in Germany, which for me, especially because of the Berlin-crisis at that time was impossible to accept. So I went to Brasil, Where it was possible for my wife and child to accompany me.

I am working here as a chief engineer in the laboratory of the post-office in Rio and as a professor at the Escola Tecnica do Exercito , also in Rio. But because of difficulties of material it is a little difficult here to ~~to~~ realize all the ideas, I have. You might also excuse the modest form of the book, but the people do it as well as they can.



If you would be specially interested in something out of my book, I would be glad to translate it for you. I would be happy, if I could here your opinion about my book, I am shure that it does not meet all the necessities for constructing an electronic computer, but it should be only the beginning of a research, I want to make about standardizing automatic switching circuits.

But if your precious time does not allow, to give me an answer, I don't feel sorry, I only wanted to repair that fault, I have committed, when you visited me in Germany in 1947.

Respectfully yours

*Helmut T. Schreyer*  
Helmut T. Schreyer

[and 5/28/53]



THE MENNINGER FOUNDATION  
TOPEKA, KANSAS .....

FOR PSYCHIATRIC TREATMENT,  
..EDUCATION, AND RESEARCH

May 11, 1953

Dr. Norbert Wiener  
Department of Mathematics  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge 39, Mass.

Dear Doctor Wiener:

Enclosed is galley proof of your article which will appear in the July issue of the Bulletin. We request that you correct it and return it to us within 36 hours after it is received, *airmail*.

You will receive ten complimentary copies of the Bulletin in which your article appears. If you wish to order reprints, you may do so on the enclosed reprint order blank which should be returned direct to the printers. Your article measures 9 pages in computing the cost of the reprints.

Sincerely yours,

*Mary D. Lee*

(Mrs.) Mary Douglas Lee  
BULLETIN OF THE MENNINGER CLINIC

*Returned - May 13<sup>th</sup>*

42  
9  
778



# TO AVOID ERROR

## Read and follow these instructions

1. Return all proof marked "Original Set" as soon as you have marked all of the corrections to be made. The "Duplicate Set" may be retained for reference.

2. If an article contains "Engravings" or "Cuts", the "Original Set" of engravers proofs must be returned.

3. Although all galleys are carefully read by our proof-readers, the author also must carefully read proof in order to obtain maximum accuracy.

4. If any errors are found which have been missed by the proof-reader, mark such errors in *red ink*. These are called *Printer's Corrections*.

5. Any changes made which are different from original copy should be marked in *black ink*. Such changes are called *Author's Alterations*.

These color differences must be maintained in order to credit the proper account with the cost of corrections or alterations.

6. Never, under any circumstances, cut the "Original Set" of proof.

The printer is entirely guided by the instruction written on proof, therefore please be exact in your proof-reading, particularly checking names, dates, references, and figures. If engravings appear see that they are properly placed.

Since *alterations* are charged for at \$5.45 per hour, it is important to the author to be conservative in order that time and money may be saved. Satisfactory alterations can be made at low cost if the following principles are observed:

1. Unless absolutely necessary, don't make an unimportant change (such as inserting a comma) on a galley not otherwise altered.

2. If you substitute a word or phrase, make the substitution as nearly as possible the same number of letters as the deleted matter. "Extraordinary" won't get into the same space as "unusual". If a line is overrun, the next must also be overrun, and the next and the next to the end of the paragraph.

3. When it is necessary to add new material put it at the end of paragraphs if possible. Make new paragraphs rather than overrun standing paragraphs.

4. In deleting, endeavor to delete solid blocks of type. Wherever possible, delete at the end of a paragraph rather than in the middle or at the beginning.

5. Transposing words, phrases or sentences is certain to be costly. Transposing entire paragraphs is relatively cheap.

6. When proof is in pages, any changes except the absolutely essential should be scrupulously avoided; especially changes which cause the overrunning of a page.

