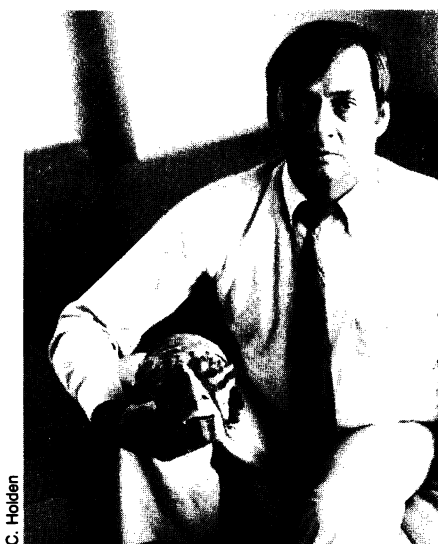


in Indo-European languages, says Sorenson; yet among the Canela they are mutually reinforcing.

- Patterns of mutual respect and interpersonal harmony among even densely populated groups in the Western Caroline Islands of Micronesia.

Sorenson has a somewhat Rousseauian view of the virtues of traditional societies. Nonetheless, one need only look at the facial expressions of young monks he has photographed during rituals at Tibetan monasteries—expressions reflecting various mixtures of awe, pensiveness, and rapture—to perceive the extraordinary range and subtlety of culturally conditioned emotional expression. People are beginning to recognize that environmental diversity must be preserved if humankind is to keep its



Sorenson holding ancestral skull from Vanuatu, formerly the New Hebrides.

options open. Sorenson's message is that the same principle applies when it comes to preserving knowledge about the emotional and behavioral diversity of human beings.

Sorenson has been described as a "genius," and a "lone wolf" type whose uncompromising approach to his work does not stand him in good stead when it comes to attracting political support. Smithsonian official Wilton Dillon, an anthropologist, also observes that his work stands outside the trends in modern anthropology which, "like other disciplines, has become so specialized that it has become divorced from its humanistic past." Sorenson is planning to sell his collection of Asian and New Guinean artifacts to finance further travel. Says Dillon: "if there was anybody who ever needed a patron, he is that."

—CONSTANCE HOLDEN

Rifkin versus Gene Splicing: NIH Wins a Round

A federal judge in Washington, D.C., has ruled that private companies, unlike federally funded researchers, are not legally required to obtain permission from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) before releasing into the environment organisms modified by gene splicing.

The ruling, by Judge Aubrey Robinson, Jr., came in a suit brought by author-activist Jeremy Rifkin. Rifkin was seeking, in effect, to force NIH to become the only federal agency with broad authority to regulate all experiments involving deliberate release of genetically engineered organisms. NIH does not want such sweeping authority, and Judge Robinson said in his ruling that there are "no legal grounds to compel NIH to regulate private firms."

NIH currently has jurisdiction only over researchers it funds. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Agriculture are claiming authority over specific types of experiments, whether funded publicly or privately, however. This means that NIH-funded researchers have to obtain approval from two separate agencies before conducting deliberate release experiments, while private companies are required to submit their proposals to a single agency.

Moreover, according to Lee Rogers, Rifkin's attorney, some types of experiments may not fall under the jurisdiction of any regulatory agency. "We were trying to say there should be no distinction between federally funded and company-funded proposals," says Rogers.

Rifkin used what one NIH official calls an "extremely contorted and remote argument" to force NIH to regulate private companies. In essence, he claimed that a clause in patent agreements between Stanford University and private firms for the use of a basic gene-splicing technique requires the firms to comply with NIH's recombinant DNA guidelines. Since NIH funded the Stanford work and is a party to the agreements, it can use them to exert authority over the companies, Rifkin claimed. Judge Robinson was unpersuaded.

The ruling is the latest setback for

Rifkin in his crusade against genetic engineering. Last year, he won a major victory when Judge John J. Sirica ruled that an experiment proposed by researchers at the University of California at Berkeley, which NIH had approved, could not go ahead because it had not been adequately reviewed for its potential environmental impact. Sirica also stopped NIH from approving any more experiments (*Science*, 1 June 1984, p. 962).

Last February, however, an appeals court said that NIH could go on approving experiments. (Rifkin filed his suit seeking to force NIH to regulate privately funded experiments before the appeals court acted. His objective at the time was to force companies to go to NIH while NIH was under court order not to approve any experiments, a situation that would effectively have placed a moratorium on all deliberate release experiments.)

NIH has now prepared an environmental assessment of the Berkeley experiment and will soon ask Judge Sirica to lift the injunction against it. The researchers will, however, have to obtain permission from EPA before they can go ahead.—COLIN NORMAN

Education Research Reorganization Announced

Secretary of Education William J. Bennett on 2 July announced a reorganization of the educational research bureaucracy, in which the National Institute of Education (NIE) will be renamed and its autonomy sharply diminished.

Two presidentially appointed positions will be eliminated, and the NIE and the National Center for Education Statistics will be reorganized within the Office of Educational Research and Improvement. This will be headed by a new assistant secretary, Chester R. Finn from Vanderbilt University. Finn, an early architect and later critic of NIE, was expected to receive Senate confirmation in mid-July.

Presented as a move toward "streamlining and consolidation," the plan entails the creation of five new offices—for research, statistics, information, library programs, and "improvement of practice." This last office