

Obituary  
**Kurt A. Kraus**  
(1914–1995)

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Just before Christmas 1995, I received the sad news that Kurt A. Kraus had died on 10 May 1995 in his eighty-first year.

Born in Windsheim, Germany, on 7 June 1914 he came to the United States in 1935 and began studies at Harvard University graduating in biochemistry

with a thesis on ricin in 1938. He taught at Tulane University for a year.

Then, he became associated with the plutonium project in Chicago because Seaborg was looking for biochemists because they were the only ones who were familiar with ultramicro chemistry techniques. When the first irradiated uranium samples from Oak Ridge were sent to the “Metallurgical Laboratory”, a war-time code for the plutonium project, the amounts for study of the chemical properties of plutonium and of the best separation techniques (bismuth phosphate or lanthanum fluoride) were very small. He described himself as a “toothpick” chemist.

In connection with this he did outstanding work on the ion-exchange chromatography of metal ions culminating in the first periodic table for anion-exchange on a resin in aqueous HCl (Fig. 1). It started a new era in analytical chemistry, not only in ion-exchange but also in spot tests, solvent extraction and other chromatographic systems, etc.

He then turned to inorganic exchangers and made fundamental contributions to ion-exchange on hydroxides and their insoluble salts such as zirconium phosphate. In the sixties he took up the field of desalination of sea water, again doing fundamental work on this topic.

Kurt A. Kraus was a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Chromatography from its beginning in 1958. His contributions both as author and referee made the journal one of the important archives for ion-exchange and inorganic chromatography.

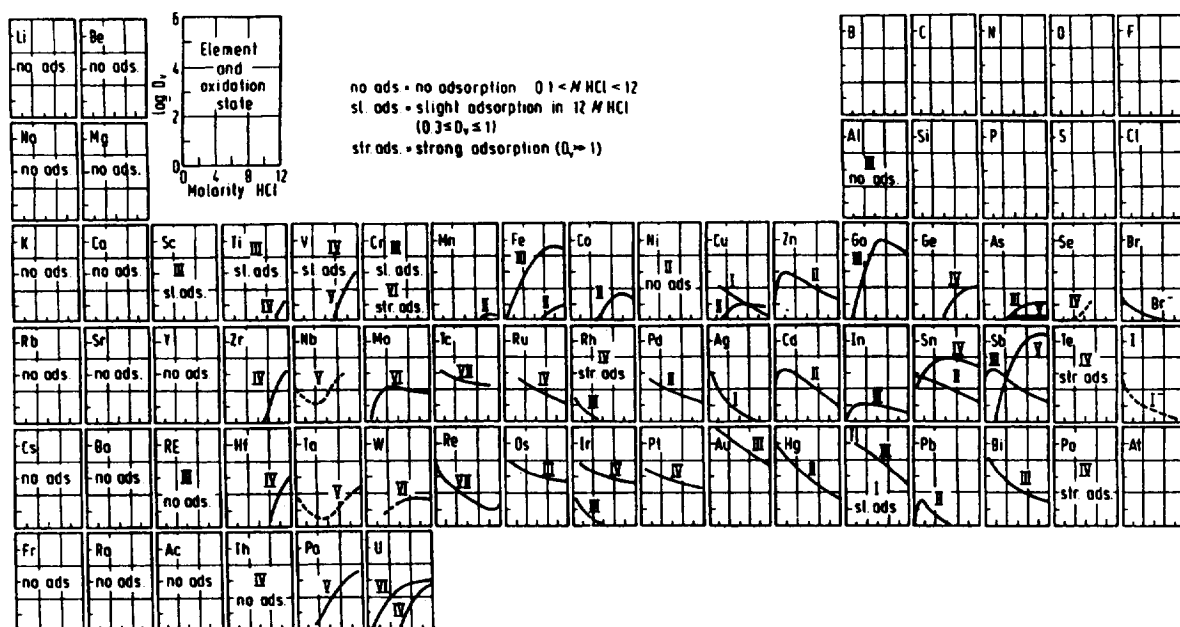


Fig. 1. The first periodic table for ion-exchange data in 1955.

I still quote from a letter by his widow, Betty Kraus:

*Also we have three lovely adult children, and seven grandchildren. It is astonishing to be sending wedding presents to young people whose parents we knew as children of our friends. Our*

*oldest ones, the twins in Louisville are now 20, one studying chemical engineering at Carnegie-Mellon in Pittsburgh, and the other, also chemical engineering at Washington University in St. Louis.*

Michael Lederer (Lausanne)