### PROOF READRES' MARKS

✕ Change bad letter	☐ Raise	√ Superior figure	no¶ No paragraph
⊥ Push down space	☐ Lower	∩ Inferior figure	w. f. Wrong font
9 Turn over	≡ Straighten lines	[ Move to left	.... Let it stand
∩ Take out ( <i>dele</i> )	⊙ Period	] Move to right	<i>stat.</i> Let it stand
^ Left out; insert	/ Comma	(?) Query	<i>tr.</i> Transpose
# Insert space	⊙ Colon	<i>out, s.c.</i> Out, see copy	<i>caps.</i> Capital letters
✓ Even spacing	/ Semicolon	☐ Em quad space	<i>s.m.c.</i> Small caps
✓ Less space	∨ Apostrophe	$\frac{1}{m}$ One-em dash	<i>l.c.</i> Lower case
○ Close up entirely	∨ Quotation	$\frac{2}{m}$ Two-em dash	<i>ital.</i> Italics
	= Hyphen	¶ Paragraph	<i>rom.</i> Roman



*National Society for the Study of Communication*

Committee on General Methodologies

Seth Fessenden, Chairman  
University of Denver  
Denver, Colorado

May 12, 1953

Dr. Norbert Wiener  
Department of Mathematics  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge 39, Mass.

Dear Dr. Wiener:

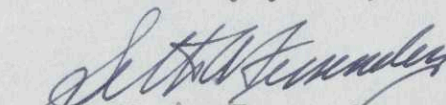
This is just a note to express my appreciation of your willingness to be a member of the panel of speakers looking "Toward a Theory of Communication" at the national convention next winter. I sincerely hope that the summer's rest will lead you to have more vigor and creativity than ever. I am selfish in this, I suppose, for I feel we need you badly.

The others who have been invited to be on the panel have also accepted. I wrote you that Dr. Moreno and M. Kendig had so written; today I heard from Dr. Allen Walker Read saying, "I am happy to accept the invitation." We should have a fine time as well as make a real contribution to the thinking of the members of the society and the speech association.

I understand you appeared on television here last night. I am very unhappy that I missed the program. It seems so often that with radio and television we miss the very things we wish most we could have heard or seen.

When the date and time are definitely set, I'll write you. I'll try not to bother you other than that until we are ready to establish the details of the program early in the fall.

Sincerely yours,

  
Seth A. Fessenden



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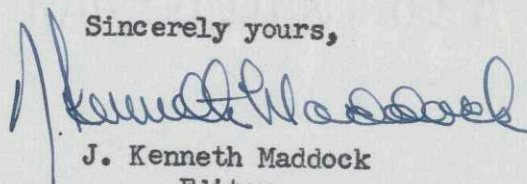
May 12, 1953

Dr. Norbert Wiener  
Department of Mathematics  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge, 39, Massachusetts

Dear Dr. Wiener:

It was good to have your letter of May 6th as well as your opinion of Dr. Rothstein. As you suggest, we shall adopt a wait and see policy and when his manuscript comes in we shall certainly take advantage of your generous offer to look it over.

Sincerely yours,



J. Kenneth Maddock  
Editor

JKM:BS





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*publishers*

ROCKEFELLER CENTER, 630 Fifth Avenue, New York 20 • CABLE ADDRESS *Essandess* • TELEPHONE *Circle 5-6400*

May 12, 1953

Dear Dr. Wiener:

I enclose herewith a royalty statement that manages to be at once accurate and misleading - if that is a scientific possibility.

You will note that the statement is for the "royalty on sales for six months ending March 31, 1953" - that is, about a week after publication date. Actually, we had sold more than 2,000 copies by that date, but these were all that had been entered on the books downtown at the time. Sales, meantime, have continued to average in the neighborhood of 200 copies a week, and the final figure on the next royalty statement will, accordingly, be in an attractive black color with at least one extra digit.

With best wishes,

As ever,

*Henry Simon*

Dr. Norbert Wiener  
MIT  
Cambridge, Mass.

hws:lf  
enc.





# SIMON AND SCHUSTER, INC.

*publishers*

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AUTHOR **Norbert Wiener**

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**March 25, 1953** **500.00**)- \$ **750.00**

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(or)

Unearned Balance— \$ **29.29**

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\*In order to achieve a maximum exposure of sales to the public in bookstores, we ship our books with a return privilege. Therefore, these sales represent books shipped out but not necessarily sold at the moment by booksellers. This royalty report is subject to adjustment in the event that any copies are returned.



