

Special Issue of Polymer to honor the memory of John D. Hoffman



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The symposium on “Semicrystalline Polymers” was held on August 22–25, 2004 in memory of John D. Hoffman, who died in February, 2004 at the age of 81. Presented under the aegis of the Polymeric and Materials Science Division at the National American Chemical Society Meeting in Philadelphia, PA, the symposium featured 71 oral presentations by authors from 9 countries in addition to the US.

Almost any “veteran” of polymer science recognizes that the most influential period of Hoffman’s career coincided with his tenure at the National Bureau of Standards (now the National Institute for Science and Technology), where he held many scientific and administrative positions between 1954 and 1982. During that time he published seminal works on dielectric relaxation and on polymer crystallization, he spearheaded the founding of Gordon Research Conferences on Dielectric Phenomena and on Polymer Physics, and he cultured and worked with a group of talented polymer scientists at NBS. More complete summaries of Hoffman’s accomplishments in research and science administration have been given earlier [1,2].

It is safe to say that secondary nucleation and lamellar crystals were Hoffman’s favored research subjects. His first papers on the theory of polymer crystallization, written with John I. Lauritzen, appeared in 1961 [3,4]. Hoffman maintained an active interest in polymer crystallization for

the remainder of his life, publishing his final scientific paper (on kinetically defined crystallization “regimes”) in 2002 [5]. From the early 1960’s until the present, “Hoffman-Lauritzen theory” has remained the standard model for understanding and interpreting the temperature dependences of growth rate and thickness of polymer crystals.

This issue of *Polymer* contains 21 papers on semicrystalline polymers that constitute eloquent testimony to the importance of Hoffman’s scientific legacy. Topics range from fundamental discussions of atomic level structure to the mechanical properties of composites based on semicrystalline polymers. Virtually any talk or paper that deals with the crystallization of synthetic, flexible chain polymers owes much to the creative mind of John D. Hoffman.

We take this opportunity to thank all those who presented lectures and posters at the symposium on Semicrystalline Polymers. We are grateful for financial support for the symposium provided by the Petroleum Research Fund, the Polymeric and Materials Science Division of the American Chemical Society, Proctor & Gamble, the Naval Research Laboratory, and the University of Akron.

References

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