

April 26, 1960

Professor J. B. S. Haldane
Indian Statistical Institute
203 Barrackpore Road
Calcutta 35, India

Dear Professor Haldane:

Happy to hear from you and read your letter of the 9th. I wrote Muller not long ago that it was no use trying to write anything new in theoretical biology -- at least not without searching for years in the library under Mu and Ha -- since the two of you, between you, had anticipated most of the now fashionable current ideas in genetics. (I say this with respect, not irony.) If you would only publish systematically in one sort of place it would be much easier for us. I will look up "The Planet Earth." However, I'm sure you're quite used to all this.

I'll see if any of my friendly mathematicians want to solve your log table analogy. This kind of analysis is beyond me.

What I'm writing to ask now is this: I was pleased to see your name on the program for a genetics symposium in Salt Lake City next month. Unfortunately, I doubt I will be attending myself (I've just returned from 10 days in London.) But if you are coming, I should regret missing you. The odds are at least even on your travelling through San Francisco and if so Esther and I would be very happy to meet your plane and spend some time with you. If you can arrange your itinerary to spend a day here at Stanford (about 25 miles south of San Francisco airport) and to give our biologists a lecture so much the better -- and we can furnish a modest honorarium. I would not presume to insist on a topic, which should be of your own choice. I would be delighted myself if you detailed your views on the origin of life. In any case I hope we can manage to see you.

Best regards,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics