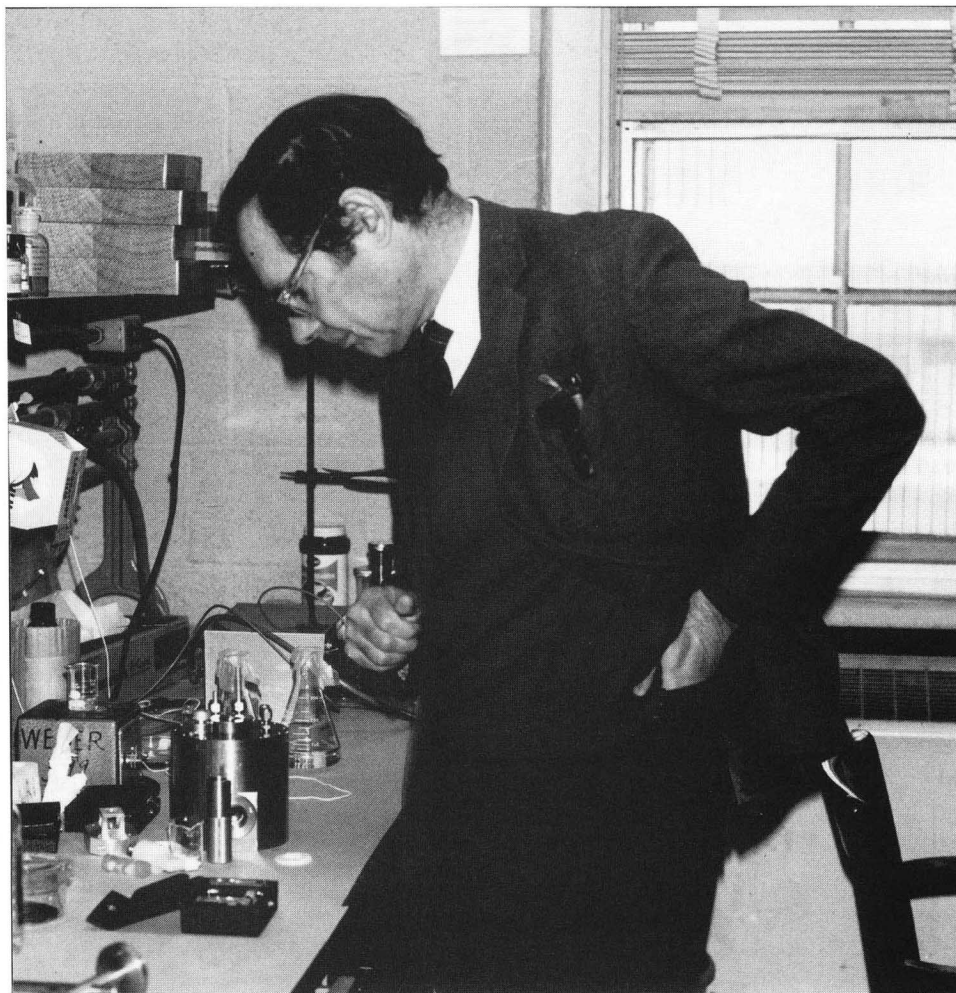


In Memoriam

Professor Gregorio Weber: 1916–1997



Professor Weber examines a high-pressure cell used to study proteins (1972).

This year the fluorescence community lost its pioneer, Professor Gregorio Weber. The Professor, as he is referred to by those who knew him, was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1916. He received an M.D. from the University of Buenos Aires in 1942 and went on to graduate studies at Cambridge University. At Cambridge, the Professor did his graduate work with Malcom

Dixon, resulting in a Ph.D. in 1947. Dr. Weber's extraordinary talents were recognized by Sir Hans Krebs, who recruited him to the University of Sheffield in 1953. During his years at Sheffield, Professor Weber developed the foundations of modern fluorescence spectroscopy. In 1962, Professor Weber joined the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, remaining active until his

death in 1997. At Sheffield, the Professor developed the use of fluorescence polarization for studying macromolecular dynamics, an effort which continues to this day in many laboratories. The Professor's laboratory was also responsible for the first widely used phase modulation fluorometer, a design that went on to successful commercialization. Perhaps the most important area of Professor Weber's research is the development of probe chemistry and, more importantly, the recognition that fluorescence spectroscopy depends on the probes first and instrumentation second. The probes which the Professor developed are still in widespread use, including dansyl chloride, ANS, TNS, and Prodan derivatives. Professor Weber's research spans more than five decades and is characterized by an unbroken chain of original and important contributions to fluorescence instrumentation, theory, and probe chemistry.

While Professor Weber's contributions as a spectroscopist are unparalleled, he also made numerous contributions to understanding the physical properties of proteins, protein–ligand interactions, and the basis of cooperativity. Work from his laboratory was the first to

demonstrate the dynamic character of the proteins and the effects of pressure on protein stability.

Professor Weber has received many honors including being elected to the National Academy of Sciences, being the first national lecturer of the Biophysical Society, and more recently, being the first recipient of the International Jablonski Award for Fluorescence Spectroscopy. Besides his direct scientific contributions, the Professor is admired for his consistently demonstrated courtesy, respect, and good humor. Numerous scientists throughout the world sought to interact with the Professor and to take part in his intellectual activities. Professor Weber was fluent in four languages and possessed a great knowledge of the culture and literature of the world. Those fortunate enough to have known the Professor value his humanitarian qualities as much as his scientific accomplishments. Professor Weber passed away July 18, 1997.

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