Faculté des Sciences

PHYSIQUE THEORIQUE

Téléphone: 401-24

Professor Norbert WIENER  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
CAMBRIDGE (Mass.)

Dear Professor WIENER,

I must travel to Montreal at the end of June to take a part to a symposium on microwaves optics to be held there. I expect to have a stay in United States on this opportunity? and I should be very glad to see you and to talk with you upon scientific matters.

I hope, I shall arrive in New-York on June 18th and depart from there on July 7th. I shall be in the States from June 18th to 21th and from June 29th to July 7th. Would you like please, to tell me if it will be possible to meet you, and when, so that I may organize my time table.

I give you in P.S. the main Problem I studied last years. I should be very glad to come into contact if possible with the Scientists you know, who study such problems.

I thank you very much for trouble and I wait for the pleasure to see you.

With kind regards.

*A. Blanc-Lapierre*

A. BLANC-LAPIERRE  
Professeur à la Faculté des  
Sciences d'Alger.

*you will be at MIT -  
seminar - on July 6-7.*

*Would this man be interested in  
your seminar with Lee?*

*[ans 5/28/53]*



A p p e n d i x  
-----

Last years, the main subjects studied in my laboratory are the following ones :

1°) Random functions theory, and application to the problem of noise in electricity.

(experimental studies of noise are lead in my laboratory.).

2°) Information theory and its application to optics.

(study of the quantity of information transmitted from an object to its image-application to the notion of limit of resolution- possibility in some cases of improvements to the limit of resolution. (We have lead on this subject, interesting experiments for principle.))

3°) Study of the conductivity of thin metallic films.

(theoretic and experimental studies. Flicker effect shown by these films.)



## THE ALUMNI

Florence Sabin, M.D. '00, FAC. '02-'25 (Medicine), has been awarded an Elizabeth Blackwell Citation by the New York Infirmary, in recognition of her work in public health in Denver and of her career on the Hopkins faculty.

David I. Macht, B.A. '02, M.D. '06, FAC. '09-'17, '23-'32 (Medicine), has been made a member of the Royal Academy of Pharmacy of Madrid. One of only three American members, Dr. Macht was so honored for his research in pharmacology and phyto-pharmacology, a new field using plants rather than animals for finding toxins in blood.



The Barbizon

LEXINGTON AVENUE AT 63<sup>RD</sup> STREET  
NEW YORK 21, N.Y.

May 13 - 1953

Dear Mr. Wigner:

I know you are in New York soon -  
I should like very much to meet you - and have  
a chat with you - I know you only <sup>from</sup> the  
publication of your book - and of your <sup>last</sup>  
letter's article about you in the Life Post  
April 27 - 1953 - That's why I want to meet you

I am a writer - I write under  
another name - ~~Marie Perle~~ <sup>you might know</sup> my father - ~~is a~~

I thought I'd enclose a clipping - from the  
Hopkins Alumni Magazine [I'm a former  
graduate - M.A. in French literature  
from Johns Hopkins] which gives the  
outlet's biographical data & accomplish-  
ments of his career - as a scientist -

I'd like to invite you to  
the Johns Hopkins Club <sup>here in NY</sup> when you are  
next in town - will you let me know if that  
will be soon? Sincerely -

P.S. Should you know my  
father - we keep from him and meet  
my family - anything particular to my  
world - please - Evelyn Beatrix Macht  
EBM:EBM



Rosewood State Training School,  
Owings Mills, Md.  
May 13, 1953

Professor Norbert Wiener,  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology,  
Boston, Mass.

