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**Published on:** 02 Mar 1992 - [Physical Review Letters](#) (American Physical Society)

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## Molecular Dynamics of $\mu^+$ -C<sub>60</sub> Radical in Solid C<sub>60</sub>

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(Received 5 November 1991)

The molecular dynamics and electronic structure of the  $\mu^+$ -C<sub>60</sub> radical in crystalline C<sub>60</sub> have been studied using muon spin rotation and relaxation. At room temperature  $\mu^+$ -C<sub>60</sub> appears to be in a state of quasifree rotation. At the critical temperature  $T_S = 260$  K the local electronic structure and molecular dynamics change discontinuously as expected for a first-order phase transition. The correlation times for reorientation are remarkably close to those determined by recent NMR experiments on C<sub>60</sub>, suggesting that the molecular dynamics of  $\mu^+$ -C<sub>60</sub> are strongly coupled to those of its C<sub>60</sub> neighbors.

PACS numbers: 64.70.Kb, 61.70.-r, 76.75.+i

The observation of C<sub>60</sub> and other fullerenes by Kroto *et al.* [1] has led to wide variety of studies of closed carbon clusters. The subsequent production of bulk quantities of relatively pure C<sub>60</sub> has greatly accelerated the process [2]. An intense effort is being made to understand the unique structural and electronic properties of pure crystalline C<sub>60</sub>, which is a semiconductor, and C<sub>60</sub> doped with other atoms. High-resolution x-ray diffraction [3] has determined that pure C<sub>60</sub> at room temperature has an fcc crystal structure in which the large weakly interacting C<sub>60</sub> molecules are orientationally disordered. Below 249 K there is a transition to an orientationally ordered phase accompanied by a small change in the lattice constant of 0.044 Å [4]. Although early calorimetry studies [5] indicated the transition is second order, heat-capacity anomalies have now been reported at 260 [3] and 252 K [6], which are characteristic of a first-order transition. Information on the molecular dynamics has been obtained principally from NMR studies [7,8], which show a very narrow <sup>13</sup>C line at room temperature, indicating rapid rotation of the C<sub>60</sub> molecules. This is confirmed by recent quasielastic neutron scattering [9]. As the temperature is lowered below about 190 K the NMR line gradually broadens due to a gradual slowing down of the motion. Although no anomaly is observed in the  $1/T_2$  linewidth or the chemical-shift tensor, at the transition there is a sharp but continuous increase in the  $1/T_1$  spin-relaxation rate below 260 K [7].

Little is known about the electronic structure and molecular dynamics of simple isolated impurities in C<sub>60</sub>,

such as atomic hydrogen. In conventional semiconductors muon spin rotation ( $\mu$ SR) and related methods have been used to obtain detailed information on the structure and dynamics of isolated muonium ( $\mu^+e^-$ ), whose properties are closely related to those of hydrogen [10]. A previous muon-spin-rotation experiment revealed signals from two distinct paramagnetic centers in a commercial sample of C<sub>60</sub> which had a 10%–15% C<sub>70</sub> contamination [11]. One signal has a large isotropic muon hyperfine parameter of 4256 MHz, which is close to the value for a muonium atom ( $\mu^+e^-$ ) in vacuum (4463 MHz), whereas the second signal had an isotropic hyperfine parameter of 325-MHz which is typical of muonated radicals [12]. In this Letter we report a study of the molecular dynamics and electronic structure of the 325-MHz center in a highly crystalline sample of pure C<sub>60</sub>. We show that the 325-MHz signal at room temperature is a  $\mu^+$ -C<sub>60</sub> radical in crystalline C<sub>60</sub> undergoing quasifree rotation. Clear discontinuities are observed at  $T_S = 260$  K, confirming that the phase transition is first order. The correlation times for reorientation of  $\mu^+$ -C<sub>60</sub> above and below the phase transition are almost identical to the NMR results on C<sub>60</sub> [7,8].

The experiment was performed on the M15 beam line at TRIUMF, which provides a beam of nearly 100% spin-polarized muons with a momentum of 28 MeV/c. Muons were stopped in a 500-mg sample of high-purity C<sub>60</sub> powder prepared using standard techniques [2]. The sample was vacuum dried overnight at 250°C, a process which results in no detectable infrared lines attributable

to solvent molecules. High-resolution powder x-ray diffraction yielded a crystallite size of greater than 1500 Å, and high-performance liquid chromatography showed better than 99.5% pure C<sub>60</sub> and no trace of C<sub>60</sub>O. The sample was cooled using a He-gas-flow cryostat.

