LONE PAIRS IN ORGANIC MOLECULES: ENERGETIC AND ORIENTATIONAL NON-EQUIVALENCE

STEREOCHEMICAL CONSEQUENCES

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IhTRODUCTION

The *energetic non-equivalence of lone pairs*

The **conventional pictwe** of the lone pairs of water or hydrogen fluoride is one with two (or three) localized orbitals pointing in tetrahedral directions on the oxygen or fluorine atom (Fig 1). These localized sp' hybrid lone pairs give the proper total electron density of each molecule. They are therefore extremely convenient in discussing electrostatic properties such as dipole moments, H- bonding, etc.

Fig I. Equivalent, tetrahedral lone-pairs.

However, it has been known for a long time' that the four lone-pair electrons of water, or the six lone-pair electrons of fluorine, are not equivalent. In both water² and hydrogen fluoride³ there are two different potentials for the ionization of lone-pair electrons. Each ionization limit terminates a series of Rydberg excitations.² This energetic non*equivalence* of lone-pairs has long been confirmed by molecular orbital calculations. In OH₂ there is a relatively deep σ lone-pair orbital and a high-lying π lone pair-orbital.⁴ In hydrogen fluoride there is also a low-lying σ lone-pair and two degenerate π lone-pairs.' These energetically non-equivalent lone-pair orbitals are shown in Fig 2. The energy difference between π and σ lone-pairs is 2.1 eV in water $2a$ and $4 eV$ in hydrogen fluoride.³

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The non-equivalence of lone-pairs is an important factor, not only in spectroscopy, but also for *any property which involves interactions between lone pairs and other components (bonds, etc) of the molecule.* When, for instance, a lone-pair orbital interacts with an empty bond orbital, the *energy gap* between the interacting orbitals is a crucial factor;[†] therefore π lone pairs should interact more efficiently. Thus it is essential to distinguish between σ and π lone pairs in studying conformational preferences.

The directional non-equivalence of lone pairs

Separate consideration of σ and π lone-pair orbitals from the energetic viewpoint requires that we also assign to each lone pair the proper σ and π directions, rather than the conventional tetrahedral directions. It is convenient, in fact, to label the lone pairs according to their local σ and π character and to their orientation. For ether 0 or thio-ether S, the labels σ and π are sufficiently explicity. For halogens the directions of the two π -type lone pairs must be distinguished: an additional directional label is useful. These labels, some of which were first introduced by Jorgensen and Salem,⁶ are

Fig 2. Energetically non-equivalent lone-pairs in OH, and FH.

tThe Laboratoire de Chimie Theorique is also part of the Laboratoire de Physico-Chimie des Rayonnements, associated with the CNRS.

^{\$}This is a well-known result of perturbation theory.

shown in Fig 3 on the model systems fluoromethane and fluorocyclohexane. In the acyclic case the labels are the same as those commonly used for a methylene group which would be placed at the position of the lone-pair orbital: π *bisected* and π *eclipsed.* In cyclic molecules the label first involves, if necessary, the nature, a (axial) or e (equatorial) of the halogen. Then the π -type lone pairs are distinguished as *peri, if* they are parallel to the periphery of the ring, or hemi, if they are directed along the major ring diagonal which bissects the ring. Thus the equatorial peri lone pair will be labelled (e) peri. The σ -type lone pairs are labelled respectively (a) σ or (e) σ .

We will now show how the energetic and directional non-equivalence of lone pairs can be applied to the interpretation of conformational properties. We first consider a simple model case which allows us to classify the different types of interaction and their electronic consequences.

The $XCH - F$ molecule

Interactions involving the *fluorine lone pairs. The* pioneering attempt at quantitative analysis of the interaction between a lone pair p orbital and an empty, low-lying CX bond orbital, is probably that of Lucken.' Here we present a qualitative analysis of the interactions in $\overline{XCH_2F}$, which draws heavily on that for hyperconjugation in $XCH_z-CH₂$ an-
ions.⁸ Consider first the nonsubstituted nonsubstituted fluoromethane molecule. The eclipsed and bisected π lone pairs of fluorine can each interact with a filled π_{CH} , and an empty π_{CH}^* , orbital on the methyl group.⁶ The first interaction is 4-electron destabilizing while the second interaction is 2-electron stabilizing. If the hydrogen atom in the symmetry plane is replaced by a substituent X in such a

manner as to preserve the plane of symmetry $(X=halogen, CH₃, C=R$ eclipsed with F, etc), these interactions are modified in the following manner (Fig 4).

