

Tim Clark

Paul von Ragué Schleyer 75th birthday Festschrift

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It seems not long ago that I wrote the introduction to the Festschrift for Paul's 70th birthday. Happily, Paul is still well and active (active means that he still publishes as much as about any three of us put together). Maybe he is not quite the fireball he used to be, but I will attribute that to the fact that his child, computational chemistry, has come

of age and is accepted as essential for modern research, so that the proud father can take it easy and no longer has to look out for its interests. Just how much the attitude to computational chemistry has changed, even in the 5 years since the last Festschrift, became clear to me in the last few weeks as we were writing a major cooperative grant proposal for the development of new materials. Modeling and simulation was assumed by all concerned to be an integral part of the concept from the beginning.

Paul is responsible for much of this change. At Gernot Frenking's recent 60th birthday symposium, Paul suggested that Gernot had achieved more in gaining acceptance for computational chemistry in his diplomatic art than Paul ever had with his frontal attacks. This may be false modesty. The young people who were in awe of Paul and relished his attacks on their elders are now the decision makers. They are the ones who are now using modeling and simulation (in the widest sense) in their chemistry.

Much of this was achieved in the "golden years" in Erlangen. Paradoxically, this was the low point in the acceptance of computational chemistry, at least in Germany. I have also only recently come to appreciate just how important and stimulating those years were. Many of the authors who have contributed to this festschrift also experienced the atmosphere in the *Blaue Saal* back then. In this respect, this volume documents Paul's seminal effect on a whole generation of computational chemists. As always, the response to my invitation to contribute papers to the Festschrift was overwhelming. This is also a measure of Paul's stature and standing in our community.

Let me close this with the wish that we can continue to produce a Paul Schleyer Festschrift every 5 years for a very long time and a wish for Paul and Inge's health and happiness.

Tim Clark, Erlangen, April 26th 2006

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "T. Clark". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.