

Christmas, 1976

Dear Friends,

The rat lab is firmly established. I received tenure this fall at Wesleyan and am looking forward to many more years of teaching here. I especially want to thank those of you who wrote letters on my behalf. I'm sure they made some difference.

I did more research abroad than at home this year. From January until June I worked at the Anokhin Institute in Moscow, and during June and July at the Georgian Institute of Physiology in Tbilisi. Nina came over in May, gathered the material for her Yale thesis on health care in the Soviet Union, and joined me in a vacation at the Black Sea before we returned home for the fall semester.

The Soviet, experience was, if anything, even more rewarding than I had expected. I learned the language well, can now enjoy the culture, made many friends, and even did a lot of research which should lead to several scientific publications. Soviet socialism is, contrary to what you are given to read in American media, a very stable and growing economic and social system. It provides the basic amenities of life to all its citizens without any threat that they may someday be withdrawn or reduced. The most important challenges center around agriculture (which is highly inefficient and specialised) and work motivation. The agriculture suffers because the best educated young people keep leaving for the city. As a result there is a big push to upgrade the quality of culture in the countryside. The work motivation suffers because nobody can be fired from their job or forced to do something if they don't feel like it. As a result, they are trying to develop new ways of motivating work, a difficult problem.

In many respects it was necessary to begin work anew when I returned to the lab this fall. Fred was finishing up work on our NIH grant. By the way, our publication should be coming out in Brain Research any day now. He had done considerable work on brain stimulation in rats which had not led to much. We decided to follow up on work which Walt Severini was doing for a thesis (as yet unfinished). Fred, Mark Loomis (a tutorial), and John Kanki, Cliff Hall, and Rob Soiffer (in Psych 202) and I all worked on determining the brain pathways of "visual boxing." Visual boxing is the boxing behavior of a rat deprived of all sensory systems except the eyes, forcing him to rely on vision alone. Another project this fall looked at maternal nest defense in a burrow system (using the old Gershon rat tank).

There were several nice reunions of lab grads. At Neuroscience in Toronto we had a dinner (Chinese this year) together: John Zook, Mike Edwards, Mike Lehman, Danny Simons, Susan Simons (member by marriage) and myself. They had lots of good stories to trade about graduate student life, while Danny is on the verge of his Ph.D. While at a meeting of the Animal Behavior Society in New York this fall. I saw Mike Lehman and Ann Odmark Squire who is now a student in the Hunter College-American Museum of Natural History graduate program.

Let's see what other news and gossip I can send you. Here's a good one: "Foggy San Francisco is treating me just fine," That's from a Christmas card I just got from Al Petrocelli who has gone into private medical practice. He lives at 189 Vernon Terrace #14. Oakland. Al writes that he went to Honolulu for a vacation during the summer and visited with Steve Lum. Actually I also know that from Steve who came through for a visit this fall while on his way from an internship rotation at Mass General. Steve and Gwyned Gail are thinking of spending a year or two in Colorado or California on residency before returning to Honolulu. Here's another letter from one of the very first students in the lab: Henry "Skip" Wood writes that he is in his second year at Vanderbilt University Law School. He is very pleased with it. Walt Severini is living in Brooklyn now and working at the Neurobiology Dept, of Cornell Medical School, Bob Koss dropped by in the fall. He was very

tanned and healthy looking , since he's been unemployed and traveling on a long bicycle tour of New England. I also heard from Zane Bailey who was applying to graduate school programs in Psychology; I 'a hoping he got into the Howard program. I also see Wayne Barber sometimes who is finishing up at Yale Medical School. Butw there are always a few people I have lost contact with. I wonder what's become of Bill Smith, John Robb, or Sara Laden?

I'm looking forward to a lot of writing over the next few years. Right now, I'm trying to get out a review paper on aggressive and related behaviors in rodents. After that I plan to finish that long since due book on evolution of motor systems. In the meantime I act still awaiting word on two papers: one with Mike Lehman which is being reviewed by Behaviour and one with Alice Gold on contraceptives snd sexual behavior.

Harry's lab is doing well. In addition to the paper with Fred and me which is in press, he has a long paper due to be published on the hippocampus and memory - a series of about 10 experiments written up together . Another paper, a review of the locus coeruleus has been accepted. And still another., a description of his microelectrode technique has bean submitted and, I am will soon be accepted. Harry find I are due to sit down over vacation and make up some brochures about the biopsychology program at Wesleyan. I realty think we're one of the best in the country, especially wlien you include Allen Berlin and the Lynches in Biology.

Nina is busy this vacation with the writeup on her thesis, It concerns the work of the Soviet district physician, and includes first hand observations she made by following a number of them around for a month and recording their work. I say it reads like a novel, but she just groans and says it takes a lot of work. At any rate, she'll get her Masters in Nursing at Yale in June and out beat out all the rest of us on the job market! By the way, I no longer consider physiological psychology the best field. It's now second to nursing!

I'd love to hear from all of you. And better yet, come visit either at Wesleyan or in New Haven.

Peace, David