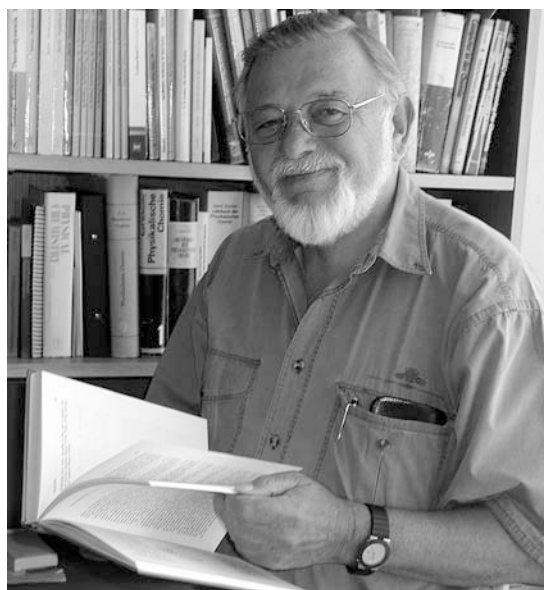


Friedrich Kremer

Honouring Prof. Dr. E.W. Fischer

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There are not many (elder) polymer scientists in the world whose careers have covered a similar wealth of scientific interests as Erhard W. Fischer's. Going through his publication list of more than 270 papers published between 1955 and 2004, one finds topics as diverse as polymer morphology and crystallisation, glassy dynamics in polymers, polymerisation of conjugated diacetylenes, density fluctuations in homogeneous and heterogeneous polymer systems, levels of order in stiff-chain polymers and scaling of relaxation process in the bulk and under confinement—to mention but a few. It is evident that this requires a manifold

of experimental methods including structural (e.g. SEM) and scattering techniques (e.g. with neutrons, electrons, X-rays and light), thermodynamics and especially spectroscopic (NMR, IR, dielectric or mechanical) tools. Backed by his deep understanding of physics it is for Erhard W. Fischer a matter of course to switch between the different fields according to the needs of the actual scientific question being studied.

Erhard W. Fischer was born in February 16, 1929 in a small village close to the city of Leipzig. He studied Physics at the Technische Hochschule Stuttgart and wrote his diploma thesis in metallurgy. He became

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acquainted with “high polymers” in his PhD work dealing with the improvement of arable soil by the addition of synthetic macromolecules. From 1956 to 1962 he was “Wissenschaftlicher Assistent” at the Institute for Physical Chemistry at the Johannes-Gutenberg-Universität Mainz in the group of H. A. Stuart.

After several years in the United States, both as a Research Fellow at the Research Triangle Institute in Durham, North Carolina, with Anton Peterlin and as Professor at the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, New York, Fischer was appointed to a full professor position in Chemical Physics at the Institut für Physikalische Chemie at the Johannes-Gutenberg-Universität, Mainz, where he remained from 1966 until 1983. He was the founder and chairman of the Polymer Physics Section of the European Physical Society (1969-1975), chairman of the Polymer Physics Group in the Deutsche Physikalische Gesellschaft (1969-1973), and member of the Macromolecular Division of the IUPAC Grenoble (1974-1978).

When the Max Planck Society decided in 1983 to establish a new Institute for Polymer Research in Mainz, Erhard W. Fischer and his former co-worker G. Wegner were selected as founding directors. Fischer later became the Head of the Department of Polymer Physics.

Erhard W. Fischer’s scientific work was honoured by the Fraser Price Memorial Award of the University of Massachusetts (1978), the Polymer Physics Prize of the

American Physical Society (1979), election as a member of the Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften (1984), the French–German Alexander von Humboldt Award (1987), the Award of the Japanese Society of Polymer Science (1990), Fellowship of the American Physical Society (1998), Honorary Membership of the Japanese Society of Polymer Science (1998), and a honorary doctorate from the Universidad del País Vasco, Donostia (San Sebastian), Spain (2000).

Erhard W. Fischer has had an enormous impact on the progress of polymer physics worldwide. He supervised more than 100 Ph.D. and diploma students, and several of his former co-workers are now directors of research institutes or full professors at different universities around the globe. All who had the luck to work with him together learned to know him as an intensive researcher with the highest expectations of himself and his discussion partners. But he managed as well to combine these demands with a relaxed atmosphere of witticism and humour. After discussing with Erhard W. Fischer one left him with new impressions and ideas.

Erhard W. Fischer published more than 30 papers in *Colloid and Polymer Science* and in *Progress of Colloid and Polymer Science* during his scientific career. In this issue dedicated to him on the occasion of his 75th birthday, former students, co-workers and friends join to contribute with their scientific works in order to honour E.W. Fischer as a person and a scientist.