

Memorandum



January 10, 1991

TO: Frank Murray, Dean
College of Education

FROM: Linda S. Gottfredson *lg*
Educational Studies

RE: Follow-Up Conference

I apologize for not responding sooner to your October 22 memo about the follow-up conference. As I told you the other day, I had hoped to avoid the fact--and then to inform people--that I have to cancel all follow-up activities to my College of Education colloquium mini-series.

I am glad that you still think it important to hold the conference, and I appreciated your October 22 offer of alternative funding for the conference. However, my July grant proposal to the Pioneer Fund (which you were not required to review and therefore may not have read) explains why I could not proceed with the conference, regardless of whether funding might now be available.

The public controversy over my funding and my work and the subsequent University investigation not only delayed any conference, thus jeopardizing its timeliness, but also poisoned the atmosphere for organizing and conducting one. I could no longer count on recruiting the other scholars and policy makers I had planned to invite after I and my funding source had just been denounced in the press by, among others, Jack Anderson and the NAACP, and then further stigmatized by the University administration itself.

You and I had agreed that the conference should be held on campus so that College faculty and students could attend. But such a conference would be viewed as especially provocative at the present time. You will recall that, by accepting the Research Committee's report, Presidents Trabant and Roselle have both officially condemned many of the colloquium participants. Five of the eight turn out to have been Pioneer grantees, and the report itself singled out two of them for criticism.

A UD conference featuring these speakers could, for that reason alone, be expected to generate disruptive protest and abuse of some conference participants. Given the current atmosphere, I doubt it would matter that, as you stated to President Jones, these are "the very best people in English speaking world on this topic" (your June 13, 1988 memo on the colloquium series).

Last summer I still held out hope of producing an edited book based on the colloquium series, but I have since concluded that even that is not possible at the present time. I explain in the attached letter, recently sent to all colloquium participants, why I am cancelling both the book and the conference.

It was very painful for me to cancel these activities. I had already invested considerable time in the colloquium-conference-book project, one which had already generated considerable interest both inside and outside the university. Internationally eminent scholars had devoted significant time to their colloquia and draft chapters in anticipation of the conference and book. A major publisher had already expressed interest in publishing the proposed book. Moreover, my chances of doing such a project in the future are now diminished. Whether the colloquium participants conclude that I am unreliable or only that my circumstances are, I imagine that they will now hesitate to work with me again.

Finally, on a personal note, you once commented that I must enjoy all the controversy. Far from it. I pursue my work despite controversy. That I have carried on with grace and occasional good humor during the past year (or at least I hope I have), as well as with undiminished resolve, has no doubt led some observers to misconstrue my behavior or to underestimate the impact of events upon me.

The last fifteen months have been devastating professionally. I had to break virtually all my professional commitments in order to contend with the various University actions against me while continuing to fulfill my University teaching and service responsibilities. Under current conditions, I see no way to continue my research or the other activities that Bob Gordon and I had been carrying out together under the umbrella of our Project for the Study of Intelligence and Society. Moreover, of the other two colleagues with whom I frequently collaborate, one has been warned by his organization not to associate publicly with me any more and the other has already suffered professionally because of our collaboration.

The University's actions have effectively terminated my research program at the University--ironically, the very same research that was so important in the University's decision to grant me tenure.

In any event, thank you again for your offer. I very much hope I will be able to accept it later if conditions improve.

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University of Delaware

To: Linda G. Hedson
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Frank

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OFFICE OF THE DEAN
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
NEWARK, DELAWARE 19716

(302) 451-2311
FAX (302) 292-3569

1 February 1990

To: Lawrence Nees, Chair
Faculty Senate Committee on Research

From: Frank B. Murray, Dean, College of Education

Subject: Pioneer Fund Investigation

I think it would be very difficult for your committee not to conclude that the acceptance of monies from the Pioneer Fund "has compromised [the University's] stated position of supporting a multi-cultural and multi-racial environment" or that it has at least made the achievement of such an environment more difficult than it was before the controversy received widespread coverage in the media. And your committee would be correct to conclude that our work would be easier if the monies were returned in a manner that also received widespread attention. Unquestionably, the goals, particularly the short term goals, of the Commission to Promote Racial and Cultural Diversity would be more easily accomplished if we severed any connection we have with any person or group who in any way opposed affirmative action, opposed racial integration, placed limitations on the potential of minority citizens on the basis of alleged genetic constraints on their intellectual power, or held that some ethnic or racial groups are superior to others in ways that make a difference or that cannot be compensated for in other ways -- no matter what scholarly veneer covered these positions.

