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#### *About the Institute*

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.



# THE SOCIETY OF THE SIGMA XI

LOUISIANA STATE CHAPTER  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70803  
OFFICE OF THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT,  
NUCLEAR SCIENCE CENTER

September 10, 1973

Dear Sigma Xi Members:

I wish to welcome all of you back for a good professional and academic year and to extend a sincere request for you to participate in the Louisiana State Chapter activities during the next nine months.

With the exception of October, January and April, the monthly luncheon meetings will be held beginning at 11:45 A.M. on the first Thursday of each month in the Vieux Carre' Room of the LSU Union. The October meeting has been moved forward to September 27. During January we have no meeting because of semester break, and the April meeting normally reserved for the Initiation Banquet is scheduled for March 27, 1974 to avoid the University's 2-week spring vacation. Please put these dates on your calendar now (Sept. 27, Nov. 1, Dec. 6, Feb. 7, March 7 & 28, May 2). Our Program Committee is planning an excellent series, and I'm sure you won't want to miss a meeting. Your participation will insure the chapter's success for another year. BL

Let me urge you to begin now considering persons you wish to nominate for membership, or for promotion to full member. The necessary nomination forms and information sheet can be obtained from the Chapter Secretary, Dr. Robert L. Thoms, 108 Engineering Science Bldg., LSU Baton Rouge, 70803, or by calling him at 388-3397. As you realize, you may submit nominations for election to membership at any time during the year. However, unless you submit your nominations by 15 January 1974, your prospective members will not be screened in time to be initiated at the March 27, 1974 Banquet. It is your duty to seek and grant membership to deserving and qualified students and colleagues in science, and your efforts here are an important part of the Society's success.

Each of you will be receiving announcements and reservation slips for the luncheon meetings and banquet about 10 days before each scheduled activity. I look forward to seeing all of you, and participating with you in the Chapter's activities.

Sincerely yours,

Edward N. Lambremont  
President

ENL:abr



THE SOCIETY OF THE SIGMA XI  
For the Encouragement of Scientific Research

COMMITTEE  
ON  
GRANTS-IN-AID OF RESEARCH

20 March 1970

155 WHITNEY AVENUE  
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 06510

Dr. Bernard Lowy  
Department of Botany  
Louisiana State University  
Baton Rouge, La. 70803

Dear Dr. Lowy:

Prior to the recent meeting of the Committee on Grants-in-Aid of Research, we had received requests for \$140,496 in grants. At that meeting we had available to give - \$41,419.

Careful consideration was given to your application, and it is with real regret that I must tell you that the Committee was unable to fund a grant to you.

The Committee hopes that you will be able to secure from other sources the funds you need to maintain your research program.

Sincerely yours,

Harold G. Cassidy, Chairman  
Grants-in-Aid of Research Committee


HGC:hm

Date 4 February 1970

Dear Mr. Lowy:

Your Sigma Xi Grant-in-Aid of Research application has been received at National Headquarters. We look forward to receiving supporting letters to complete your application. When completed, it will be presented to the Grants-in-Aid of Research Committee. (March 1970)

Sincerely yours,



Thomas T. Holme

Executive Director



THE SOCIETY OF THE SIGMA XI  
For the Encouragement of Scientific Research

Grants-in-Aid of Research

Grants-in-Aid of Research are supported by voluntary contributions to the Research Program from the membership of SIGMA XI. Awards are normally made in amounts ranging from \$100 (or less) to a maximum of \$2,000.

Grants-in-Aid of Research may be made in any field of scientific investigation. The funds may be used to purchase apparatus and supplies, to pay for sub-professional assistance, to assist in preparing manuscripts for publication, etc. Each award is made payable to the individual recipient. No part of his grant may be used for the payment of any indirect costs to that institution—all of the funds must be expended directly in support of the proposed investigation. All equipment purchased shall be the property of the institution.

The Committee on Grants-in-Aid of Research meets on or about the first of March, June, and December of each year and the awards are announced shortly afterwards. Applications and supporting letters should be submitted to "Sigma Xi National Headquarters, 155 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, Connecticut 06510, Attention: Committee on Grants-in-Aid of Research," at least one month before the meeting at which consideration is desired.

