

GENETICS

# SYDNEY BRENNER (1927–2019)

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There are some scientists that have left a lasting impression – one of these is Sydney Brenner. [Science today has a n obituary.](#)

*By Cynthia Kenyon*

**S**ydney Brenner, an icon of science, died on 5 April at age 92. Sydney helped decipher the genetic code, he pioneered the use of *Caenorhabditis elegans* for genetic analysis, he made us think, and he made us laugh.

Sydney was born in Germiston, South Africa, the son of Jewish immigrants. He graduated from the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg with degrees in medicine and science in 1947 and completed his Ph.D. in chemistry at Oxford University in England in 1954. In 1953, Sydney visited the University of Cambridge to see Watson and Crick's new structure of DNA. He later recalled, "[i]t was the most exciting day of my life. Everything fell into place, and my future life was decided then and there."

I think this is only the [second obituary](#) at Science Surf.