

# Macromolecules

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## Frank Alden Bovey (1918–2003)



Frank A. Bovey, a founding editor of *Macromolecules*, died in Warner, NH, on January 19, 2003. Bovey was one of the two Associate Editors (the other was Walter Stockmayer) joining one of us (F.H.W.) at the inception of this journal in 1968. He continued his dedicated and efficient service for more than a quarter century.

Frank was one of the earliest pioneers and leading researchers in the field of nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy of polymers. Starting in 1959, he performed the first (and now classical) studies demonstrating the use of NMR spectroscopy to detect isotactic, syndiotactic, and atactic stereosequences in polymers. Over the ensuing decades, he defined the configurational microstructures of a wealth of different polymers at high resolution. As new techniques kept being developed in NMR (such as high-resolution and wide-line solid-state, two-dimensional, and deuterium NMR), Bovey was among the very first to adapt and apply them

to polymers, revealing microstructural information that is still extensively used in the field.

He was a prolific writer, having produced six textbooks in the field of NMR and over 200 original publications. His 1969 textbook *Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy* educated generations of students and researchers and was republished in a second, enhanced and updated, edition in 1988. In 1981, he spent a sabbatical year lecturing at MIT, from which resulted his book *Chain Structure and Conformation of Macromolecules*. His latest book, *NMR of Polymers*, was coauthored with Peter A. Mirau and published in 1996.

Frank was born in 1918 in Minneapolis, MN. He received a BS degree in chemistry from Harvard University in 1940 and a Ph.D. in physical chemistry from the University of Minnesota in 1948. He began his career at the National Synthetic Rubber Corp. in 1943 and then moved to 3M Co. where he became Head of its Polymer Research Department. From 1962 until his retirement in 1993 he worked at Bell Laboratories, where for over a decade he headed the Polymer Chemistry Research Department. In that capacity he hired and developed a number of young staff members who then went on to become, in their own right, leading researchers in microstructures and NMR of synthetic and biological macromolecules.

Bovey's seminal contributions have been recognized with a number of top international awards. He won practically every research prize in the field of polymer science, i.e., the Polymer Chemistry Award of the American Chemical Society (in 1969), its Applied Polymer Science Award (in 1983), and the High-Polymer Physics Prize of the American Physical Society (in 1974). Other major international awards included the ACS Nichols Medal (in 1978), the Carothers Award (in 1991), and the Silver Medal of the Japanese Polymer Society (in 1991). He had been a Member of the National Academy of Sciences since 1975.

Frank will be fondly recalled by his colleagues as a quiet and friendly person, always gentlemanly and modest, somewhat formal, and intensely private. He

impressed everyone with his erudition and his almost encyclopedic knowledge of many areas of science, art, literature, and history. He will undoubtedly be remembered by the many thousands of people who learned from his textbooks, lectures, and papers and who interacted with him during his long-standing service at *Macromolecules*.

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