Harlow Shapley, Chairman

Please type or print all information

APPLICATION FOR GRANT-IN-AID OF RESEARCH

Name..... Lowy..... Bernard..... --  
LAST NAME FIRST NAME MIDDLE NAME

Address..... Botany Department, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, La. 70803

Age 54 Single..... Married X..... Number of Children two

Present position and institution..... Professor of Botany, Louisiana State University,  
Baton Rouge, La.

Degrees, institutions conferring them, dates..... M.S. (1949), Ph.D (1951). both from  
The University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

Membership in SIGMA XI..... Full member since 1951.

*Titles of articles published during the last five years, with names of periodicals and dates:*

Estudio sobre algunos Tremellales de México. Boletín Sociedad Botánica de México  
29: 1-33. 1965. A new species of *Stypella* from Brazil. Transactions Mycological  
Society of Japan 7: 1-2. 1966. Un hongo de piedra preclásico de Mixco Viejo,  
Guatemala. Boletín informativo Sociedad Mexicana de Micología. No. 2. 9-16. 1968.  
Taxonomic problems in the Heterobasidiomycetes. Taxon 17: 118-127. 1968.  
Septate holobasidia. Taxon 18: 632-634. 1969.  
Monograph of Neotropical Tremellales. Flora Neotropica. (book in press; 1970).

*Title of proposed investigation:* Ethnomycological study in Mexico and an inquiry into  
Guatemalan mushroom stones.

*Proposed investigation, described in non-technical language:* The use of hallucinogenic mushrooms by  
some tribes of Mexican Indians has raised questions of great interest to the mycologist,  
ethnomycologist and to other specialists. Mushroom stones are known principally from  
Guatemala and are presently interpreted as artifacts possibly used in sacred ceremonies  
by earlier Middle American civilizations. The aims of this investigation are: 1) to  
seek further evidence regarding the distribution of the contemporary, indigenous mushroom  
cult in Mexico; 2) to collect pertinent specimens for documentation; 3) to explore sites  
in Guatemala for additional mushroom stones, other mushroomic artifacts and related  
information.

Locations where problem will be studied: Mexico: localities in states of Veracruz, Oaxaca, Tabasco, Chiapas. Guatemala: localities in departments of El Quiche, Alta Verapaz, Baja Verapaz, El Progreso, Zacapa, Jalapa, Chiquimula.

Nature of assistance desired and amount of grant needed, itemized: For travel: 1) RT via airlines Baton Rouge-Mexico City; San Cristobal de Las Casas; elsewhere in Mexico by bus, jeep, hired car. 2) via air Mexico City-Guatemala; elsewhere in Guatemala by bus, hired car, horse and/or muleback. For subsistence 3 months, June-August 1970. For subprofessional assistance as required in the field. Photographic film. Amount of grant needed: \$1600. (one thousand six hundred dollars)

Institutional support for study of problem: Leave of absence and publication costs.

Previous grants received from SIGMA XI and others: Sigma Xi, 1963; Fulbright, 1965 (Brazil).

Other applications pending: None

Name and academic biography of each assistant or co-worker, if any, engaged in the investigation:  
None

Names and addresses of three specialists\* in this field who will be asked by the applicant to send statements indicating (1) the importance of the proposed investigation and (2) the qualifications of the investigator to Sigma Xi National Headquarters.

Dr. Richard E. Schultes, Botanical Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., 02138.

Mr. R. Gordon Wasson, 42, Long Ridge Road, Danbury, Conn., 06810.

Dr. Harry E. Wheeler, Botany Department, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Ky., 40506.

\* If applicant is a degree candidate, one of these three must be that faculty or research staff member supervising his research.

Applicant's Signature: Bernard Lowy

Date January 29, 1970

THIS PAGE FOR COMMITTEE USE ONLY

APPLICANT: .....  
LAST NAME FIRST NAME MIDDLE NAME

FIELD: .....

TITLE OF STUDY: .....

Date Received	.....
Amount Requested	.....
Action:	
Not Granted	<input type="checkbox"/>
Granted:	
Full (\$ )	<input type="checkbox"/>
Partial (\$ )	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conditional (\$ )	<input type="checkbox"/>
Date of mailing award	.....
Date of receipt of final report	.....

