

# QUANTUM CHEMISTRY

John P. Lowe

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THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY



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*To*  
*ARTHUR A. FROST*

### THE MOLECULAR CHALLENGE

Sir Ethylene, to scientists fair prey,  
(Who dig and delve and peek and push and pry,  
And prove their findings with equations sly)  
Smoothed out his ruffled orbitals, to say:  
"I stand in symmetry. Mine is a way  
Of mystery and magic. Ancient, I  
Am also deemed immortal. Should I die,  
Pi would be in the sky, and Judgement Day  
Would be upon us. For all things must fail,  
That hold our universe together, when  
Bonds such as bind me fail, and fall asunder.  
Hence, stand I firm against the endless hail  
Of scientific blows. I yield not." Men  
And their computers stand and stare and wonder.

W. G. LOWE

## PREFACE

My aim in this book is to present a reasonably rigorous treatment of molecular orbital theory, embracing subjects that are of practical interest to organic and inorganic as well as physical chemists. My approach here has been to rely on physical intuition as much as possible, first solving a number of specific problems in order to develop sufficient insight and familiarity to make the formal treatment of Chapter 6 more palatable. My own experience suggests that most chemists find this route the most natural.

I have assumed that the reader has at some time learned calculus and elementary physics, but I have not assumed that this material is fresh in his or her mind. Other mathematics is developed as it is needed. The book could be used as a text for undergraduate or graduate students in a half or full year course. The level of rigor of the book is somewhat adjustable. For example, Chapters 3 and 4, on the harmonic oscillator and hydrogen atom, can be truncated if one wishes to know the nature of the solutions, but not the mathematical details of how they are produced.

I have made use of appendixes for certain of the more complicated derivations or proofs. This is done in order to avoid having the development of major ideas in the text interrupted or obscured. Certain of the appendixes will interest only the more theoretically inclined student. Also, because I anticipate that some readers may wish to skip certain chapters or parts of chapters, I have occasionally repeated information so that a given chapter will be less dependent on its predecessors. This may seem inelegant at times, but most students will more readily forgive repetition of something they already know than an overly terse presentation.

I have avoided early usage of bra-ket notation. I believe that simultaneous introduction of new concepts and unfamiliar notation is poor pedagogy. Bra-ket notation is used only after the ideas have had a chance to jell.

Problem solving is extremely important in acquiring an understanding of quantum chemistry. I have included a fair number of problems with hints for a few of them in Appendix 14 and answers for almost all of them in Appendix 15.

It is inevitable that one be selective in choosing topics for a book such as this. This book emphasizes ground state MO theory of molecules more than

do most introductory texts, with rather less emphasis on spectroscopy than is usual. Angular momentum is treated at a fairly elementary level at various appropriate places in the text, but it is never given a full-blown formal development using operator commutation relations. Time-dependent phenomena are not included. Thus, scattering theory is absent, although selection rules and the transition dipole are discussed in the chapter on time-independent perturbation theory. Valence-bond theory is completely absent. If I have succeeded in my effort to provide a clear and meaningful treatment of topics relevant to modern molecular orbital theory, it should not be difficult for an instructor to provide for excursions into related topics not covered in the text.

Over the years, many colleagues have been kind enough to read sections of the evolving manuscript and provide corrections and advice. I especially thank L. P. Gold and O. H. Crawford, who cheerfully bore the brunt of this task.

Finally, I would like to thank my father, Wesley G. Lowe, for allowing me to include his sonnet, "The Molecular Challenge."

**QUANTUM CHEMISTRY**



# CONTENTS

## PREFACE

xv

### *Chapter 1*   **Classical Waves and the Time-Independent Schrödinger Wave Equation**

1-1	Introduction	1
1-2	Waves	1
1-3	The Classical Wave Equation	5
1-4	Standing Waves in a Clamped String	7
1-5	Light as an Electromagnetic Wave	9
1-6	The Photoelectric Effect	11
1-7	The Wave Nature of Matter	15
1-8	A Diffraction Experiment with Electrons	16
1-9	Schrödinger's Time-Independent Wave Equation	19
1-10	Conditions on $\psi$	21
1-11	Some Insight into the Schrödinger Equation	23
1-12	Summary	23
	Problems	24

