



UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM

From Batch to Flow: Advancing Synthetic Organic Chemistry through Technological Innovation

Prof. Dr. ing. Timothy Noël

Van 't Hoff Institute for Molecular Sciences University of Amsterdam The Netherlands

> t.noel@uva.nl www.NoelResearchGroup.com

🔽 @NoelGroupUvA, @tnoel82

Reimagining Synthetic Chemistry



Our mission:

Expanding the available chemical space by embracing technology to the fullest extent

by

- 1) Developing new synthetic transformations using reagents or conditions that are difficult to handle
- 2) Developing new tools to make synthesis easier
- 3) Showing unique selectivity and reactivity

How?

by merging organic chemistry and chemical engineering



How can flow make an impact?

Inherent advantages of microscale flow reactors:

Enhanced mass transfer

Enhanced heat transfer

High reproducibility

Multistep flow sequences

Automation

Safety

Scalability

Gas-liquid reactions

Taming exothermic reactions

Reaction kinetics

Time-gain, labor reduction

Minimizing human error

New processing windows

From mg to kg in same device



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Problem: In general, people resist change.

Education is Key!

OPINION

Flow into the chemistry curriculum

BY TIMOTHY NOEL | 27 SEPTEMBER 2019

There's more to chemistry than the round-bottomed flask

It's ironic that chemists are experts at change, except when it comes to their own practice. Mark Gilligan recently wrote about chemists' reluctance to adopt flow chemistry as an example of this innate resistance to change. I have seen that same resistance, and I understand it. Why would you suddenly change your habits and embrace an expensive new technology?



"Put flow chemistry in your curriculum and give students the broadest experience of making molecules. Let them decide which ideas have a future."

For an opinion article: Noël, *Chemistry World* 2019, <u>https://www.chemistryworld.com/opinion/flow-into-the-chemistry-curriculum/4010382.article</u>. For our undergrad flow experiments: Kuijpers, Weggemans, Verwijlen, Noël, *J. Flow Chem.* 2021, *11*, 7-12.

Democratization of Flow Chemistry

UFO – Batch

UFlow

Flow – Fidget Reactor



Fully characterized, standardized batch and flow setups that are affordable.

Designs available via: Masson, Zondag, Schuurmans, Noël, React. Chem. Eng. 2024, 9, 2218-2225.

For characterization procedure: Zondag, Schuurmans, Chaudhuri, Visser, Soares, Padoin, Kuijpers, Dorbec, van der Schaaf, Noël, Nature Chemical

Engineering 2024, 1, 462–471.

Photocatalysis

Photoredox Catalysis

photocatalysis allows for absorption of wavelengths of the UV-A and VIS

Advantages: - cheap, energy-efficient and high intensity energy light sources (LEDs)

- mild reaction conditions (room temperature, functional group tolerance)
- new opportunities in organic synthesis

 $Ru(bpy)_{3}Cl_{2}$ is the most studied one-electron photoredox catalyst.



Special issue in *Chemical Reviews* on **Photochemical Catalytic Processes** (Paolo Melchiorre, Guest Editor), **2022**, *122*, 1483-2980. For a perspective on PC: Noel, Zysman-Colman, *Chem Catalysis* **2022**, *2*, 468-476.

Light activation of molecules

Thermochemical activation:

$$k = A^{\left(-\frac{E_a}{RT}\right)}$$

Photochemical activation:

 $k = \alpha \cdot I^{\beta}$



For comprehensive reviews: (i) Cambié, Bottecchia, Straathof, Hessel, Noël, Chem. Rev. 2016, 116, 10276-10341. (ii) Buglioni, Raymenants, Slattery, Zondag, Noël, Chem. Rev. 2022, 122, 2752-2906.

Every single pharma- and agro-chemical company has initiated programs to implement Photoredox catalysis.