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FIRST REVIEW ..... MEETING					
SECOND REVIEW ..... MEETING					

ADDITIONAL REMARKS

Jan. 1970

Dr. Thomas G. Holme  
Society of the Sigma Xi  
51 Prospect Street  
New Haven, Conn.

Dear Dr. Holme:

In 1963 the Society awarded me a Grant-in-Aid which enabled me to pursue a research program in Guatemala. This summer I plan to continue mycological work in Mexico and would again like to apply for a grant. I would appreciate your kindness in sending me an application form for this purpose.

Sincerely yours,

Bernard Lowy  
Professor of Botany

January 19, 1970

Dear Dr. Schultes:

Since our meeting in Seattle last August, after my return from Mexico, I have been thinking about some of the problems related to the contemporary mushroom cult in Juautla. Among other things, I would like to look into the question of whether or not Psilocybe spp. are being cultivated to meet the recent demand for specimens which is probably somewhat in excess of what may be expected to be found at any given time in the natural habitat. The extension by Guzman (1968) of the geographical range of Psilocybe spp. in Mexico is also of interest and should be followed up by further search. In addition, I am deeply interested in mushroom stones, some aspects of which have been elucidated so elegantly by Borhegyi. I plan to return to Guatemala, particularly to localities in El Quiche, Alta and Baja Verapaz, to investigate certain leads that I did not have time to pursue during an earlier visit.

My reason for outlining these summer plans is that I want to apply to Sigma Xi for a grant-in-aid for travel in Mexico and Guatemala and would like to ask for your support in this project. If you feel that you can write a letter of recommendation for me, I shall gladly send you such additional information as you may need.

With best regards,

Sincerely yours,

Bernard Lowy  
Professor of Botany

PS - My enclosed reprint is one that may not have come to your attention.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR



Jan 22/70.

Dear Prof Lowy -

Yes, I'll be glad to support your grant request. Send me your data & I'll get my letter right off.

I took the liberty of sending your letter & reprint to Mr. Wasson. He might also like to support your request. He is at #2, Long Ridge Rd, Danbury, Conn.

Sincerely,

Dick Schuttles

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR



Jan. 30/70.

Dear Bernard -

Just a line to let you know that  
Dr. Borhegyi died in an auto accident  
last spring. This in answer to  
your letter of Jan 27.

Hastily,

Arch Schultes

January 30, 1970

Dear Dr. Schultes:

I have just received a letter from Mr. Wasson telling me that he will be "delighted to help me in any way" with my project. The enclosures, including a copy of my completed grant application, are to give you some additional information that you may need. I would like to have my application considered by the Committee that meets "on or about the first of March", so that if possible, your letter should reach them by that time. Please send it to the following address:

Sigma Xi National Headquarters  
155 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, Conn., 06501

Attention: Committee on Grants-in-Aid of Research

I was shocked to learn that Dr. Stephan Borhegyi died in an automobile accident last September. An Associate Curator of the Milwaukee Public Museum so informed me in response to a letter I had sent to Dr. Borhegyi asking for his support of my summer project. I have also enclosed a copy of some correspondence I had with him in 1965 which is still pertinent to the project I hope to pursue.

Sincerely,y

B. Lowy

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY  
AND AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE

BATON ROUGE · LOUISIANA · 70803

College of Arts and Sciences — Agricultural Experiment Station

DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY AND PLANT PATHOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF PLANT PATHOLOGY

April 7, 1970.

Dear Dick,

Según el antiguo refrán: "muchos van por lana y vuelven trasquilados". The Committee has turned down my request for a grant. However, this does not change my plan and I expect to leave for Guatemala early in June.

I value your help very much and thank you again for writing in my behalf.

Cordially,

Bernard

January 30, 1970.

Dear Harry:

I was about to write to you when your letter arrived. I'm sorry that your invitation to Florida turned out to be something less than you had expected. It is also a loss for Florida but there is little consolation in that.

