

Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Association of Black Psychologists, a Hispanic group, and several academics.

Each criticized ETS, but for mostly the same faults. Its major tests, such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test, the Law School and Graduate Management Admission tests, and the Graduate Record Examination, were said to be flawed by cultural bias, inadequate test construction and validity, and scoring errors; ETS itself was said to be flawed by its size, or rather its dominance of the testing industry, and also by its unresponsiveness to criticism and student complaints. The ETS tests, said Nader with typical flourish, "continue to unfairly shape the plans of millions of people, regulate their hopes, and shatter their self-confidence."

ETS President William Turnbull, who flew to Washington to rebut the report on the same day, termed it "an anti-climax after a five-year build-up. It seems mainly a collection of well-published material about testing, much of it published by ETS. Much of the material is dated . . . and some of it is just wrong."

ETS takes particular issue with the contention in the report that the major ETS tests are barely predictive of first-year academic performance, the major criterion by which such tests are measured. The author of the report, 24-year-old Columbia undergraduate Allen Nairn, concluded from published studies on the tests' validity that random predictions are just as reliable 90 percent of the time. Winton Manning, a vice president at ETS, says the validity is slightly higher, and that, in any event, it must be placed in the context of overall predictive difficulty and of practical use.

This rebuttal was challenged, however, by two Harvard Medical School faculty members who appeared on the podium with Nader. Douglas Porter and Warner Slack said their own research, soon to be published in the *Harvard Educational Review*, revealed similarly low correlations between test scores and college grades. They, and Nader, also said the tests do not predict grades in later years, the likelihood of eventual graduation, or eventual success in one's chosen profession. ETS admits as much, pointing out that such claims were never made.

The study, with attendant charges and countercharges, perhaps serves best to highlight the difficulty of predicting eventual performance at all. ETS and its supporters in the testing community believe the standardized tests offer enough improvement over older, less objective methods in order to justify their continued use. Nader, along with such academics as Leon J. Kamin, former chairman of the Princeton psychology department, and Banesh Hoffman, a mathematician from Queens College, believes the tests to be frauds perpetrated on a largely captive public.

But his sympathizers' real grievances are revealed several times in transparent remarks. For example, the report notes that "the ETS legal selection [LSAT] system does little to encourage the admission of potential advocates for working class and minority people. It is, however, congenial to the philosophy and priorities of the corporate bar." Nader also acknowledged he thought that better measures of potential success might replace traditional testing, measures such as a look at "extracurricular activities and community organizing."

The Nader-backed bill on standardized testing, which recently took effect in New York State, is due to be considered soon in at least 9 other states. ETS, in an effort to eclipse these moves, recently announced its willingness to distribute more sample tests and more information about its tests, to both students and statisticians. It also proposes to get independent analysis of potential cultural bias. Whether these measures go far enough will become evident soon in the legislatures.

## Women Gain Parity in Smoking-Related Ailments

"Cigarette smoking, an early sign of woman's social emancipation, is now a major threat to her personal health and her ability to bear healthy children." So states Surgeon General Julius Richmond, in releasing a study this month that says lung cancer due to smoking will soon be the leading cause of disease-related death among women.

The study, latest in a series of an-

nual reports to Congress on the health effects of smoking, notes for the first time that the death rate from lung cancer among women has tripled since the 1960's, and will surpass the rate of death from breast cancer by 1983. "An epidemic of lung cancer among women has now begun," Richmond said.

The cancer rate is rising now because women who entered the work force during World War II began smoking in greater numbers, and the latency period for cancers induced then has now ended. The report notes that, even today, there is a high incidence of smoking among women in professional occupations (the reverse is true for men), and that women are "more likely than men to smoke in order to reduce stress" such as that induced on the job.

The result is an unpleasant twist in the battle for equality. Women who smoke are now vulnerable to coronary heart disease and peptic ulcers, two smoking-related ailments more common among men. They also have special risks, because pregnant women who smoke experience more spontaneous abortions, bleeding, and ruptures of the amniotic membrane. Smoking during pregnancy has been firmly linked to lower birth weights, and tentatively linked with sudden infant death syndrome. Children of parents who smoke have more respiratory infections and more hospitalizations during the first year of life. As a result, Richmond said, the Health and Welfare Department is considering recommendation of a specific package warning label against smoking during pregnancy.

The report acknowledges that the incidence of smoking among both men and women is declining, but says the decline is slower among women. It also calls into question the predominant means of reducing one's risk, short of quitting: a switch to lower tar and nicotine cigarettes. "The evidence is mounting that individuals who switch to cigarettes with lowered 'tar' and nicotine inhale more deeply, smoke a greater proportion of their cigarettes, and in some cases smoke more cigarettes," possibly to maintain blood nicotine levels, the report says. Though the number of smokers is down, business is still brisk, because the average number of cigarettes that each smoker purchases is going up.

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