



G. A. Olah

George A. Olah

Date of birth:	May 22, 1927
Position:	Distinguished Professor, University of Southern California
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Homepage:	http://chem.usc.edu/faculty/Olah.html
Education:	1949 PhD in Chemistry, Technical University, Budapest
Awards:	1964 American Chemical Society (ACS) Award in Petroleum Chemistry; 1994 Nobel Prize in Chemistry; 2001 ACS Arthur C. Cope Award; 2005 ACS Priestley Medal; 2011 Széchenyi Grand Prize of Hungary
Current research interests:	The feasible replacement of fossil fuels based on the concept of the “methanol economy”: capture of carbon dioxide and its chemical recycling into methanol and its varied fuels and synthetic products
Hobbies:	Reading, swimming

The author presented on this page has recently published his **30th article** in *Angewandte Chemie*: “Towards Oil Independence Through Renewable Methanol Chemistry”: G. A. Olah, *Angew. Chem.* **2013**, 125, 112–116; *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2013**, 52, 104–107.

In a spare hour, I ... read outside chemistry.

If I could be any age I would be ... young again.

My biggest inspiration is ... to do my best.

My favorite time of day is ... early morning.

I admire and get advice from ... my wife.

I advise my students to ... set a goal and work hard for it.

My favorite name reaction is ... the Friedel–Crafts reaction.

My science “hero” is ... Hans Meerwein.

My favorite painter is ... Georges Braque.

My motto is ... if I believe in something I don’t give up easily.

The greatest scientific advance of the last decade was ... proving the existence of the Higgs Boson.

When I was eighteen I wanted to be ... a scientist and teacher.

Looking back over my career, I ... am grateful for the chances I had.

My favorite drink is ... a glass of wine.

My first experiment was ... at age 14 creating a loud explosion and much smoke in a friend’s basement.

How is chemistry research different now than at the beginning of your career?

Many new computerized methods and technologies became available allowing significant extension of experimental and theoretical studies.

Why is it important for scientists to publish their results?

It is the responsibility of an author and his co-workers to make their results available to others (also for criticism, comments, and different views).

My 5 top publications:

1. G. A. Olah, *Friedel–Crafts Chemistry*, Wiley-Interscience, New York, **1973**.
2. G. A. Olah, R. Malhotra, S. C. Narang, *Nitration: Methods and Mechanisms*, VCH, Weinheim, **1989**.
3. “My Search for Carbocations and their Role in Chemistry (Nobel Lecture)”: G. A. Olah, *Angew. Chem.* **1995**, 107, 1519–1532; *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed. Engl.* **1995**, 34, 1393–1405.
4. *Across Conventional Lines: Selected Papers of George A. Olah*, Vols. 1 and 2 (Ed.: G. A. Olah and G. K. S. Prakash, respectively); published as volume 11 of the *World Scientific Series in 20th Century Chemistry*, World Scientific, Singapore, **2003**.
5. G. A. Olah, A. Goepfert, G. K. S. Prakash, *Beyond Oil and Gas: The Methanol Economy*, 2nd ed., Wiley-VCH, Weinheim, **2009**.

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