I would like to ask you to support my application for a grant-in-aid from Sigma Xi, a copy of which is enclosed. Several years ago I became interested in some aspects of ethnomycology in Mexico and Guatemala, but because of my greater concern then with taxonomic problems, I did not pursue certain leads (see the copy of my letter to Borhegyi) that I would now like to follow up. As you know, this area of research is still very young, having gotten off to a spectacular start with the publication of Wasson's "Mushrooms, Russia and History" in 1957. Wasson is still by far the most prominent worker in the field and his interests are world-wide. Richard Schultes of Harvard was among the first to visit the now famous Huautla de Jimenez in Oaxaca (in 1938 !) and to bring back collections of Psilocybe which the Indians there said were vision-producing. Both Wasson and Schultes have assured me of their support. This is certainly not because of any contribution I have made (I have published a single paper on a new mushroom stone from Guatemala) but because there is so much to be done and still relatively few who are interested in doing anything. If you would also write for me I think I stand a good chance of getting the grant. Your letter might mention whatever competence you think I may have regarding the strictly mycological phase of the project and I think this would reinforce whatever Schultes and Wasson may have to say concerning the other aspects. I would like to have my application considered by the Committee that meets "on or about the first of March", so that if possible your letter should reach them by that time.

The monograph on Neotropical Tremellales has been delayed because the publisher (Hafner) was shopping around for a printer whose price he could afford. I was notified last week that such a printer has been found, so presumably my paper and several other manuscripts for Flora Neotropica should begin to appear shortly. At present the only other mycological papers ready for publication in this series are 2 or 3 by Singer who I think has had them "in press" for over a year.

Yes, the moving is over except for some odds and ends. Almost everyone has his pet gripe, relating in general to scarcity of space (!), small and poorly designed labs, sluggish elevators, etc. etc. The one point of consensus is that the air conditioning is fine - as long as it lasts. Those who had relatively big offices have to get used to the almost claustrophobic 12 X 10 size of the new ones.

My best regards to you and Babe and wishing you both a non-allergic and otherwise happy new year,

Cordially,

February 5, 1970

Dr. Harlow Shapley  
Sigma Xi National Headquarters  
155 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, Connecticut 06510

Attention: Committee on Grants-in-Aid

Dear Dr. Shapley:

Professor Bernard Lowy's application for support for an ethnomycological study in Mexico and Guatemala has my unqualified endorsement.

Professor Lowy's proposed research is in an area which has, for a long time, fascinated the mycological community. In the past, this area has been neglected probably because of lack of support for purely scholarly pursuits. Today the importance of research in this area must be obvious even to those pragmatists who demand relevance and instant application.

It is no exaggeration to say Bernard Lowy is uniquely and superbly qualified for the research he proposes to do. His professional competence is documented by his publications and the mycological herbarium which he built and maintained. All this was accomplished while he carried a heavy load of graduate and undergraduate teaching. Moreover, he is recognized as a world authority on the fungi of the area involved in this study. At least as important as his professional qualifications are his linguistic ability and his past experience in South American countries. His ability to communicate and to gain the confidence of the native populace greatly enhances the probability of success in this research.

I believe that evaluation of a research project that involves contact with the people of a foreign country should take into account the character and personality of the investigator. I have known Professor Lowy for nearly twenty years. He is a true gentleman, a fine scholar, and an outstanding teacher. He is a sensitive and humane person. He has a high regard for human dignity. He has my enthusiastic support.

Sincerely yours,

Harry Wheeler  
Professor of Plant Pathology

HW/ka

February 5, 1970

Dr. Harlow Shapley  
Sigma Xi National Headquarters  
155 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, Connecticut 06510

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Sincerely yours,

Harry Wheeler  
Professor of Plant Pathology

HW/ka

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY 40506

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

RESIDENT INSTRUCTION  
AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION  
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

DEPARTMENT OF PLANT PATHOLOGY

Feb. 6, 1970

Dear Bernie:

I was happy to have the opportunity of supporting your application for a research grant. The original of the enclosed letter was sent out air-mail yesterday (Feb. 5).

Saw and visited with several people from L.S.U. at the ASAW meetings in Memphis. They all seem to appreciate the airconditioning in the new building.

Congratulations to Sara for her achievement.

Best regards,  
Harry

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY  
AND AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE  
BATON ROUGE · LOUISIANA · 70803

College of Arts and Sciences — Agricultural Experiment Station

DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY AND PLANT PATHOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF PLANT PATHOLOGY

February 11, 1970.

