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Publisher *Taylor & Francis*

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## Journal of Macromolecular Science, Part A

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713597274>

### **A review of: "THEODORE PROVDER, Editor: Computer Applications in Applied Polymer Science, A.C.S. Symposium Series 197, American Chemical Society, Washington, D.C., 1982"**

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**To cite this Article** Ham, George E.(1984) 'A review of: "THEODORE PROVDER, Editor: Computer Applications in Applied Polymer Science, A.C.S. Symposium Series 197, American Chemical Society, Washington, D.C., 1982"', *Journal of Macromolecular Science, Part A*, 21: 4, 529 – 530

**To link to this Article:** DOI: 10.1080/00222338408056567

**URL:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00222338408056567>

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## Book Review

THEODORE PROVDER, Editor: *Computer Applications in Applied Polymer Science*, A.C.S. Symposium Series 197, American Chemical Society, Washington, D.C., 1982

This book illustrates, as well as any, the problems inherent in developing a symposium and, in turn, a symposium volume for publication. Even the most carefully prepared symposium is faced with the problems of interweaving of subject matter written by different authors. This problem is especially severe in the case of *Computer Applications in Applied Polymer Science*. The editor has divided the book into three main sections. The first section deals with polymerization process modeling and control, the second with instrumentation automation for polymer characterization and modeling, and the third, more general in nature, covers various aspects of computer use for mathematical modeling, such as degradation kinetics, solution properties, water/cosolvent evaporation, and emulsification.

In point of fact, the diversity of topics in each one of these sections is so great that there is little in the way of a common thread binding the various papers together. The following listing, though not complete, serves to illustrate the range of topics under polymerization process modeling and control: control of an isothermal/polystyrene reactor; computational aspects of free radical polymerization kinetics with chain-length-dependent termination; analysis of molecular weight distribution using multicomponent models; use of continuous system modeling program to simulate polymerization, polycondensation, and polymer modification reactions; copolymerization reaction engineering; controlled and uncontrolled semibatch solution; copolymerization of styrene with methyl acrylate; computerized quantitative analysis of copolymers by IR spectroscopy; and modeling the equilibrium swelling of latex particles with monomers.

Under instrument automation, the subjects are as diverse: an automated Ferranti-Shirly viscometer, computer simulation of nip flow in roll coating, finite element modeling of nonisothermal polymer

flows, measurement of polarization in thermoplastic elastomers with application to morphological studies, and analysis of an epoxy curing reaction by differential scanning calorimetry.

Finally, in mathematical modeling, the topics include an advanced thermal analysis system polymer heat capacity data bank, computerized viscoelastic master plots for vibration damping applications, applications of a computer to degradation kinetics of polyvinylhalides, mathematical treatment of emulsification of benzene and styrene, and design analysis of acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene pipe compound experiment. If these topics have any general relationship with one another, I would appreciate the reader enlightening me.

In a larger sense, the proliferation of symposium volumes in recent years points up a growing dilemma of the scientist and publisher with respect to suitable approaches to the gathering and dissemination of scientific knowledge and advances. Perhaps we have to come to this latest computer-generated "elephant" in order to recognize the seriousness of the problem.

George E. Ham