Separation Science and Technology
Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713708471

Foreword

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To cite this Article Grushka, E.(1987) 'Foreword', Separation Science and Technology, 22: 8, 1791 — 1792
To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/01496398708057613
URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01496398708057613

SEPARATION SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, **22**(8-10), pp. 1791-1792, 1987

Foreword

Preparative-scale chromatography, as judged from the growing number of specialized symposia and publications, is experiencing a long overdue revitalization. The resurgence of preparative chromatography is not surprising since, by its very nature, chromatography seems to be an ideal tool for concurrent purification and collection of fractions. The chemical and pharmaceutical industries have investigated and practiced preparative chromatography, but the knowledge gained by them, in general, has remained "in house." Until recently, relatively few chromatographers outside the industrial world devoted an appreciable amount of time to detailed examination of the preparative aspect of chromatography. Instead, major efforts were directed by most academicians at perfecting analytical systems, both from instrumental and chemical points of view. It is only in the last couple of years that the attention of those outside the industrial laboratory has turned in earnest to the preparative side of chromatography.

Large-scale chromatography imposes restrictions which are either unfamiliar or insignificant in the analytical scale. The effect of the adsorption isotherms on the shape of the eluted peaks, the requirements of the pumping system, and the difficulties associated with sample injection are but a few of the problems that must be dealt with in this facet of chromatography. In addition, preparative-scale chromatography can be pursued in several different ways, each having its own advantages and disadvantages. Most of the fundamental research in preparative chromatography during the last few years deals with these issues, as reflected in this special issue of *Separation Science and Technology*. The papers cover a wide range of topics: peak shapes, optimum dimensions of preparative columns, size of the support, and modes of operation. Specialized applications are also covered in this issue. These topics, which cover theoretical, instrumental, and practical aspects, are at the forefront of the developments in preparative chromatography.

Our hope is that the papers in this special issue will help those who are active in the field and also spark the interest of those who are attempting to use preparative-scale chromatography.

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