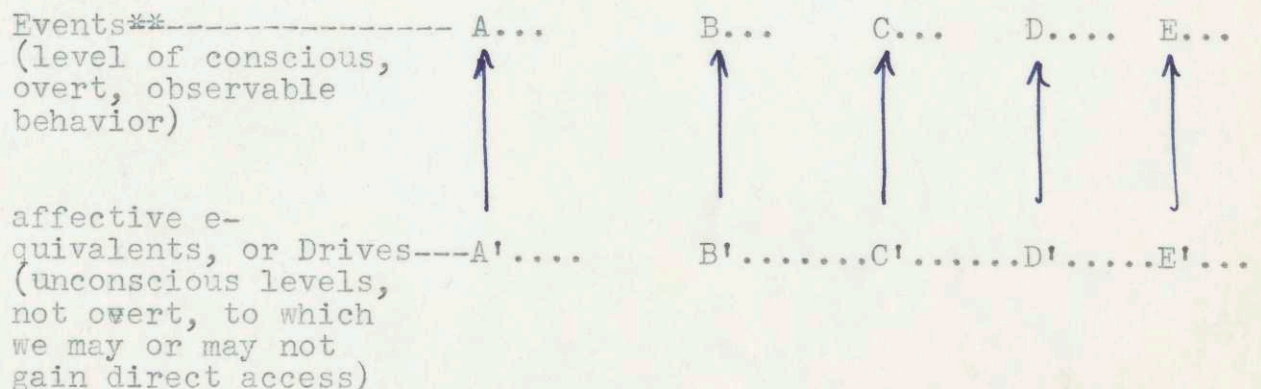
Dear Dr. Wiener,

I was tremendously stimulated recently in reading your book Cybernetics, although as a person with no background in mathematics I found the going rather rough in spots. I write you at this time because I feel that you would be able to answer some questions I have, and I feel emboldened to write because I sensed from the book that you would be inclined to encourage and welcome thinking and investigation in these matters on the part of tyros like myself.

The first general topic I had in mind might be called "The Philosophy of Statistics". As a psychiatrist, I am interested in behavior, and have lately become interested in the matter of randomness and control as they apply to the human.

I might clarify the problem I had in mind by the illustration of the "burnt-out" chronic psychotic patient. If we take a given psychotic patient before "burning-out" has occurred, we might observe a set of behavior A, B, C, D, E... etc. where these refer to separate acts occurring (as we observe them) in entirely random sequence: e.g. A--tugs at ear lobe, B-- gets up and walks around, C--an incoherent verbal utterance, D-- urinates in the corner etc., where these events do not relate periodically to any known parameter. However, if we investigate further we discover that there is drive involved, that each event is related symbolically to certain deeper affective equivalents. We might diagram the situation thus:

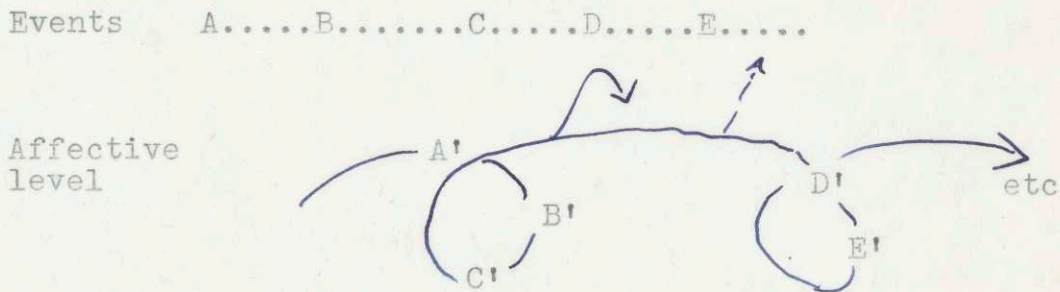
(Situation 1)





Now, there may come a time when such a patient becomes "burnt-out". There is at present no explanation for such an occurrence, but it seems clinically to be a well-substantiated phenomenon. What it means simply is that the affective drives, to any observable or perceptible degree, are no longer connected to the overt behavior in question; with some chronic patients one has the feeling that affective drive# has simply disappeared entirely. These are patients in whom psychiatrists talk of "flattening of affect". The patient's overt behavior may be about the same, or even exactly the same, as before, but it has become habitual or automatic. Our particular patient above may now present the same "random" behavior in the same sequence, but no longer bearing any relationship to the affective drives. Diagrammatically thus:

(Situation 2)



(represented in this form to indicate the possibility that if the same affective components may be said to exist at all, they may be occurring in a state of circuit formation, oscillation, etc.).

