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3/21/95

To: Iris Rotberg
From: Doc Howe

H. H. II

Belated thanks for your kindness in sending me a copy of your Bell Curve piece from ED WEEK. I had not seen it and was delighted to have the chance.

Whenever someone bothers to present the long term story of American schooling, real progress is evident; and usually, responsible people go on to say that real changes are needed in schools in spite of their past successes because of the many social and economic changes that have come so rapidly in recent years.

But most of the self appointed saviors of education deeply love the SAT score decline as evidence of school decline, which it is not, because they can use it to attract attention by blaming the schools for the troubles of business. The Bell Curve is being similarly misused.

I heard from Mike Usdan that he wanted to create a panel of educational dissenters - You, me, Bracey, Berlin etc. An unusual candidate for this "honor" would be Paul Houston, now the boss of the AASA. I hope he can make a dent in that bureaucracy, which vigorously fought me in 1966, when I was trying to launch NAEP. Now they want to test every kid every other day.

I hope all is well with you!

Keep the Faith!

cc. Mike Usdan