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Dear Josh,

I marvel at how you keep up with the "literature."

There may be something interesting in the Kada paper, but I doubt it. If coli + subtilis from any inocula exhibited the effect one might think seriously about a surface interaction that caused leakage (or excretion of a bacteriocin, etc.) But they had to take inocula from only certain kinds of rich media. Since their cultures were fully grown, & were moving from rich to minimal, there would have to be a lot of derepression, + I can imagine that imbalance during that period might cause slight excretion, despite feedback inhibition. Also, they carried over nutrients with their large, unwashed inocula -- which might explain dependence on certain media.

If I were to pursue this (which I won't) I'd try growing cells, washed, as inocula.

I don't know of any theoretical treatment of syntrophism. Martin Alexander, working with mixed cultures + trying to simulate natural conditions, might be closest, but his seminar here last year did not come out with any clean + interesting mechanism.

Incidentally, I'll become Emeritus next year, + will be teaching for the winter in Africa at Berkeley. Also incidentally, I had a good exchange of letters + conversation w. Blobel last spring -- I think his SRP work fully justified election to the NAS, + I was glad to see him get in. My earlier objection was based on an effort to evaluate the history of the field accurately, + not on his style.

Regards,

Jenni

DAVIS