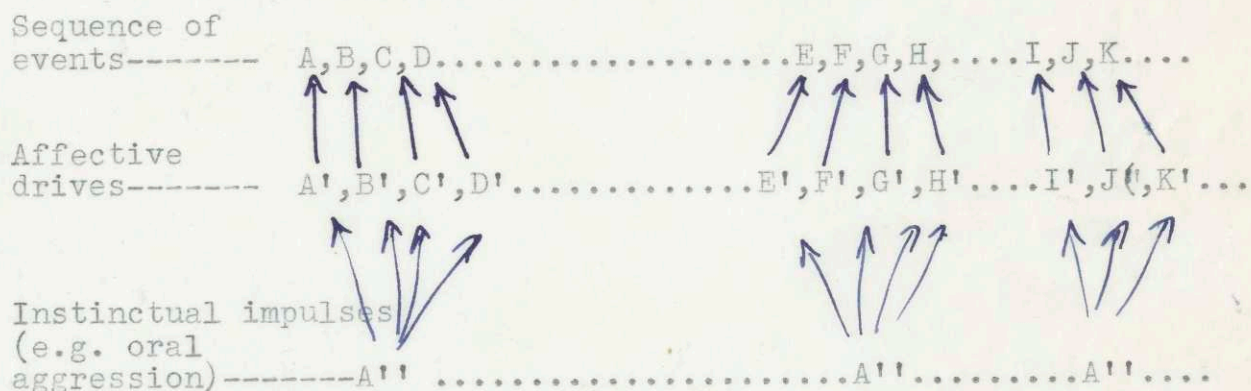
The pure behaviorist with a mathematical bent might judge picture #1 to be "a series of acts occurring in random ~~sequence~~ sequence". If he came on the scene later he might judge picture #2 to be exactly the same. This would be justifiable from the purely statistical point of view. And yet clearly the two situations are different, if we consider the entire context.

Can we speak of degrees, or types, of randomness? Is the randomness of events A,B,C,D... at Time #1 different in quality from that of the same events at Time #2? Or is randomness randomness, no matter what its "background" might be? A physician-physicist friend, Dr. Donald Rudin, with whom I argue about these things, implies that the latter is true, that if a sequence is random, it is random---no matter what drives feed the events; and that to the statistician the question is meaningless. From the point of view of considering deeper psychic



motives and forces, I find myself unable to accept this, although I do not have the mathematical background to be able to fit deeper motives of human events into a statistical scheme. But it seems that we have to take these into account--- the purely behavioristic attitude has, I think, been shown ultimately to be of limited use in understanding human behavior.

If, referring back to Situation 1, we descend even deeper, to the motives underlying affective drives A', B', etc., keeping in mind the principle that randomness and control (or entropy and information) are opposite, we would discover that in terms of deeper motives, instincts and impulses, there is actually a high degree of control. We might now modify Situation #1 as follows:



Thus, at deeper levels, events which seem entirely random and sometimes entirely unrelated, may be being powered by the same instincts, and in a manner which, upon investigation, is found to be utterly logical and controlled. So the events occurring randomly at superficial levels (of overt, observable muscular behavior) are actually at deeper levels under a high degree of control. A perfect illustration of this principle is in the dream. In terms of its manifest content, a dream sequence may be entirely random, may appear to be completely uncontrolled, and containing no information ("I had the craziest dream...just didn't make any sense at all..."). However, as Freud brought out in his The Interpretation of Dreams, the opposite of all these things is true: events in the dream are not random, are under high degrees of control, and the dream contains enormous information----once we look beneath the surface of its manifest contents.

Can we speak, then, in the human, of "levels" of randomness, so that the randomness in any given individual may actually ~~xx~~ be different at any one time, depending on which stratum of behavior (from conscious to unconscious) we are observing? (Incidentally, in a "burnt-out" patient, there may be disconnection of drives between levels all the way down).