### *Chapter 2*   **Quantum Mechanics of Some Simple Systems**

2-1	The Particle in a One-Dimensional "Box"	27
2-2	Detailed Examination of Particle-in-a-Box Solutions	30
2-3	The Particle in a One-Dimensional "Box" with One Finite Wall	38
2-4	The Particle in an Infinite "Box" with a Finite Central Barrier	44
2-5	The Free Particle in One Dimension	49
2-6	The Particle in a Ring of Constant Potential	50
2-7	The Particle in a Three-Dimensional Box: Separation of Variables	52
2-8	Summary	56
	Problems	57
	Reference	59

### *Chapter 3*   **The One-Dimensional Harmonic Oscillator**

3-1	Introduction	60
3-2	Some Characteristics of the Classical One-Dimensional Harmonic Oscillator	60
		ix

3-3	The Quantum-Mechanical Harmonic Oscillator	63
3-4	Solution of the Harmonic Oscillator Schrödinger Equation	65
3-5	Quantum-Mechanical Average Value of the Potential Energy Problems	73 74

## **Chapter 4 The Hydrogenlike Ion**

4-1	The Schrödinger Equation and the Nature of Its Solutions	76
4-2	Separation of Variables	92
4-3	Solution of the $R$ , $\Theta$ , and $\Phi$ Equations	93
4-4	Atomic Units	96
4-5	Angular Momentum and Spherical Harmonics	97
4-6	Summary	103
	Problems	104
	References	106

## **Chapter 5 Many-Electron Atoms**

5-1	The Independent Electron Approximation	107
5-2	Simple Products and Electron Exchange Symmetry	109
5-3	Electron Spin and the Exclusion Principle	112
5-4	Slater Determinants and the Pauli Principle	117
5-5	Singlet and Triplet States for the $1s2s$ Configuration of Helium	119
5-6	The Self-Consistent Field, Slater-Type Orbitals, and the Aufbau Principle	127
	Problems	132
	References	134

## **Chapter 6 Postulates and Theorems of Quantum Mechanics**

6-1	Introduction	135
6-2	The Wavefunction Postulate	135
6-3	The Postulate for Constructing Operators	136
6-4	The Time-Dependent Schrödinger Equation Postulate	137
6-5	The Postulate Relating Measured Values to Eigenvalues	138
6-6	The Postulate for Average Values	139
6-7	Hermitian Operators	140
6-8	Proof That Eigenvalues of Hermitian Operators Are Real	141
6-9	Proof That Eigenfunctions of an Hermitian Operator Form an Orthonormal Set	142
6-10	Proof That Commuting Operators Have Simultaneous Eigenfunctions	143
6-11	Completeness of Eigenfunctions of an Hermitian Operator	144
6-12	The Variation Principle	145
6-13	Measurement, Commutators, and Uncertainty	146
6-14	Summary	147
	Problems	148
	References	149

**Chapter 7 The Variation Method**

7-1	The Spirit of the Method	150
7-2	Nonlinear Variation: The Hydrogen Atom	151
7-3	Nonlinear Variation: The Helium Atom	155
7-4	Linear Variation: The Polarizability of the Hydrogen Atom	157
7-5	Linear Combination of Atomic Orbitals: The $\text{H}_2^+$ Molecule-Ion	167
7-6	Molecular Orbitals of Homonuclear Diatomic Molecules	181
7-7	Basis Set Choice and the Variational Wavefunction	192
7-8	Beyond the Orbital Approximation	195
	Problems	197
	References	200

**Chapter 8 The Simple Hückel Method and Applications**

8-1	The Importance of Symmetry	202
8-2	The Assumption of $\sigma$ - $\pi$ Separability	202
8-3	The Independent $\pi$ -Electron Assumption	204
8-4	Setting up the Hückel Determinant	205
8-5	Solving the HMO Determinantal Equation for Orbital Energies	209
8-6	Solving for the Molecular Orbitals	209
8-7	The Cyclopropenyl System: Handling Degeneracies	211
8-8	Charge Distributions from HMOs	214
8-9	Some Simplifying Generalizations	217
8-10	HMO Calculations on Some Simple Molecules	222
8-11	Summary: The Simple HMO Method for Hydrocarbons	227
8-12	Relation between Bond Order and Bond Length	228
8-13	$\pi$ -Electron Densities and Electron Spin Resonance Hyperfine Splitting	
	Constants	231
8-14	Orbital Energies and Oxidation-Reduction Potentials	234
8-15	Orbital Energies and Ionization Potentials	236
8-16	$\pi$ -Electron Energy and Aromaticity	239
8-17	Extension to Heteroatomic Molecules	245
8-18	Self-Consistent Variations of $\alpha$ and $\beta$	248
8-19	HMO Reaction Indices	250
8-20	Conclusions	257
	Problems	258
	References	266