Conventional transverse-field  $\mu$ SR data [13] were taken in an applied magnetic field of 1.5 T. We assume that the  $\mu^+$ -C<sub>60</sub> radical has an axial hyperfine interaction and that gyromagnetic ratios for the muon and electron ( $2\pi\gamma_\mu$  and  $2\pi\gamma_e$ , respectively) are isotropic. For a fixed orientation of the symmetry axis with respect to a large external magnetic field  $\mathbf{H}$  the muon spin will precess about an effective magnetic field whose components parallel and perpendicular to  $\mathbf{H}$  are approximately

$$H_{\parallel}^{\pm} = H \mp [A_s - A_p(1 - 3\cos^2\theta)]/2\gamma_\mu, \quad (1)$$

$$H_{\perp}^{\pm} = \pm 3A_p \sin\theta \cos\theta / 2\gamma_\mu, \quad (2)$$

where  $A_s$  and  $A_p$  are the isotropic ( $s$ ) and anisotropic ( $p$ ) hyperfine parameters,  $\theta$  is the angle between  $\mathbf{H}$  and the axis of symmetry, and the upper or lower sign corresponds to the projection of the electron spin along  $\mathbf{H}$ . If  $\theta$  is random with respect to  $\mathbf{H}$  and  $A_p \ll A_s$ , then one expects a powder-pattern line shape for each of the two possible muon precession frequencies, a higher one  $\nu^+$  and a lower one  $\nu^-$ . On the other hand if  $H_{\perp}$  is fluctuating with an autocorrelation time  $\tau_c$  due to reorientation, such that  $2\pi A_p \ll 1/\tau_c \ll 2\pi\nu^-$ , one expects a Lorentzian line shape, which for  $\nu^+$  has a width

$$1/T_2 = \sigma_{\parallel}^2 \tau_c + \frac{1}{2} \sigma_{\perp}^2 \tau_c / [1 + (2\pi\nu^+ \tau_c)^2], \quad (3)$$

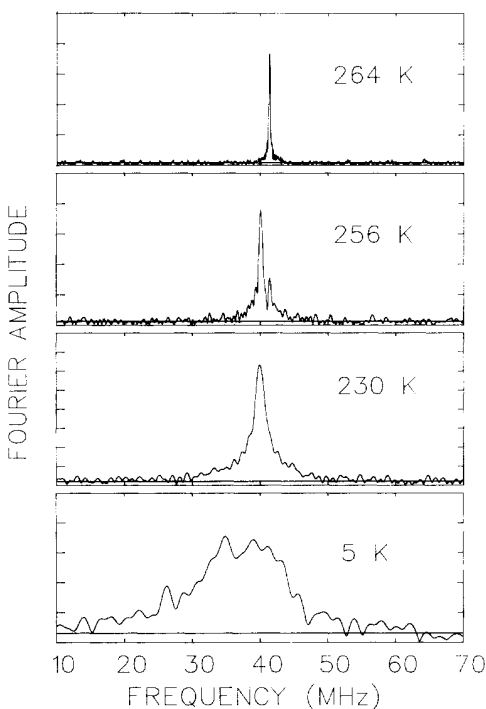


FIG. 1.  $\mu$ SR frequency spectra  $\mu^+$ -C<sub>60</sub> in solid C<sub>60</sub> near  $\nu^+$ . Below the phase transition at  $T_S = 260$  K a new line appears at a slightly lower frequency and with increased linewidth.

where the second term is the  $1/T_1$  contribution arising from the fluctuating transverse components of the effective field. The parameters  $\sigma_{\perp}^2 = \frac{3}{10} (2\pi A_p)^2$  and  $\sigma_{\parallel}^2 = \frac{1}{5} (2\pi A_p)^2$  are proportional to the mean-squared deviations for  $H_{\parallel}^{\pm}$  and  $H_{\perp}^{\pm}$ , respectively.

Figure 1 shows the Fourier transform of the  $\mu$ SR spectrum at various temperatures in the region of the lower frequency  $\nu^+$ . Near room temperature the  $\mu$ SR lines are very narrow with a width close to that measured for muonated organic radicals in liquids [12]. Below  $T_S = 260$  K a new signal appears which is characterized by a slightly larger  $A_s$  and significant line broadening, attributed to slowing down of the reorientation. There is a region of temperature between 242 and 265 K where the signals coexist. The observation of a significant coexistence region for a first-order transition implies that part of the high- $T$  phase is pinned by defects or (undetected) impurities during cooling. The Gaussian line shape at 5 K indicates that a distribution of hyperfine parameters, arising from inequivalent orientations of the symmetry axis with respect to the crystalline axes, effectively smears the powder pattern. The overall width of the line indicates that  $A_p$  is a few MHz which is typical for muonated radicals [14]. Figures 2(a) and 2(b) show the discontinuity in the fitted Lorentzian linewidth  $1/T_2$  and the average hyperfine parameter  $A_s$  at 260 K.