The relationship (I gather, the equivalence) between randomness and probability offers further problems in the statistics of human behavior. Clearly, if we are shuffling cards, it is probable that the subsequent sequence will be random. But is random behavior in a human being necessarily probable? Insofar as a person is operating with a minimum of randomness, he is improbable; in other words, the intelligent person under full control at all times would be statistically unlikely. But the opposite is not true, if we look deeper into unconscious motivation. For example, a psychopath may appear to be operating at random: now picking a pocket, now getting drunk, now running off with his friend's wife. But all of these random events, which for this kind of person are probable, may be powered by a single drive, such as an incestuous interest in his mother.; thus, looking at the events from inside out, they are not random at all, and are thus improbable.

I do not feel that it is begging the question, or bringing a meaningless solution to a meaningless problem, to pose the concept of levels --or classes-- of randomness. The institution of classes is the way out of the Russellian paradox, and may be the way out of this one.

There is another aspect of deeper philosophical significance, and obscurity, which is brought out by investigation of very deteriorated patients., particularly low-grade, chronic custodial idiots, such as we find in an institution of the type in which I am now working\*. Here are patients operating at as high a level of randomness as we could expect to find in a human, where everything in the psyche is disconnected from everything else, where circuits are firing entirely at random, and where the randomness occurs at all levels of personality. This may be so pronounced that the patient might simply not eat unless he were fed by someone else.

But there is something we might overlook, and that is that the patient is still alive. Spontaneous death may occur in these patients, assuming that they are being properly cared for, apparently as a random occurrence in a random existence. And yet, can we be sure? There is no evidence to indicate that natural death in general is necessarily a random event; quite the opposite. We see, for example, in the course of any general medical or psychiatric experience, death of a widow or widower occurring shortly after the death of a spouse. We see many other kinds of these unconsciously determined natural deaths, which are in another sense suicides. We see them in the general, "normal" public, and we see them also in chronic psychotics and (as nearly as we could judge) very low-grade idiots.

Is death as it occurs here, then, really a random occurrence? Or does it represent, in fact, a spurt, a last gathering, of

\* Corresponding, I believe to the Fenwald School in Massachusetts.



non-randomness or control? Another way of asking the question is this: for the individual operating completely at random, which is the more probable state---life or death?

The latter questions are possibly more stimulating, and of deeper philosophical import, but are very likely not promising avenues of investigation here.

Randomness is a subject of particular interest to me since I have lately begun to work psychiatrically, and as much as possible psychoanalytically, with feebleminded persons, people in whom what we call intelligence is ~~is~~ limited or lacking. It seems to me (and I find support in your book) that intelligence is nothing more or less than information or negative **Entropy**. Therefore we do, in fact, see greater degrees of randomness in these patients of lower intelligence---randomness operating more flagrantly at all levels of personality structure than in the normal. A particularly striking instance of this is in group behavior (in those patients capable of verbalizing) where periods of intelligible, meaningful conversation or communication will be interrupted by spurts of noise---actual, literal noise (giggling, screaming, everyone talking at once etc.) and "noise" in the communication-engineering sense (i.e. no information available at those times).

I have a second topic of some interest to me and possibly of greater interest than the above for the general scientist. That is this idea: if we accept Eddington's idea that the only absolute measure of (non-Newtonian) time is entropy, is it not also equally possible that time is also "resistance against entropy". For example, if the universe runs on to a point where throughout the entire system entropy is at an absolute maximum, we could say that since no more entropy is possible, there will be no more time. But could we not as easily say, and in terms more meaningful to us, that time ceases to exist because resistance against entropy is no longer possible.

If we regard the subjective experience of time (and I might here state my opinion that the physical sciences, in their persistently striving to eradicate subjectivity, do not represent the ultimate in scientific endeavor. I believe that we must inevitably, in creating a real and valid scheme of things, consider subjectivity. I feel that one of the great contributions of your work, as I interpret it, is that it deliberately brings the human psychic apparatus, with all its errors and aberrations, back into meaningful focus as a part of the physical world which cannot be ignored)---if we regard subjective time, we observe that ~~it~~ generally seems to go fastest at those times when we are concentrating intensely, in other words when entropy is minimal and resistance against entropy is maximal, that is, under conditions of maximum control.. Conversely, when we are



bored time drags by at a snail's pace--- and one component of boredom is surely that entropy is rampant: either there is randomness and chaos in our environment or we have lost affective contact with it and are in a sense randomly scanning.

