

Autobiography

VICTOR SNEECKUS

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Victor Snieckus was born in Kaunas, Lithuania in 1937 and spent his childhood in Germany during World War II. He received the B.Sc. degree at the University of Alberta (1959) where he was strongly influenced by R. Sandin. After graduate work at the University of California, Berkeley (M.Sc. with D.S. Noyce) and Oregon (Ph.D. with V. Boekelheide), he returned to Canada for a postdoctoral year with O.E. Edwards at NSERC, and then joined the faculty at the University of Waterloo in 1966. He held the Monsanto/NRC Industrial Research Chair until 1998 when he accepted the Bader Chair in Organic Chemistry at Queen's University.

Honors and Awards (since 2000)

- 100 Milestones of 20th Century Canadian Chemistry Award (2000)
- Killam Research Fellowship (2000-2001)
- ACS Arthur C. Cope Scholar Award (2001)
- International Society for Heterocyclic Chemistry Award (2001)
- Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Invitational Fellowship for Research (2001)
- Guest Professor, Australian National University, Canberra (2002)
- Craig Visiting Professor, Australian National University, Canberra (2003)
- Arfvedson-Schlenk Award of the Gesellschaft Deutscher Chemiker (GDCh) (2003)
- Pattison Lectureship, University of Western Ontario, London, ON, Canada (2004)
- Bernard Belleau Award of the Canadian Society for Chemistry (2005)
- Novartis Chemistry Lectureship (2005)
- Aventis Vision Lecturer (2005)
- AstraZeneca Lectureship (2006)
- GlaxoSmithKline Fellowship, Grey College, University of Durham, UK (2006)
- Bristol-Myers-Squibb North Jersey ACS Lecturer (2007)
- Fellow, International Society of Heterocyclic Chemistry (IHC) (2007)
- Aldrich Lectureship, Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla (2007)
- Givaudan/Karrer Medal, Organic Chemistry Institute, University of Zurich (2008)
- Glaxo Smith-Kline Gordon Hodson Memorial Lectureship (2008)
- International Society of Heterocyclic Chemistry, Honorary Lecturer (2009)
- Novartis Lecturer, Central European Countries, Prague, Budapest, Bratislava (2009)
- Fellow, American Chemical Society (2009)
- Honous Causa, Technical University of Tallinn, Estonia (2010)
- Lithuanian Academy of Sciences Laureate (2010)
- Excellence In Research, Queen's University (2011)
- Alumni Award for a Distinguished BSc Graduate, University of Alberta (2011)

Editorships and Editorial Advisory Boards

- Volume Editor, *Science of Synthesis – Volume Eight* (1999-)
- General Organic Editor, *Canadian Journal of Chemistry* (1988-)
- Regional Editor for the American Continents, *SYNLETT* (1990-)
- Synthesis Editor, *Polycyclic Aromatic Compounds* (1988-)
- Editorial Board Member, *Organic Process Research & Development* (2000)
- Editorial Board Member, *Advanced Synthesis and Catalysis* (2000)

- Editor, *Advances in Carbanion Chemistry* (1988-1999)
- Editorial Advisory Board, *Journal of Organic Chemistry* (1984 -89)
- Editorial Advisory Board, *Progress in Heterocyclic Chemistry* (1988-95)

Professional Service Includes:

- Chairman, International Conference in Heterocyclic Chemistry (Waterloo, 1985)
- Chairman, Organic Division, ACS (1989-90)
- Councilor, Division of Organic Chemistry, ACS (1993-1996)
- Committee Associate, International Activities Committee, ACS (1994-)
- Alternate Councilor (DOC), ACS (1996-2002)
- International Advisory Committee, 18th International Congress of Heterocyclic Chemistry, 2001
- International Advisory Committee, 6th International Conference on Heteroatom Chemistry, 2001

Publications:

- over 245 papers and 62 reviews. Eight patents.

Student Training:

- over 90 graduate students and 100 post doctoral fellows.

Research

- **Focus:** Pursuing serendipity, to devise and develop new methods and strategies in organic synthesis.
- **Current Programs:** the Directed *ortho* Metalation (DoM) strategy for polysubstituted aromatics and heteraromatics; emphasis on biological molecules; aromatic radical cyclizations; transition metal cross coupling reactions; new acyl anion equivalents; BINOL and ferrocene ligands for asymmetrical synthesis.
- **Lectures:** 261 Plenary and over 440 Invited Lectures
- **Industrial Interaction:** 16 consultantships; lead compound for Monsanto fungicide for the TAKE-ALL disease, commercialized in 1999, originated from the Snieckus laboratories.
- **Teaching:** Snieckus delights in undergraduate and graduate teaching and interaction. Since 1990, he has also regularly taught short courses on Directed *ortho* Metalation (DoM) and Heteroaromatic Directed *ortho* Metalation (HetDoM) to medicinal and process chemists in North America and Europe.
- **When not in the Lab,** he enjoys hockey with the group, jazz and history of chemistry in inverse order as he gets older.