

Structure and Soot Properties of Nonbuoyant Ethylene/Air Laminar Jet Diffusion Flames

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The structure and soot properties of round, soot-emitting, nonbuoyant, laminar jet diffusion flames are described, based on long-duration (175–230-s) experiments at microgravity carried out on orbit in the Space Shuttle Columbia. Experimental conditions included ethylene-fueled flames burning in still air at nominal pressures of 50 and 100 kPa and an ambient temperature of 300 K with luminous flame lengths of 49–64 mm. Measurements included luminous flame shapes using color video imaging, soot concentration (volume fraction) distributions using deconvoluted laser extinction imaging, soot temperature distributions using deconvoluted multiline emission imaging, gas temperature distributions at fuel-lean (plume) conditions using thermocouple probes, soot structure distributions using thermophoretic sampling and analysis by transmission electron microscopy, and flame radiation using a radiometer. The present flames were larger, and emitted soot more readily, than comparable flames observed during ground-based microgravity experiments due to closer approach to steady conditions resulting from the longer test times and the reduced gravitational disturbances of the space-based experiments.

Nomenclature

D	= mass diffusivity
d	= burner exit diameter
f_s	= soot volume fraction
L	= luminous flame length
\dot{m}	= burner mass flow rate
p	= pressure
R	= maximum luminous flame radius
Re	= burner Reynolds number, $4\dot{m}/(\pi d\mu_0)$
r	= radial distance
T	= temperature
t	= time
t_{ch}	= characteristic residence time, $2L/u_0$
t_{tr}	= characteristic transient time, R^2/D
u	= streamwise velocity
v	= radial velocity
z	= streamwise distance
μ	= dynamic viscosity
ρ	= density
ϕ	= fuel-equivalence ratio

Subscript

0	= burner exit condition
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Introduction

Overall Objectives and Motivation

THE present experimental study of soot processes in hydrocarbon-fueled nonbuoyant and nonpremixed (diffusion) flames at microgravity in space was motivated by the importance of soot to the performance of power and propulsion systems, the hazards of unwanted fires, and emissions of combustion-generated pollutants. For example, deposition of flame-generated soot can foul critical combustor components such as ignitors and injectors, whereas continuum radiation from soot is the main heat load of combustor components and controls their durability and life.¹ Continuum radiation from soot also is mainly responsible for the growth and spread of unwanted fires, whereas soot-containing plumes emitted from these flames inhibit fire-fighting efforts.^{2–4} In addition, black exhaust plumes containing particulate soot are an easily recognized source of combustion-generated pollutants that will be subjected to increasing regulation in the future. No less problematical are the carbon monoxide and unburned hydrocarbon emissions that intrinsically are associated with emissions of soot, e.g., carbon monoxide emissions are the main cause of fatalities in unwanted fires.^{5–7} Finally, developing methods of computational combustion are frustrated by limited understanding of soot processes within hydrocarbon-fueled flames. Thus, a better understanding of soot processes within flames is a major unresolved problem of combustion science.

Soot Processes in Buoyant and Nonbuoyant Flames

Soot processes in turbulent diffusion flames are of the greatest practical interest, but direct study of turbulent flames is not tractable because the unsteadiness and distortion of turbulent flames limit available residence times and spatial resolution within regions where soot processes are important. These limitations prevent the numerous simultaneous measurements needed to define the reactive and radiative environment of soot, e.g., soot concentration, soot structure, gas composition, and temperature. Thus, laminar diffusion flames are generally used as more tractable model flame systems to study processes relevant to turbulent diffusion flames, justified by the known similarities of gas-phase processes in laminar and most practical turbulent flames.^{8–12} Unfortunately, laminar diffusion flames at normal gravity are affected by buoyancy due to their relatively small flow velocities and, as discussed next, they do not

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have the same utility for simulating soot processes as they do for simulating the gas-phase processes of practical turbulent flames.

Local effects of buoyancy are small in the soot reaction regions of practical turbulent flames; therefore, buoyant laminar diffusion flames can only provide a proper model flame system for practical turbulent flames to the extent that buoyancy does not directly affect soot processes. Unfortunately, because soot particles are too large to diffuse like gas molecules and primarily are convected by local flow velocities (aside from usually minor effects of thermophoresis in practical flames), their behavior in buoyant and nonbuoyant diffusion flames is quite different.¹¹⁻¹³ This can be seen in Fig. 1, where some features of buoyant and nonbuoyant laminar jet diffusion flames are plotted as a function of streamwise and radial positions. The results for the buoyant flame are based on measurements,¹⁴⁻²⁰ whereas the results for the nonbuoyant flame are based on predictions.^{21,22} Soot formation (nucleation and growth) reactions in diffusion flames occur where fuel-equivalenceratios are roughly in the range 1-2 (Refs. 14-16, 23, 24), which is marked on the plots. The dividing streamline, which is the boundary of the cross section of the flow that has the same streamwise mass flow rate as the burner port (and roughly corresponds to a condition of negligible cross-stream velocity, $v \approx 0$), and some typical soot pathlines are also shown in Fig. 1.

To interpret Fig. 1, it should be noted that soot convects with the flow velocity and moves toward the dividing streamline in the radial direction, i.e., radial velocities inside and outside the dividing streamline are positive and negative, respectively. Because of flow acceleration within buoyant flames, the dividing streamline moves toward the flame axis with increasing streamwise distance and generally lies inside the soot formation region. In contrast, because of flow deceleration in nonbuoyant flames, the dividing streamline moves away from the flame axis with increasing streamwise distance and generally lies outside of the soot formation region. The different relative positions of the soot formation regions and the dividing streamlines imply different scalar-property-time histories for most of the soot formed in buoyant and nonbuoyant flames. For buoyant flames, most of the soot nucleates near the outer boundary of the soot formation region (near the flame sheet at $\phi = 1$) and then moves radially inward to cooler and less reactive conditions at larger fuel-equivalence ratios before finally crossing the flame sheet near its tip within an annular soot layer in the vicinity of the dividing streamline. In contrast, for nonbuoyant flames, most of the soot nucleates at relatively large fuel-equivalence ratios near the inner boundary of the soot formation region (near $\phi = 2$) and then moves radially outward through the flame sheet so that it only experiences a monotonic reduction of fuel-equivalence ratio. In addition, velocities along these soot paths progressively increase (decrease) with increasing distance along the path for buoyant (nonbuoyant) jet diffusion flames, respectively, which implies that ratios of soot-formation/soot-oxidation residence times generally are larger for buoyant than for nonbuoyant flames.⁴ In view of these considerations, soot processes within buoyant and nonbuoyant laminar diffusion flames obviously are very different, with results for the nonbuoyant laminar diffusion flames representing the soot processes that are of greatest interest for practical turbulent flames (which generally are nonbuoyant due to their large flow velocities).

Other advantages of nonbuoyant laminar diffusion flames for experimental studies of soot processes are that nonbuoyant flames provide better spatial resolution, and more flexible control of flame residence times, than do buoyant flames. The improved spatial resolution can be seen from the results in Fig. 1. In particular, the flame surface and the dividing streamline are close to one another in buoyant flames so that soot oxidation processes are confined to a narrow layer near the flame tip. In contrast, soot oxidation processes are spread along most of the flame surface for nonbuoyant flames, vastly improving the spatial resolution. Finally, flame residence times for buoyant laminar diffusion flames can only be controlled over a narrow range because flow velocities and mixing rates are dominated by effects of buoyancy so that burner diameter and initial gas velocity variations have little effect.^{5,6} In contrast, changing burner diameters and initial gas velocities for nonbuoyant flames yield corresponding variations of flame residence times,²²

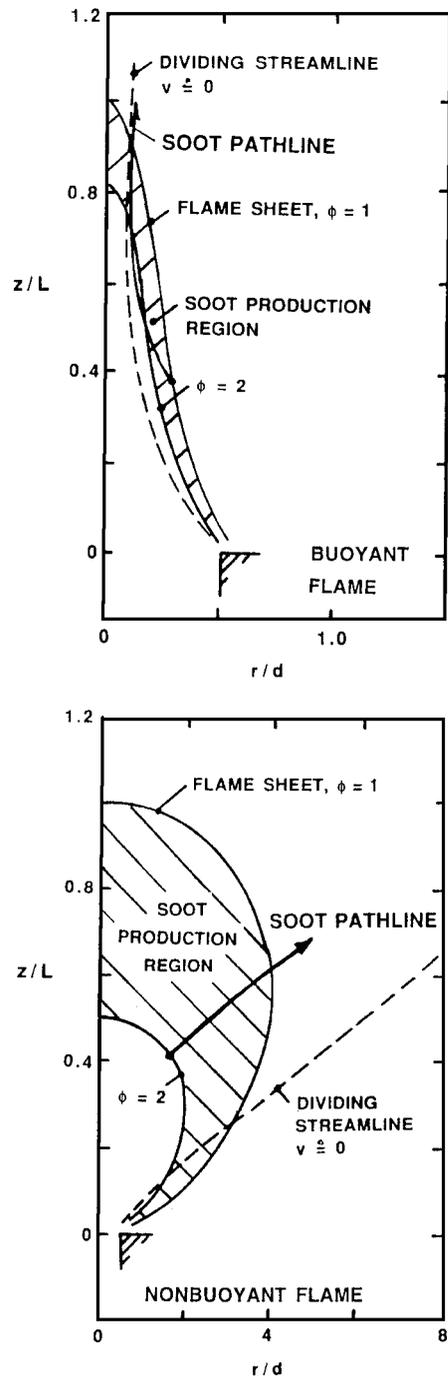


Fig. 1 Flame shapes, soot production regions, dividing streamlines, and soot pathlines in buoyant and nonbuoyant laminar jet diffusion flames; stoichiometric mixture fraction is 0.07.

providing considerable flexibility for experimentally probing soot processes in diffusion flames.

In summary, nonbuoyant laminar diffusion flames provide a better simulation of the hydrodynamic environment of soot in practical turbulent diffusion flames. They also offer better spatial resolution and flexibility to vary residence times than either buoyant laminar diffusion flames or practical turbulent diffusion flames. These advantages motivated the present study of soot processes in nonbuoyant laminar diffusion flames; in addition, space-based experiments at microgravity provided sufficient test times to ensure steady flame conditions for measurements of flame structure and soot properties.

Previous Studies

Previous studies of soot processes in laminar diffusion flames and of nonbuoyant laminar diffusion flames at microgravity will be briefly reviewed in the following paragraphs. More extensive

reviews of past studies of soot processes and soot structure in flames can be found in Refs. 23–27 and references cited therein; more extensive reviews of past studies of nonbuoyant laminar diffusion flames at microgravity can be found in Refs. 4 and 28 and references cited therein.

