

SBC

SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

March 15, 1966
L-3790

Miss Julia Johnston
250 Douglas Street
San Francisco, California

Dear Miss Johnston:

Thank you for your generous patience but more especially for the joy you occasioned in me by the reading of your arresting, thoughtful, eloquent and very disturbing dissertation. Statement after statement, or shall I say more aptly, reflection after reflection struck a sympathetically resounding response from within me. And yet... and yet... I wonder: Can it be simply my loyal attachment to a youthful first love that keeps me from assenting whole-heartedly to your not-infrequent outbursts of outright condemnation (as on pp. 308-311) of Descartes and of his entire effort? I do not know. That within Descartes' teachings lurk the kinds of dangers which you so vividly attack I shall not gainsay--have you come across my own many strictures against Descartes in my Malebranche book?--but I cannot bring myself to accept the sort of frontal assault you make. You are, however, sincere--that is patent. And it is this very sincerity which makes me want not only to reread and rethink Descartes but also your own thoughts (which, I trust, will soon find their way into a hard-covered book).

One thing more--your study of Pascal's wager is beautiful.

Cordially yours,

Beatrice K. Rome

Beatrice K. Rome

Decision Processes Staff

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250 Douglass Street
San Francisco, California
March 22, 1966

Dear Mr. Ferrater Mora,

I pause in the midst of making up a lecture (it is very hard to attend to the business of making up lectures and marking papers while I am so much preoccupied with my personal affairs these days; and yet in another way it isn't, because I remain so much delighted by many of my students here; I don't like San Francisco State College itself at all, but I do like my students, and I wish that I could take a number of them away with me to wherever I go next year) to tell you that I have just had a telephone call from a Professor Furst, the Head of the Chemical Biology Institute at the University of San Francisco. He is the person whom Professor Grassi at Fairfield has asked to interview me. I am going to have breakfast with him on Saturday. He is a member of a national body called the Jesuit Research Council and so is familiar in a general way with all the Jesuit colleges in the nation. And he has been asked to talk with me precisely because he is non-Catholic himself, he informed me, and will be able to talk with me about the position of a non-Catholic in a Catholic university. Very considerate, don't you think, of the Jesuits? They do sound like civilized people. I shall copy out for you now the letter I had yesterday from the man at Fairfield; you might like to catch the tone of it:

"Dear Miss Johnston:

Now that I have had the opportunity to study your transcripts and letters of recommendation I would like to have you join our philosophy department. Rather than have you come east I should like to have you contact Dr. Arthur Furst, Director of the Institute of Chemical Biology, University of San Francisco, Phone: Skyline 2-1000, who will interview you for me. This interview will not involve philosophical matters rather only general matters.

I am planning to offer you the rank of Assistant Professor with a salary in the neighborhood of \$8,500.

To help in the development of a strong philosophy program I would like to have you teach a section or two of Introductory Philosophy plus the History of Ancient Philosophy (upper division). As you probably realize the upper division courses will have small enrollments until we can stimulate philosophical interest. To stimulate such interest I'd like to have you offer the introductory course.

We are at present setting up a philosophy program and I should very much like to have any suggestions as to courses that philosophy majors should take. In fact I am interested in any suggestions you may have.

It is the policy of the school to help defray normal moving expenses so we shall gladly pay 50% of those expenses.

considerable portion of least which she says otherwise to it.

As you know Fairfield is a school under the auspices of the Jesuits. If this should, perchance, raise any doubts let me assure you that we have full academic freedom and in fact when I, a product of the University of Buffalo (Ph. D.) and the University of Florence (Italy) was appointed chairman the only direction from the Administration was to get the best philosophers possible. Your application has everyone's approval. I hope that you find all the above satisfactory. If not please write indicating any dissatisfactions and I hope to be able to take care of them."

As I've indicated, however, the letters from the man at North Dakota (who is not, incidentally, himself, for whatever it's worth, a Ph. D.) have been extremely pleasant, too. Very long and informative (three and four page letters he's sent me). I tried calling him after we talked, but couldn't get him. ~~xxx~~ I'm mailing him a special delivery letter today, suggesting that I'd like to come there for a visit and asking him to telephone me as soon as possible.

After we talked yesterday, a copy of my thesis that I had lent to a person to read came in the mail for me. That person is Beatrice K. Rome (Mrs. or Dr., whichever you prefer). Do you remember my speaking of her? She's the person who wrote the article on Descartes a number of years ago that I so much admired. And she recently published a big book on Malebranche. With her husband she does work with computer systems of some sort here in California. When I met her in Boston when we all were up there, she promptly suggested I send my thesis to her to read when I finished it. This fall I wrote to her asking her if she really wanted to see it. She replied that she did. I mailed it to her in November. I enclose for ~~you~~ a Xeroxed copy of the letter she has just ~~received~~ sent me along with the copy of the thesis itself. I am going to mail a Xeroxed copy of this letter to Miss McBride, too; I think she would be pleased by it. I have by the way written off a preliminary letter to the U. of North Carolina Press trying to interest them in my writing. But I've had no response from them yet, and I may fail altogether. I want to teach for two years (at the most, three years) more and then to have leave for a year ~~for~~ to complete my writing. I am going to start investigating foundations that might give me money.

It was nice to talk with you yesterday; I found it reassuring that you, too, saw my situation as one in which it would naturally be hard to make a decision. I hope that I can manage to visit both campuses; I do think that would be the thing to do. If I do end up visiting Fairfield, of course I shall try to come down to Bryn Mawr, too, for a brief time. So--who knows?--maybe I'll see you soon. We have spring holidays here beginning April 2.

27-3-66.

Sincerely,

Jim -

You do remember Father Paul Henry, don't you? He's brother of the U. of California at La Jolla for a part of each year. He telephoned me recently, and in the course of our conversation he asked me to tell you how fine he

will be giving a lecture at La Jolla - This spring based on

He said he would, and he's still undecided, and he's

Discretion in you - He thinks it's

consider your essay on