



Photograph by Robert Ladd

Encouragement in his scientific journey

Audience member: What advice do you have as far as maybe a theme or a quote or something that has encouraged you throughout your scientific journey?

Dr. Smithies: Well, I think just the whole of the discipline of science has always been part of my life, as it were. And that what's encouraged me and I didn't realize it was what you call science when I first began. I just wanted to be an inventor. I read, I think I read a comic strip that had this character that was an inventor and he always seemed to be doing neat things. And I thought I want to be an inventor. I didn't know the word *scientist*. And then I found that I liked making things and doing things and building things with my hands. Try to make a radio or make a telescope or whatever and so you find something that you enjoy doing and that turned out to be science really. Because at the time I went to the University, I couldn't decide what I wanted to study. I won my scholarship with physics, but I don't know where in my mind I decided I might want to be a medical doctor. And so I eventually started off as a medical student, and did that for two, three years. And then heard from the person I mentioned, my tutor, who was so exciting a person and his things were so exciting that I decided that I wanted to do that sort of science which meant learning chemistry which we were talking to that young lady over there about chemistry. And I went and did chemistry and it was always something exciting, you know? So that's the enjoyment of science is it never stops being exciting -- because you don't know what's...I say it in a way here, I mean this is in my book and this is page 59 in this book. And here is page 60. [Shows book to audience] I don't know what's on it. I don't know what's going to be on it. That's why it's exciting. Cause I don't know what's going to be on it.