

I hope this can be added to the AVERY documentation.
Josh

July 27, 1998

I have had the privilege of viewing the nominations that had been submitted to the Nobel Foundation prior to 1948, on behalf of O. T. Avery. The nominators and their remarks about his work on DNA include:

For 1946 prize (Dec. 1945)

Charles Huggins - "isolation of the specific transforming agent, nucleo-protein, of pneumococcus."

For 1947

A. Szent-Gyorgyi -- "Pneumococci and their mutation, induced by nucleic acid derivatives."

O. Loewi -- (Avery and Heidelberger) -- "Entdeckung der immunologisch spezifischen Polysaccharide..."

A. A. Miles (Jan 28 1947) --

"... in particular his recent discovery of the principle responsible for the artificial transformation of the type II pneumococcus into the type III pneumococcus."

... "precise function for the nucleic acids in the hereditary processes of the cell...." [DNA] ... "only a few removes from a gene-like factor the transforming principle ... acts ... by occupying or modifying [the] empty locus".

Other nominations over the years had coupled Avery's name with Michael Heidelberger, and focussed on their long recognized studies on the role of specific polysaccharides as chemically defined antigens important in the type specificity of pneumococci.

The extensive report in Miles' nomination gives a detailed account of the history of the pneumococcus transformation and is particularly insightful about its significance for genetics and general biology.

In that regard, among early comments, it is matched only by the attribution in Dubos "The Bacterial Cell", 1945: "nucleic acids of this type must be regarded as ... functionally active in determining the biological activities and specific characteristics of the pneumococcal cells." Dubos shies from the term "gene"; in fact at the 1946 Cold Spring Harbor Symposium, Dubos remarks: "One may wonder whether the geneticist will not arrive too late to introduce his jargon into bacteriology".

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