

August 24, 1953

Miss Jacqueline Gering  
1004 Redwood Drive  
Green Bay, Wisconsin

Dear Miss Gering:

Thank you for your letter of August 14.

I wonder if you will not get the best advice on planning your college curriculum from your own teachers and advisers at Beloit College. They surely will be in a better position to tell you what courses are available there, and to help you to evaluate your best talents. If you are planning to go into scientific research in bacteriology, it will be more important for you to acquire a sound education in cultural and scientific fundamentals than in too much technical detail in this specialty. This you can better pick up in your graduate training. Only if you have somewhat less ambitious aims of technical work in this field would it be appropriate for you to insist on the narrower curriculum of something like the medical technologists' program. But as I already stated, you will get much sounder advice from people who can know your needs and yourself more intimately.

If I may close with a more personal word, I would say that no single college or postgraduate course was particularly helpful. Much more important is the habit of inquiry, and of reading books and journals to go more deeply into the subjects which are merely touched upon by courses.

With cordial best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg  
Associate Professor of Genetics

P.S. Three or four years from now, won't you let me know how you make out?