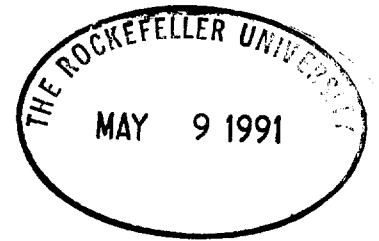


Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Founders Hall, #400
The Rockefeller University
1230 York Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10021-6399



Dear Dr. Lederberg,

April 30, 1991

Thank you very much for so graciously remembering my interest in the "Creative couples in science" project. I was very interested in your list of NAS female spouses and will mention it in my fall course on the "History of women in science" to be given at the Johns Hopkins University. However, for the purpose of our collection, in my Series at Rutgers University Press - flyers enclosed - I need only couples who collaborated (e.g. the Coris on whom I already have an author, Mildred Cohn of Penn). They need not be NAS members.

In this connection, I would like to urge you to reflect again on whether you might cooperate with me on an article, for this collection on yourself and EZL, to be limited to the 1950s, or before the later, more problematic period. In the 1950s, you might have been the best known and most important couple in American science; your presence in the collection is similarly of importance to history of science. The fact that both of you had since diverged and are both currently married to other individuals, need not affect the importance of recording the experience of your collaboration.

I will not do such an article without your cooperation, though I encourage students to work on EZL, among other women scientists. My own parents, sadly deceased, were called E&J, so I always had a special interest in a famous couple with such first names. I understand, of course, that collaborators, whether married to each other or not, may subsequently go their separate ways. The argument you gave me at the Boston Colloquium, namely that you do not wish EZL to be bothered with inquiries about the past, is admirable but I think it is more important to rescue her unique role in the immediate post-WW2 period.

I have interviewed many scientists for my NSF project and they are usually helpful. EZL was no exception, when my post-doc associate and I interviewed her as part of a Stanford contingent in 1988. However, at that time, we focused primarily on her views of the French group at the Pasteur and of the Phage group, (the topic of my NSF project; same as my Boston Colloquium talk) since I had not yet thought, by then, of the Creative Couples volume.

Thank you also for the letter to Nature. Do you know how it came into being?

[Kindly send an updated C.V. and List of publications for my project's database.

Last, I would greatly appreciate your comments on the enclosed essay review. I look forward to hearing from you. With best wishes,
Encl.:

sy

Dr. P.G. Abir-Am
Dr. P.G. Abir-Am (Tel & Fax: 617-489-2620)
(Northeastern University, Boston, MA. 02115
after June 15: the Johns Hopkins University)