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STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Archives Division

Memo to: John W. Hill ✓
From: Carl Thompson
Subject: Meeting with ARMITAGE WATKINS, acting agent for
Darrell Huff in writing and publishing of book,
"HOW TO LIE WITH STATISTICS"

Date: September 29, 1954

Copies: Darrow
Hoyt
Yolen

Last Friday Will Yolen and I had a personal meeting with Armitage (Mike) Watkins, who acted as agent for Darrell Huff in writing and publishing of the book, "HOW TO LIE WITH STATISTICS." This session confirmed the impression previously reported that it would be difficult to approach Mr. Huff concerning any popularized version of an analysis of the Hammond-Horn report. After some discussion of the possibilities, Mr. Watkins said that he would be unwilling even to approach Mr. Huff with such a suggestion and that he saw no market possibilities for an article even resembling analysis of just one paper. Even a broader approach of examining all statistics that are being kicked around in relation to the tobacco and health situation did not appeal to Mr. Watkins as having any market.

He added that, of course, his opinion did not stop our going directly to Mr. Huff and perhaps just paying him to do a piece on commission by us. He advised, however, that he could give us no indication of how Mr. Huff would react, except to say that Huff was not a very communicative man and it took him three years to get the material for the book from Mr. Huff.

Since Huff lives in Sonoma, California, the method of contact itself presents considerable difficulty. The proposal is not the type of thing that ought to be discussed by letter and even a telephone conversation could be most unsatisfactory.

It does not seem to me that our best approach for an analysis of a scientific paper, like the Hammond-Horn report, is through a popular magazine writer; at least, not until we have a more scientific analysis that will enable us to present an outline of sound data.

CP
CT.

cbs