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Medicinal Chemistry:

- Goal: identify new chemical structures ASAP.
- Small amounts for bio-assays and ADME studies
- Well implemented

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Process Chemistry:

- Goal: clean, cost-effective manufacturing process for new medicines
- Scalable process for clinical trials and commercialization
- Challenging!

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Process Chemistry:

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- Scalable process for clinical trials and commercialization
- Challenging!

Scale up: 50 kg product/day is a good estimate for what is required in pharma!

This requires about 1000 W of optical power per day.

Noel, Zysman-Colman, Chem Catalysis 2022, 2, 468-476.

1000 W of optical power per day to produce 50kg/day

To put it in perspective:

This amounts to the light delivered by 5000 CFL light bulbs !!!



Photocatalysis scale up problems

Batch : limited penetration depth of irradiation because of absorption results in longer reaction times, higher catalyst loadings and difficult scale-up



 $\log (T) = \log (I_0/I) = \varepsilon.I.c$

(Bouguer-Lambert-Beer)

For comprehensive reviews: (i) Cambié, Bottecchia, Straathof, Hessel, Noël, Chem. Rev. 2016, 116, 10276-10341. (ii) Buglioni, Raymenants, Slattery, Zondag, Noël, Chem. Rev. 2022, 122, 2752-2906.

Scaling Photochemistry

Longer operation times + intensified reaction conditions:



Wan, Wen, Laudadio, Capaldo, Lammers, Rincon, Garcia-Losada, Mateos, O'Frederick, Broersma, Noel, ACS Central Sci. 2022, 8, 51-56.

Scaling multiphase reaction conditions:



- Reactor = two stators and one rotating disc.
- Distance between rotor and stators is about 1-2 mm
- Rotational speed (1000-3000 rpm) induces high shear and thus provides high mass and heat transfer.

For a review: (i) F. Visscher, J. van der Schaaf, T. A. Nijhuis, J. C. Schouten, Chem. Eng. Res. Des. 2013, 91, 1923-1940. (ii) J. van der Schaaf, J. C. Schouten, Curr. Opin. Chem. Eng. 2011, 1, 84-88,



Chaudhuri, Kuijpers, Hendrix, Hacking, Shivaprasad, Emanuelsson, Noel, van der Schaaf, Chem. Eng. J 2020, 100, 125875.

Batch ($V_R = 5 mL$)

Microflow (id = 0.76 mm, V_R = 1 mL) pSDR at 50 mL/min

 $(V_{R} = 28 \text{ mL}, h = 2 \text{ mm})$



- 1. Selectivity goes up from 50% (batch) to 70% (flow) to 90-95% (pSDR).
- 2. Residence time is reduced from 40 minutes (batch) to 1 min (flow) to 27 seconds (pSDR)
- 3. Throughput increases from 0.375 mmol/h (batch) to 4.2 mmol/h (flow) to 270 mmol/h (pSDR)

Chaudhuri, Kuijpers, Hendrix, Hacking, Shivaprasad, Emanuelsson, Noel, van der Schaaf, Chem. Eng. J 2020, 100, 125875.



Chaudhuri, Kuijpers, Hendrix, Hacking, Shivaprasad, Emanuelsson, Noel, van der Schaaf, Chem. Eng. J 2020, 100, 125875.

Photochemical Spinning Disk Reactor Handling heterogeneous Photocatalysts

A Photochemical Rotor-Stator Spinning Disk Reactor enables scale up of complex heterogeneous photocatalytic reaction conditions



B Degradation of methylene blue enabled by titanium dioxide semiconductor photocatalysis



Chaudhuri, Zondag, Schuurmans, Van der Schaaf, Noel, Org. Process Res. Dev. 2022, 26, 1279-1288.

Photochemical Spinning Disk Reactor Handling heterogeneous Photocatalysts



500 RPM (red dots show particle agglomeration)

2000 RPM (10 mg/mL TiO₂)

Chaudhuri, Zondag, Schuurmans, Van der Schaaf, Noel, Org. Process Res. Dev. 2022, 26, 1279-1288.

