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When a man splits a grain of sand and the universe is turned upside down, in consequence, it is difficult to realise that to the man who did it, the splitting of the grain is the great affair; and the capsizing of the cosmos quite a small one.



THE EDITOR'S FIST

A BANEFUL BIT OF BUREAUCRATIC BUNGLING;
OR: BEN FRANKLIN -- WHERE ARE YOU WHEN WE NEED YOU?

Why doesn't the US Postal Service concentrate on moving the mails more effectively and stop its dangerous interference with scientific publishing?

Whatever one's views of "publish or perish" and its allied ills, the proliferation of new (and often unneeded) journals, and other afflictions of scientific publishing, one fact remains: the life blood of scientific progress is the scientific journal, from Arch. Sci. Neeth. through JACS to Zeits. Phys. Chem.

Now, at a time when rising costs, diminishing advertising, questionable mass photocopying, and worsening material shortages are giving publishers more ulcers than ever, a potentially greater menace is posed by a recent action of the Postal Service.

Although page charges have been an essential part of US scientific publishing for many years, the postal people have only now discovered them. (Why the delay, one wonders. Could it be that the news came to them by mail?) Postal officials have recently sent notices to several journals, JACS included, which regularly impose page charges, that articles for which the charges are paid are henceforth to be considered advertising. Consequently, these journals will have to pay considerably higher postal fees, and all such articles will have to be labeled as advertising.

If it were not so serious, one could really laugh. Too many papers are being published whose only contribution to the literature is to raise the noise level. Such papers are indeed advertising, and false advertising at that. But the cure for this ailment is a strong dose of editorial blue pencil administered by the journals' editors themselves.

The root of the problem has been alleged to be the Postal Service's desperate need for money. The need is indeed desperate if they must stoop to a foolish misinterpretation of an ancient statute to satisfy it. (As a matter of fact, we do not question the Postal Service's legitimate requirements for more money-increased funding, in federalese. We happen to favor a greater subsidy, but this is not the place to debate the point.)

Based mainly on our own trips to our friendly neighborhood post office, plus some experience with other federal agencies, we suspect -- but cannot prove -- that the real trouble with the Postal Service is the elephantiasis that afflicts virtually every government agency; in a phrase, too many chiefs, too few braves. If the administrators who are currently pushing ("implementing" is their word) this new policy would only rise from their padded chairs and start hauling some mail sacks, the entire country would benefit, the Postal Service most of all.

BUMPER STICKERS

Chemistry bumper stickers are available from the ACS Department of Educational Activities, 1155 - 16th St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036, at 5/\$1.50 or 50¢ each. Slogans available: *IT'S AMINO WORLD WITHOUT CHEMISTS; CHEMISTS HAVE SOLUTIONS; HONK IF YOU PASSED P-CHEM; EVERYONE HAS AVOGADRO'S NUMBER; HEISENBERG MAY HAVE SLEPT HERE.*



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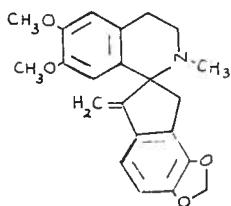
MAURICE SHAMMA

Maurice Shamma was born in 1926. He obtained his A.B. degree from Berea College, Kentucky, in 1951, and his Ph.D. degree in chemistry from the University of Wisconsin in 1955. After a one-year postdoctoral appointment at Wayne State University, he joined the chemistry faculty of The Pennsylvania State University in 1956, where he is currently Professor of Chemistry.

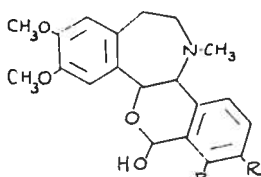
Professor Shamma has concentrated his research in the area of isoquinoline alkaloids, and has published over 150 papers on this subject. He has lectured extensively, and has written one book, *The Isoquinoline Alkaloids, Chemistry and Pharmacology*, which appeared in 1972. He is presently working on a second book to cover developments since 1972. He is a member of the advisory boards for *Heterocycles* and *Lloydia*.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CHEMISTRY OF ISOQUINOLINE ALKALOIDS

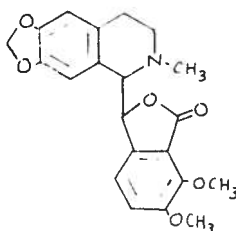
Various aspects of synthetic organic chemistry will be emphasized. In particular, methods for expanding 6-membered nitrogen rings to azepines, or for contracting such rings to cyclopentane derivatives, will be covered. New syntheses of spirobenzylisoquinolines, rhoeadines, and phthalideisoquinolines will be presented.