There is no point in attempting to develop this further at present. But I wonder if time in an absolute sense simply does not exist, if all time is nothing more or less than our subjective experience of it in terms of the resistance we maintain ~~yx~~ against randomness in ourselves and in our environment; in other words, the amount of control we maintain or information we codify, decodify, transmit, etc. It happens statistically that most people have about the same experience of resistance against entropy or time passage (although as you probably know, in certain psychopathological states the sense of time passage varies widely from the norm), and they can generally speaking agree on how much time has passed. We are also, of course, aided in our appraisal of time passage by the Newtonian events of diurnal and seasonal repetition.

I hope that you will find these questions of interest, or worth answering in some way. I can go only so far with these ideas, as I get rapidly out of my depth: these are among the reasons why I write to you.

It happens that I will be in Boston for my Fifth Reunion at Harvard Medical School on Friday, May 29 and Saturday, May 30. I would cherish and deeply appreciate the opportunity to spend a little time with you on either of those days. I might also mention at this point that I was introduced to you by Dr. Trygve Gundersen back in January or February, 1948, an occurrence I'm sure you would not recall.

Hoping very much to hear from you,

I remain,

Yours respectfully,

*David J. Vail M.D.*  
David J. Vail, M.D.



May 13, 1953

Dr. S.A. Goudsmit  
Brookhaven National Laboratory  
Upton, Long Island  
New York

Dear Dr. Goudsmit:

I wish to submit the enclosed article by Professor Wiener  
and myself for publication in The Physics Review.

Sincerely yours,

Armand Siegel

hb



TONI CASSIRER  
839 WEST END AVE. APT. 6B  
NEW YORK 25. N. Y.

Ex Prodigy

5.14.1953

Sehr verehrter Professor Wiener!

Ich habe soeben die letzten Seiten Ihres Buches (Ex-Prodigy) gelesen und befinde mich in einem Zustand der Begeisterung, der meinem Alter gar nicht zukommt. Es kommt mir auch nicht zu, Ihre Zeit ohne weiteres in Anspruch zu nehmen--das weiss ich wohl-- aber es gibt eben Dinge die man aussprechen muss, selbst auf die Gefahr hin etwas Ungewöhnliches im Sinne der Konvention, zu tun.

Ich bin die Witwe, des hier in New York, im Jahre 1945 versorbenen Philosophen, Ernst Cassirer, dessen Namen Sie zwar nicht erwähnen, der Ihnen aber wohl doch bekannt ist. Als ich begann Ihre Jugendgeschichte und geistige Entwicklung zu lesen--wurde ich ganz eigentümlich berührt, durch die merkwürdige Überschneidung Ihres und unseres Lebensweges und ~~das~~ nahezu gleichartigen Probleme, die sich Ihnen und uns in den Weg stellten---noch mehr aber über die Art wie Sie sie für sich und wir sie für uns gelöst haben. Ich kann Ihnen was ich empfinde und ausdrücken möchte, nicht in einem Brief übermitteln. Ich sende Ihnen daher mit gleicher Post, ein, als Manuskript vervielfältigtes Buch, das ich vor drei Jahren beendet habe und das alles enthält, was ich Ihnen sagen möchte. Im Gegensatz zu Ihnen, bin ich nicht nur kein Prodigy, sondern ein hoffnungslos unwissenschaftliches Wesen und meine Aufzeichnungen, die nur den Zweck hatten, meines Mannes Bild und seine Stellung zu mir, seiner Wissenschaft und den Problemen unseres Schicksals festzuhalten---könnte man eher mit der etwas kindlichen Leistung einer Grandma Moses vergleichen, als mit irgend etwas, das mit Begabung oder Wissenschaft zu tun hat. Es ist ein rein persönliches Dokument, ohne Anspruch auf irgend etwas anderes als verstanden zu werden. Als ich Seite auf Seite Ihres Buches las war es mir als müsste ich Sie seit vielen Jahren kennen. Überall stiess ich, nicht nur auf Namen die mir vertraut sind, sondern was viel wichtiger für mich wahr, auf eine merkwürdige Gleichartigkeit dessen, was mein Mann und ich für Wichtig und Wertvoll gehalten haben und was uns oft isoliert hat, in der Jugend und



TONI CASSIRER  
639 WEST END AVE. APT. 63  
NEW YORK 25, N. Y.

