

October 2, 1954

Dr. Melvin Cohn  
Dept. Microbiology  
Washington University School of Medicine  
St. Louis, Mo.

My dear Cohn:

I will accept your note as greetings, and return them warmly. For its formal purpose (reprints) it was quite unnecessary, though I rather lazily save reprint mailings for an annual chore. It might straighten out the records if you could let me know which of the reprints you do already have, according to the numbers on the attached list; and I will send on whatever is missing that I can later.

Your new project sounds fascinating, and all success in it. For my own information, has anyone succeeding in getting certain continuation of antibody synthetases in proliferating explants? The best I had known was still not very dramatic, some older work (by Maede I think) on tuberculin sensitivity. Or do you know of any good evidence of the sensitization of once-established explants? Again, what I've seen had left me more confused than enlightened. But there's the challenge, I suppose/

Unfortunately there are too many loose ends still to be cleaned up in E. coli genetics for me to be able to look forward very soon to the refreshment of a change. Lately, I have been preoccupied with the microscopic characterization of conjugal pairs in K-12, which proves quite easy after the first time. The pairs last about 1-2 hours, then separate. Both exconjugants can then proliferate, but recombinants are found only in the clones from the r- parent cell. So fertilization is unilateral and, as had been suspected without strong proof for a long time, we can rather sloppily consider r- as "female" and r+ or Hfr as "male" (or, more accurately, as hermaphroditic). The older programs on Salmonella and on E. coli transduction are also continuing; Esther still ties these together with lysogenicity, and then more recently we have some new studies on actinomycetes and yeasts (the latter being a new angle on cytoplasmic transfer). I'm not doing a thing now on lactase, but Jacques probably told you of Boris Kotman's interest in "activation".

Give our regards to Kornberg; if you find a chance to pay us a visit, do give us the opportunity of adding at least two more to your many friends in Madison.

Yours sincerely

Joshua Lederberg