

## ENERGY LANDSCAPES

The study of energy landscapes holds the key to resolving some of the most important contemporary problems in chemical physics. Many groups are now attempting to understand the properties of clusters, glasses and proteins in terms of the underlying potential energy surface. The aim of this book is to define and unify the field of energy landscapes in a reasonably self-contained exposition. This is the first book to cover this active field. The book begins with an overview of each area in an attempt to make the subject matter accessible to workers in different disciplines. The basic theoretical groundwork for describing and exploring energy landscapes is then introduced, followed by applications to clusters, biomolecules and glasses in the final three chapters. Beautifully illustrated in full colour throughout, the book is aimed at graduate students and workers in the field.

DAVID J. WALES was awarded his B.A. degree and the Norrish Prize for Chemistry by Cambridge University in 1985, and gained his Ph.D. from the same institution in 1988. During 1989 he worked with Professor R. S. Berry at the University of Chicago as a Lindemann Trust Fellow, before returning to a research fellowship at Downing College, Cambridge in 1990. He subsequently held a Lloyd's of London tercentenary fellowship and a Royal Society research fellowship before being appointed to a lectureship in Cambridge in 1998. He was awarded the Meldola Medal of the Royal Society of Chemistry in 1993, and was elected a fellow of the Society in 2001. His research interests are mostly concerned with energy landscapes, incorporating a broad range of topics in chemical physics.

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Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-81415-7 - Energy Landscapes  
David J. Wales  
Frontmatter  
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Cambridge University Press  
 978-0-521-81415-7 - Energy Landscapes  
 David J. Wales  
 Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
 The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK  
 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA  
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
 Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain  
 Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

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First published 2003

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

*Typeface* Computer Modern 11/14 pt    *System* L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X 2<sub>ε</sub> [TB]

*A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*  
 Wales, David J.

Energy landscapes / David J. Wales.  
 p.    cm. – (Cambridge molecular science)  
 Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0 521 81415 4

1. Potential energy surfaces.    I. Title.    II. Series.  
 QD462.6.P64W35    2003  
 541.2'8 – dc21    2003053071

ISBN 0 521 81415 4 hardback

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The publisher has used its best endeavours to ensure that the URLs for external websites referred to in this book are correct and active at the time of going to press. However, the publisher has no responsibility for the websites and can make no guarantee that a site will remain live or that the content is or will remain appropriate.

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## Preface

The motivation for writing this book was to produce a unified and reasonably self-contained account of how potential energy and free energy surfaces are used to study clusters, biomolecules, glasses and supercooled liquids. Making connections between these different fields, where the same ideas frequently resurface in different guises, will hopefully assist future research and interdisciplinary communication.

While this is essentially a theoretical book, I have tried to provide sufficient background information and references to experiments to put the objectives in a proper context. Readers are assumed to be familiar with the basic ideas of quantum mechanics, statistical mechanics and point group symmetry. Most other derivations are treated in sufficient detail to make them accessible to nonspecialists, graduate students and advanced undergraduates. A number of more peripheral topics are covered at an introductory level to provide pointers to further reading.

Some of this material has formed the basis of lecture courses on the subject of energy landscapes delivered to students at Cambridge and Harvard Universities, and at Les Houches Summer Schools, although it has all been rewritten in the current endeavour. I am particularly grateful to all the people who read initial drafts, and helped me to prepare figures.

No molecules were harmed in the writing of this book, although a number underwent significant rearrangements.