The correlation times for reorientation below  $T_S$  [see Fig. 2(c)] were estimated by fitting the time evolution of

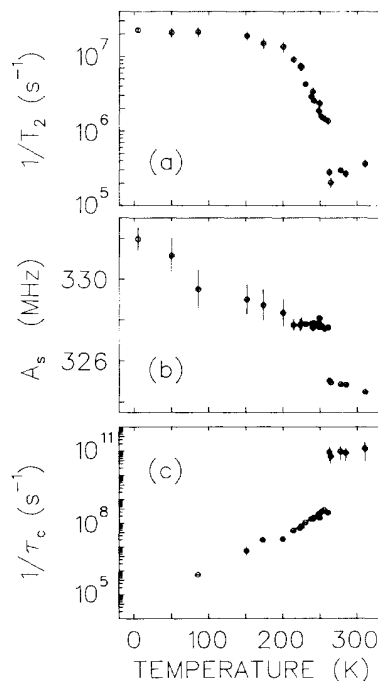


FIG. 2. (a) The  $\mu$ SR  $1/T_2$  linewidth, (b) the isotropic hyperfine parameter, and (c) the reorientation rate of the  $\mu^+$ -C<sub>60</sub> radical in crystalline C<sub>60</sub>. Note the clear discontinuity at 260 K.

the muon spin polarization using the formula [15]

$$G_{xx}(t) = \exp[-\sigma_{\parallel}^2 \tau_c^2 (e^{-t/\tau_c} - 1 + t/\tau_c)] \quad (4)$$

to describe the dephasing and resulting decay of the amplitude of precession. Although this expression neglects the  $1/T_1$  contribution to the linewidth in Eq. (3), it is valid for arbitrarily large  $\tau_c$ . Note that the Fourier transform of  $G_{xx}(t)$  is the line shape. In all the fits the static linewidth parameter  $\sigma_{\parallel} = 21.2(1.1) \mu\text{s}^{-1}$  was obtained from an average of the lowest-temperature runs so that the only free parameter was  $\tau_c$ . The correlation times between 200 and 250 K were fitted with an Arrhenius law,  $1/\tau_c = \Lambda \exp[-E_a/k_B T]$ , yielding  $\Lambda = 6.4(2.4) \times 10^{12} \text{ s}^{-1}$  and  $E_a = 219(7) \text{ meV}$ . At 200 K,  $\tau_c = 52(17) \text{ ns}$  which is remarkably close to the NMR result [7] of 64 ns for  $\text{C}_{60}$ . This is surprising considering that the added  $\mu^+$  atom is estimated to be approximately a C-H bond length on the outside of the  $\text{C}_{60}$  molecule [16] where it would be expected to hinder the reorientation of the molecule. This suggests that the reorientation of  $\mu^+-\text{C}_{60}$  is coupled to the motion of its  $\text{C}_{60}$  neighbors such that the molecular dynamics of the  $\mu^+-\text{C}_{60}$  impurity are controlled by those of its neighbors. At 200 K there appears to be a slight change in slope in the temperature dependence of  $A_s$  and  $1/\tau_c$ . One possibility is that at lower temperatures the  $\mu^+-\text{C}_{60}$  is no longer able to execute large-angle reorientations but is restricted to jumps within a finite solid angle. Although an additional phase transition is also a possibility there is no evidence for such a transition from other studies. There are several calculations on the nature of the orientational ordering in  $\text{C}_{60}$  [17–20]. Most of them predict a single first-order transition below room temperature whereas one calculation [20] finds an additional second-order transition at lower temperatures [20]. However, none of the calculations is accurate enough yet to predict the simple-cubic phase indicated by x-ray diffraction [3].

Figure 3 shows the field dependence of the measured muon  $1/T_1$  spin-relaxation rate as a function of magnetic field for two temperatures below  $T_S$ . The solid curves are fits with the second term in Eq. (3). Note that the peak position occurs at a magnetic field where  $\nu^+ = 0$ , whereas the width of the peak is determined by  $\tau_c$ . The correlation times measured in this way agree within a factor of 2 with those obtained from the transverse-field data, confirming that the fluctuating hyperfine field is the dominant source of muon spin relaxation and line broadening below  $T_S$ .

