

Classics in Total Synthesis II. By K. C. Nicolau and S. A. Snyder (Scripps Research Institute). Wiley-VCH, Weinheim. 2003. xix + 639 pp. 7½ × 11 in. \$64.95. (soft). ISBN 3-527-30684-6.

This is the second volume of *Classics in Total Synthesis* started in 1996. The first volume was written to advance chemical synthesis to new heights and to train the next generation of synthetic organic chemists. Given that the field of total synthesis of natural products has continued to flourish, the authors have compiled over 30 total syntheses accomplished since 1992. Among the syntheses covered are swinholide A, dynemicin A, ecteinascidin 743, resiniferatoxin, epithilones A and B, manzamine A, vancomycin, colombiasin A, quinine, vinblastine, diazepam, and plicamine. The book also covers domino reactions, cascade reactions, biomimetic strategies, and asymmetric catalysis. In addition, the topics of solid phase synthesis, combinatorial methods, and solid-supported reagents are also discussed.

Overall, this is an excellent teaching text for graduate courses in synthetic organic chemistry. This volume is set up more clearly

for teaching than Volume I. A nice addition to this volume is the discussion of more than one synthetic approach to the featured target. The book also uses text boxes to highlight key concepts and important reactions discussed. Furthermore, the book has excellent discussions of the mechanisms or proposed mechanisms of action of the target molecules. A minor weakness of the book is the brevity given to the efforts needed to isolate, characterize, and evaluate the natural products selected. An exception is the in-depth discussion of the structure elucidation of diazepam. Regardless, this book is a welcome addition to the library of organic chemists, young or old.

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