

Editorial

The present issue of *Polymer* is dedicated to Professor Roderic P. Quirk

The idea of doing so came, in part, due to the fact that Professor Quirk celebrated his 60th birthday last year, but mostly as a way to pay tribute to his exemplary career as a Professor and Scientist.

Professor Quirk's contributions to science and teaching have been recognized in many different ways, including Kumho Professor of Polymer Science, Distinguished Professor of Polymer Science in the Department of Polymer Science at the University of Akron, Outstanding Researcher Award (University of Akron, Alumni Association), 1995 Chairman of the Gordon Conference on Elastomers and the 2000 Cooperative Research Award of the Polymeric Materials Science and Engineering Division of the American Chemical Society (shared with Dr J.A. Schwindeman, FMC).

The body of his work can be found in more than 200 publications including 20 patents, numerous reviews, one tome on anionic polymerization (co-authored with Henry Hsieh) and five edited books. More importantly, his teachings and scientific legacy will be carried on by all of those scientists that had the privilege of learning from him: 53 M.S. and Ph.D. students, 10 visiting scientists and 23 post-doctoral associates coming from around the world.

Professor Quirk's research interests include group transfer, Ziegler–Natta/metalocene/rare earth and anionic polymerizations and his main contributions have been made in the area of 'living' polymerization. This field has allowed many a scientist to be over-enthusiastic about the possibilities of these synthetic tools and to fall into unsupported assumptions of how and why certain things work. With such a background, his scientific rigor is legendary: "In my laboratory, we develop synthetic methods that not only work well in Akron, but all over the world".

Examples of 'vintage' Quirk can be found in his seminal work using 1,1-diphenylethylene and its derivatives for the preparation of model macromolecules with well-defined macrostructures [1–5], functionalized polymers with strict control on the functionalization position [6–8] and multi-functional initiators [9,10]. Other notable contributions include papers on preparation and rigorous characterization of functionalized polymers [11–14], experimental criteria for living polymerizations [15] and detailed investigations of the mechanism of group transfer polymerization [16–18]. The results from Professor Quirk's work have given

scientists the ability to establish credible structure–property relationships, as well as to have access to molecules that allow the elucidation of such complex phenomena as surface grafting kinetics, surface segregation of star polymers, phase dynamics, phase structure, and the structure and dynamics of micelles [19–26].

Finally, the undersigned would like to express his appreciation to all those who participated in the preparation of this special issue of *Polymer*. My thanks to all the contributing authors, the referees who kindly put time and effort to review all of the articles, and to Professor Stephen Z.D. Cheng (editor of *Polymer*) for his continuous support.

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