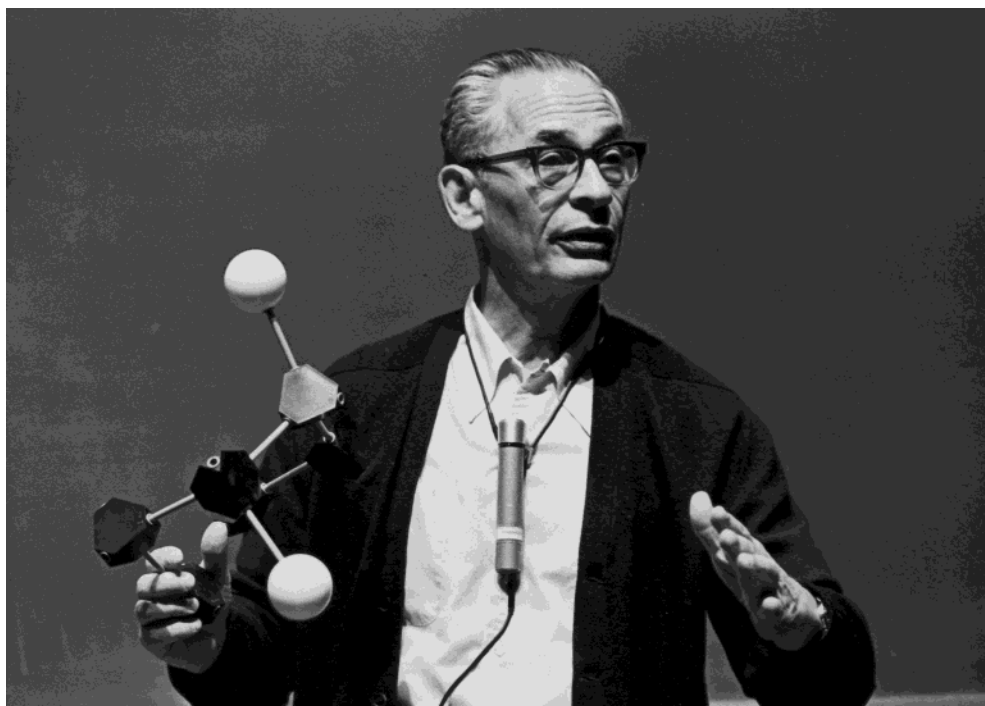


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### Henry Rapoport

Henry Rapoport was born in Brooklyn, New York, on November 16, 1918. He attended high school in Atlantic City, New Jersey. After his graduation in 1936, he entered the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he received a B.S. in 1940 with a major in chemistry with minors in mathematics and physics. He remained at MIT for graduate work and in 1943 received a Ph.D. in organic chemistry.

His first position was with the Heyden Chemical Corporation, where he worked on the isolation, structure elucidation, and synthesis of penicillin. He resigned his position with Heyden in 1945 to accept a National Research Council Fellowship with Lyndon Small at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. At the NIH he carried out research on the synthesis of morphine derivatives.

In June of 1946, Dean Wendell Latimer offered Rapoport the position of Instructor of Chemistry at the University of California at Berkeley. He assumed the position in September 1946 and was promoted to Assistant Professor in 1948, to Associate Professor in 1953, and to Professor in 1957. He retired from active service in 1989 and was awarded the Berkeley Citation in 1999.

During his scientific career, Rapoport published more than 400 scientific articles, of which more than 75 appeared after his retirement from active service in 1989. He was also granted numerous patents in the general area of heterocyclic and natural products chemistry. He is noted for seminal work on the biosynthesis of morphine using radiolabeled carbon as a tracer element and for his contributions to the chemistry and biosynthesis of the porphyrins. He and his students carried out one of the first laboratory syntheses of the antitumor agent camptothecin. In the 1970s, Rapoport teamed with his colleague John Hearst to develop the chemistry of psoralens, natural products which have found use for the deactivation of viruses and which served as the basis for the formation of a successful private company named Cerus Corporation.

Throughout his career, Rapoport served the organic chemistry profession in numerous ways, including serving as Associate Editor of *The Journal of Organic Chemistry* and as a member of the Medicinal Chemistry Study Section of the National Institutes of Health. He was highly valued as a consultant by medicinal chemistry research laboratories.

Rapoport was an outstanding and popular organic chemistry teacher. For several decades he taught the important service courses required by premedical and other life science students. He also taught upper division undergraduate and graduate-level courses in natural products chemistry. But his greatest impact was on the doctoral and postdoctoral students he trained throughout his 55-year career at Berkeley. He loved interacting with his students even more than he loved a good Cuban cigar. He mentored more than 300 graduate students and postdoctoral fellows during his career and often carved the turkey for them at Thanksgiving feasts. Past 80 he was still dancing the kazatska, the vigorous Russian men's folk dance in which the dancer folds his arms and

alternately kicks out each leg from a squat. To honor his life, family members raised on a high pole in Berkeley's Claremont neighborhood a flag with the nickname "Rap". Friends and students made the banner for Professor Rapoport's birthday five years ago. Within a month of his death, on March 6, 2002, his former students and research collaborators had raised the funds to endow the "Henry Rapoport Chair in Organic Chemistry" at Berkeley.

Rapoport is survived by his wife of 57 years, Sonya Goldberg Rapoport, their daughter, Hava Rapoport of Cordova, Spain, and sons David of Berkeley and Robert of Cincinnati.

Clayton H. Heathcock  
October 20, 2002

The Articles and Notes in this issue of *The Journal of Organic Chemistry* are dedicated to the memory of Henry Rapoport and were submitted by his former co-workers and colleagues. As Editor-in-Chief, I want to thank them for all of their efforts in making this memorial issue possible. On behalf of the JOC Editors, I wish to join Clayton Heathcock in recognizing Henry Rapoport's service, scientific contributions, and leadership to the field of organic chemistry.

C. Dale Poulter  
Editor-in-Chief

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