Recent studies of soot processes in buoyant laminar diffusion flames include those of Sunderland et al.,¹⁴ Sunderland and Faeth,¹⁵ Lin et al.,¹⁶ Santoro et al.,^{17,18} Puri et al.,^{19,20} Kent et al.,²⁹ Kent and Wagner,^{30,31} Kent and Honnery,³² Honnery and Kent,³³ Kent and Honnery,³⁴ Miller et al.,³⁵ Honnery et al.,³⁶ Dobbins and Megaridis,³⁷ Megaridis and Dobbins,^{38–40} Dobbins et al.,⁴¹ Flower and Bowman,^{42–45} Glassman,²⁴ Schug et al.,⁴⁶ Garo et al.,^{47,48} and Saito et al.,⁴⁹ among others. A popular flame configuration for these studies has been the buoyant laminar jet diffusion flame that is typically used for measurements of laminar smoke point properties.^{5,46} These studies provide considerable information about the structure of both buoyant laminar jet diffusion flames and soot particles within them, which has been exploited in connection with the discussion of Fig. 1. The most recent studies involve measurements of velocities, temperatures, concentrations of major gas species, concentrations of soot, and soot structure, along the axes of laminar buoyant jet diffusion flames; these results helped to identify some properties of soot formation (nucleation and growth) in different flames, as well as the relationships between soot formation processes in premixed and diffusion flames.^{14–16} Puri et al.^{19,20} recently reported similar studies of soot oxidation in laminar jet diffusion flames. Unfortunately, the properties of both the soot and the local reactive environment in all of these studies were not defined sufficiently to allow detailed phenomenological descriptions of soot formation and oxidation processes in laminar diffusion flames, comparable to recent studies of laminar premixed flames (see Refs. 27, 50, and 51 and references cited therein for discussions of recent findings concerning soot processes in laminar premixed flames).

The use of detailed chemistry to predict the structure of soot-containing flames is far too complex and too poorly characterized to be feasible. In addition, the numerous semiempirical models of soot processes in the literature lack universality. A tractable alternative is offered by the well-known observation that the concentrations of major gas species within soot-containing laminar diffusion flames correlate reasonably well as functions of the extent of mixing of the fuel- and oxidant-containing streams (usually represented by the mixture fraction or fuel-equivalence ratio).^{8–12} These correlations (called state relationships) extend to fuel-rich conditions affected by finite rate fuel decomposition and soot chemistry for wide ranges of local transport and reaction rates (usually characterized by wide ranges of flame stretch) within typical flames. This behavior implies that state relationships found from relatively simple measurements within laminar diffusion flames can be applied to turbulent diffusion flames, by assuming the validity of the laminar flamelet concept or conserved-scalar formalism,⁸ i.e., that practical turbulent flames correspond to wrinkled laminar flames.

There is indirect evidence from measurements within strongly turbulent diffusion flames (having small local effects of buoyancy) that laminar flamelet concepts may also apply to the soot properties of strongly turbulent diffusion flames.^{5–7,52–54} If this proves to be true, the resulting state relationships for soot concentrations, soot structure, and soot optical properties would vastly simplify models of the structure and radiative properties of practical soot-containing turbulent diffusion flames. Part of this evidence comes from observations within the fuel-lean region of large buoyant turbulent diffusion flames; these results show that soot structure is uniform and soot concentrations are proportional to the degree of mixing (note that these results are based on time-averaged properties but in regions where soot concentrations are proportional to mixture fractions so that instantaneous and time-averaged properties are the same), implying remarkably similar behavior for soot passing through all points along the transient and wrinkled flame sheet.^{5–7,52,53} Instantaneous measurements of soot concentration/temperature correlations in the fuel-rich region of similar buoyant turbulent diffusion flames also support the existence of state relationships for soot properties in these flames.⁵⁴ Unfortunately, corresponding attempts to develop state relationships for soot structure and concentrations based on measurements within buoyant laminar diffusion flames, in the same

way that such flames are used to find state relationships for major gas species concentrations, have not been successful.^{11,12} This difficulty has been attributed to the differences between soot processes within nonbuoyant and buoyant laminar diffusion flames discussed in connection with Fig. 1 (Ref. 4); however, definitive proof of this hypothesis has been frustrated by the absence of detailed measurements of flame structure and soot properties within steady and nonbuoyant laminar diffusion flames.^{13–16}

Past studies of nonbuoyant laminar diffusion flames at microgravity include those of Cochran and Masica,⁵⁵ Haggard and Cochran,⁵⁶ Edelman et al.,⁵⁷ Klajn and Oppenheim,⁵⁸ Edelman and Bahadori,⁵⁹ Bahadori et al.,^{60–63} Megaridis et al.,⁶⁴ Konsur and Megaridis,⁶⁵ Sunderland et al.,¹³ and references cited therein. The emphasis of the earliest studies was on evaluation of methods of predicting flame structure.^{55–59} Experiments completed during these studies were mainly based on free-fall facilities that provide nonbuoyant flame conditions at microgravity for test times up to 5 s. It was found that predictions based on simple boundary-layer approximations as well as detailed multidimensional numerical simulations all provided good correlations with measurements of luminous flame lengths, in spite of uncertainties about effects of unsteady flame development and glowing soot particles in the fuel-lean portions of the flames.

The most recent studies of nonbuoyant laminar jet diffusion flames have concentrated on observations of soot processes.^{13,60–65} An interesting property of these flames, not seen for buoyant laminar jet diffusion flames, is that the flame tip is pointed when the flame is not emitting soot, but becomes blunt (opens) at the onset of soot emissions. This tip-opening phenomenon has been attributed to effects of radiation, soot formation, and thermophoretic motion of soot particles.^{60–63} Corresponding measurements of soot brightness temperatures show rather low-temperature values in the tip-opened region of nonbuoyant soot emitting flames, supporting the idea that heat losses caused by continuum radiation from soot are responsible for the tip-opening phenomenon by causing the flame extinction.^{60–63} Later work by Megaridis et al.⁶⁴ and Konsur and Megaridis,⁶⁵ using a laser extinction imaging system developed by Greenberg and Ku,⁶⁶ generally support these findings.

The laminar smoke point properties of nonbuoyant laminar jet diffusion flames have also been measured to help predict possible soot emissions for some space-based experiments.¹³ These measurements were carried out using aircraft-based facilities to provide test times up to 20 s at low gravity (on the order of 0.01 g) to reduce uncertainties associated with slow flame development. Considerable differences between the laminar smoke point properties of nonbuoyant and buoyant flames were observed, which is not surprising based on the discussion of Fig. 1. Unfortunately, aircraft-based facilities provide rather disturbed low-gravity environments, and gravitational disturbances were strongly correlated with soot emissions, which causes concerns about the relevance of these results to truly steady nonbuoyant laminar jet diffusion flames.

Specific Objectives

The discussion of past research indicates that there are several issues concerning the structure and soot properties of nonbuoyant laminar jet diffusion flames that merit further study, as follows. Have existing measurements of flame shapes been influenced by unsteady flame development effects due to limited test times at microgravity? Have existing measurements of laminar smoke point properties at low gravity been affected by disturbances of the gravity environment? What is the relationship between flame structure, soot properties, and laminar smoke point properties? What is the nature of the tip-opening process seen at the onset of soot emissions and is it associated with radiative heat losses from the flame? Do nonbuoyant flames at microgravity have properties consistent with the existence of state relationships for soot properties that are not seen in buoyant laminar diffusion flames at normal gravity due to the intrusion of buoyancy? The present investigation sought to address these issues, based on long-term observations of nonbuoyant laminar jet diffusion flames at microgravity carried out on orbit in the Space Shuttle Columbia.

The specific objectives of the study were to measure flame structure and soot properties, including visible flame shapes, soot

concentration distributions, soot temperature distributions, soot structure distributions, plume temperature distributions, and flame radiative heat losses. These results were then used to find luminous flame shapes, laminar smoke point properties, relationships between soot concentrations in the flames and laminar smoke point properties, soot concentrations and temperatures during tip opening, and the potential for state relationships for soot properties within non-buoyant diffusion flames.

The present discussion will focus mainly on a description of experimental methods and findings from the first flight of the apparatus [denoted the laminar soot processes (LSP) apparatus] on the Orbiter (flight STS-83, which was abbreviated due to a fuel-cell malfunction). Measurements were made for two soot-emitting ethylene/air flames at nominal pressures of 50 and 100 kPa, respectively. Although few in number, these tests were extensively instrumented to provide information about the research issues mentioned earlier. During the second flight of LSP on the Orbiter (flight STS-94) 19 subsequent tests covered a broader range of conditions, but mainly addressed non-soot-emitting flames and will be reported separately.

In the following, experimental methods are discussed first. Results are then considered, treating flame development properties, flame appearance, luminous flame lengths, laminar smoke point properties, soot structure properties, soot concentration distributions, and flame temperature distributions, in turn.

Experimental Methods

Apparatus

The test arrangement consisted of a laminar jet diffusion flame stabilized at the exit of a round fuel nozzle and extending along the axis of a windowed cylindrical chamber as shown in Fig. 2. The chamber had a diameter of 400 mm, a maximum length of 740 mm, and an internal volume of 0.082 m³ and was capable of containing laminar diffusion flames tests at pressures in the range 30–130 kPa. The end of the chamber was sealed with an O-ring/V-band system to provide access to interior components. The chamber was fitted with six fused-silica windows of which three were used by the LSP experiment, as follows: two windows having viewing diameters of 100 mm, mounted opposite one another, for laser extinction measurements and one window having a viewing diameter of 150 mm for multiline temperature imaging measurements and for color video images of the flame. The chamber was filled with an oxygen/nitrogen mixture to provide the nominal composition of dry air (21 ± 1% oxygen by volume) with the total oxygen consumption during a flame test not exceeding 10% by volume. Combustion products were vented to space after appropriate processing to satisfy Orbiter venting requirements.

Two interchangeable fuel nozzles, consisting of constant diameter cylindrical stainless steel tubes having inside diameters of 1.6 and 2.7 mm, wall thicknesses of 0.28 mm, and lengths of 148 mm from the inlet plenum were used. (Only the 1.6-mm-diam fuel nozzle was used for present results, however, due to the shortened mission.) The inlets of these tubes had four-passage (cross-configuration) flow

straighteners with length-to-diameter ratios of 8:1 to eliminate swirl in the flow. The overall length-to-diameter ratios of the nozzles themselves were in the range 59–60 to yield fully developed laminar pipe flow at the nozzle exits for the test conditions ($Re = 141$). The test fuels were stored in cylinders and delivered to the fuel nozzles through a pressure regulator, solenoid valves, and a mass flow rate controller/sensor. The flames were ignited by a hot-wire coil, which was retracted from the nozzle exit once ignition was successful. Ignition was detected by the change of resistance of the hot wire and from the output of a radiometer positioned to view the flame. Fuel flow rates at ignition were set at 30% above the final test values, based on tests at microgravity using a free-fall facility. After ignition was confirmed, the fuel flow rate was automatically adjusted to the nominal test value. The crew could subsequently adjust the fuel flow rate up to ±30%, in 5% steps, to achieve the desired final flame condition.

Several measurements were made to monitor flame operation, as follows: fuel flow rate, measured with the mass flow rate controller with an accuracy of 0.8% of the reading; fuel temperature, measured with a thermocouple in the fuel nozzle plenum with an accuracy of ±1.5 K; chamber pressure, measured with a pressure transducer with an accuracy of ±1.2% of the reading; chamber ambient gas temperatures, measured with two thermistors with an accuracy of ±1.0 K; and flame radiation, measured with a Medtherm 64 series heat flux transducer (wavelength range of 130–11,000 nm) with an accuracy of ±4% of full-scale reading over the range 0–2.2 kW/m². All readings were time based and were measured with a frequency no smaller than 1 reading/s. As with the imaging and thermocouple measurements (to be discussed next), all data were stored and downlinked digitally.