**Chapter 9 Matrix Formulation of the Linear Variation Method**

9-1	Introduction	267
9-2	Matrices and Vectors	267
9-3	Matrix Formulation of the Linear Variation Method	275
9-4	Solving the Matrix Equation	277
9-5	Summary	280
	Problems	280
	References	282

## Chapter 10 The Extended Hückel Method

10-1	The Extended Hückel Method	283
10-2	Mulliken Populations	295
10-3	Extended Hückel Energies and Mulliken Populations	298
10-4	Extended Hückel Energies and Experimental Energies	301
	Problems	304
	References	308

## Chapter 11 The SCF-LCAO-MO Method and Extensions

11-1	<i>Ab Initio</i> Calculations	309
11-2	The Molecular Hamiltonian	310
11-3	The Form of the Wavefunction	310
11-4	The Nature of the Basis Set	311
11-5	The LCAO-MO-SCF Equation	311
11-6	Interpretation of the LCAO-MO-SCF Eigenvalues	313
11-7	The SCF Total Electronic Energy	314
11-8	Basis Sets	315
11-9	The Hartree-Fock Limit	318
11-10	Correlation Energy	319
11-11	Koopmans' Theorem	320
11-12	Configuration Interaction	322
11-13	Examples of <i>Ab Initio</i> Calculations	328
11-14	Approximate SCF-MO Methods	342
	Problems	344
	References	345

## Chapter 12 Time-Independent Rayleigh-Schrödinger Perturbation Theory

12-1	An Introductory Example	347
12-2	Formal Development of the Theory for Nondegenerate States	347
12-3	A Uniform Electrostatic Perturbation of an Electron in a "Wire"	352
12-4	The Ground-State Energy to First Order of Heliumlike Systems	359
12-5	Perturbation at an Atom in the Simple Hückel MO Method	361
12-6	Perturbation Theory for a Degenerate State	364
12-7	Polarizability of the Hydrogen Atom in the $n = 2$ States	365
12-8	Interaction between Two Orbitals: An Important Chemical Model	368
12-9	Connection between Time-Independent Perturbation Theory and Spectroscopic Selection Rules	371
	Problems	374
	References	380

## Chapter 13 Group Theory

13-1	Introduction	381
13-2	An Elementary Example	381

13-3	Symmetry Point Groups	383
13-4	The Concept of Class	386
13-5	Symmetry Elements and Their Notation	389
13-6	Identifying the Point Group of a Molecule	395
13-7	Representations for Groups	396
13-8	Generating Representations from Basis Functions	399
13-9	Labels for Representations	405
13-10	Some Connections between the Representation Table and Molecular Orbitals	406
13-11	Representations for Cyclic and Related Groups	408
13-12	Orthogonality in Irreducible Inequivalent Representations	411
13-13	Characters and Character Tables	413
13-14	Using Characters to Resolve Reducible Representations	417
13-15	Identifying Molecular Orbital Symmetries	418
13-16	Determining in Which Molecular Orbital an Atomic Orbital Will Appear	421
13-17	Generating Symmetry Orbitals	422
13-18	Hybrid Orbitals and Localized Orbitals	425
13-19	Symmetry and Integration	428
	Problems	431
	References	436

## *Chapter 14 Qualitative Molecular Orbital Theory*

14-1	The Need for a Qualitative Theory	437
14-2	Hierarchy in Molecular Structure and in Molecular Orbitals	437
14-3	$H_2^+$ Revisited	438
14-4	$H_2$ : Comparisons with $H_2^+$	441
14-5	Rules for Qualitative Molecular Orbital Theory	443
14-6	Application of QMOT Rules to Homonuclear Diatomic Molecules	444
14-7	Shapes of Polyatomic Molecules: Walsh Diagrams	447
14-8	Frontier Orbitals	461
14-9	Qualitative Molecular Orbital Theory of Reactions	464
	Problems	480
	References	482

<i>Appendix 1</i>	<b>Useful Integrals</b>	483
-------------------	-------------------------	-----

<i>Appendix 2</i>	<b>Determinants</b>	485
-------------------	---------------------	-----

<i>Appendix 3</i>	<b>Evaluation of the Coulomb Repulsion Integral over 1s AOs</b>	488
-------------------	---	-----

<i>Appendix 4</i>	<b>Some Characteristics of Solutions of the Linear Variation Procedure</b>	493
-------------------	--	-----

<i>Appendix 5</i>	<b>The Pairing Theorem</b>	498
<i>Appendix 6</i>	<b>Hückel Molecular Orbital Energies, Coefficients, Electron Densities, and Bond Orders for Some Simple Molecules</b>	500
<i>Appendix 7</i>	<b>Derivation of the Hartree–Fock Equation</b>	509
<i>Appendix 8</i>	<b>The Virial Theorem for Atoms and Diatomic Molecules</b>	520
<i>Appendix 9</i>	<b>Details of the Solution of the Matrix Equation <math>HC=SCE</math></b>	525
<i>Appendix 10</i>	<b>Computer Program Listings</b>	538
<i>Appendix 11</i>	<b>Bra–Ket Notation</b>	552
<i>Appendix 12</i>	<b>Values of Some Useful Constants and Conversion Factors</b>	554
<i>Appendix 13</i>	<b>Group Theoretical Charts and Tables</b>	558
<i>Appendix 14</i>	<b>Hints for Solving Selected Problems</b>	572
<i>Appendix 15</i>	<b>Answers to Selected Problems</b>	574
	<b>INDEX</b>	595

## CHAPTER 1

# CLASSICAL WAVES AND THE TIME-INDEPENDENT SCHRÖDINGER WAVE EQUATION

### 1-1 Introduction

The application of quantum-mechanical principles to chemical problems has revolutionized the field of chemistry. Today our understanding of chemical bonding, spectral phenomena, molecular reactivities, and various other fundamental chemical problems rests heavily on our knowledge of the detailed behavior of electrons in atoms and molecules. In this book we shall describe in detail some of the basic principles, methods, and results of quantum chemistry that lead to our understanding of electron behavior.

In the first few chapters we shall discuss some simple, but important, particle systems. This will allow us to introduce many basic concepts and definitions in a fairly physical way. Thus, some background will be prepared for the more formal general development of Chapter 6. In this first chapter, we review briefly some of the concepts of classical physics as well as some early indications that classical physics is not sufficient to explain all phenomena. (Those readers who are already familiar with the physics of classical waves and with early atomic physics may prefer to jump ahead to Section 1-7.)

### 1-2 Waves

#### A. *Traveling Waves*

A very simple example of a traveling wave is provided by cracking a whip. A pulse of energy is imparted to the whipcord by a single oscillation of the handle. This results in a wave which travels down the cord, transferring the energy to the "popper" at the end of the whip. In Fig. 1-1, an idealization of the process is sketched. The shape of the disturbance in the whip is called the *wave profile* and is usually symbolized  $\psi(x)$ . The wave profile for the traveling wave in Fig. 1-1 shows where the energy is located at a given instant. It also contains the information needed to tell how much energy is being transmitted,

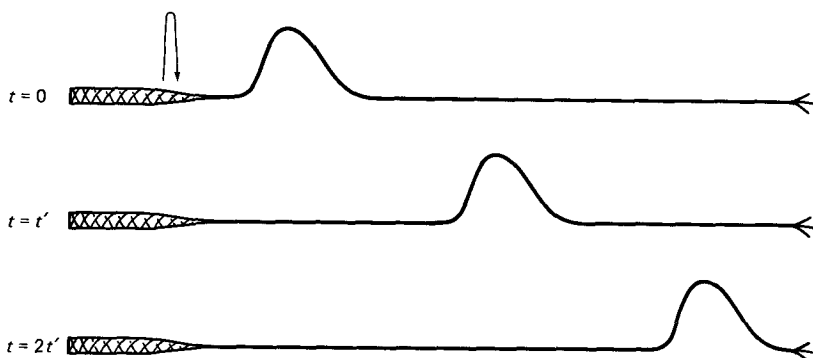


FIG. 1-1 Cracking the whip. As time passes, the disturbance moves from left to right along the extended whip cord. Each segment of the cord oscillates up and down as the disturbance passes by, ultimately returning to its equilibrium position.

because the height and shape of the wave reflect the vigor with which the handle was oscillated.

The feature common to all traveling waves in classical physics is that energy is transmitted through a medium. The medium itself undergoes no permanent displacement; it merely undergoes local oscillations as the disturbance passes through.