Above  $T_S$  the motion changes suddenly as evidenced by the discontinuous behavior of  $1/T_2$  and  $A_s$  [see Figs. 2(a) and 2(b)]. There is good evidence that  $\mu^+-\text{C}_{60}$  is in a state of quasifree rotation in the high-temperature phase, as has been proposed for the  $\text{C}_{60}$  molecules [7,8]. For instance, the linewidth for  $\mu^+-\text{C}_{60}$  above  $T_S$  is close to that observed for other muonated organic radicals in liquids [12] and increases with increasing temperature. The latter observation cannot be explained by Eq. (3) which

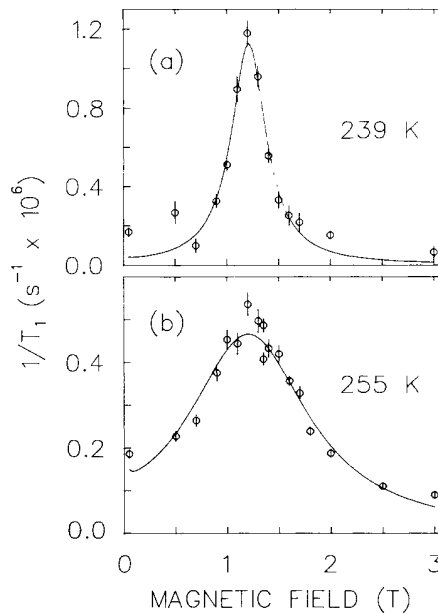


FIG. 3. The  $1/T_1$  muon spin-relaxation rate of  $\mu^+-\text{C}_{60}$  as a function of magnetic field.

predicts a monotonic decrease in the linewidth for increasing  $1/\tau_c$  or temperature. On the other hand if there is very rapid rotation of the radical the contribution from the fluctuating hyperfine field is negligible and the  $\mu\text{SR}$  linewidths are dominated by electron-spin relaxation induced by the coupling of the electron spin to the molecular-rotational-angular momentum [21]. The muon  $1/T_2$  linewidth in this case can be approximated as

$$1/T_2 = \sigma_{\text{SR}}^2 \tau_c / [1 + (2\pi\nu_e \tau_c)^2], \quad (5)$$

where  $\sigma_{\text{SR}}$  is the electron-spin-molecular-rotation coupling constant and  $\nu_e = \gamma_e H$  is the Zeeman frequency of the electron. The relaxation-rate data above  $T_S$  were fitted with Eq. (5) assuming an Arrhenius behavior for  $1/\tau_c$ , yielding  $\sigma_{\text{SR}} = 4.9(1.0) \times 10^8 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ,  $\Lambda = 5.1(7) \times 10^{12} \text{ s}^{-1}$ , and  $E_a = 98(16) \text{ meV}$ . The correlation times above  $T_S$  shown in Fig. 2(c) were obtained from the measured  $1/T_2$  linewidths using this fitted value for  $\sigma_{\text{SR}}$ . At 300 K,  $\tau_c = 8.5(2.0) \text{ ps}$ . This is in good agreement with NMR results [7,8], although we find the preexponential factors for  $\mu^+-\text{C}_{60}$  are about the same above and below  $T_S$  with the main change occurring in the activation energy.

The discontinuous change in the isotropic hyperfine parameter at  $T_S$  shows that the electronic structure of  $\mu^+-\text{C}_{60}$  changes suddenly at the phase transition. Based on what is known about structure and intramolecular motion of muonated radicals [22] it is reasonable to assume that at the phase transition there is a sudden change in the C- $\mu^+$  bending motion and/or C- $\mu^+$  bond length. Since the lattice constant at  $T_S$  changes by only a small amount (0.044 Å) [4] it suggests that there is a change in the distribution of angles between the C- $\mu^+$  bond and the crystalline axes which are being sampled over the path of ro-

tation. This is consistent with a sudden change in the motion from one characterized by jumping between specific crystalline directions to one involving quasifree rotation.

In conclusion, we have carried out a  $\mu$ SR investigation of the molecular dynamics of the  $\mu^+$ -C<sub>60</sub> radical in solid C<sub>60</sub>. Above the structural phase transition at  $T_S = 260$  K the radical appears to rotate rapidly as if it were in a liquid with correlation times of about 10 ps, whereas just below  $T_S$  the correlation time is more than a 100 times longer. The molecular dynamics of  $\mu^+$ -C<sub>60</sub> appear to be controlled by those of its C<sub>60</sub> neighbors indicating strong dynamic correlations. Clear discontinuities in both the local electronic structure and in the molecular dynamics are observed at  $T_S$ , confirming that the orientational ordering at 260 K is a first-order transition.

We would like to acknowledge helpful discussions with Mike Klein at the University of Pennsylvania and thank Donald Cox of Exxon for performing the C<sub>60</sub>O analysis. This work is supported by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. The research of T.L.E. is supported by Grant No. C-1048 of the Welch Foundation and Grant No. DMR-8917639 of the U.S. National Science Foundation. The work of B.H. is supported by Grant No. DMR-8917639 of the U.S. National Science Foundation. J.W.S. is partially supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation. Research at the University of Pennsylvania is supported by the National Science Foundation Materials Research Laboratory Program, DMR88-19885, and by the Department of Energy, DE-FC02-86ER45254.

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