Dear Harry,

I don't know how I can live up to it,  
but my sincere thanks for your fine letter of  
recommendation!

I think you would be interested in Wasson's  
latest work, "Soma, Divine Mushroom of Immortality",  
in which he identifies soma as Amanita muscaria.  
Robert Graves gives his scholarly opinion of soma  
and related matters in the February 1970 issue of  
"The Atlantic". A considerably more mundane review was  
published in the July-August 1969 issue of "Mycologia".

Cordially,

Bernie

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY  
AND AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE

BATON ROUGE · LOUISIANA · 70803

College of Arts and Sciences — Agricultural Experiment Station

DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY AND PLANT PATHOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF PLANT PATHOLOGY

April 7, 1970.

Dear Harry,

There is an old Spanish proverb that says:  
"Muchos van por lana y vuelven traquilados",  
meaning that not all who ask for a grant  
get one. I was notified of the refusal of my  
request a few days ago. This does not change  
my plans, it only means that I will have  
to dig deeper into my pocket than I had  
expected, but there will really be no hardship.

I value your letter more than you imagine  
and hope you don't throw away the carbon  
copy. I may ask you to use it again on  
some occasion.

With best regards and many thanks,

Permie

February 16, 1970

The Society of the Sigma Xi  
155 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, Connecticut 06501

Attention of Committee on Grants-in-Aid of Research

Gentlemen:

I want to take this opportunity of sending a very strong recommendation for a Grant-in-Aid award to Professor Bernard Lowy of Louisiana State University for ethnomycological study in Mexico and research into the famous mushroom stones of Guatemala.

Mr. Lowy is well equipped as an outstanding mycologist to carry out this research — not only the research on the mushrooms themselves in the field, but investigation of the enigmatic mushroom stones that archaeologists have been finding in Guatemala. Most of the writings about these stones and their significance have come from anthropologists or archaeologists, and it would be extremely helpful and would probably add much to our knowledge of these artifacts to have them studied by a mycologically-trained scientist.

I have for many years carried out research of hallucinogenic plants of the New World and I am, therefore, familiar with the many problems arising from the complexities of the use of intoxicating mushrooms in Mexico. In fact, in 1939, I published the initial paper which started the ethnomycological research that has brought us to a rather extensive understanding of this curious hallucinogenic group of plants. It is, therefore, with a very strong personal interest that I ask you to support Professor Lowy in further pushing back our frontiers of knowledge about the present and past use of these intoxicating fungi.

Most sincerely yours,

Richard Evans Schultes  
Executive Director and Curator of  
Economic Botany

RES:mg

Copy to: Professor Bernard Lowy ✓

DRAFT

???

Sigma XI National Headquarters  
155 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, Conn., 06510

Att.: Committee on Grants-in-Aid of Research

Dear Sirs:

I bespeak your support for the research project dated January 29, 1970 submitted to you by Professor Bernard Lowy who holds a chair in botany at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.

The value that you place on Professor Lowy's program will depend on the value you give to my own work in the same field, for Professor Lowy wishes to continue in precisely the same field that my wife and I pioneered in -- the role of the fungal hallucinogens among the primitive Indians of Middle America and the study of the 'mushroom stones' in the archeological digs there. In this area there were three precursors in modern times, Blas Pablo Reko, Robert J. Weitlaner, and Richard Evans Schultes. My wife and I immensely expanded ~~on~~ their work and published our findings in books and many papers, working later with the famous French mycologist Roger Heim, at that time Director of the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle. Much remains to be done. My health and my years do not permit me to do further field work. Gaining access to as many shamanic ceremonies as possible, tape-recording the voices, talking with the shamans and other participants and learning their attitude to the mushrooms, linguistic analysis of the names of the mushrooms and everything about them, -- all this offers opportunities for research of great value in the study of the origins of the religious approach to life; or, perhaps more accurately, ~~in~~ the origins and role of the ecstatic approach to religion. This may have an important bearing on the studies now under way concerned with the human psyche.