Instrumentation

Laminar flame shapes were measured from video images obtained using a standard color charge-coupled device (CCD) video camera (Hitachi Model KP-C553). The field of view of the camera was 60 mm wide × 80 mm long, starting 10 mm before the nozzle tip, with a depth of field of 25 mm centered on the nozzle axis. The spatial resolution of the recorded images was better than 0.3 mm. One difficulty with this camera, however, was that it was not possible for the image brightness to be adjusted on orbit. As a result, it was necessary to select camera settings so that flames having the smallest levels of luminosity, based on tests at microgravity using a free-fall facility, could still be observed while minimizing effects of camera gain on luminous flame dimensions. This caused flame images to be overexposed in most instances. The flame images were recorded at a rate of 30 frames/s. Experimental uncertainties of luminous flame dimensions are estimated to be less than 10%.

Soot volume fraction and temperature distributions were measured using imaging techniques (see Ref. 67 for analogous non-intrusive measurements of temperatures and compositions in soot-containing buoyant flames). Soot volume fraction distributions were obtained by deconvoluting laser extinction images for chordlike paths through the flames, using methods developed by Greenberg and Ku⁶⁶; see Refs. 14–16 for more details about present imaging methods. The laser source was a diode laser yielding roughly 1 mW of optical power at 634 nm (Sanyo Corporation Model 5DL3038). The laser beam was passed through a custom-made apodizing filter to reduce laser intensity variations to less than 75% over the field of view (with most of the variation at the periphery of the field of view, well away from the laser extinction image of soot in the flame) and then expanded and collimated to a 40 × 50 mm beam using a parabolic mirror. The transmitted signal was collected by a decollimator and a 3.8-mm-diam spatial filter that provides a 0.5-deg acceptance angle on the optical axis. The signal was then passed through neutral density filters to control total signal levels and a laser line filter [1-nm full width at half maximum (FWHM)] to minimize effects of flame radiation. The laser signal was recorded using a Panasonic Model GP-MF552 CCD video camera. The camera was oriented to provide 302 pixels over the 80-mm field of view along the flame axis and 484 pixels normal to the flame axis. The laser was adjusted to bring the signal just below saturation for the most intensely illuminated pixels, allowing optimum use of the 8-bit detector. Spatial resolution of the imaging system was better than

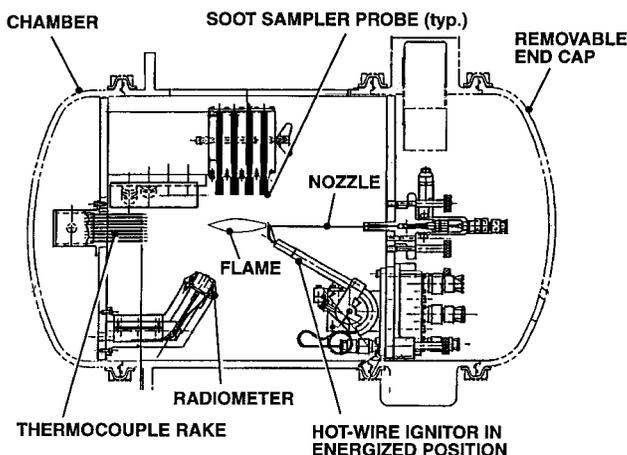


Fig. 2 LSP test apparatus for observations of nonbuoyant round laminar jet diffusion flames.

0.3 mm. Baseline measurements were made before and after each test, to allow corrections for background and instrument effects and to indicate any changes over the measuring period (there were none).

The laser extinction measurements were analyzed assuming that the soot optical properties satisfied the small particle (Rayleigh) scattering approximation, as was done during past work.^{14–16} A soot refractive index of $1.57 + 0.56i$ was used, based on the measurements of Dalzell and Sarofim,⁶⁸ which suggests relatively small effects of fuel type on this property, for consistency with past work^{14–16}; notably, recent gravimetric measurements of soot volume fractions and in situ measurements of soot refractive indices tend to support these results.^{50,69} Experimental uncertainties of these measurements (95% confidence) are estimated to be less than 10% for soot volume fractions, $f_s > 0.1$ ppm, increasing inversely proportional to f_s for values smaller than 0.1.

Soot temperature distributions were obtained by deconvoluting spectral radiation intensities for chordlike paths through the flames, using methods similar to those used by Sunderland et al.,¹⁴ Sunderland and Faeth,¹⁵ and Lin et al.¹⁶ This procedure involved consideration of the line pair at 650/850 nm. The flame images were observed using two Panasonic GP-MF552 CCD video cameras, which observed the flames through interference filters centered at the appropriate wavelength (10-nm FWHM), as well as neutral density filters to control overall signal levels. The two cameras were mounted side by side and directed to image the flame. The cameras were oriented to provide 197 pixels over the 80-mm field of view along the flame axis and 78 pixels over the 20-mm-wide region that includes the soot-containing region. The integration time of each image was controlled to fully utilize the range of the 8-bit detectors. The spatial resolution of these imaging systems was better than 0.4 mm. The multiline imaging measurements were analyzed assuming that the soot optical properties satisfied the small particle (Rayleigh) scattering approximation, similar to past work.^{14–16} Camera response at the two wavelengths was calibrated over the CCD arrays using a blackbody source. Differences between soot refractive indices at the two wavelengths were small compared to effects of experimental uncertainties and were ignored.⁶⁸ Experimental uncertainties (95% confidence) of these measurements are estimated to be less than 50 K for temperatures greater than 1200 K.

Soot structure was measured by thermophoretic sampling and analysis using transmission electron microscopy (TEM), similar to earlier work in Refs. 14–16. This procedure involved mounting the Formvar/carbon-coated copper grids used to hold TEM specimens (3-mm-diam, 200 mesh copper grids coated with a Formvar/carbon film, SPI Supplies, part 3420C) directly on sampling probes so that they were aligned parallel to the streamwise direction. Four sampling probes located 15, 37, 59, and 80 mm from the burner exit were used. Four TEM grids were located along each sampling probe with the innermost grid centered at the flame axis and with 4.2-mm separations between the centers of the grids. The grids were stored in cylindrical chambers with the probe and cylinder tips located 48 mm from the flame axis. Insertion and retraction times of the probes were smaller than 18 ms, with sampling periods of 200 ms producing less than 30% coverage of the grid surface with soot, minimizing overlapping of soot aggregates. Smaller levels of coverage, less than 10% as in past work,^{14–16} would have been desirable but could not be selected because there was no past experience with TEM sampling at these conditions. Fortunately, present measurements were limited to determination of primary soot particle diameters that are not strongly affected by overlapping soot aggregates. In addition, soot aggregate size causes negligible sampling bias for present conditions.⁷⁰

The soot samples were analyzed using a JEOL 2000FX analytical electron microscope with a 1-nm edge-to-edge resolution. The images were calibrated with latex spheres having diameters of 91 nm (with a standard deviation of 5.8 nm). The soot primary particles were nearly monodisperse at a given position, i.e., the standard deviation of primary soot particle diameters were less than 10% of the mean, determined by measuring 50–100 primary particles from 25–50 different aggregates. Experimental uncertainties (95% confidence) of soot primary particle diameters were dominated by finite sampling limitations and were less than 10%.

Finally, radial temperature distributions in the plume were measured using a thermocouple array located 190 mm from the burner

exit. Thermocouple spacing in the radial direction was 4.8–5.1 mm, with seven thermocouples positioned along one diameter and three thermocouples positioned along a perpendicular diameter. The thermocouple beads had diameters less than 0.20 mm, with bare wire distances between the beads and the sheathed insulators used to mount the wires greater than 9 wire diameters. Unfortunately, soot emitted from the flames deposited on the thermocouple wires making assessment of thermocouple errors problematical; therefore, these measurements are only considered to be qualitative, as discussed later.

Test Conditions

The conditions of the two flames tested are summarized in Table 1. These flames consisted of ethylene fuel jets burning in still air at nominal pressures of 100 and 50 kPa. The fuel flow rates and burner diameters of both flames yielded the same Reynolds number $Re = 141$. Ambient chamber compositions, pressures, and temperatures all varied slightly over flame burning periods of 230 and 175 s. Both flames were soot emitting and had luminous flame lengths L of 49–64 mm. Characteristic flame residence times were based on the luminous flame length and the average streamwise velocity $u_0/2$, as follows:

$$t_{ch} = 2L/u_0 \quad (1)$$

The values of t_{ch} are rather large for the present flames, 124 and 78 ms, because very low velocities can be accommodated due to the absence of buoyancy. In particular, most practical flames at normal gravity have characteristic residence times less than 10 ms. It will be seen later that these lengthy residence times introduce effects of radiative heat losses (particularly for the higher pressure flames) that are not typical of practical flames.

Radiative heat losses from the flames were found by assuming that the radiant heat flux was spherically symmetric, with the radiative heat flux found from the single-radiometer measurement, similar to past work.^{11,12} The chemical energy release rate of the flame is defined as the product of the burner fuel flow rate and the lower heating value (LHV) of the fuel, ignoring effects of unreacted fuel due to soot emissions, also similar to past work.^{11,12} Then the radiative heat loss fraction is defined in the usual manner as the ratio of the radiative heat loss rate to the chemical energy release rate.

The resulting values of the radiative heat loss fraction for the present flames are rather large, 60 and 56%, compared with expectations for buoyant laminar ethylene/air flames¹¹; this behavior is caused by the large residence times, which imply unusually slow heat release rates to compensate for effects of flame radiation. These large residence times are also responsible for large soot concentrations and primary soot particle diameters, relative to buoyant flames of similar size at normal gravity, as discussed later. It should be

Table 1 Summary of test conditions^a

Test	01E	02E
Nominal test pressure, kPa	100	50
Steady burning period, s ^b	18–230	20–175
Fuel flow rate, mg/s	1.84	1.84
Average burner exit density, kg/m ^{3c}	1.12	0.56
Average burner exit velocity, mm/s ^c	815	1630
Burner exit Reynolds number Re	141	141
Chamber oxygen concentration, % by volume ^d	21.2–20.1	21.2–19.4
Chamber pressure, kPa	104.0–105.0	52.5–53.5
Chamber temperature, K	301–302	301–302
Flame radiant heat flux, kW/m ^{2e}	0.62	0.58
Flame radiative heat loss fraction, % LHV	60	56
Luminous flame length, mm	49–52	63–64
Maximum luminous flame diameter, mm	14	14
Characteristic flame residence time, ms	124	78
Maximum soot concentration, ppm	32.0	2.1
Average primary soot particle diameter, nm	40	24

^aExperiments carried out on Space Shuttle Columbia (flight STS-83) with ethylene as the fuel: 1.6-mm burner diameter, initial fuel flow rate of 2.6 mg/s, soot-emitting, soot samples obtained, ranges shown correspond to beginning and end of soot sampling period, $\mu_0 = 1.03 \times 10^{-5}$ kg/(ms) at 300 K, LHV = 47,158 kJ/kg fuel.

^bTimes of beginning and end of steady burning period relative to the time of ignition.

^cBased on nominal pressure and 300 K.

^dInitially simulated dry air as an O₂/N₂ mixture.

^eMeasured at a distance of 80.5 mm from the flame axis.

noted, however, that both flames were optically thin, based on the present laser extinction measurements; therefore, the multiline temperature measurements can properly be deconvoluted to provide radial distributions of soot temperatures.

