Victor Guillemin

Dr. Victor Guillemin received his PhD in mathematics from Harvard University in 1962. He is currently a professor in the department of Mathematics in MIT. Guillemin works on the field of symplectic geometry. He also made contributions to the fields of microlocal analysis, spectral theory and mathematical physics.

Guillemin was elected to the United States National Academy of Sciences in 1985. In 2003, he was awarded the Leroy P. Steele Prize for Lifetime Achievement by the American Mathematical Society. In 2012, he became a Fellow of the American Mathematical Society.

As a graduate student at Harvard in the 1960's my mathematical heroes were Raoul Bott, Shlomo Sternberg and Iz Singer. However, they were heroes of mine not solely because of their great contributions to global analysis and differential geometry, but also because of the generosity with which they shared their ideas with others, and created for graduate students like me an exciting world of "anything goes" mathematics in which no topic whatsoever, no matter how occult or esoteric, was off the table. Two decades later Yau joined this pantheon of heroes of mine for a lot of the same reasons; i.e. his revolutionary contributions to differential geometry and mathematical physics played a role in this, but also his solicitude for students and willingness to go out of his way to help them and share with them his mathematical insights. The Cambridge Math scene today has, thanks in large part to Yau's presence, become very reminiscent for me of the Cambridge Math scene that I grew up with in the 1960s.