I believe, however, that your committee must go beyond the question of the compatibility of the Pioneer Fund's goals with our Commission's goals to the question of which of our many University goals are the overriding ones, the ones which we will preserve at all costs -- even if other important goals need to be sacrificed temporarily or altogether. It would be helpful if we could be very clear on this question, and I would hope that we would all see that the scholarly pursuit and promulgation of truth is our overriding goal, a goal to which all other worthy goals must be subservient.

With regard to the question of the Pioneer Fund, I hope, regardless of how you decide the matter of the eventual disposition of the funds, that you can give me some guidance on

how I can avoid the kind of problem that now occupies your committee and many other committees on campus. I have used four criteria to determine whether our college should accept monies from an external source and I hope you can frame your conclusions, particularly if you want the University to reject the Pioneer Fund's support of research and dissemination, in a way that would add a fifth or sixth criterion to my list. Currently, I believe we can do the right thing in the acceptance of funds if we require the following of our grantors:

1. That the funds be legal.
2. That the work supported by the funds be subjected to all the standards of free and open inquiry.¹
3. That the provider of the funds exercise no influence on the outcome of the inquiry.²
4. That the work supported by the funds be consistent with our mission and the standards of scholarship, research, instruction and service that we employ in the Department and College.

To date I have not been able to formulate another criterion that would identify "tainted" money, although I believe that there are funds from some clearly objectionable groups that we would not take regardless of the value of the projects that would be supported. These cases, however, are so flagrant and unlikely that a criterion based upon the discrepancy or contradiction between their stated goals and ours would not help us with cases like the Pioneer Fund. While I believe I can infer the motives of the Pioneer Fund Trustees from their pattern of funding, I have not been able to formulate a criterion about my inference that would serve us in other cases where I also think I know what the donor really had in mind. I have not found a principle of higher education -- not already compromised by us -- that a group would have to oppose and work against for us to deny the legitimacy of any connection between the group and the University; what could they oppose -- tenure, academic freedom,

¹ This criterion is compromised now at Delaware when dissertations and proprietary research findings are sequestered. However to date, the College has not qualified its adherence to this standard.

² Here again I worry that this criterion is compromised in cases within and without the College where the continuation of funding for evaluation and projects is contingent upon the outcomes meeting the client's wishes and needs.

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the canon, affirmative action, democratic forms of governance, peer review, etc.? I believe you could test the soundness of your conclusion to return the money by the formulation of a criterion that would be as obviously correct as the four above. Even if it were not as obviously correct as these, I would be satisfied if it were something we, as a university, wanted to believe and something we would be willing to say we stood for.

With regard to another question about the Pioneer Fund, I would like your advice about our obligations to support Dr. Gottfredson's work with other University funds should we as a university, for our own purposes, return the funds she is using. Were she unable to do her research because we returned her funds, are we not obligated to support her work by other means? What will be the source of these funds? If your committee believes we are not obligated to provide the funds, then I would like to know how we can avoid the charge that we are simply doing by another means what we claim we would not do directly, namely contravene a professor's right to follow research questions to their natural ends.

Finally, I am troubled by the intemperate public tone of this debate and the number of reckless and unsupportable claims that have been made by almost all parties in the debate, especially in the newspaper accounts of it. Your committee should be in a position to evaluate the merits of the various claims that have been made, and if some are without foundation and are framed to mislead us, I think your committee should make this clear to the University community. We ought to be able to evaluate these competing claims, as we would any claims in our fields, and render a judgment about which of them should be dismissed and discredited and which deserve further consideration and respect.

Unlike the English and our own law courts, the Scottish law courts can render one of three verdicts in capital cases -- innocent, guilty, or not proven. I worry that your committee will give us a not proven verdict against the Pioneer Fund that will leave the impression, as it certainly will, that the College and any right thinking person would be wrong to take the Pioneer Fund's money, but give us no means of turning it back. I am asking you for a clear innocent or guilty verdict, as it were; if you decide to keep the funds, then make it unmistakably clear that this is the right thing to do. Similarly, if we are to return the funds, our decision must be seen as right and one whose justification can be extended to all other cases. To express reluctance or regret that we have no choice but to take the funds is a mistake in my opinion. We can apologize, and I believe we should apologize, to those who are offended, and I think harmed by, any research program of ours that bolsters the

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hateful prejudices and actions of ignorant people. We cannot
apologize for truth -- only for the harm it may do.

cc: President Trabant
Acting Provost Murray
Ron Whittington