Results and Discussion

Flame Development

The general nature of the test flames at nominal pressures of 100 and 50 kPa can be seen from the plots of the monitoring measurements shown in Figs. 3 and 4, respectively. The following flame properties are shown as a function of time after ignition: ignitor and soot sample timing, fuel flow rate, ambient oxygen concentration (calculated), luminous flame length, maximum luminous flame radius, plume axis temperature at flame axis, radiant heat flux, ambient chamber pressure, and ambient chamber temperature. The ignitor and soot sampler timing refers to hardware actuation conditions. The ignitor system was energized for roughly 11 s, which shifts the hot-wire coil to the burner exit at the beginning of the test. The soot samplers are energized for shorter periods than can be seen in Figs. 3 and 4 (200 ms) toward the end of the test, with the four activations corresponding to the four soot samplers, which are energized one at a time, progressively moving toward the burner exit. It should be noted that images for flame shape, soot concentration, and soot temperature measurements, were obtained during the quasisteady period at times greater than 18 s and before operation of the soot samplers.

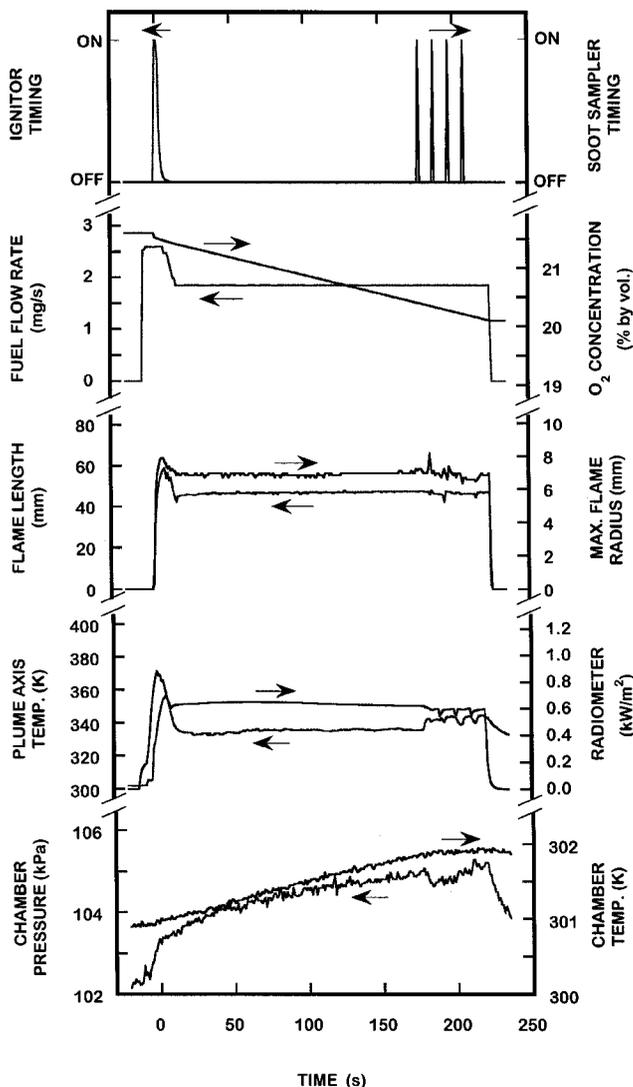


Fig. 3 Monitoring measurements as a function of time for the 100-kPa flame: ignitor and soot sampler timing, fuel flow rate, ambient oxygen concentration, luminous flame length, maximum luminous flame radius, plume axis temperature, radiometer output, chamber pressure, and chamber temperature.

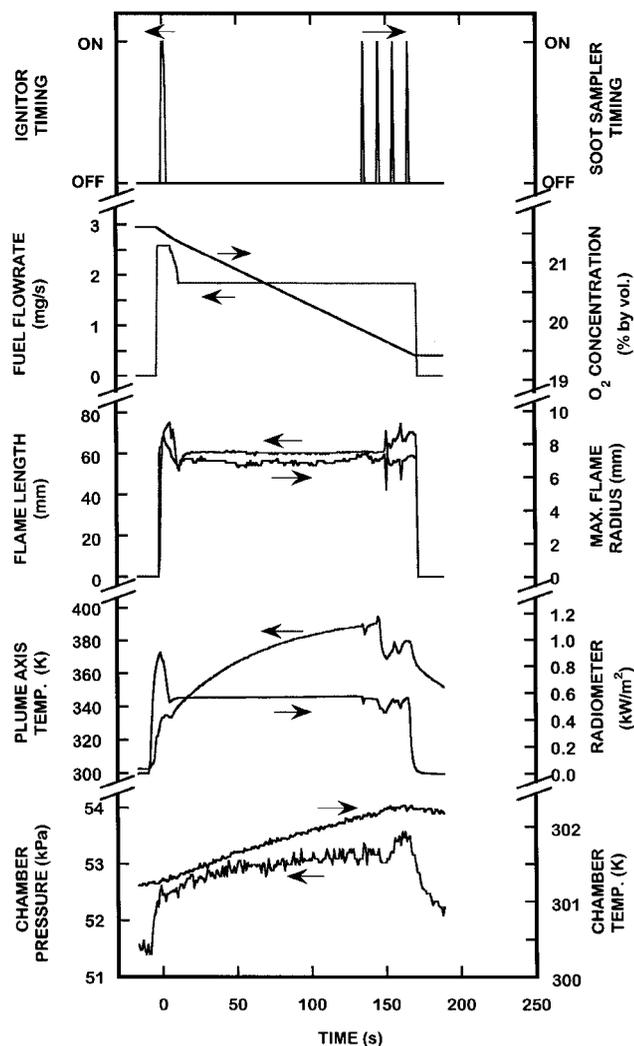


Fig. 4 Monitoring measurements as a function of time for the 50-kPa flame: ignitor and soot sampler timing, fuel flow rate, ambient oxygen concentration, luminous flame length, maximum luminous flame radius, plume axis temperature, radiometer output, chamber pressure, and chamber temperature.

The results shown in Figs. 3 and 4 show that ambient oxygen concentrations (computed assuming complete fuel oxidation) decreased while ambient chamber pressures and temperatures increased with increasing time. More rapid changes are seen for the flame having the lower nominal pressure, as expected, due to the smaller mass and thermal capacity of the lower pressure air within the chamber. It will be seen later that, even though these changes of ambient chamber properties are relatively small, they still cause measurable changes of flame properties.

Because the STS-83 flight duration was abbreviated, the present two test conditions were chosen to yield flames that provided good signal-to-noise ratios for measurements. Figures 3 and 4 show that after ignition, the crew reduced fuel flow rates to the minimum allowable amount for both flames to minimize soot emissions. In spite of this large adjustment, however, both flames emitted more soot than expected because the flames were somewhat larger and began to emit soot at somewhat smaller flame sizes than anticipated from microgravity tests using ground-based facilities, as discussed later.

Maximum flame dimensions decrease in response to the initial fuel flow rate decreases in Figs. 3 and 4 and finally approach quasisteady behavior, where the flames grow slowly due to changes of chamber conditions over the total test time. The final adjustment to this quasisteady behavior, however, is rather slow. For example, after the last fuel flow rate adjustment, the flame lengths undershoot and then increase in length once again, over a 5–10 s period, before finally approaching quasisteady behavior. This undershoot is largely a result of the interaction between the mass flow controller

and an orifice (upstream) that was included to limit the maximum fuel flow rate for safety reasons. The characteristic transient development times of the present flames can be expressed as follows:

$$t_{tr} = R^2/D \quad (2)$$

where R is the maximum luminous flame radius. Based on the results plotted in Figs. 3 and 4, R is on the order of 10 mm for both flames, whereas representative values of D for transport processes near the periphery of the flame are on the order of 20 and 48 mm²/s for the flames at pressures of 100 and 50 kPa, respectively. Then, Eq. (2) yields t_{tr} on the order of 5 and 3 s for the flames at pressures of 100 and 50 kPa, which is also comparable to present observations. Evidence just presented suggests that laminar flames typical of present test conditions require relatively long transient development times (aside from system response characteristics) and are best observed during long-term space-based experiments if steady and nonbuoyant behavior is desired. Other evidence suggesting rather slow flame development rates can be seen from the effects of the soot sampler disturbances, which do not entirely decay away for many properties over the 10-s intervals between activation of soot samplers. Finally, other supporting evidence of slow flame development times, based on comparisons between the present flames and flames observed for shorter test times using ground-based microgravity facilities, will be discussed later.

Plume axis temperatures for the flame having a nominal pressure of 100 kPa, and radiometer signals for both flames, suggest transient development and quasisteady periods, similar to the other properties just discussed. On the other hand, plume temperatures increase slowly over the entire test period for the flame having a nominal pressure of 50 kPa. This behavior is felt to be caused by soot deposition on the thermocouple probes from the heavily sooting first test at 100 kPa, which was evident when the interior components of the chamber were inspected after the second test [the two soot populations on the thermocouple probes could be distinguished by both the amount and the appearance (color) of the soot]. Such deposits would be expected to inhibit thermocouple response, leading to the gradually increasing plume temperature signals seen in Fig. 4.

Flame Appearance

Flame images from the color videocamera and the laser extinction observations provide complementary information about the flames by defining regions of flame luminosity and regions containing soot, respectively. This information will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

A video image of the flame at a pressure of 100 kPa is shown in Fig. 5. This image was obtained at quasisteady conditions, in the period where laser extinction and multiline temperature images were being obtained, at roughly 170 s after the time of ignition. As noted earlier, fixed camera settings imply that images of these strongly luminous flames are overexposed; therefore, the images were adjusted to minimize color distortion due to saturation and reflection from components within the test chamber. As a result, this image provides an indication of regions in the flame having different colors, but the image does not provide particularly accurate representation of the actual flame colors. As noted during earlier observations of nonbuoyant round laminar jet diffusion flames at microgravity,^{55-57,59-65} these flames are very symmetric, they tend

to extend somewhat upstream of the burner exit, and they are very steady with none of the flickering due to buoyant instabilities that is characteristic of buoyant laminar jet diffusion flames at normal gravity.⁴ No soot is present in the region where the flame stabilizes near the burner exit so that this region appears blue. The absence of soot in this region is caused by small residence times, some pre-mixing from quenched air flowing into the flame along the burner tube, and the effects of entrained air sweeping soot particles away from the flame sheet toward the interior of the flow. (This region is upstream of the dividing streamline and behaves similarly to the region downstream of the dividing streamline of buoyant flames discussed in connection with Fig. 1.) Significant soot concentrations begin to develop very close to the burner exit in the flame, yielding a brilliantly luminous region that extends over most of the length of the flame. Evidence to be presented later will show that the outer radial boundary of this strongly luminous region is just inside the flame sheet, which is not visible itself in the present image. The color changes abruptly near the flame tip along a line normal to the flame axis; evidence to be presented later strongly suggests that oxidation at the flame sheet is extinguished along this line. Downstream of the extinction region, the glowing soot particles cool rapidly causing luminosity to decrease and flame color to become a deeper red. Finally, the luminous region at the top of the flame ends in a rather blunt shape, which is typical of the tip-opening behavior of soot-emitting nonbuoyant laminar jet diffusion flames.⁶⁰⁻⁶⁵

The evolution of flame shape as a function of time during the quasisteady period can be seen from the plots of flame boundaries for the flame at a nominal pressure of 100 kPa shown in Fig. 6. The luminous and extinction boundaries are plotted in the figure at the beginning, middle, and end of the quasisteady period ($t = 18, 90,$ and 180 s). It is evident that changes of flame boundaries are small over the quasisteady period, which is consistent with estimates of simplified theories²¹ of flame shape for the modest changes of ambient conditions over the time period considered.