Professor Lowy approaches his proposed task with boundless enthusiasm. He seems to possess the qualifications that are needed in this field of research. As a botanist he has specialized in the area of mycology -- where the techniques and problems are quite different from the rest of botany. He knows Spanish well and has a linguistic aptitude that will stand in good stead among the monolingual Indians of Middle America. He knows archeology, and can pursue the study of the 'mushroom stones' of Middle America with some hope of making important discoveries. Above all, his attitude to the Indians suggests to me that he possesses the gift of empathy: he stands some chance of gaining their confidence and access to their cherished secrets.

Professor Lowy seems to me a good candidate to undertake research in this field. I earnestly hope that your budget will permit you to support his endeavors.

Sincerely yours,

*Is this so? How well do  
you know it?*

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY  
AND AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE

BATON ROUGE · LOUISIANA · 70803

College of Arts and Sciences — Agricultural Experiment Station

DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY AND PLANT PATHOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF PLANT PATHOLOGY

February 16, 1970

Dear Mr. Wasson:

I consider it an extraordinary courtesy to have received from you the draft of a letter that you propose to submit to Sigma Xi, endorsing my application for a grant-in-aid. I am gratified not only because of the favorable impression your words are sure to have on those who are to judge my qualifications, but also for the insight it affords me regarding the generosity of my supporter. Although we have had only the briefest personal encounter - one which it would hardly be possible for you to recall - I was nevertheless greatly impressed. It was on the occasion of your memorable lecture before the Mycological Society of America in Stillwater, Oklahoma, on August 30, 1960. Following your presentation we exchanged a few words concerning the Hungarian expression "bolond gomba", which was known to me quite well since I had not infrequently heard them addressed to me in their usual context by my mother, though never by my father. But in answer to your question about my knowledge of Spanish, I consider it to be my second language, one which I now use a great deal more than Hungarian. Although my interest in Spanish began during my high school days, such proficiency as I now have in the use of the language I owe in no small part to my wife, who is a native of Argentina and who still prefers to speak Spanish at home. She is presently a teacher of Spanish in Southern University in this city. When I am in Latin America I prefer not to use English. I have given lectures in Mexico, Peru and Argentina and have taught mycology to students in those countries.

I have no illusions about making any "important discoveries", but I believe that ethnomycological problems should be vigorously pursued. I can only hope that the confidence you seem to be willing to place in me will be justified.

Sincerely yours,

*B. Lowy*  
Bernard Lowy

PS.- I assume you have received the enclosures recently sent to you, including a copy of my grant request. Your letter should be sent directly to the following address:

Dr. Harlow Shapley  
Sigma Xi National Headquarters  
155 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, Connecticut 06510

Attention: Committee on Grants-in-Aid of Research

*I am returning your letter, but have taken  
the liberty of copying it.*

DRAFT

???

Sigma XI National Headquarters  
155 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, Conn., 06510

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Dear Sirs:

I bespeak your support for the research project dated January 29, 1970 submitted to you by Professor Bernard Lowy who holds a chair in botany at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.

The value that you place on Professor Lowy's program will depend on the value you give to my own work in the same field, for Professor Lowy wishes to continue in precisely the same field that my wife and I pioneered in -- the role of the fungal hallucinogens among the primitive Indians of Middle America and the study of the 'mushroom stones' in the archeological digs there. In this area there were three precursors in modern times, Blas Pablo Reko, Robert J. Weitlaner, and Richard Evans Schultes. My wife and I immensely expanded ~~on~~ their work and published our findings in books and many papers, working later with the famous French mycologist Roger Heim, at that time Director of the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle. Much remains to be done. My health and my years do not permit me to do further field work. Gaining access to as many shamanic ceremonies as possible, tape-recording the voices, talking with the shamans and other participants and learning their attitude to the mushrooms, linguistic analysis of the names of the mushrooms and everything about them, -- all this offers opportunities for research of great value in the study of the origins of the religious approach to life; or, perhaps more accurately, ~~in~~ the origins and role of the ecstatic approach to religion. This may have an important bearing on the studies now under way concerned with the human psyche.

Professor Lowy approaches his proposed task with boundless enthusiasm. He seems to possess the qualifications that are needed in this field of research. As a botanist he has specialized in the area of mycology -- where the techniques and problems are quite different from the rest of botany. He knows Spanish well and has a linguistic aptitude that will stand in good stead among the monolingual Indians of Middle America. He knows archeology, and can pursue the study of the 'mushroom stones' of Middle America with some hope of making important discoveries. Above all, his attitude to the Indians suggests to me that he possesses the gift of empathy: he stands some chance of gaining their confidence and access to their cherished secrets.

