

May 15, 1967

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Dear Ed:

I was really quite delighted to get your letter of May 9 suggesting the possibility of my giving a series of Silliman lectures. I do indeed regard this as a great honor and would like to give the occasion the effort and the merit it deserves.

Unfortunately, I just do not see how I can apply myself properly to this task in the present state of my personal affairs. However, blind optimism suggests the eventual return of some tranquility and I would like very much to schedule a formal appearance under the Silliman lectureship some time during the twelve months starting about a year from now. I think I would be prepared to tell you in about six months exactly when the most convenient interval would be. If there are some technical reasons why this is quite unacceptable, perhaps I should consider a more truncated obligation at an earlier date. However, I guess I would prefer having the lectures prepared sufficiently well to be worth publishing in that historic series.

Yes, Ed, it has been a very long time. The last occasion that I can recall was at the Workshop at the Cal alumni retreat house near Squaw Valley, probably not long before your departure from Berkeley.

Contemplating what I might use as subject matter for the lectures, I had thought to give one or perhaps at most two reflecting directly on bacterial genetics, and the rest on a somewhat more detailed perspective of the impact of the new biology on human affairs than I have been able to develop in my weekly column. So another reason to put off the lectures just a bit is to give me time to mature some of my own perspectives on these issues. I am particularly intrigued at the way in which somatic cell genetics has suddenly begun to take fire under the hot breath of Ephrussi, Koprowski, and others.

With all best wishes,

Sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

ADELBERG