

Bill Watson – An Appreciation

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Bill Watson was a pioneer in interstellar chemistry, making notable contributions in a number of fields, including the basic ideas that chemistry occurs both on the surfaces of dust particles and via ion-molecule reactions in the gas. Bill's ideas on surface chemistry came first, in 1972, during a productive postdoctoral position with the well-known astrophysicist E. E. Salpeter. This work was followed by several basic papers on ion-molecule reactions, on which Bill, now at the University of Illinois, was the sole author. Bill soon became an expert in the chemistry of diffuse interstellar clouds while maintaining an interest in dense clouds as well. The 1970's were an extremely fecund period for him in interstellar chemistry, with papers in photoelectric heating of HI clouds, isotopic fractionation of both carbon and hydrogen, shock waves, and a formidable and still useful review article on interstellar reactions in the *Reviews of Modern Physics*, among many other topics. Eventually, the intense competition in the field of interstellar chemistry in those early days prompted Bill to try his hand at other areas of astrophysics such as gravitational lensing and, most importantly, masers, at which he became a well-known expert. His legacy in astrochemistry will remain secure.