Professor Lowy seems to me a good candidate to undertake research in this field. I earnestly hope that your budget will permit you to support his endeavors.

Sincerely yours,

*Is this so? How well do  
you know it?*

DRAFT

???

Sigma XI National Headquarters  
155 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, Conn., 06510

Att.: Committee on Grants-in-Aid of Research

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LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY  
AND AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE

BATON ROUGE · LOUISIANA · 70803

College of Arts and Sciences — Agricultural Experiment Station

DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY AND PLANT PATHOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF PLANT PATHOLOGY

February 16, 1970

Dear Mr. Wasson:

I consider it an extraordinary courtesy to have received from you the draft of a letter that you propose to submit to Sigma Xi, endorsing my application for a grant-in-aid. I am gratified not only because of the favorable impression your words are sure to have on those who are to judge my qualifications, but also for the insight it affords me regarding the generosity of my supporter. Although we have had only the briefest personal encounter - one which it would hardly be possible for you to recall - I was nevertheless greatly impressed. It was on the occasion of your memorable lecture before the Mycological Society of America in Stillwater, Oklahoma, on August 30, 1960. Following your presentation we exchanged a few words concerning the Hungarian expression "bolond gomba", which was known to me quite well since I had not infrequently heard them addressed to me in their usual context by my mother, though never by my father. But in answer to your question about my knowledge of Spanish, I consider it to be my second language, one which I now use a great deal more than Hungarian. Although my interest in Spanish began during my high school days, such proficiency as I now have in the use of the language I owe in no small part to my wife, who is a native of Argentina and who still prefers to speak Spanish at home. She is presently a teacher of Spanish in Southern University in this city. When I am in Latin America I prefer not to use English. I have given lectures in Mexico, Peru and Argentina and have taught mycology to students in those countries.

I have no illusions about making any "important discoveries", but I believe that ethnomycological problems should be vigorously pursued. I can only hope that the confidence you seem to be willing to place in me will be justified.

Sincerely yours,

*B. Lowy*  
Bernard Lowy

PS.- I assume you have received the enclosures recently sent to you, including a copy of my grant request. Your letter should be sent directly to the following address:

Dr. Harlow Shapley  
Sigma Xi National Headquarters  
155 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, Connecticut 06510

Attention: Committee on Grants-in-Aid of Research

*I am returning your letter, but have taken  
the liberty of copying it.*

February 16, 1970

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Dr. Harlow Shapley  
Sigma Xi National Headquarters  
155 Whitne Avenue  
New Haven, Connecticut 06510

Attention: Committee on Grants-in-Aid of Research

February 5, 1970

Dr. Harlow Shapley  
Sigma Xi National Headquarters  
155 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, Connecticut 06510

Attention: Committee on Grants-in-Aid

Dear Dr. Shapley:

Professor Bernard Lowy's application for support for an ethnomycological study in Mexico and Guatemala has my unqualified endorsement.

Professor Lowy's proposed research is in an area which has, for a long time, fascinated the mycological community. In the past, this area has been neglected probably because of lack of support for purely scholarly pursuits. Today the importance of research in this area must be obvious even to those pragmatists who demand relevance and instant application.

It is no exaggeration to say Bernard Lowy is uniquely and superbly qualified for the research he proposes to do. His professional competence is documented by his publications and the mycological herbarium which he built and maintained. All this was accomplished while he carried a heavy load of graduate and undergraduate teaching. Moreover, he is recognized as a world authority on the fungi of the area involved in this study. At least as important as his professional qualifications are his linguistic ability and his past experience in South American countries. His ability to communicate and to gain the confidence of the native populace greatly enhances the probability of success in this research.

I believe that evaluation of a research project that involves contact with the people of a foreign country should take into account the character and personality of the investigator. I have known Professor Lowy for nearly twenty years. He is a true gentleman, a fine scholar, and an outstanding teacher. He is a sensitive and humane person. He has a high regard for human dignity. He has my enthusiastic support.

Sincerely yours,

Harry Wheeler  
Professor of Plant Pathology

HW/ka