Photochemical Spinning Disk Reactor Matching with high power LEDs

а



high light intensity enables to exploit excellent mass-transfer capacity of SDR

18 kg/day productivity for α -terpinene photooxidation

Chaudhuri, de Groot, Schuurmans, Bianchi, Zondag, Kuijpers, Broersma, Dorbec, Van der Schaaf, Noel, in preparation.

Photoredox Catalysis scaling via flow technology



For reviews on scaling flow reactors: (i) Dong, Wen, Zhao, Kuhn, Noël, Chem. Eng. Sci. X 2021, 100097. (ii) Donnelly, Baumann, J. Flow Chem. 2021, 11, 223-241. (iii) Berton, de Souza, Abdiaj, McQuade, Snead, J. Flow Chem. 2020, 10, 73-92.

Synthetic methodology enabled by flow

Expanding Chemical Space

Photocatalytic sp³ C–H functionalization via HAT

R **—** H

generally unreactive bond

- activated and non-activated C H bonds
- untapped synthetic potential

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Generation of radical intermediates via Hydrogen Atom Transfer





For a review: (a) Capaldo, Ravelli, Fagnoni, Chem. Rev. 2022, 122, 1875-1924. (b) Capaldo, Quadri, Ravelli, Green Chem. 2020, 22, 3376–3396.

Photocatalytic sp³ C–H functionalization via HAT



For a review: (a) Capaldo, Ravelli, Fagnoni, Chem. Rev. 2022, 122, 1875-1924. (b) Capaldo, Quadri, Ravelli, Green Chem. 2020, 22, 3376–3396.

Photocatalytic HAT using gasses in flow







For a review: (i) Laporte, Masson, Zondag, Noël, Angew. Chem. Int. Ed. 2024, 63, e20231610.

(ii) Mallia, Baxendale, Org. Process Res. Dev. 2016, 20, 327–360.

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(ii) Mallia, Baxendale, Org. Process Res. Dev. 2016, 20, 327–360.



Laudadio, Govaerts, Wang, Ravelli, Koolman, Fagnoni, Djuric, Noël, Angew. Chem. Int. Ed. 2018, 57, 4078-4082.

Most challenging problem in C–H functionalization



"Remaining unsolved, but increasingly important due to the production of shale gas, is the original goal: the mild and selective conversion of methane and light hydrocarbons to functionalized feedstocks" John F. Hartwig, JACS **2016**, 138, 2-24.

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John F. Hartwig, JACS 2016, 138, 2-24.

"[Natural gas] is a vast, low-cost feedstock of hydrocarbons that remains untapped as a raw material, simply because there has been no easy way to turning it into synthetically useful compounds"

Robert G. Bergman, Nature 2007, 138, 391-392.

Photocatalytic sp³ C–H functionalization of light alkanes



Sulfonyl hydrazone, a versatile building block



Via a one-pot, two-step process:



For HAT: Pulcinella, Bonciolini, Lukas, Sorato, Noël, Angew. Chemie Int. Ed. 2023, 62, e202215374.

For decarboxylative coupling: Bonciolini, Pulcinella, Leone, Schiroli, Luguera Ruiz, Sorato, Dubois, Gopalakrishnan, Masson, Della Ca', Protti,

Fagnoni, Zysman-Colman, Johansson, Noël, Nature Commun., 2024, 15, 1509.

Reaction Optimization

Streamlining and optimizing a compound trace into a widely applicable synthetic method is both demanding and time-intensive.
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Typical strategy for synthetic methodology development:



Transformation

Random Screening **Reaction Conditions**

HIT Optimization One-Factor-At-A-Time

High Yield & Selectivity

Reaction Protocol for Entire Substrate Scope

Reaction Optimization

Streamlining and optimizing a compound trace into a widely applicable synthetic method is both demanding and time-intensive.

