

Erwin Bolthausen Biography

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Erwin Bolthausen (October 15, 1945-) was born in Rohr, Aargau, Switzerland, the son of Werner Bolthausen, saddle maker, and Ida, born Hächler, dressmaker. He went to primary school there, then the district school, and then Realabteilung of the Gymnasiums at the Old Cantonal School of Aarau, where he passed the Matura Examination (Type C) in 1964.

He then attended the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich (ETH Zürich), studying in the Department of Mathematics and Physics, from which he obtained a Diplom in Mathematik (1969). In 1973, he obtained a Dr. Sc. Math. from that same department, for a thesis entitled “Einfache Isomorphietypen in lokalisierten Kategorien und einfache Homotopietypen von Polyeder” [Simple isomorphy in localized categories and simple homotopy types of polyhedra] under the supervision of Beno Eckmann. He was then a postdoctoral fellow in the Fakultät für Wirtschaftswissenschaften und Statistik [Faculty of Economy and Statistics] at the university of Konstanz, where he received his Habilitation in 1978. He was then Associate Professor (C3) of Mathematics at the University of Frankfurt (1978-1979), Full Professor (C4) of Mathematics at the Technische Universität Berlin (1979-1990), and Full Professor of Mathematics at the University of Zürich (1990-2020), where he is now Professor Emeritus. He notably served as associate editor of *Annals of Statistics* (1987-1989) and *Annals of Probability* (1988-1993), as editor-in-chief (1994-2000) and associate editor (2000-today) of *Probability Theory and Related Fields*. He was also head of the Institut für Mathematik at the University of Zürich (1998-2001).

Bolthausen was trained as an algebraist but moved towards probability and statistics during his postdoc years. He then notably worked on central limit theorems and large deviation theory, before getting interested in disordered systems. This background eventually led him to the study of spin glasses, for which he notably formulated the Bolthausen-Sznitman coalescent. He also played a key role in stimulating and encouraging the rigorous study of these systems.

Bolthausen is a member of German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina since 2007. He received the Humboldt Forschungspreis in 2008. He notably gave invited lectures at the Congress of the European Mathematical Society (1998) and the International Congress of Mathematics (2002) as well as special invited lectures at the World Congress of the Bernoulli Society (1998 and (2000).