(1) First the *change* **in electronegativity** due to the substitution $H \rightarrow X$ modifies the energy of the in-plane π_{CH_3} , $\pi_{CH_3}^*$ orbitals which have a significant amplitude on the hydrogen atom which is substituted. If X is more electronegative than H, both these orbitals are lowered. These are precisely the orbitals which interact with the eclipsed lone-pair π_{ϵ} of fluorine. The 2-electron interaction between $\pi_{\rm c}$ and $\pi_{\rm CRX}^*$, which are now close in energy, tends to become predominant, all the more so because π_{CHX}^* is strongly localized on carbon.⁸ If X is more electropositive than H, the substituted methyl π orbitals rise in energy, and the 4-electron interaction between π_c and $\pi_{\text{CH-}x}$ now predominates, both because of the small energy gap and because π_{CH_2X} is mainly localized on carbon.

Thus the inductive effect of X is stabilizing for the eclipsed lone-pair of fluorine if X is electronegative, destabilizing for this same lone-pair if X is electropositive.

One consequence of the interactions involving the eclipsed lone-pair of fluorine is that it *tilts* slightly in the XCF plane,⁶ and does not remain orthogonal to the CF bond. For electropositive X the upper lobe tends to tilt toward X by 2° or 3° . The tilt occurs in the opposite direction, also by a few degrees, for electronegative $X(X = NH_1^*)$. If X is a halogen, however, the hyperconjugative effect dominates and forces the tilt toward X. Rationalization of these phenomena is under study, in collaboration with R. Hoffman.

(2) In most cases X carries additional π -type orbitals, perpendicular to the plane of symmetry,

Fig 3. Labels for **lone pairs.**

Fig 4. Orbital interactions in X-CH₂-F.

which can *conjugate* with the corresponding π_{CH} , and $\pi_{\text{CH}_2}^*$ orbitals of the central methylene group and with the bisected lone-pair orbital π_{b} of the fluorine atom. If X is a halogen atom, it brings one such π orbital with two electrons. The π framework of the $XCH₂$ moiety then becomes isoelectronic with an allyl anion. Thus the π_b lone-pair orbital interacts with three π orbitals. From the energetic point of view the major interaction should be the destabilizing interaction with the filled $2\pi_{CH_2X}$ orbital. However $2\pi_{CH_2X}$ is localized mainly on X, while the empty $3\pi_{CH_2X}$ orbital, admittedly energetically further from π_b , has a much larger amplitude on carbon. Thus both the $\pi_b \leftrightarrow 2\pi_{\text{CH-}X}$ and $\pi_b \leftrightarrow 3\pi_{\text{CH-}X}$ interactions should be considered. If on the other hand X is a C=R double bond, it adds both a π orbital and a π^* orbital and 2 electrons to the CH₂ π system. The XCH₂ moiety becomes isoelectronic with butadiene. The π_b lonepair orbital now interacts with four π orbitals. The two energetically nearest ones, first $2\pi_{CH-X}$ and then 3π _{CH}_x, have only small amplitudes on the carbon atom adjacent to fluorine. Thus it may be necessary in certain cases to include all four interactions with $\pi_{\rm b}$.

To summarize, the conjugative or "hyperconjugative" influence of X appears to include a delicate balance of destabilizing and stabilizing interactions for the bisected lone-pair of fluorine. This is true whether X **is a halogen or a double-bonded group.**

We now turn to the application of these themes to some simple conformational problems.

The CHO - $CH₂$ -F molecule

The *conformation of acyclic 3-halo ketones. t* Let us first consider how the lone pairs of fluorine interact with a carbonyl group (X=CHO). We compare the cis (0°) form and perpendicular (90") form-chosen preferentially to the 120" form because orbital effects show up more clearly—of fluoro-acetaldehyde (Fig 5). In the *cis* conformation n_b on fluorine interacts with the carbonyl π

Fig 5. **Conformations of Ruoroacetaldehyde.**

orbitals (Fig 4 (2)) while n, interacts with the lone pair on oxygen. In the perpendicular conformation the roles are essentially reversed: now n. on fluorine interacts with the carbonyl π orbitals while n_b interacts mainly with the oxygen lone pair.

Careful analysis of our *ab initio* calculations confirm that consideration must be given to the interactions between fluorine and both the carbonyl π orbitals and the oxygen lone pair.

The fist interactions are shown schematically below in Fig 6. The interaction with n_b in the *cis* conformer resembles case (2), Fig 4, for $X = C=R$. (For simplicity we have restricted consideration to $\pi_{\rm co}$ and $\pi_{\rm co}^*$, which correspond essentially to $2\pi_{CH_2X}$ and $3\pi_{CH_2X}$ in Fig 4). The interactions can be

tFor a similar interpretation of the conformation of propenes, see Ref 9.

Fig **6. Orbital interactions** in fluoroacetaldehyde.

decomposed into two effects:

(1) The $n_F \leftrightarrow \pi_{CO}$ repulsive interaction which gives two levels, one slightly above the (π, n) pair, one slightly below the (π, n) pair. The $n_b \leftrightarrow \pi_{\text{CO}}$ overlap (5.7 10⁻³) and n_e $\leftrightarrow \pi_{\text{CO}}$ overlap (1.3 10⁻²) are both very small so that there is no significant difference between the top energy levels of cis and perpendicular conformations after this first step.

(2) The $n_F \leftrightarrow \pi_{\text{co}}^*$ attractive interaction, which can be considered to operate between $\pi_{\rm co}^*$ and the newly formed slightly antibonding combination of $\pi_{\rm co}$ and $\pi_{\rm F}$ which is thereby lowered (dotted arrows). Since the energy gap is the same in both conformations, the relative strength of this interaction in the two conformers depends on the relative overlaps π_{co}^* , n_b and π_{co}^* , n_e . These overlaps are very different, as the reader will easily convince himself by examining a model and by remembering that π_{co}^{*} is essentially localized on the carbon atom. The difference is illustrated below (Fig 7). The net result of the differential overlap illustrated in Fig 7 is a much larger stabilization by π_{co}^{*} of the two top electrons in the perpendicular conformation. One can speak loosely of a "superjacent"^{10,8b} interaction between a non-bonding pair and a low-lying empty orbital as providing a stabilization

to the perpendicular form. An equivalent viewpoint is to speak of donation from fluorine into the carbonyl group, or simply of hyperconjugation.

The other interactions, which are not illustrated in Fig 6, are:

(3) The $n_{o} \leftrightarrow n_{e}$ (*cis*) or $n_{o} \leftrightarrow n_{b}$ (perpendicular) through-space lone pair \leftrightarrow lone pair repulsion. The relevant overlaps are very similar in the two conformations. Neither conformation seems to be favored by this effect.

(4) The interaction $n_{o} \leftrightarrow n_{e}$ through bond,¹¹ via the CC σ and CC σ^* orbitals. As shown qualitatively by Epiotis, $9c,12+$ this through-bond interaction favors the *cis* conformation.

The relative energy of the two conformations will be determined by a balance between effect (2) -favoring perpendicular—and effect (4)—favoring *cis. Ab* initio calculations indicate cis-fluoroacetaldehyde to be 0.76 Kcal/mole more stable than the perpendicular form (in acetaldehyde this energy difference is calculated to be 0.54 Kcal/mole). Gauche (120°) fluoroacetaldehyde, however, is calculated to be 0.04 Kcal/mole below the *cis* form.

For experimental energy differences in chloroand bromo-acetaldehyde (see Ref 13).

The trend in relative energies, however, as

Fig 7. Comparison of overlaps between fluorine lone-pair and carbonyl $\pi_{\rm co}^*$ orbital.

fluorine is replaced by a more electronegative halogen atom, should be essentially determined by teractions, since n_a is essentially orthogonal to σ_{cc} and the variation of the superjacent interaction (2). As σ_{cc}^* . Epiotis' mechanism assumes that the conformation
it the logical principal energy rises in the series industries in the logical childrine, bromine, iodine, etc the stabilization of stabilization *nia* **interaction with u.* and that this stabil-** the perpendicular and *gauche* forms is expected to **ization more than** *compensates* **for its larger initial repul-** increase via a smaller energy gap. As concerns

There is no contribution from n_n to through-bond interactions, since n_s is essentially orthogonal to σ_{cc} and

with the larger through-space splitting gains the larger sion energy. Here the $n_0 \leftrightarrow n_2$ overlap is larger in the cis form. are expected to increase in parallel fashion, but

with little differential effect, particularly because of the high energy of σ_{cc}^* .

The 2-fluoro-cyclohexanone molecule

The conformation of cyclic *haloketones."* **Let us** now consider how the previous situation is modified in a cyclic ketone such as cyclohexanone. **We** compare the cyclohexanone equatorially substituted by a fluorine atom (1) to that axially substituted by a fluorine atom **(2).** Conformation 1 is analogous to the cis acyclic conformation, while 2 corresponds to the perpendicular acyclic conformation.

Fig 8. Conformations of fluoro- l-cyclohexanone.

