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From: Lloyd Etheredge <lloyd.etheredge@policyscience.net>

**Subject: 257. Red Team: Reversing the Process - DNI Suggestions to Academic Social Science**

Dear Dr. Fischhoff and Colleagues:

It would be worthwhile to reverse the current process, and for a Red Team/National Academy of Sciences project to survey members of the DNI world with research orientations/degrees to ask for their recommendations of useful questions for academic research, [Many years ago the National Research Council published an exciting booklet, "Inventions Wanted by the Armed Forces," which I still remember from the time that I encountered it in elementary school.] A stimulating and productive process could get underway.

**Misperceptions of the Academic World**

During the Clinton-Gore Administration I spent time talking with senior people involved in the Reinvention of Government to discuss the potential role of the social sciences. I encountered a strong judgment that "academic social scientists are such narcissists" that any new money they

received would be used for projects and arguments to fight academic battles for status and tenure and were unlikely to get them, or the federal government, any more closely in contact with reality or provide practical suggestions about important problems, Even the current President of Columbia, in a rare moment of public criticism, referred to academic economic theory in an Op Ed piece (before the catastrophic failure) as "solipsistic."

I would not discount these descriptions, but I draw the causal arrows differently. From a wider historical perspective, going back to the Great Society and Reagan years, I think that we have been observing the behavior of people who have been deprived of data systems with which to test their ideas, or anybody's competing ideas. And where cynicism, despair, and frustration had taken hold.

However, I think we can assuredly get very rapid progress in any SBE field if there are very large public data systems, designed to test many competing (including new) theories and paradigms, that are available to many researchers and graduate students here and abroad, on their desktops without cost. NASA's COBE satellite was brilliantly designed to test more than 100 theories, and the new, brilliant, design of national/global rapid learning systems based on electronic health records are another example of this diagnosis.

Yes, there will be Kuhnian mechanisms, and dysfunctional institutions like NSF and some Republicans to deal with. However if the DNI has ideas and can help with large-scale public databases and analysis methods for exploration and theory-testing, the academic SBE disciplines may have a quick Renaissance in these areas of mutual interest.

### **DNI Agendas**

I cannot speak for the DNI system. However if I was in General Clapper's position, I think that several of the ideas that I have suggested during the Fischhoff process also would occur to me.

For example, 1.) computer-assisted content analysis is such a remarkably good research tool that I would wonder why the academic world wasn't already developing it at high speed.

- It also would occur to me that 2.) It is overdue to test all of the basic theories and discoveries of political and other behavior across different cultures & to educate students and make predictions that could be informed by what is discovered (e.g., # 12 at [www.policyscience.net](http://www.policyscience.net) at II.D).

It also would occur to me that 3.) hierarchical psychodramas are so obvious a feature of political behavior and power relationships in so many countries, that we ought to use the new capabilities of neuroscience to get as much insight as we can. Especially since group behavior, order, and violence are often phenomena related to hierarchical psychodramas.

4.) I also might be interested in any assessments, drawn from social scientists in all countries, about whether their governments or influential publics misperceive America or its motives in ways that get in the way of progress and that could be corrected.

5.) Theoretical and practical suggestions about building new policy networks and other dimensions of G-20 capability to improve system-level intelligence & how the DNI system could help with linkups and unclassified data.

6.) I would wonder whether the CIA was missing anything about new ways to increase the growth of GDP/capita by 1% a year above the pre-crisis baseline; or missing anything about new catastrophes that are building outside the ken of traditional economic models

Etc. . . . It could be a long list.

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