

January 15, 1957

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Dear Jim:

Thank you for your letter of the 11th, and for the Orientation Handbook. I am pleased to learn that your discussions have reached this favorable point.

It will take me some time to work out a tentative plan for the laboratory development, but I will send you my notes as soon as possible. Please keep in mind that it would be very difficult for me to wind up my responsibilities here appreciably before July 1, 1958, so there is at least some time to work out such details, if the questions of principle can be settled.

The point about which I have the deepest apprehension is the matter of "nepotism." Since this is an issue on which succeeding administrations might take different, or more legalistic, views, we have to be sure we have a common understanding on any 'solution'. Your letter indicated that Esther might 'apply for a grant on her own'. If this means that she would have to be the direct legal recipient of the grant, I can foresee some difficulties: most granting agencies are more or less constrained to make their gifts to recognized non-profit corporations or institutes as legal recipients. Her opportunities to receive direct fellowship subsidies would be very much more limited, and we would have to be confident of a successful arrangement with a specific agency in advance. On the other hand, if this means that a grant for her support can be accepted by the University through another department — say Professor Stanier in Bacteriology — it might constitute an acceptable solution, provided both the means and the end were understood and approved by competent University authorities. One other approach occurs to me, but I would need legal advice: namely that an existing research corporation be found, or a new one organized, that could handle such problems by arrangement with the University on the one hand, and the agencies on the other. It seems to me utterly silly that a regulation of this kind — which is designed to forbid real abuses in other contexts to be sure — should frustrate and waste the professional lives of trained and competent women who happen to be married. For my own part, it would be impossible for me to maintain a diversity of interests and personnel working smoothly without the help of such an associate.

I could also point to our joint publications, which are an imperfect measure of the role of her collaboration.

I am returning the Biography 1501 form, as requested, including some of the inconsequential types of data that I know our own News Bureau likes to keep on file.

As to the hood, I am sure we would be able to improvise. In due course, however, I hope we will have a fully equipped chemical laboratory -- convenient facilities of that kind (within the bounds of our discussion on how much biochemistry a physiological geneticist should do himself) represent one of the potential attractions of the appointment.

In making our detailed plans, it would be useful to know how much of the following facilities will be available to the department at large, in the same building: darkroom (I strongly hope this can be shared); storeroom (for general supplies) and shop (any machine tools?) Some of the 2581 square feet might be expeditiously shared for such facilities. I suppose Spencer Brown is the person with whom I would deal most directly on such arrangements: can you tell me just when he is returning?

Some additional questions will undoubtedly come up. For example, one of my present students is a Japanese national, another an Australian. The handbook points to a number of restrictions on alien employment. Would such students have any difficulty, on that account, a) in securing admission to the graduate school, or b) in qualifying for research--assistantships? I would have thought no, but a student now here (a Chilean national) has told me of rather brusque replies to her own inquiries.

Then: should I assume that 'payment of moving expenses' (p. 11) would apply to my appointment?

There are other minutiae, but these can be deferred. We now realize we have to face the problem squarely of making a decision, which we will do on the assumption that the 'nepotism' problem will be satisfactorily dealt with. Meanwhile, I also have to furnish you with tentative laboratory and equipment plans. You will realize that we cannot take a step like this lightly or hastily. For our own peace of mind, however, we are determined to come to a fair conclusion before we begin our travels (to Paris, London and Glasgow and back in March, then to Melbourne via San Francisco-- June through September), which gives us now about six weeks. For a final conclusion, it may be desirable for me to visit Berkeley again: if necessary I propose to do this early in April. Would it be too much for me to ask your advance approval on this, so I can make arrangements on the shortest notice?

May I give an outline of the most optimistic assumptions, as I understand them?

Now till March:	straighten out major policy matters
April 1957	I visit Berkeley for final decision and details. Discuss preliminary lab. plans
June 1957	We visit Berkeley (en route to Melbourne). Final lab. plans
about Jan 1958	? remodelling on rooms 22-23 in progress. Visit Berkeley to adjust details on this and order equipment, arrange budget and grant transfers, etc.
July 1958	Move to Berkeley.
1959-1960?	Genetics Dept. moves to Giannini. When?

Yours sincerely

Joshua Lederberg