II

noch mehr später in der Fremde.

Ich würde es nicht wagen, Ihnen die Lektüre eines Amateurbuches zuzumuten und noch dazu in deutscher Sprache, wenn Sie in Ihrem Buche Ihre Frau nicht so geschildert hätten, dass ich mich darauf verlassen kann, dass sie Ihnen abnehmen wird, was Sie nicht selbst unternehmen sollten. Und so kann sie ja auch eine Auswahl treffen, wenn sie findet, dass überhaupt irgend etwas für Sie Interessantes in meinen Aufzeichnungen enthalten ist. Merkwürdigerweise glaube ich, dass Sie solche Stellen finden werden. Wie hätte ich sonst durch Ihre Schilderungen so ergriffen worden sein? - fast auf jeder Seite.

Verzeihen Sie bitte diesen Überfall. Wenn er zu beanstanden ist (was ich nicht ausschliessen will) so sind die Motive die ihn hervorbringen doch einwandfrei.

Ich danke Ihnen für die Bereicherung die Sie mir durch Ihr Buch gegeben haben. Mir ist zu Mute, wie an einem hohen Feiertag.

Ihre sehr ergebene

Toni Cassirer

Noch eine Frage. Ist oder wird das Buch ins Deutsche übersetzt?

[ans 6-1-53]



Dr. Weir  
Man Inst of Tech.  
Boston Mass

May 14-53

Dear Sir

For an apparatus to read aloud from a  
painted page a possible example would be an  
instrument as teleprompter to read off the page  
while the viewer or subject were ~~it~~ operated a  
possible gaze of syllabic hand contact as the  
words became legible this to function as  
a playback of present phonic dictation  
apparatus. The whole would be an automatic  
operation including the viewer's operation of the  
hand instrument as in type writing reproductions  
A short period of practice would ~~might~~ do  
average person proficient in this operation.

Another method would be a viewer to use  
the lip method (an automatic process) of slight  
pronunciation of enlarged words this sound to  
be amplified ~~immediately~~ for his attention  
of intelligible apparatus.

Dr. Weir  
7/14



May 14, 1953

Mr. E.C. Foster  
International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union  
33 Harrison Avenue  
Boston, Mass.

Dear Mr. Foster:

The end of the term finds me facing an accumulated amount of work which is considerably greater than I had anticipated. I am badly in need of a vacation, and I can only achieve this by ruthlessly cutting down on my commitments.

Will you therefore forgive me when I ask to back off from the obligation that I have assumed from you to write a series of three articles on mathematics? I am firmly convinced of the wisdom of your publishing idea, and only regret that my limited strength prevents me from making the contribution you invited me to make.

It was good to meet you and to talk to you. With every good wish,

Sincerely yours,

Norbert Wiener

hb



Mr. E.C. Foster, Boston office of the International Ladies'  
Garment Workers' Union.

HA 6-9350.

33 Harrison Ave. B.K.

Asks for a series of three articles of 2500 to 3000 words each for use in public education through newspaper distribution in science. Articles to be geared to arousing interest in various fields, and to imparting information which will increase public knowledge. Make Math important so people want to understand it.

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1. What mathematics is about, why it's important.
  
2. Rudiments of math in mathematical logic: the simplest mathematics. Communication theory, for example, used to be one of math's most abstract areas, and is now a widely used tool in many branches of science.
  
3. History of the branches of mathematics which the telephon engineer must use. What is the history of requirements and tools used by the telephone engineer?

Articles to be finished about June first. Incidental expenses--typing, etc.--to be borne by the ILG.