A typical laser extinction image obtained at the middle of the quasisteady period is shown in Fig. 7 for the flame having a nominal pressure of 100 kPa. In this image, the flow is from left to

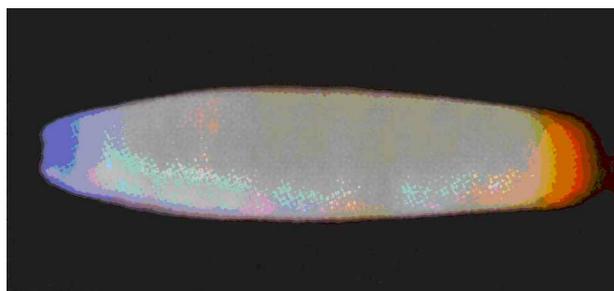


Fig. 5 Color video image of the 100-kPa flame during the image sampling period. (Maximum luminous flame diameter is 14 mm.)

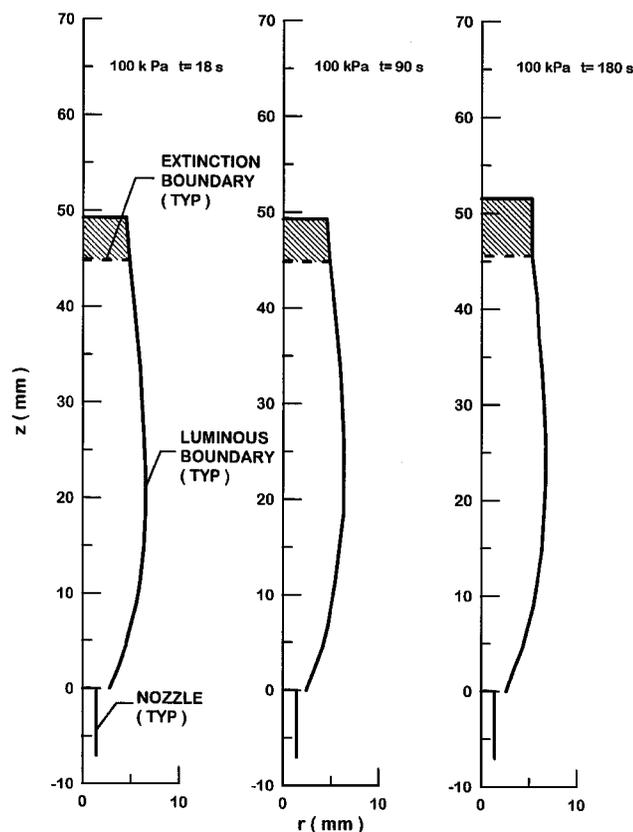


Fig. 6 Luminous flame boundaries of the 100-kPa flame at 18, 90, and 180 s after the time of ignition.

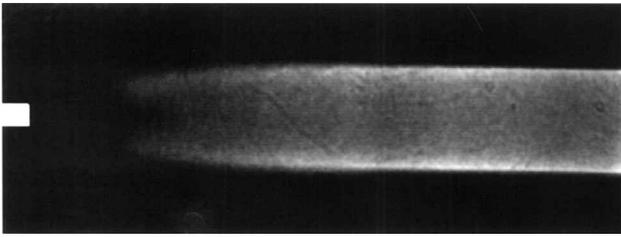


Fig. 7 Laser extinction image of the 100-kPa flame during the image sampling period. (Maximum image diameter is 14 mm.)

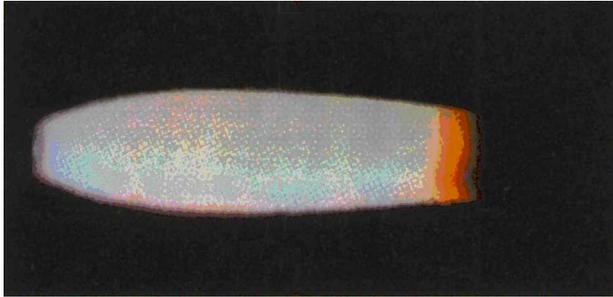


Fig. 8 Color video image of the 50-kPa flame during the image sampling period. (Maximum luminous flame diameter is 14 mm.)

right, as indicated by the outline of the burner tube at the left of the photograph. The laser extinction signal is weak near the burner exit due to combined effects of small soot concentrations and small path lengths through the flame. The signal strength increases with increasing streamwise distance, however, and reaches very good signal-to-noise ratios at 20 mm from the nozzle exit. This flame is soot emitting so that the extinction signal does not end at the blunt tip of the luminous flame; instead, soot emitted from the flame generates an extinction signal throughout the plume region. The extinction signal is particularly strong near its periphery; results to be considered later will show that this region corresponds to a rather prominent soot layer that is confined and has nearly parallel sides due to effects of thermophoresis caused by the presence of the high-temperature flame sheet just outside the soot-containing region, followed by the tendency of streamlines to parallel the axis of the flame beyond the flame tip. Thermophoresis is particularly important for this flame because flow velocities become small near the tip of the flame, whereas the nominal pressure level (100 kPa) provides significant thermophoretic velocities.

Similar images of the flame at a nominal pressure of 50 kPa are shown in Figs. 8–10. A video image of the flame during the quasisteady period (130 s after the time of ignition) is presented in Fig. 8. This flame is somewhat longer, and the tip opening is not quite as complete due to reduced rates of soot emission, compared to the video image of the flame at a nominal pressure of 100 kPa (Fig. 5).

The evolution of flame shape as a function of time during the quasisteady period can be seen from the plots of flame boundaries for the flame at a nominal pressure of 50 kPa shown in Fig. 9. An interesting feature of these results is the progressive development of tip opening as the ambient oxygen concentration decreases and the pressure increases as a function of time (see Fig. 4). Thus, this flame was initially borderline soot emitting with the degree of soot emission progressively increasing with increasing time. Similar to effects of fuel flow rates on tip opening seen by Sunderland et al.,¹⁵ tip opening occurs as the result of rather modest changes of flame operating conditions, which make this phenomenon a helpful indication of the onset of soot emissions, i.e., the laminar smoke point.

A typical laser extinction image obtained at the middle of the quasisteady period is shown in Fig. 10 for the flame at a nominal pressure of 50 kPa. As will be seen later, concentrations of soot in this flame are roughly an order of magnitude smaller than in the high-pressure flame, yielding reduced signal-to-noise ratios in Fig. 10 compared to Fig. 7. As before, this flame is soot emitting,

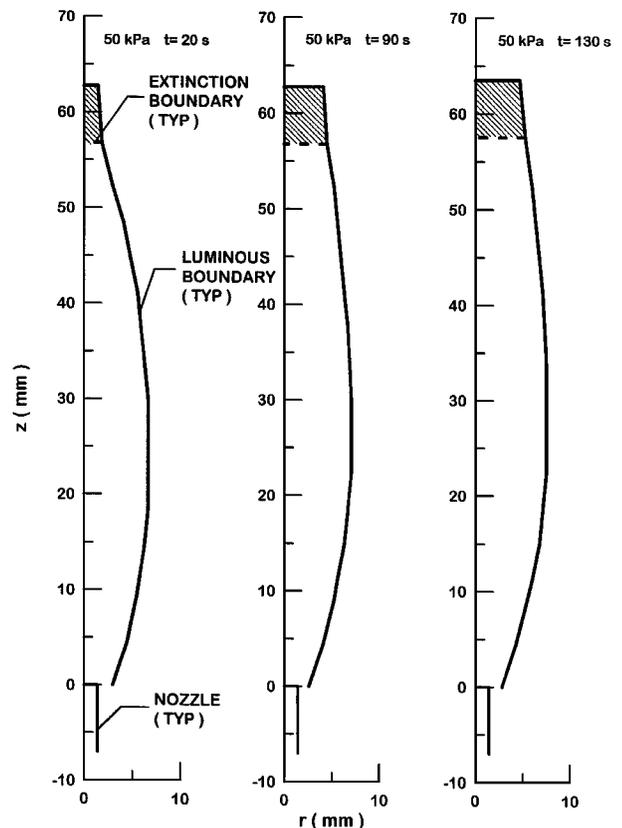


Fig. 9 Luminous flame boundaries of the 50-kPa flame at 20, 90, and 130 s after the time of ignition.

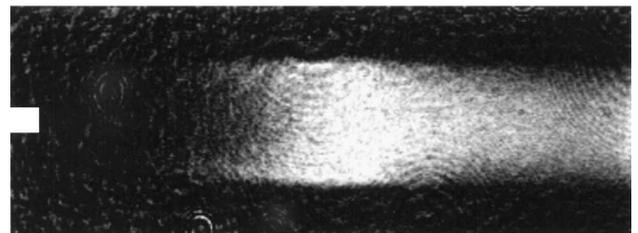


Fig. 10 Laser extinction image of the 50-kPa flame during the image sampling period. (Maximum image diameter is 14 mm.)

with an open tip at the time this image was obtained, so that laser extinction continues in plume region. One rather different feature of the laser extinction image of the flame at 50 kPa compared to the flame at 100 kPa is that the extinction signal tends to be strongest near the flame axis, rather than near the periphery. It will be seen that this behavior occurs due to much less prominent annular soot layers; in particular, effects of thermophoresis are smaller due to larger flow velocities and smaller thermophoretic velocities at the lower pressure.

Luminous Flame Length

The luminous flame length is an important property of laminar jet diffusion flames because it helps define the region where flame structure and soot properties can be measured while also playing a critical role in the definition of laminar smoke point properties. It is well known that the luminous flame lengths of buoyant laminar jet diffusion flames can be correlated as a simple function of fuel mass flow rate for a given fuel and ambient oxygen condition^{4,22,55–65}; therefore, the performance of this type of correlation for results from both ground-based and space-based experiments will be considered in the following discussion.

Luminous flame lengths of ethylene/air laminar jet diffusion flames are plotted as a function of fuel flow rate in Fig. 11. Three types of measurements appear: measurements of buoyant flames at

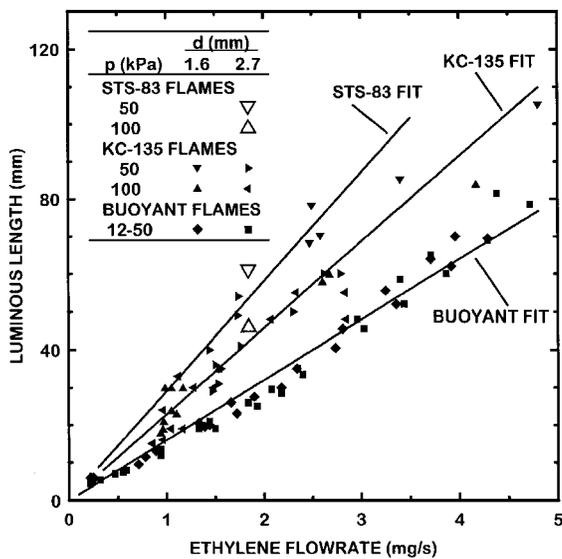


Fig. 11 Luminous flame lengths of nonbuoyant and buoyant ethylene/air round laminar, jet diffusion flames as a function of fuel flow rate, burner diameter, and pressure.

