

November 13, 1951

Dr. S. E. Luria  
Department of Bacteriology  
University of Illinois  
Urbana, Illinois

Dear Lu:

Esther and I are in full agreement with your philosophy about setting up a standardized nomenclature for bacteria-phage relationships. However, we cannot assess your comments very intelligently, for we have not seen the ms. to which they refer. [We suspect that Lwoff is unaware of our interest in lysogenicity, to judge from a number of trivial incidents.]

Although it may be unfortunate if Lwoff insists on forwarding his own system without general consultation, it is only necessary for us to use those parts which are useful, and ignore the rest. So long as words which already have definite connotations are not misappropriated, there may be no serious harm.

At any rate, we endorse your objections unreservedly, and especially as they relate to the relativity of "temperateness" and "virulence". (We have, by the way another case: a lambda-sensitive stock which does not, as far as we can tell, become lysogenic. ) You may use this statement as you see fit.

Sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg