

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

MARTIN LATTERICH

The Pew Scholars Program in the Biomedical Sciences

Transcript of an Interview
Conducted by

William Van Benschoten

at

McGill University
Montreal, Québec, Canada

on

12, 13, and 15 January 2004

From the Original Collection of the University of California, Los Angeles

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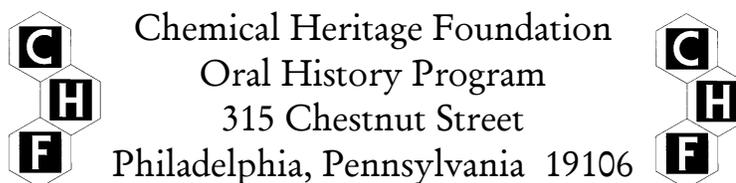
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MARTIN LATTERICH

1966 Born in Hamburg, Germany, on 28 October

Education

1989 B.Sc., First Class Honors in Molecular Biology and Biochemistry,
University of Durham, United Kingdom

1992 Ph.D., Molecular Cell Biology, University of Durham, United Kingdom

Professional Experience

1988 Imperial Cancer Research Fund, Manchester, United Kingdom
Laboratory Assistant, laboratory of Dr. John M. Boyle

1992-1995 University of California, Berkeley and Howard Hughes Medical Institute,
Berkeley, California
Postdoctoral Fellow, Laboratory of Dr. Randy Schekman

1995-2000 The Salk Institute for Biological Studies, San Diego, California
Assistant Professor
2000-2003 Adjunct Professor

1997-2000 University of California, San Diego, San Diego, California
Assistant Adjunct Professor

2000-2001 Diversa Corporation, San Diego, California
Principal Scientist and Head of Proteomics

2001-2003 Illumina, Inc., San Diego, California
Director of Proteomics

2003-2005 Montreal Proteomics Network, Montreal, Québec, Canada
Principal Investigator and Manager, New Technology
Development

2003-present McGill University, Montreal, Québec, Canada
Associate Professor, Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology

Honors

2009	Organizer and Chairman, Eighth International AAA Meeting, Montreal, Québec, Canada
2004-present	Co-chair, Human Systems Biology Graduate Stream
2003	Tier I Canada Research Chair
2001-present	Editor-in-chief, <i>Proteome Science</i>
1999	Organizer and chairman, Third International Conference on the Cell Biology of AAA proteins, La Jolla, California
1998-2002	Pew Scholar Award in Biomedical Sciences
1997	Basil O'Connor Starter Scholar Research Award
1995	American Cancer Society, California Division, Senior Postdoctoral Fellowship
1989-1992	Science and Engineering Research Council award
1990	NATO collaborative travel grant
1989	Best graduate of the decade, Durham, United Kingdom
1986	<i>Verband der Chemischen Industrie</i> book-prize for best chemistry student, Germany
1986	First and third prize in national young scientist competition, <i>Jugend Forscht</i> , Germany

Selected Publications

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ABSTRACT

Martin Latterich was born in Hamburg, Germany, though lived in Mönchengladbach, Germany until he left for college. His mother, a trained chemist who worked in quality control at a company that manufactured perfume, had a congenital kidney defect that required treatment, so Latterich spent a lot of time with his maternal grandmother, who was an accountant, and his maternal grandfather, who was an artist trained at Düsseldorf Art Academy and who started his own arts and graphics business. From a young age he was interested in his mother's work, like gas chromatography and atomic absorption spectroscopy, visiting her at her office often. With a proclivity towards science and technology, Latterich spent much of his youth performing his own experiments (with chemistry sets and the like) and taking apart pieces of electronics. In high school he entered and placed in the *Jugend Forscht*, a National Young Scientists Competition, with work on cadmium: he studied the toxicity of cadmium—when in ionic form compared to when taken up as an organometallic complex—in algae and in *Daphnia* (water fleas).

Latterich chose to attend Durham University in the United Kingdom for his undergraduate degree, during which time he undertook an undergraduate research project studying pathogenesis mechanisms and crown gall tumors with Charles Shaw. For the summer after his second year at college he worked under John Boyle at the Imperial Cancer Research Fund in Manchester, England on exonucleases: he wanted experience in mammalian-type cell biology/biochemistry, which he felt Durham could not offer (its strongest focus was in plant sciences). Latterich decided to stay at Durham for his graduate degree since he was interested in working with Martin Watson and on lysosome vacuole biogenesis. He met Randy W. Schekman and decided to go to his laboratory at the University of California, Berkeley, as a postdoctoral fellow in order to research vesicular movements in intracellular transport. From there he accepted a position at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, California. After some time in the academy, he decided to move into industry to gain access to resources unavailable at a university, first working for Diversa Corporation and then for Illumina, Incorporated. Ultimately, though, he chose to return to academia and accepted a position at McGill University in Montreal, Québec, Canada, researching membrane-fusion elements required for intracellular transport.

During the interview Latterich discusses his family life and his career, especially his wife and daughter; setting up his various labs; learning about the history of science; and the practical applications of Latterich's research. He also talks about his funding history; the process of writing journal articles; product development in industrial science; scientific collaborations between the academy and industry; and his role on scientific advisory boards. The interview concludes with Latterich's thoughts on the privatization of research; morality and scientific research; the role of the scientist in educating the public about science; science and religion; and the role of the Pew Scholars Program in the Biomedical Sciences in his work.

UCLA INTERVIEW HISTORY

INTERVIEWER:

William Van Benschoten, Interviewer, UCLA Oral History Program; B.A., History, University of California, Riverside, 1990; M.A., History, University of California, Riverside, 1991; C.Phil., History, University of California, Los Angeles, 1995.

TIME AND SETTING OF INTERVIEW:

Place: Latterich's office at McGill University.

Dates of sessions: January 12, 13, and 15, 2004.

Total number of recorded hours: 7.

Persons present during interview: Latterich and Van Benschoten.

CONDUCT OF INTERVIEW:

This interview is one in a series with Pew Scholars in the Biomedical Sciences conducted by the UCLA Oral History Program in conjunction with the Pew Charitable Trusts's Pew Scholars in the Biomedical Sciences Oral History and Archives Project. The project has been designed to document the backgrounds, education, and research of biomedical scientists awarded four-year Pew scholarships since 1988.

To provide an overall framework for project interviews, the director of the UCLA Oral History Program and three UCLA faculty project consultants developed a topic outline. In preparing for this interview, Van Benschoten held a telephone preinterview conversation with Latterich to obtain written background information (curriculum vitae, copies of published articles, etc.) and agree on an interviewing schedule. He also reviewed documentation in Latterich's file at the Pew Scholars Program office in San Francisco, including Latterich's proposal application, letters of recommendation, and reviews by Pew Scholars Program national advisory committee members.

ORIGINAL EDITING:

Carol Squires edited the interview. She checked the verbatim transcript of the interview against the original tape recordings, edited for punctuation, paragraphing, and spelling, and verified proper names. Words and phrases inserted by the editor have been bracketed.

Latterich did not review the transcript. Consequently some names remain unverified.

Carol Squires prepared the table of contents and TechniType Transcripts compiled the guide to proper names.

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