12–50 kPa using 1.6- and 2.7-mm burner diameters (burner diameter, however, does not have a large effect on luminous flame lengths at these conditions), measurements of nonbuoyant flames at 50 and 100 kPa using 1.6- and 2.7-mm burner diameters for nonbuoyant conditions provided by ground-based aircraft (KC-135) microgravity facilities, and measurements from the present two tests for nonbuoyant space-based microgravity conditions. Consistent with earlier observations,^{4, 22, 55–65} the buoyant flames display an excellent correlation of luminous flame length as a function of fuel mass flow rate for laminar flows at various pressures and burner diameters.

The measurements of luminous flame lengths for the nonbuoyant flames using the KC-135 microgravity facilities presented in Fig. 11 exhibit somewhat greater scatter than the buoyant flame results; this behavior is due to effects of gravitational disturbance typical of aircraft microgravity facilities. In spite of the scatter, however, the fuel flow rate correlates the effects of both burner diameter and pressure. The KC-135 flame correlation also yields (at 95% confidence) a significant (40%) increase of luminous flame lengths compared to the buoyant flames. In this case, the good correlation between luminous flame lengths and fuel flow rates for various pressures and burner diameters was expected based on the predictions of simplified analysis of laminar nonbuoyant jet diffusion flames.²¹

The final measurements of luminous flame lengths shown in Fig. 11 are from the present tests at microgravity using space-based facilities. The two available tests with soot-emitting flames yield longer luminous flame lengths than the mean results using ground-based microgravity facilities, e.g., roughly 27% longer than the ground-based microgravity measurements and 82% longer than the buoyant flame results. Flame disturbances enhance the transport of fuel and oxygen to the flame sheets, which tends to reduce flame lengths and explains the shorter lengths of the more disturbed microgravity flames using aircraft facilities relative to the present measurements. In the same way, accelerations of the flame gases resulting from buoyancy also enhance transport of fuel and oxygen to the flame sheet, explaining why the buoyant flames generally are shorter than the rest. Finally, the significant effects of g -jitter on the luminous flame lengths of nonbuoyant laminar jet diffusion flames, combined with the slow rate of development of these flames toward quasisteady behavior, highlight the need for long-term tests in the stable microgravity environment of space-based facilities for developing reliable information about the structure and mixing properties of nonbuoyant laminar jet diffusion flames.

Laminar Smoke Point Flame Lengths

Laminar smoke point flame lengths (defined here in a conventional way as luminous flame length at the condition where the

flame just begins to emit soot) are an important observable soot property of laminar jet diffusion flames. In particular, laminar smoke point flame lengths provide a single well-defined parameter that can be used to highlight differences between nonbuoyant and buoyant flames and to quantify evaluations of soot formation models. There also is interest in this property for nonbuoyant flames because excessive soot emissions could compromise experiments, such as the present laminar jet diffusion flame tests, by fouling the test chamber components. Thus, laminar smoke point properties are discussed in the following paragraphs.

The present flames were soot emitting, and it was not possible to reduce fuel flow rates sufficiently to accurately identify laminar smoke point flame properties, i.e., luminous flame lengths and fuel flow rates at incipient sooting conditions. Nevertheless, present observations were not far from laminar smoke point conditions for the flame at a nominal pressure of 50 kPa, based on the tip opening behavior of the flame shown in Fig. 9. In addition, the present luminous flame length for the flame at a nominal pressure of 100 kPa at least provides an upper bound for the laminar smoke point flame length at this condition. Thus, it is useful to compare present observations with earlier observations of laminar smoke point flame lengths of ethylene/air flames.

Table 2 is a summary of laminar smoke point flame lengths for round ethylene/air flames. Present results for nonbuoyant flames at microgravity involve a burner diameter of 1.6 mm, and pressures of 50 and 100 kPa, with the results noted as limits as just discussed. The more extensive nonbuoyant flame results of Sunderland et al.¹³ involved ground-based tests at microgravity using aircraft facilities for burner diameters of 1.6, 2.7, and 5.9 mm and pressures of 50, 100, and 200 kPa. Finally, results for buoyant flames were obtained from Schug et al.⁴⁶ and Sivathanu and Faeth⁵⁴ for a burner diameter of 10.0 mm at 100 kPa, although effects of burner diameter on the laminar smoke point properties of buoyant flames are small, as noted earlier.

An obvious feature of the results summarized in Table 2 is that the laminar smoke point flame lengths of the nonbuoyant flames are significantly smaller than those of the buoyant flames. The nonbuoyant flames have unusually large residence times compared to buoyant flames, as discussed in connection with Table 1. This provides extended periods for soot growth but without corresponding extension of the soot oxidation period due to the flame quenching. These extended residence times also provide an opportunity for increased effects of radiative heat losses near the tip of nonbuoyant flames at microgravity compared to the shorter residence time conditions of buoyant (and most practical) flames, as discussed in connection with Table 1. In particular, such radiation effects near the flame tip are expected to enhance quenching of soot oxidation and thus tend to reduce laminar smoke point flame lengths.

Another interesting aspect of the results summarized in Table 2 is that the laminar smoke point flame length observed at 50 kPa is significantly shorter for the present tests than the results obtained using aircraft microgravity facilities (corresponding results at 100 kPa are not definitive as noted earlier because they only represent an upper bound of the actual laminar smoke point flame length). This behavior is felt to be due to closer approach to steady and nonbuoyant flame properties compared to the relatively disturbed microgravity environment of aircraft facilities, as discussed earlier.

Table 2 Summary of laminar smoke point flame lengths, mm^a

Burner diameter, mm	Nominal pressure, kPa		
	50	100	200
	<i>Nonbuoyant (space-based) present measurements</i>		
1.6	<63	<49	—
	<i>Nonbuoyant (ground-based) measurements of Sunderland et al.¹³</i>		
1.6	85	36	—
2.7	80	25	13
5.9	110	28	13
	<i>Buoyant measurements of Schug et al.⁴⁶ and Sivathanu and Faeth⁵⁴</i>		
10.0	—	162–169	—

^aLaminar round jet ethylene/air flames at normal temperature (roughly 300 K).

Soot Structure

Typical TEM images of soot particles within the flames at nominal pressures of 100 and 50 kPa are shown in Figs. 12 and 13, respectively. As noted earlier, insertion of the soot samplers caused a significant cross-stream disturbance of the flame so that radial variations of sample properties are not very reliable and will not be specified in the following. The images shown in Figs. 12 and 13 were obtained from the plume region of the flames at the first sampling station beyond the luminous flame tip: at $z = 59$ mm for the 100 kPa flame in Fig. 12 and at $z = 80$ mm for the 50 kPa flame in Fig. 13. It should be noted that the magnification used in Fig. 13 is 2.5 times larger than the magnification used in Fig. 12; this was done so that the much smaller soot aggregate observed in the low-pressure flame can be seen more clearly.

The soot aggregates shown in Figs. 12 and 13 are similar to soot sampled from buoyant diffusion flames; see Refs. 71–73 and references cited therein. This involves roughly spherical primary soot particles that have nearly uniform diameters at any given position in the flame. The primary soot particles are collected into open structured and branched aggregates that have rather large variations of the number of primary soot particles per aggregate (typically represented by log normal distributions).^{72,73} The images shown in Figs. 12 and 13 are representative of larger soot aggregates emitted from the two flames: the aggregate in Fig. 12 for the 100-kPa flame has a mean primary particle diameter of 39 nm and a maximum aggregate dimension (taken as the diameter of the smallest circle that can bound the aggregate) of 1100 nm, whereas the aggregate in Fig. 13 for the 50-kPa flame has a mean primary particle diameter of 22 nm and a maximum aggregate dimension of 600 nm. Thus, decreasing the pressure results in a significant reduction of both the primary particle mass (a roughly 6:1 reduction in the present case) and the degree of aggregation of the particles. The size of the present primary soot particles in the 100-kPa flame is also larger than the primary particles emitted from large ethylene/air buoyant diffusion flames at normal gravity (which are roughly 32 nm in diam,^{72,73} implying a 2:1 reduction of mass compared to the present flame). The

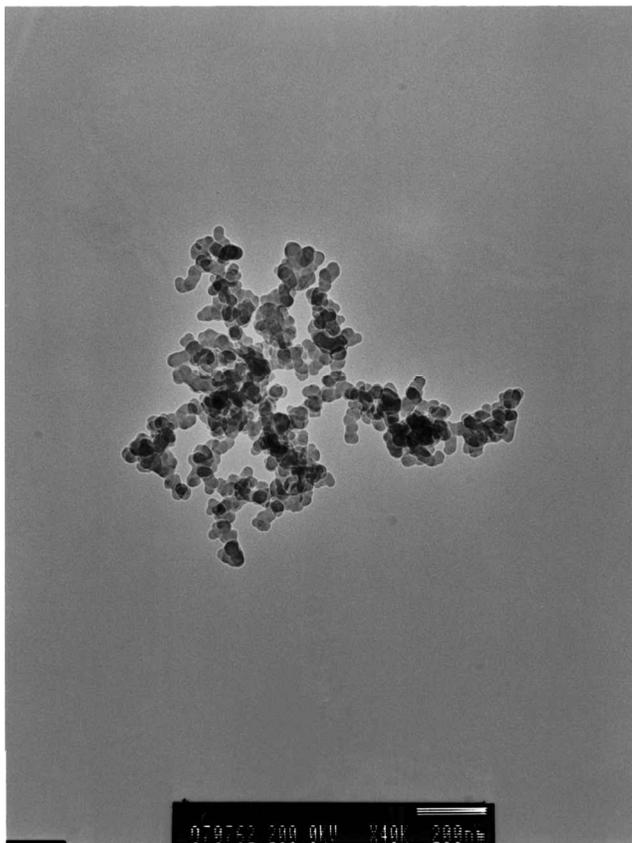


Fig. 12 TEM photograph of a typical soot aggregate in the 100-kPa flame from within the soot layer beyond the flame tip ($z = 59$ mm): Maximum dimension of the aggregate is roughly 1100 nm.

Table 3 Summary of primary soot particle diameters, nm^a

Streamwise distance, mm	Test (pressure)	
	01E (100 kPa)	02E (50 kPa)
15	39	—
37	45	27
59	39	23
80	38	22
Average	40	24

^aExperiments carried out on Space Shuttle Columbia (flight STS-83) with ethylene/air flames: 1.6-mm burner diameter.