One of the most important kinds of wave in physics is the *harmonic* wave, for which the wave profile is a sinusoidal function. A harmonic wave, at a particular instant in time, is sketched in Fig. 1-2. The maximum displacement of the wave from the rest position is the *amplitude* of the wave, and the *wavelength*  $\lambda$  is the distance required to enclose one complete oscillation. Such a wave would result from a harmonic<sup>1</sup> oscillation at one end of a taut string. Analogous waves would be produced on the surface of a quiet pool by a vibrating bob, or in air by a vibrating tuning fork.

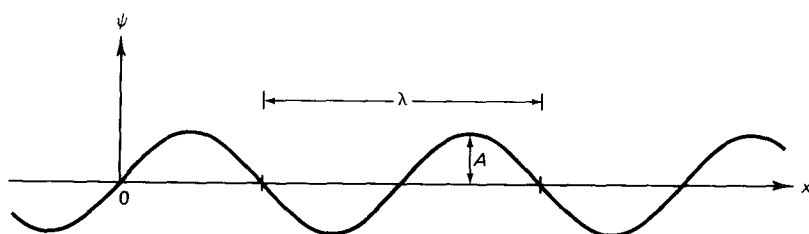


FIG. 1-2 A harmonic wave at a particular instant in time.  $A$  is the amplitude and  $\lambda$  is the wavelength.

At the instant depicted in Fig. 1-2, the profile is described by the function

$$\psi(x) = A \sin(2\pi x/\lambda) \quad (1-1)$$

<sup>1</sup> A harmonic oscillation is one whose equation of motion has a sine or cosine dependence on time.



( $\psi = 0$  when  $x = 0$ , and the argument of the sine function goes from 0 to  $2\pi$ , encompassing one complete oscillation as  $x$  goes from 0 to  $\lambda$ .) Let us suppose that the situation in Fig. 1-2 pertains at the time  $t = 0$ , and let the velocity of the disturbance through the medium be  $c$ . Then, after time  $t$ , the distance traveled is  $ct$ , the profile is shifted to the right by  $ct$  and is now given by

$$\Psi(x, t) = A \sin[(2\pi/\lambda)(x - ct)] \quad (1-2)$$

A capital  $\Psi$  is used to distinguish the time-dependent function (1-2) from the time-independent function (1-1).

The *frequency*  $\nu$  of a wave is the number of individual repeating wave units passing a point per unit time. For our harmonic wave, this is the distance traveled in unit time  $c$  divided by the length of a wave unit  $\lambda$ . Hence,

$$\nu = c/\lambda \quad (1-3)$$

Note that the wave described by the formula

$$\Psi'(x, t) = A \sin[(2\pi/\lambda)(x - ct) + \epsilon] \quad (1-4)$$

is similar to  $\Psi$  of Eq. (1-2) except for being displaced. If we compare the two waves at the same instant in time, we find  $\Psi'$  to be shifted to the left of  $\Psi$  by  $\epsilon\lambda/2\pi$ . If  $\epsilon = \pi, 3\pi, \dots$ , then  $\Psi'$  is shifted by  $\lambda/2, 3\lambda/2, \dots$  and the two functions are said to be exactly out of phase. If  $\epsilon = 2\pi, 4\pi, \dots$ , the shift is by  $\lambda, 2\lambda, \dots$ , and the two waves are exactly in phase.  $\epsilon$  is the *phase factor* for  $\Psi'$  relative to  $\Psi$ . Alternatively, we can compare the two waves at the same point in  $x$ , in which case the phase factor causes the two waves to be displaced from each other in time.

### B. Standing Waves

In problems of physical interest, the medium is usually subject to constraints. For example, a string will have ends, and these may be clamped, as in a violin, so that they cannot oscillate when the disturbance reaches them. Under such circumstances, the energy pulse is unable to progress further. It cannot be absorbed by the clamping mechanism if it is perfectly rigid, and it has no choice but to travel back along the string in the opposite direction. The reflected wave is now moving into the face of the primary wave, and the motion of the string is in response to the demands placed on it by the two simultaneous waves:

$$\Psi(x, t) = \Psi_{\text{primary}}(x, t) + \Psi_{\text{reflected}}(x, t) \quad (1-5)$$

When the primary and reflected waves have the same amplitude and speed, we can write

$$\begin{aligned} \Psi(x, t) &= A \sin[(2\pi/\lambda)(x - ct)] + A \sin[(2\pi/\lambda)(x + ct)] \\ &= 2A \sin(2\pi x/\lambda) \cos(2\pi ct/\lambda) \end{aligned} \quad (1-6)$$