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THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY
FEB 27 1980
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

FACULTY OF ~~SOCIAL~~ SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
TELEPHONE (403) 284-6501

22 February 1980

Dear Dr. Joshua Lederberg

Please find enclosed a copy of a piece I have prepared on Gregor Mendel and his place in the history of evolutionary thought. I began the Mendel investigation in the context of developing a model of scientific discoveries. Most of the literature on this topic is devoted to describing the conditions under which ideas come into the mind (genius, gestalt shift, bisociation, perception of anomaly, retroduction, etc). It seems to me that the Mendel case directs our attention, not to how they happen, but to how they get labelled as discoveries by both the scientist and his/her community. The barebones of this theory are described in an article which will appear in the June issue of the British Journal of Sociology. The more developed statement is offered in a monograph, The Social Basis of Scientific Discoveries, which will be appearing with Cambridge University Press later this year.

If you have any thoughts on the Mendel article please write to me and let me know what you think. If your experience was like mine, you might recall that undergraduate instructors told students not to bother reading the second half of Mendel's original paper because it was somewhat misleading (it deals with transmutating one species into another). If we'd only read the original more closely, this legend of the long neglected Moravian monk would have been cleared up long ago.

I trust you will enjoy the article.

Yours sincerely,

D. Brannigan