

May 31, 1947
Sent in long hand

Dr. E. W. Sinnott
Osborn Botanical Laboratory
Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut

Dear Dr. Sinnott:

Dr. Cole's retirement has created a vacancy in our staff which we are seeking to fill with a man who would work on the genetics of microorganisms. Dr. Tatum has suggested Joshua Lederberg as a possibility and has kindly lent us manuscript material which bears out the considerable promise in research which Lederberg has shown as a graduate student.

We would appreciate having your judgment regarding Lederberg's ability to fit into the pattern of a mid-western agricultural experiment station. We understand that Lederberg's leanings are toward medicine and surmise that agriculture would be new to him. Our first consideration is to get a first-rate research man interested in fundamental rather than applied genetics. It is not less important, however, that the man be able to adjust himself in reasonable degree to the heterogeneous character of a large agricultural institution.

I have just written Dr. Tatum concerning the general nature of the opportunity here and I have inquired about Lederberg's attitude toward team work in view of the probable call for cooperation with microbiologists working on allied problems in other departments. A further point is whether Lederberg's personal characteristics are such that he could avoid the prejudice which members of his racial group sometimes encounter even in a community which considers itself rather generally tolerant in such matters.

Your counsel on these questions will be most helpful to us.

Sincerely yours,

R. A. Brink
Professor of Genetics