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... Rossi says that a working mother is a better example to her children than one "who shelves her books along with her diploma." There are two fallacies in that statement. First, many homemakers read, participate in community affairs, and retain a lively interest in the world. How many truly educated women shelf their books and their intellectual curiosity? Second, Rossi ignores the contribution women can make by showing their children how to use leisure. Experts tell us that one of the crises of the future will be the growth of leisure and the inability to use it wisely. Surely an educated mother who employs her education constructively while remaining at home can teach her children, by example, that free time is a gift to be cherished. . . .

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The Critic Criticized

It is clear from his recent letter to *Science* (16 July, p. 245) that all of us have been taking Banesh Hoffman much too seriously in his role as objective test critic. His argument shows no trace of his scientific training. Briefly, it is this: he has raised certain objections to the use of objective tests; Chauncey and Hilton state that they do not have *direct* evidence that these objections are false; hence Hoffman concludes they are true. Note that Hoffman has no evidence to support his arguments; they are entirely *a priori* ones. Note also that Chauncey and Hilton have a good deal of *indirect* evidence, all of which hangs together, that the arguments are fallacious. For a scientist it is surely a strange sort of argument that the absence of direct data to the contrary proves that a theory is the correct one.

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Hoffman's letter indicates that he is interested in statistical evidence and may have some of his own. I should therefore like to pose two questions for him: (i) Just what kind of statistical evidence would cause him to proclaim publicly that his charges were indeed refuted and that he had been wrong in his evaluation of the best of the multiple-choice tests? (ii) What are the

magnitudes of the negative correlations of "depth, subtlety, creativity, intellectual honesty, and superior knowledge" with Scholastic Aptitude Test scores?

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VA Hospitals:

Length of Stay

In his argument concerning length of stay of patients in Veterans Administration hospitals (Letters, 11 June, p. 1411), Spratt overlooks these most important points of difference between "private university hospitals" and those of the VA:

1) Patients discharged from surgical wards in private hospitals are not always ready to walk the streets upon discharge. The operation has been successful, but the recovery takes a long time, and when the patient has run out of insurance money he prefers to hobble home rather than go bankrupt at the rate of \$30 a day. A VA hospital, by law, cannot discharge a patient until the patient is ready for discharge.

2) With the aging of the population of veterans, disabling neurological diseases (such as strokes) are on the increase. Such illnesses are not like acute appendicitis; the treatment is long, the progress is slow, the complications frequent. A "private university hospital" usually shuns this kind of patient after a week or two of diagnostic work-up (which, again, takes up the largest chunk of insurance money, leaving the rest for "chronic care" in some nursing home). Through no fault of the private hospital, to the patient it looks as if once he has been squeezed dry of financial resources (usually insurance) he is shipped somewhere else. One can imagine the howling in Congress if VA institutions were to follow this policy.

3) The VA carries on the most extensive training program for medical residents, a benefit which may tend to lengthen hospital stay in some cases.

4) The VA is a very large organization; therefore anecdotes of particular instances are bound to be misleading. The fact is that it provides the cheapest high-quality medical care in our country today.

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