Typical strategy for synthetic methodology development:



Most substrates have suboptimal yields.

Reaction Optimization

If most substrates in a scope have suboptimal yields.

Why not let a machine do the work?



Slattery, Wen, Tenblad, Pintossi, Orduna, den Hartog, Noel, Science 2024, 383, eadj1817.

Photocatalysis offers distinct organic synthesis methods but faces significant challenges.





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Can we expedite the optimization of complex photocatalytic reactions with minimal human knowledge and intervention?



RoboChem An all-in-one robotic platform



Slattery, Wen, Tenblad, Pintossi, Orduna, den Hartog, Noel, Science 2024, 383, eadj1817.

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Slattery, Wen, Tenblad, Pintossi, Orduna, den Hartog, Noel, Science 2024, 383, eadj1817.

Trifluoromethylthiolation via HAT



Original work: Schirmer, Rolka, Karl, Holzhausen, König, *Org. Lett.* **2021**, *23*, 5729–5733. Slattery, Wen, Tenblad, Pintossi, Orduna, den Hartog, Noel, *Science* **2024**, *383*, eadj1817.

Oxytrifluoromethylation via SET



Original work: Yasu, Koike, Akita, Angew. Chem. Int. Ed. 2012, 51, 9567-9571.

Slattery, Wen, Tenblad, Pintossi, Orduna, den Hartog, Noel, Science 2024, 383, eadj1817.

Trifluoromethylation via SET



Original work: Abdiaj, Bottecchia, Alcazar, Noël, Synthesis 2017, 49, 4978-4985.

Slattery, Wen, Tenblad, Pintossi, Orduna, den Hartog, Noel, Science 2024, 383, eadj1817.

Cross-Electrophile Coupling



Original work: Luridiana, Mazzarella, Capaldo, Rincon, Garcia-Losada, Mateos, Frederick, Nuno, Buma, Noël, ACS Catal. 2022, 12, 11216–11225. Slattery, Wen, Tenblad, Pintossi, Orduna, den Hartog, Noel, Science 2024, 383, eadj1817.

Machine Learning May Sometimes Simply Capture Literature Popularity Trends: A Case Study of Heterocyclic Suzuki–Miyaura Coupling

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Caused by

- Subjective preferences in selecting reaction conditions by chemists
- Lack of reliable and standardized data, including lack of negative data.

Grzybowski et al., J. Am. Chem. Soc. 2022, 144, 4819-4827.

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Fundamental flaw in the current synthetic literature (!)

Grzybowski et al., J. Am. Chem. Soc. 2022, 144, 4819-4827.

Digitization of Chemistry



Clean, detailed and reproducible datasets

- No mass, heat or photon transfer issues
- No human error
- Positive and negative data available

	Phth-SCF ₃	Sclareolide	TBADT	Residence	Light		
run	Conc.	loading	loading	time	intensity	Yield	Throughput
	(M)	(equiv.)	(mol%)	(min)	(W)	(%)	(mmol/hr)
1	0.100	4.00	4.00	15.0	144	58.6	0.668
2	0.064	4.42	1.75	5.1	117	21.2	0.457
3	0.132	1.95	3.35	8.8	104	50.4	1.282
4	0.125	1.88	1.38	9.0	108	51.6	1.226
5	0.062	1.63	2.44	12.3	1	1.8	0.015
6	0.100	2.75	2.25	9.0	108	57.1	1.084
7	0.065	3.77	3.18	10.9	84	51.5	0.523
8	0.138	4.06	3.56	4.5	36	5.4	0.282
9	0.075	1.88	3.13	9.0	36	4.2	0.059
10	0.100	3.42	2.72	6.0	32	3.5	0.100
11	0.141	2.68	0.90	11.2	135	32.2	0.690
12	0.149	4.47	3.97	19.1	92	47.1	0.630
13	0.093	1.38	2.79	9.0	144	25.8	0.456
14	0.100	4.28	3.94	13.4	122	50.1	0.641
15	0.138	4.50	4.00	19.8	144	65.3	0.776
16	0.138	2.31	2.69	9.4	108	4.7	0.119
17	0.145	3.21	4.00	19.1	97	60.7	0.789
18	0.131	4.45	3.93	13.6	105	58.4	0.961
19	0.128	1.68	1.22	17.2	61	31.7	0.403
20	0.072	3.26	1.87	4.5	142	11.2	0.304
21	0.121	2.00	3.13	7.3	36	8.7	0.248
22	0.091	5.00	1.37	8.9	0	0.0	0.000
23	0.092	4.75	0.72	18.9	63	23.0	0.190
24	0.115	4.24	3.94	13.7	64	52.0	0.750
25	0.082	4.53	1.21	15.8	85	36.6	0.327
26	0.119	4.88	2.69	13.4	132	52.3	0.791

