

Editorial

Introducing Volume 100 of *Organic Syntheses*

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For over one hundred years *Organic Syntheses* has provided the chemistry community with reliable procedures for the synthesis of organic compounds. Volume 1, with Roger Adams of the University of Illinois as Editor-in-Chief, appeared in 1921 and featured seventeen detailed procedures for the preparation of benzoin, furfural, mesityl oxide, and other organic compounds that were not commercially available at the time. The *Organic Syntheses* Editorial Board in 1921 consisted of Roger Adams, Hans T. Clarke of Eastman Kodak, James Bryant Conant of Harvard, and Oliver Kamm of the Parke Davis pharmaceutical company. The responsibilities of the editors included developing all of the procedures published in the volume which were then “checked” for reproducibility in the laboratory of another member of the Board. The fascinating early history of *Organic Syntheses* is described in detail in an article by Ralph and Rachel Shriner that can be accessed at <http://www.orgsyn.org/history.aspx>.

All of the articles published in Volume 1 provided a detailed and reproducible procedure for the preparative-scale synthesis of a specific organic compound of interest. For example, the first article in the volume presented procedures for the synthesis of a series of alkyl bromides via the reaction of the corresponding alcohols with aqueous hydrobromic acid in the presence of sulfuric acid. The HBr for the reaction was “conveniently” generated in situ by bubbling sulfur dioxide gas into a mixture of bromine and ice water!

Procedures for synthesizing specific compounds of interest comprised the subject of nearly all of the articles published in *Organic Syntheses* for many years. More recently, however, the majority of articles in *Organic Syntheses* showcase reactions serving to demonstrate a representative protocol for a generally useful synthetic method. For example, the first article in the present volume, a contribution from my own laboratory, describes a general method

for the synthesis of highly substituted pyridines via the Diels-Alder reaction of vinylallenes and tosyl cyanide.

To celebrate and mark this special anniversary, Volume 100 of *Organic Syntheses* will include a number of special features.

“OS Perspectives” provide authors with an opportunity to provide personal perspectives on topics associated with the field of organic synthesis. Appropriate subjects for OS Perspectives include, but are not limited to, discussions of the following:

- Trends and developments in the strategies, methods, and the applications of organic synthetic chemistry.
- Trends and developments with regard to the community of researchers in the field.
- Reflections on how research in the field is carried out and published.
- Discussions concerned with reproducibility are particularly welcome.
- Also welcome are Perspectives on the role and value of the publication *Organic Syntheses* including personal reminiscences.

Typical Perspectives are expected to be on the order of 2-20 published pages in length and submissions are welcome from all members of the community.

“OS Classics”, invited by the Board of Editors, will celebrate notable past articles published in *Organic Syntheses*. OS Classics will include commentaries by authorities in the relevant area of chemistry discussing the significance of the reactions described in the article and providing an historical perspective.

As we enter the second hundred years of publication, the core mission of Organic Syntheses, Inc. continues to be to promote the availability of reliable and practical procedures for synthesizing organic compounds. As outlined on the Org Synth website, today this is accomplished not only by the publication of the open access online journal, but also through several philanthropic programs (<http://www.orgsyn.org/osphilanthropy.aspx>). These include the funding of lectureships at a number of chemistry departments in the US and abroad, providing grants for summer research to faculty at principally undergraduate institutions, sponsoring and furnishing full funding for an annual Workshop on Synthetic Organic Chemistry for Young Investigators, and contributing funding for a number of conferences including the Empowering Women in Organic Chemistry (EWOC)

Conference. Organic Syntheses, Inc. also contributes funding for the Roger Adams Award of the American Chemical Society.

In conjunction with the publication of this landmark 100th volume of *Organic Syntheses*, a special one-day symposium is scheduled for the Fall National Meeting of the American Chemical Society in San Francisco. The Board of Editors and Board of Directors of Organic Syntheses, Inc. are dedicated to ensuring that the organization will continue to make valuable contributions in support of the chemistry community during the next hundred years.



Rick L. Danheiser received his undergraduate education at Columbia where he carried out research in the laboratory of Professor Gilbert Stork. He received his Ph.D. at Harvard in 1978 working under the direction of E. J. Corey on the total synthesis of gibberellic acid. Dr. Danheiser is the A. C. Cope Professor of Chemistry at MIT where his research focuses on the design and invention of new annulation and cycloaddition reactions, and their application in the total synthesis of biologically active compounds. Danheiser has been Editor-in-Chief of *Organic Syntheses* since 2004.