

MY LETTERS OF SUPPORT (2)

August 3, 2006

Dean Svend Hylleberg

Aarhus University

Dear Dean Hylleberg:

I have read the committee report on Dr. Nyborg's sex-differences research that your institution requested. I write not only to reiterate my strong support for Dr. Nyborg, but also to express my incredulity that this report would be used to justify relieving Dr. Nyborg of all duties.

The report examined only a narrow slice of Dr. Nyborg's scholarship, and then examined only selected bits of that slice. That, apparently, was the university's charge to the committee. In essence, it asked the committee to put several very small pieces of his large corpus of scholarship under a microscope to find even "hairline cracks." The committee, in turn, created the appearance of many more flaws than it found. It treated minor errors as major ones and imputed from this inconsequentialia a "lack of due diligence." The committee judged Prof. Nyborg ignorant for using inadequate statistics when, as the report admits, adequate ones are not yet available in the literature; for not discussing differences between factoring methods that have already been found to provide essentially identical results for his purposes; for using statistical methods that experts in our field advise; and for, in essence, not analyzing his data in the way the committee members would have. When it lacked evidence, it always drew inferences that disfavored Prof. Nyborg (for example, it concluded that Dr. Nyborg would not actually do his follow-up because it didn't think such work worthwhile). At the same time, it did not doubt the claims against him (for example, the false claim that Dr. Nyborg refused to share his research with a colleague).

This persecution illustrates the tactics so often used against researchers whose research yields the "wrong" answers. Unable to condemn the answer outright, critics find scientific-appearing pretexts to manufacture the appearance of incompetence or fraud: they judge the work against standards applied to no one else, nit-pick details while ignoring the big picture; make innocent acts look suspicious; condemn doing that which the institution required (for example, speak to the press when it calls; abbreviate methods section when required by journals); never doubt accusers but always the accused.

You still have an opportunity to right this wrong.

Sincerely,

Linda S. Gottfredson

Professor

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December 12, 2005

Letter of Support for Professor Helmuth Nyborg

To Whom It May Concern:

I have known Professor Nyborg for over 15 years, during which time I have read his publications and attended many of his conference presentations in the USA and Europe. I have written extensively on sex and race differences in abilities and interests, and can testify that he is a careful, highly productive, and much respected empiricist in this area. I also greatly respect his willingness to follow where the data lead-and all-too-rare trait in these politically correct times.

He has presented his research on intelligence, sex differences, and related topics at every meeting of the International Society for Intelligence Research (ISIR) since its founding in 2000. I serve on both ISIR's Board of Directors and its journal's (Intelligence) Editorial Board, and I was present when Professor Nyborg reported his findings on sex differences in IQ in 2001. His data-rich presentation raised important questions, and, following his lead, many ISIR presentations now focus on sex differences in cognitive abilities, including their magnitude, developmental trajectory, manifestations in brain function, and evolutionary origins.

I am also on the Board of Directors (as has been Professor Nyborg) of the international society which publishes Personality and Individual Differences (PAID), the journal in which Professor Nyborg later published the article based on his 2001 ISIR presentation. Like the other scientific journals in which he publishes, PAID publishes only papers that have survived the peer review process. When the University of Aarhus suggests that his peer-reviewed articles are unworthy until re-examined in-house, it insults the expert reviewers, denies Professor Nyborg due credit for his exceptional accomplishments, and impermissibly imposes a special burden on him that other faculty do not share-a clear violation of academic freedom.

That the University of Aarhus has also confiscated Professor Nyborg's research materials is truly astounding-and despicable. With only the thinnest pretense of cause, it has smeared his good name and halted his research. This action is unprecedented, the misbehavior extreme.

The University can regain its claim to scholarly integrity only by swiftly returning Professor Nyborg's materials, publicly apologizing to him, publicly admonishing the perpetrator(s), and announcing that it will never tolerate such violations of academic freedom. Unless it does so, the University of Aarhus may suffer the same fate as my university, the University of Delaware, when it persisted in harassing me in the 1990s (for example, by trying to block my research funding, also on specious grounds). Among other embarrassing consequences, a national arbitrator ruled against the university, the university had to offer me an out-of-court settlement, and it garnered much bad publicity. The university had encouraged the press to demonize me, but ended up, fittingly, being ridiculed by it.

Sincerely,

Linda S. Gottfredson, Professor

<http://www.udel.edu/educ/gottfredson>

cc: Lauritz B. Holm-Nielson, Rector

Helmuth Nyborg