 Table S15. Experimental conditions and results for trifluoromethylthiolation campaign of sclareolide.

Slattery, Wen, Tenblad, Pintossi, Orduna, den Hartog, Noel, Science 2024, 383, eadj1817.

For a review on self-driving labs, see: Bailey, Slattery, Savino, Noel, Matter 2024, 7, 2382–2398.

On-demand Generation Fluorinated Reagents

Emerging fluorinated moieties

Growing interest into trifluoromethyl groups attached to heteroatoms



Emerging fluorinated moieties

Growing interest into trifluoromethyl groups attached to heteroatoms



But how to make them?

Emerging fluorinated moieties

Growing interest into trifluoromethyl groups attached to heteroatoms



Emerging Fluorinated Motifs: Synthesis, Properties and Applications, Wiley-VCH 2020

Proposed change in EU law

Potential ban on polyfluorinated alkyl substances (PFAS) in EU?



ANNEX XV RESTRICTION REPORT

PROPOSAL FOR A RESTRICTION

SUBSTANCE NAME(S): Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs)

Tyrrell, Org. Process Res. Dev. 2023, 27, 1422-1426.

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BUT

The ban could still involve reagents or even API intermediates...

Tyrrell, Org. Process Res. Dev. 2023, 27, 1422-1426.

We need new synthetic methods that are:

- Environmentally-friendly

- Starting from non-banned chemicals, e.g. alkali fluorides
 - Enable Late-stage Functionalization

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Our approach:



Synthesis of CF₃N anions on demand



Synthesis of CF₃N anions on demand



Synthesis of CF₃N anions on demand



Synthesis of CF₃S anions on demand



Synthesis of CF₃S anions on demand



Synthesis of CF₃O anions on demand


Synthesis of CF₃O anions on demand



Spennacchio, Bernus, Stanic, Mazzarella, Colella, Douglas, Boutureira, Noel, Science 2024, 385, 991-996.

On-demand SO₂F₂ generation



Bernus, Mazzarella, Stanic, Zhai, Vazquez, Boutureira, Gargano, Grossmann, Noel, Nature Synth. 2024, 3, 185-191.

On-demand SOF₂ generation



Mazzarella, Stanic, Bernus, Mehdi, Henderson, Boutureira, Noel, JACS AU 2024, 4, 2989–2994.

Conclusions

- Use of microreactors for organic chemistry:
 - Many advantages: intensified reaction conditions, scalability, safety, reduced reaction times, etc.

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• So what are you waiting for?

- But be careful, look for advantages of flow!
- ... and carry out only those reactions in flow which are worth pursuing.

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 - Many advantages: intensified reaction conditions, scalability, safety, reduced reaction times, etc.

• So what are you waiting for?

- But be careful, look for advantages of flow!
- ... and carry out only those reactions in flow which are worth pursuing.
- Go with the Flow!

Acknowledgements













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Acknowledgements



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