

Acceptance of the Dana Medal of the Mineralogical Society of America for 2015

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In the interests of time, I'll just thank everybody. Not just my students, mentors, and family, but the entire field of petrology. Thanks for encouraging me to think and work for 30 years and counting. I don't know why petrology raises my pulse whilst somebody else obsesses over climate or embryology or astrophysics. Can it be genetic? Surely it's more than the topic; it's also your collective personality. Maybe it's because I like a good argument. Mind you, I do wish we could actually settle some of our debates. You know, like the physicists—a question is fought over, someone makes a definitive measurement, and everybody moves on to a new challenge. But even if petrology cannot stop chasing its tail, it is also an elastic domain that invites us to ask ever-larger questions. Petrology started as “the origin of rocks” but it expands and colonizes—from nanophases to magma oceans, from carbon sequestration to super-Earths. Everything is a petrologic object, from the core to the clouds, from cement to comets. Yes, they all can be understood with phase diagrams. I'm grateful to contribute a little to this contentious widening adventure and thankful to have all of you as colleagues, adversaries, and friends.

