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"Avery" ↓

31.3.94

Dear Dr Lederberg,

Thank you for your perspectives on the transforming factor. On re-reading Avery, MacLeod & McCarty,

I felt that Hershey's doubts were malicious, since they had proved that proteolytic enzymes, RNAase, and sugarases left the transforming principle intact, whereas DNAase destroyed it.

Hershey had worked with DNA for years without realising its import which I regard as the motive for his doubts. Jim Watson had none when he joined us in 1951, and his convictions were reinforced on hearing Hershey & then at Old Spring Harbor in the following year. Did the doubters whom you quote understand enzyme biochemistry? Had they read the paper?

Here is the reprint you asked for.

With best wishes