A spirobenzylisoquinoline



A rhoeadine



A phthalideisoquinoline

GARY POSNER

Gary Posner was born in 1943. He received a B.A. degree from Brandeis University in 1964 and an M.A. from Harvard in 1965. He obtained his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1968, working with E. J. Corey. Following a year as Research ... *continued on p. 6*

----- TEAR-OUT DINNER RESERVATION FORM -----

Enclosed is \$ _____ (\$6.25/\$4.25* per person) for dinner reservations at the Eudowood Gardens Dining Room for the following persons:

NAME (Please print or type) AFFILIATION

Please make check payable to Maryland Section, ACS, and mail together with reservation form to Dr. Ernest Silversmith, 2607 Taney Road, Baltimore, MD 21209. Or phone 444-3216 (8-4 weekdays), 358-0619 (evenings & weekends).

* See note on p. 5.

Return by February 10

FEBRUARY MEETING

DATE:

Wednesday, February 16, 1977

PLACE:

Eudowood Gardens Lecture Room
Eudowood Plaza, Joppa Road near
Goucher Boulevard

SPEAKERS AND TOPICS:

5:30 PM
Dr. Gary Posner
The Johns Hopkins University
"New Methods for Organic
Synthesis"

8:30 PM
Dr. Maurice Shamma
The Pennsylvania State
University
"Recent Developments in the
Chemistry of Isoquinoline
Alkaloids"

SOCIAL HOUR:

There will be a social hour after the meeting. Refreshments will be served.



Dr. GARY POSNER

COCKTAILS AND DINNER:

Eudowood Gardens Dining Room
Cocktails 6:30-7:15
Cash Bar
Hot buffet dinner (7:15) \$6.25 per person, EXCEPT: Spouses, retired chemists and students, and their spouses, may attend the dinner at \$4.25. Reservations are necessary for the dinner and should be made with

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USE THE CONVENIENT FORM THAT APPEARS ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE

(Or phone: 444-3216, 8-4 weekdays; 358-0619 evenings and weekends)

It is not necessary to be a member of the American Chemical Society to attend the dinner or the talks, and the talks may be attended without attending the dinner. You are invited to bring your wife and friends to both the dinner and the meeting.



Dr. MAURICE SHAMMA

... continued from p. 4

Fellow with W. G. Dauben at Berkeley, he was appointed an Assistant Professor at Johns Hopkins in 1969. In 1974 he assumed his present position as Associate Professor of Chemistry at Hopkins.

Dr. Posner has published more than 35 papers in areas of organic reaction mechanisms and synthesis. Much of his work has dealt with organometallics, especially copper compounds, as reagents for organic syntheses. He has been an invited speaker at numerous symposia, and he served as Chairman of the organometallic compounds session of the 25th IUPAC Congress in 1975.

NEW METHODS FOR ORGANIC SYNTHESIS

Emphasis will be given to two new reagents for organic synthesis: (1) organo-copper compounds and (2) chromatographic alumina.

Organocopper reagents are becoming almost as familiar to practicing synthetic chemists as the Grignard reagents. The history and development of organo-copper reagents will be discussed briefly. Preparation of organocuprates will be illustrated by a series of photographs of an actual laboratory experiment. Use of these reagents will be exemplified (a) by conversion of acid chlorides into ketones and (b) by attachment of hydrocarbon groups to the α - and β -carbons of α,β -ethylenic ketones. Application to natural product synthesis will be mentioned.

Although chromatographic alumina is normally used as an adsorbent for purification of mixtures, we have found that highly dried alumina can be used *as a reagent* to promote several types of organic reactions: (1) elimination reactions, (2) substitution reactions, and (3) redox reactions. The scope and limitations of carbonyl reduction-alcohol oxidation on dried alumina will be discussed. Comparison will be made with complex metal hydride reducing agents. The role of the alumina in the heterogeneous reactions will be mentioned.

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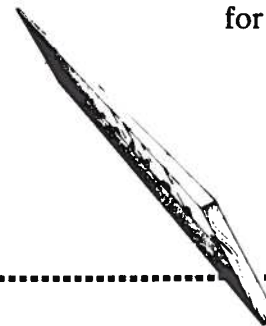


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When did YOU Last Write Your Congressman?

The following item is excerpted from an article by Alan C. Nixon (a past president of the ACS) that appeared in the November, 1976 issue of *The Chemist*, the official publication of the American Institute of Chemists:

I think that the ACS and the AIC are leaders in the areas of trying to get information into the Congress and in trying to get information out to the public, to let them know what science is all about.

But even so if there's one thing that we can be criticized for, it's not spending enough time in this area. We are certainly favored by conditions in this country, we're favored by the educational system, we're favored by job opportunities, and yet, there are very few people who are willing to put in their one or two or three hours per month doing their duty as scientist-citizens: writing to Congress, looking at the bills that are coming up and reacting to them. You know, you've heard about gun control laws. The reason we don't have rational gun control laws in this country is because of the existence of an organization called the National Rifle Association, which is just up the street from the ACS building in Washington. They can put 50,000 letters into Congress any time a bill comes up that has to do with keeping people from having six-shooters. They get the letters in and they block the legislation.

Now we've got two million scientists and engineers in this country. I doubt if we put a thousand letters a year into Congress. And that's a terrible indictment, I think.

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