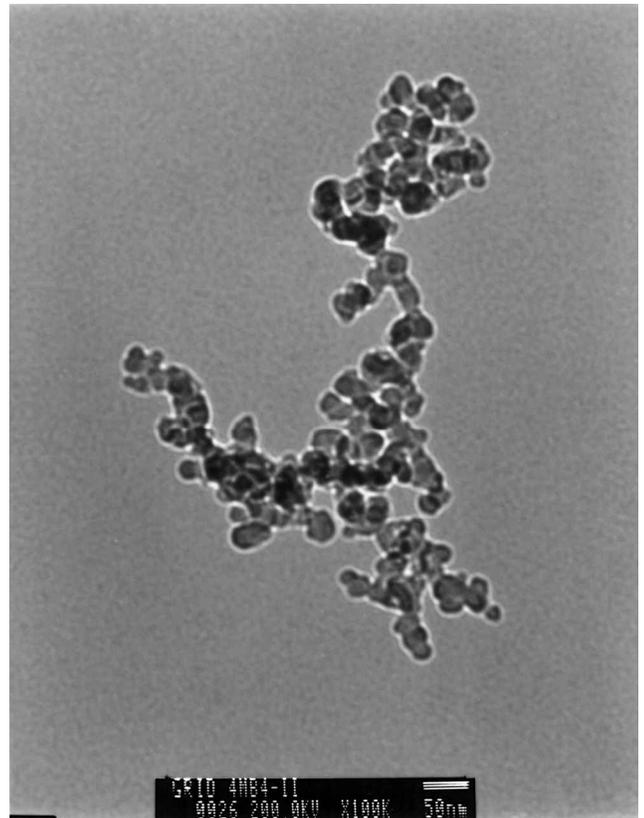


Fig. 13 TEM photograph of a typical soot aggregate in the 50-kPa flame from within the soot layer beyond the flame tip ($z = 80$ mm): Maximum dimension of the aggregate is roughly 600 nm.

strong effect of pressure is consistent with earlier observations of soot formation rates in laminar jet diffusion flames.^{14,15} Finally, the effect of the buoyant condition is expected because the nonbuoyant flames have significantly larger residence times than typical buoyant flames, which provides more time for soot growth and aggregation, without compensating increases of time for soot oxidation because soot oxidation processes are quenched near the flame tip.

Primary soot particle diameters are summarized as a function of distance from the burner exit for the two flames in Table 3. The values shown are averaged over the cross section of the flame, as noted earlier. This emphasizes soot at conditions where it is emitted from the flames due to the rapid nucleation near the inner edge of the soot formation region of typical laminar diffusion flames.^{14,15} In addition, it should be noted that soot was observed only at the first two sampling grids centered at radii of 0 and 4.2 mm from the flame axis, except for the 50-kPa flame at $z = 59$ mm, where soot was also observed at the third sampling grid centered at a radius of 8.4 mm from the axis. This tendency for soot to be confined in the radial direction will be considered more quantitatively later, when distributions of soot volume fractions are discussed. Uniform mean particle sizes are seen at each distance from the burner exit, except very near the burner exit (upstream of the dividing streamline), where no soot was observed at all for the 50 kPa flame. This uniformity of primary soot

particle diameters for various paths through the flames (downstream of the dividing streamline) is supportive of potential universal state relationships for soot properties in nonbuoyant laminar diffusion flames, as discussed earlier. In addition, different behaviors of soot processes upstream and downstream of the dividing streamline are anticipated, based on the discussion in connection with Fig. 1, helping to explain the different behavior of the first station downstream of the burner exit for the 50-kPa flame.

Soot Concentrations

The measurements of soot structure provide justification for adopting the Rayleigh scattering approximation for analyzing laser extinction measurements to determine soot volume fraction distributions. In particular, soot primary particle dimensionless optical diameters, i.e., the primary particle circumference divided by the wavelength of light, based on the mean primary particle diameter of 40 nm for the 100-kPa flame summarized in Table 1, are less than 0.20 so that effects of scattering on estimates of soot volume fraction are small compared to uncertainties of these estimates due to the uncertainties about the refractive indices of soot.^{72,73}

Present measurements of the radial distributions of soot volume fractions at various distances from the burner exit are shown in Figs. 14 and 15 for the flames burning at nominal pressures of 100 and 50 kPa, respectively. These measurements were obtained during the quasisteady period with soot volume fraction distributions given at the beginning and end of this period so that effects of chamber property changes can be seen: Distributions are shown for times of 90 and 170 s after ignition for the 100-kPa flame and for times of 90 and 130 s after ignition for the 50-kPa flame. In both cases, the soot concentration profiles tend to become broader, with somewhat reduced peak soot concentrations, as time increases. This behavior is caused by reduced ambient oxygen concentrations due to oxygen consumption by the flame. Another trend of the soot concentration measurements shown in Figs. 14 and 15 is the substantial increase of soot concentrations with increasing pressure for otherwise relatively similar flames, with maximum soot concentrations increasing from roughly 2–32 ppm for an increase of pressure from 50 to 100 kPa. This behavior agrees with earlier observations of significant increases of soot formation rates with increasing pressure in laminar diffusion flames.^{14, 16, 42–45}

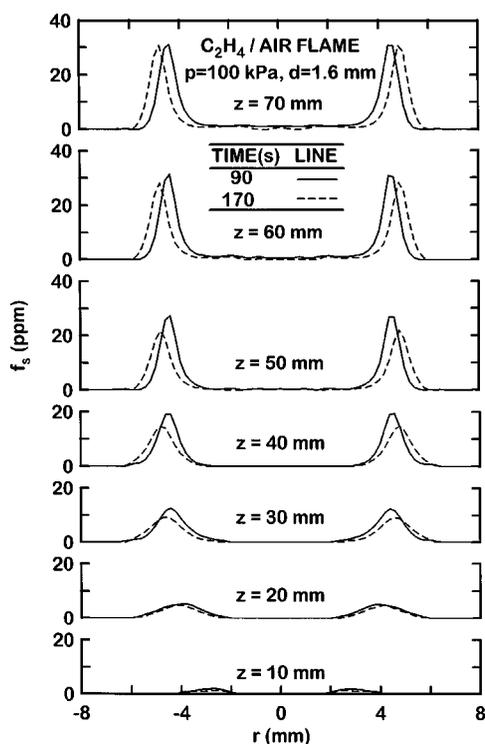


Fig. 14 Soot volume fraction distributions in the 100-kPa flame at 90 and 170 s after the time of ignition for various distances from the burner exit.

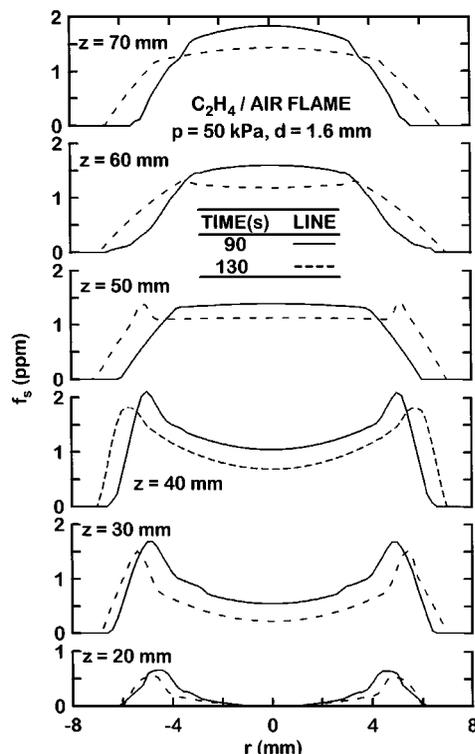


Fig. 15 Soot volume fraction distributions in the 50-kPa flame at 90 and 130 s after the time of ignition for various distances from the burner exit.

Another feature of the results for the 100-kPa flame shown in Fig. 14 is that all of the soot at each cross section of the flame is contained within a narrow annular ring, and soot is never observed along the axis of the flame. This behavior appears to be a unique feature of nonbuoyant laminar jet diffusion flames that is associated with the tip-opening phenomenon. In particular, measurements to be discussed subsequently suggest that the flame is quenched near its tip due to continuum radiation heat losses from soot. This implies low temperatures along the flame axis. As a result, the fuel does not decompose near the axis and subsequent soot reaction processes do not occur, indicating that radiative losses are responsible for significant soot and unburned hydrocarbon emissions from tip-opened flames.

Other interesting features of the soot concentration distributions shown in Fig. 14 for the 100-kPa flame are the straight sides of the soot-containing region and the progressively increasing maximum soot concentrations with increasing distance from the burner exit. As discussed earlier in connection with Fig. 7, thermophoresis due to the presence of a diffusion flame just outside the soot-containing region acts to impede the radial transport of soot. This effect is particularly important near the tip of the 100-kPa flame because radial flow velocities become relatively small in this region.²² Similar effects of thermophoresis are not as important for buoyant diffusion flames at 100 kPa and normal gravity because buoyancy-induced flow velocities near the flame tip are relatively large.⁵⁴ Thus, the inward transport of thermophoresis counterbalances the outward convection of soot for the present nonbuoyant flames so that the soot becomes trapped within a cylindrical region for the high-pressure flame; therefore, soot accumulates within a finite radius, and its concentration progressively increases with increasing streamwise distance, as seen in Fig. 14. Beyond the flame tip, however, the annular soot-containing region tends to be preserved because the streamlines in the soot-containing region are nearly parallel to the flame axis.

Taken together, the earlier observations concerning soot concentrations for the 100-kPa flame shown in Fig. 14 demonstrate that this soot-emitting flame will not yield a soot concentration (or soot volume fraction) state relationship required by the laminar flamelet concept. The reason for this behavior can be seen by noting that the mixture fraction is unity at the burner exit, zero in the unreacted air

far from the burner, and monotonically decreases along any flow path between these two limits. Thus, straight paths from the burner exit through the maximum soot concentration condition at each streamwise distance from the burner exit shown in Fig. 14 involve progressively increasing maximum soot concentrations as the streamwise distance increased. On the other hand, paths near the axis are in the soot-free region and never encounter a finite soot volume fraction. Clearly, soot volume fraction distributions as a function of mixture fraction for these varying paths would differ considerably, and this lack of universality would preclude the existence of a soot volume fraction state relationship for this condition. Based on the preceding discussion, state relationships for soot concentrations are not possible at this condition for two main reasons: 1) the tip-opening phenomenon, which is caused by radiative extinction of reactions in the flame sheet, and 2) the thermophoretic phenomenon that impedes radial transport of soot particles due to the small flow velocities within the flame. Neither of these phenomena, however, is relevant to practical (laminar or turbulent) diffusion flames at 100 kPa, for the following reasons. 1) Practical diffusion flames have much smaller characteristic residence times and, thus, much smaller radiative heat losses, so that radiative extinction yielding tip-opening behavior does not occur. 2) Flow velocities are much larger, which precludes significant thermophoretic effects for soot particles.

In contrast to the findings for the 100-kPa flame, the 50-kPa flame operated at conditions that provided a better simulation of practical diffusion flames and yielded results that are more supportive of the potential existence of soot volume fraction state relationships. In particular, this flame only exhibits weak tip-opening behavior, and there is no indication that reactions were quenched along the axis, i.e., significant soot concentrations develop along the axis of the flame. In addition, thermophoretic velocities are reduced (by a factor of roughly two),⁷⁰ whereas flow velocities are increased (by roughly a factor of two)²² so that capabilities for thermophoretic trapping of soot are much smaller as well. The effect of these changes is that most paths from the burner exit to the ambient environment exhibit nearly the same maximum soot concentration (in the range 1.5–2.0 ppm), which at least satisfies a necessary condition for the existence of a soot volume fraction state relationship for this flame condition. An exception to this behavior is the first streamwise position shown in Fig. 15, $z = 20$ mm, where the maximum soot concentration (0.7 ppm) is roughly half that of the other paths. This behavior corresponds to well-known exceptions to state relationships for major gas species that are associated with points of flame attachment,⁵⁴ except slower soot kinetics places the region of onset of soot formation farther downstream of the burner. Another factor influencing soot concentrations near the burner exit is the different convection pattern of soot particles upstream of the dividing streamline compared to the rest of the flow, as discussed in connection with Fig. 1. Nevertheless, the bulk of the flame is not influenced by these effects and exhibits potential for the existence of soot concentration state relationships. Definitive evaluation of the feasibility of soot volume fraction state relationships, however, will require direct computations or measurements of mixture fractions along with corresponding direct measurements of soot volume fractions.