The dotted lines on fluorine indicate the direction of the "peri" and "hemi" lone pairs—before interaction with the carbonyl group. Similarly the dotted line on the carbonyl carbon atom indicates the direction of the $\pi\xi_0$ orbital. Clearly in 2 the *peri* lone-pair orbital of the halogen points directly at, and comes very close to. this empty carbonyl orbital.[†] With a much larger n_F , π_{co}^* overlap (Fig 9) **the** superjacent stabilization of the fluorine lone**pair** should be significantly larger in 2 than in I. In other words there is better donation from fluorine into the empty orbital of the carbonyl group. The effect, and the corresponding *axial* preference for the halogen competing with its natural equatorial preference should increase **in the series F, Cl, Br, I,** as has indeed been observed by Cantacuzène.¹⁴ The electronegative substituents **in pyranose rings. Altona suggested'6 that donation from the axial lone pair of the ring oxygen into the C,X antibonding orbital stabilizes the axial conformation. It can be shown" that, if due account is made for the different energies of the two oxygen lone pairs,** their interaction with the low-lying σ_{cx}^* orbitals **leads naturally to the preference for an axial X ligand.**

The two competing conformations are shown below (Fig 10) together with a Newman projection showing the relative orientation of oxygen lonepairs. Restricting ourselves to the superjacent interactions between the two oxygen lone-pairs and the empty σ_{cx}^* and σ_{CH}^* orbitals, we obtain the in**teraction diagrams of Fig 11. Since calculations**

Fig 9. Comparison of overlaps between fluorine lone-pairs and carbonyl π^* orbital.

tIn fact π_{∞}^* points in between n_{pert} and n_{b} of the show the overlaps involved for n_{π} in both confor-
 outing atom By analogy with the acyclic cases one can mations to be very similar (also for n

previously offered explanation¹⁴ for this effectdonation from the σ_{CF} orbital into the π_{CO}^* orbital, although related, seems less likely because of the very low energy of the σ_{CF} bond orbital and the much larger energy gap with π_{co}^* .

The *I-chloro tetrahydropyran molecule*

The anomeric effet. In this section we present a case where the energetic non-equivalence of the two oxygen lone-pairs, in a ring, leads to conformational preference for an electronegative substituent on carbon adjacent to the oxygen. The *anomeric effect*¹⁵ is the preference of axial over equatorial C_1

> – hemi peri

fluorine atom. By analogy with the acyclic cases, one can *mations to be very similar (also for n_o)***, the most**
construct an eclipsed combination of the peri and hemi stabilizing interactions are those with the smallest construct an eclipsed combination of **the peri and hemi stabilizing interactions are those with the smallest** lone pairs which is directed, along the CC bond, right at the π_{∞}^{*} lobe. π_{∞}^{*} lobe. π_{∞}^{*} axial case, with one small gap and one large gap,

Fig 10. Conformations of 1-substituted tetrahydropy-
rans.

electron-electron repulsions,? or subtle balances between electron-electron repulsion and nuclearelectron attraction." The "superiacent" effect studied here finds its basis on undisputed photoelectron spectroscopic results which prove the energetic non-equivalence of ether and halogen lone-pairs. The application of this non-equivalence to preferential interactions with low-lying empty orbitals on neighboring groups has been shown here to allow at least a consistent interpretation of various conformational problems.

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Fig 11. Comparison of superjacent interactions in halo-substituted pyranose rings. (Left: X axial; right: X equatorial)

has a larger stabilization than the X-equatorial case. The order of magnitude calculated¹⁰ for the differential stabilization (3 kcal/mole) compares well with the experimental energy difference (2.7 kcal/mole)'⁶⁰ for X=Cl. The decrease in confor mational preference with increasing solvent polarity is nicely interpreted here by an increase in the energy gaps due to a lowering of the oxygen lonepair levels.

CONCLUSIONS

It is clear that we have singled out one phenomenon, namely the *2-electron* stabilizing interaction between energetically and orientationally *nonequivalent lone-pairs and neighboring low-lying empty orbitals.* In a few cases we have also invoked the 4-electron exclusion repulsion with filled adjacent orbitals. Other effects certainly intervene in conformational dipole-dipole interactions, steric interactions,

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tit has not always been clearly stated in the literature as to whether electron-electron interactions, postulated in the interpretation of conformational preferences, are purely Coulomb repulsions or also include exchange repulsion due to overlap between adjacent electron pairs. However Gillespie [J. Chem. *Ed 47,* 18 (1970)] did invoke the Pauli exclusion principle. Klaus Muller *[Helv. Chim.* Acta **53**, 11120 (1970)] was first to delineate clearly the exchange contribution between adjacent lone pairs which he and A. Eschenmoser labeled "conjugative destabilization".

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