Temperature Distributions

Present measurements of radial distributions of soot temperatures at various distances from the burner exit are shown in Figs. 16 and 17 for the flames burning at nominal pressures of 100 and 50 kPa, respectively. Soot concentration distributions and the luminous flame radius at these same positions are also shown in Figs. 16 and 17, for reference purposes. Present determinations of soot temperatures are only possible where reasonable levels of soot concentrations and temperatures are present. Two sets of distributions are shown in these figures, similar to the soot concentration results shown in Figs. 14 and 15, namely, distributions at $t = 90$ and 170 s after the time of ignition for the 100-kPa flame and $t = 90$ and 130 s after the time of ignition for the 50-kPa flame. The effect of increased time is to decrease maximum temperatures and broaden temperature profiles, slightly. Such changes are expected due to reduced ambient oxygen concentrations as combustion proceeds, as noted in connection with Figs. 14 and 15.

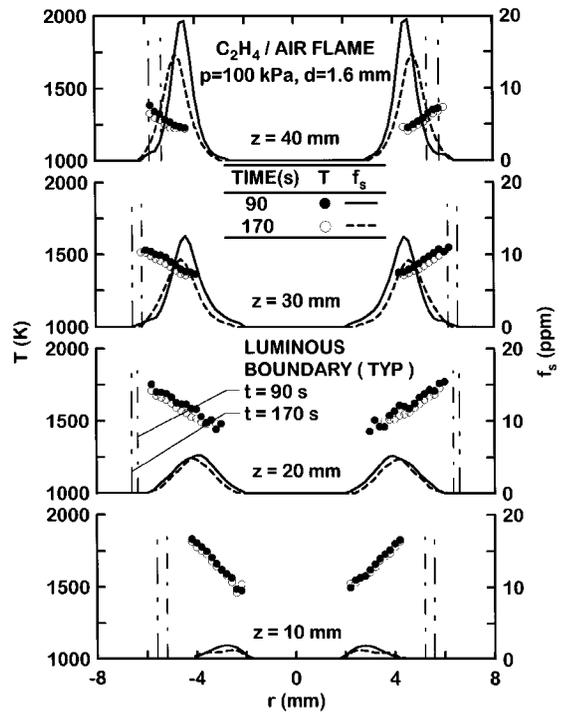


Fig. 16 Soot temperature and volume fraction distributions in the 100-kPa flame at 90 and 170 s after the time of ignition for various distances from the burner exit.

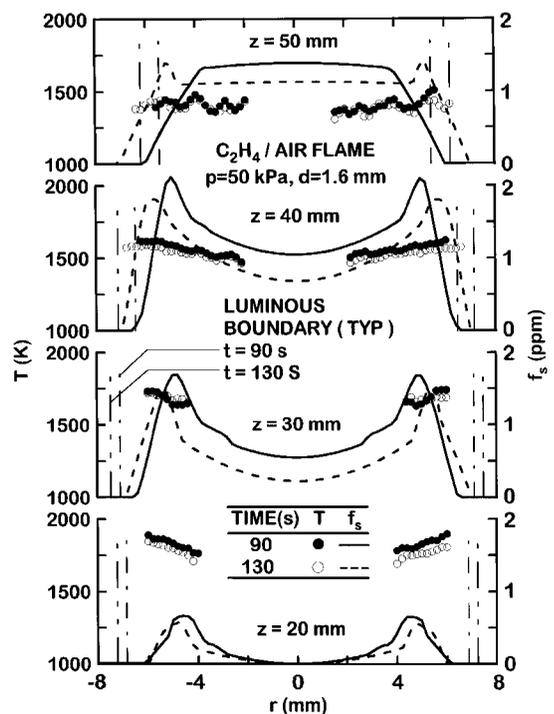


Fig. 17 Soot temperature and volume fraction distributions in the 50-kPa flame at 90 and 130 s after the time of ignition for various distances from the burner exit.

In general, soot temperatures progressively increase in the radial direction when there is a reasonably well-defined soot layer near the periphery of the flow in Figs. 16 and 17. This behavior suggests the presence of a flame sheet just outside the soot layer at moderate streamwise positions, as discussed in connection with the flame images of Figs. 5–10. This behavior changes as the tip of the 50-kPa flame is approached. There, the temperature distributions tend to be relatively flat, suggesting that the flame sheet is well within the soot-containing region with soot concentrations decreasing due to soot oxidation near the edge of the flame. The positions of the luminous

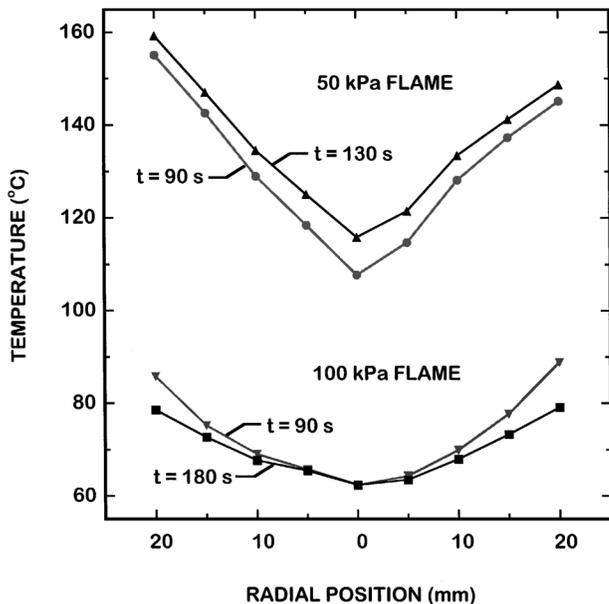


Fig. 18 Plume temperature distributions ($z = 150$ mm) at the beginning and end of the image sampling period for the 100- and 50-kPa flames.

flame boundary also support this view; for example, the luminous flame boundary is associated with the edge of the soot-containing region at the lower positions but moves into the soot-containing region at higher positions.

Another general trend seen in the soot temperature results shown in Figs. 16 and 17 is that soot temperatures progressively decrease with increasing streamwise distance. This behavior follows because radiative heat losses tend to increase with increasing streamwise distance whereas rates of chemical energy release tend to decrease due to reduced concentration gradients as the flame structure develops. As a result, soot temperatures decrease as the flame tip is approached; extrapolating maximum soot temperatures of both flames in the streamwise direction to the extinction boundaries shown in Figs. 6 and 9 yields temperatures of roughly 1000 K with corresponding low reaction rates at such temperatures consistent with extinction. This substantiates the earlier assertion that the flame tip is extinguished and unreacted fuel is escaping from the flame along its axis. As noted earlier, Bahadori et al.^{62,63} reach similar conclusions for nonbuoyant tip-opened diffusion flames at microgravity, assuming that spectral luminosity can be correlated with spectral emissions from a blackbody.

Plume temperature distributions also provide information about radiative heat loss phenomena and extinction in the present flames. Thus, measurements of these distributions are shown for the 100- and 50-kPa flames in Fig. 18. Two measured distributions are presented for each flame, representative of conditions at the beginning and end of the quasisteady periods, i.e., $t = 88$ and 175 s for the 100-kPa flame and $t = 89$ and 130 s for the 50-kPa flame. As noted earlier, variations of flame properties over the quasisteady period are not large for the present flames; thus, the corresponding changes of the temperature distributions in Fig. 18 are not large compared to experimental uncertainties.

The plume temperatures shown in Fig. 18 are larger for the 50-kPa flame than for the 100-kPa flame; these changes are consistent with the increased length and reduced radiative heat losses of the 50-kPa flame. A surprising feature of these results, however, is that plume temperatures are lowest near the axis for the restricted range of radial distance considered in Fig. 18 (note measurements at larger radial distances would yield a maximum temperature condition with subsequent approach to the ambient temperature conditions as radial distance was increased). This type of temperature distribution, however, is consistent with flame extinction near the axis in the region of tip opening.

Conclusions

The structure and soot properties of round, soot-emitting, nonbuoyant, laminar jet diffusion flames were studied experimentally.

Test conditions involved ethylene-fueled flames burning in still air at nominal pressures of 50 and 100 kPa and ambient temperatures of roughly 300 K to yield luminous flame lengths of 49–64 mm. The experiments were carried out at microgravity with long test durations (175–230 s) to ensure that nonbuoyant and steady laminar diffusion flames were observed. The major conclusions of the study are as follows.

1) Transient development of the present flames to quasisteady conditions (involving variations of flame shape due to gradual oxygen consumption within the test chamber) was surprisingly slow for present test conditions, highlighting the importance of adequate test times at microgravity to attain nearly nonbuoyant and steady flames. Evidence of slow development comes from flow disturbances and from quantitative differences between flame properties observed during the present tests and during earlier short-duration tests at microgravity (using ground-based facilities).

2) The present nonbuoyant and steady flames at microgravity were somewhat larger than in earlier observations at microgravity (using ground-based facilities) and at normal gravity, for comparable conditions. In particular, present luminous flame lengths were up to 30% longer than observed at microgravity (using ground-based facilities) and up to 80% longer than observed at normal gravity.

3) The present nonbuoyant and steady flames at microgravity emitted soot more readily than seen in earlier tests at microgravity (using ground-based facilities) and at normal gravity, for comparable conditions. In particular, present laminar smoke point lengths were 35% shorter than at microgravity (using ground-based facilities), based on results at 50 kPa, where the laminar smoke point was approached reasonably closely, and less than one-third as long as laminar smoke point flame lengths at normal gravity, based on results at 100 kPa, where the present heavily sooting flame, which is clearly longer than the laminar smoke point flame length, is less than one-third the laminar smoke point flame length of buoyant flames.

4) Increasing the pressure from 50 to 100 kPa for flames having comparable lengths caused maximum soot volume fractions to increase from 2 to 32 ppm and mean primary particle diameters to increase from 24 to 40 nm; this shows that soot emissions (and thus laminar smoke point properties) are not strongly correlated with maximum soot concentrations and primary particle sizes. In addition, comparable soot-emitting buoyant laminar diffusion flames at normal gravity have significantly smaller primary particles, probably due to their much shorter characteristic residence times, e.g., primary particles at normal gravity have roughly 50% less mass than at microgravity for flames at 100 kPa.

5) Present observations show that the tip-opening phenomenon associated with long residence time soot-emitting flames at microgravity is caused by extinction of the flame near its tip, confirming earlier conclusions of Bahadori et al.^{61–63} regarding this effect. New evidence for extinction is provided by measurements of temperatures near the flame tip approaching 1000 K, followed by rapid cooling of soot particles, suggesting a region where fuel oxidation is no longer releasing energy to compensate for radiative heat losses. The end of reaction in an annular soot-containing region also implies significant emissions of unburned fuel along the flame axis, along with the emissions of soot.

6) Finally, results for the 50-kPa flame near incipient tip-opening conditions yielded similar maximum soot concentrations along all paths through the flame. The flame approached conditions where effects of radiative extinction and thermophoresis were relatively small, typical of practical nonbuoyant turbulent diffusion flames, and this supports the potential existence of state relationships for soot concentrations at these conditions. It should be noted, however, that the present observations represent only a necessary, not a sufficient, condition for the existence of state relationships for soot concentrations, pending mixture fraction measurements or predictions, and soot volume fraction measurements needed for direct assessment of soot volume fraction state relationships.

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