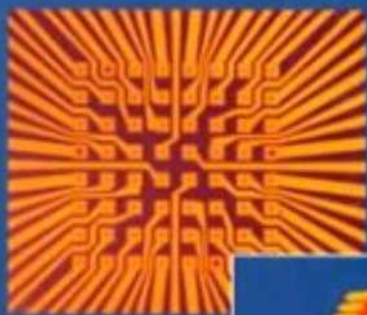


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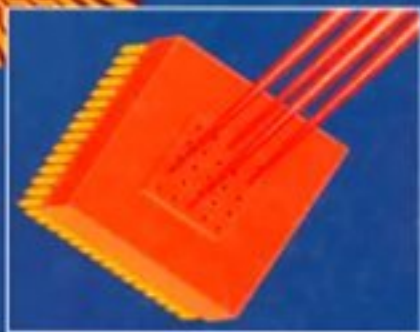


Joseph T. Verdeyen

PRENTICE HALL SERIES IN SOLID STATE PHYSICAL ELECTRONICS
Nick Holonyak, Jr., Series Editor

LASER ELECTRONICS

THIRD EDITION



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Laser Electronics

THIRD EDITION

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Nick Holonyak, Jr., Series Editor



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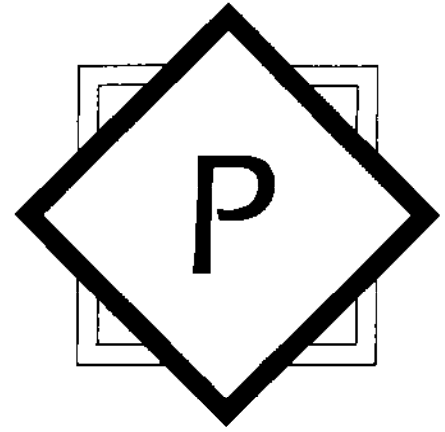
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*This book is dedicated to Katie,
my wife, constant companion, and best friend
for 40 years of marriage and courtship.
She is the loving mother of my children Mary, Joe, Jean, and Mike,
an exciting grandmother to their children,
and an understanding mother-in-law to Dennis, Pam, Jim, and Tammy.
She has demonstrated incredible patience and understanding
with the rather painful process of revising this book while maintaining
a most pleasant, cheerful and comforting home.
From my perspective, our marriage has had a storybook characteristic to it
with my love for her increasing daily.
With her enthusiasm, example, and love, it is easy to learn
to love God, to love our neighbors, and to keep His commandments.
Thank you honey for my life!*



Preface

The underlying philosophy of this third edition of *Laser Electronics* is the same as in the previous two: lasers are very simple devices and are far simpler than the very complicated high frequency RF or microwave transistor circuits. The main purpose of the book is to convince the student of this fact. In one sense, lasers are a simple movement of the decimal point on the frequency scale three to five places to the right, but much of the terminology and all of the insight developed by the earlier pioneers of radio have been translated to the optical domain.

The potential of the many applications of lasers and optical phenomena has necessitated the formation of a new word to describe the field: *photonics*. One would be hard pressed to define all of its ramifications since new ideas, devices, and applications are frequently being added. In a very loose sort of way, the early history of radio is being repeated in the optical frequency domain, and this is a theme that will be employed throughout the book. Although both have a common basis in electromagnetic theory, there are special phenomena peculiar to the optical wavelengths.

For instance, a wave intensity of 10^{15} – 10^{19} watts/m² would have been incomprehensible in 1960, but is now attainable with rather common lasers and comparatively cheap optics. Similarly, a 50 femtoseconds (50×10^{-15} s) pulse requires more frequency bandwidth for transmission than that which was installed in all of the telecommunications networks of 1960. Yet such a pulse is rather common with optical techniques.

The ability to generate such short pulses and transmit them over significant distances (many hundreds of kilometers) by using low loss fibers and erbium-doped fiber

amplifiers (EDFA) was a major impetus for the revisions incorporated into this third edition.

Chapter 4 has been changed to emphasize some of the more sophisticated aspects of guided wave propagation, such as dispersion in fibers, solitons, and perturbation theory. By necessity, the chapter is an introduction intended to encourage further investigation. While those are important topics for a communication system, they may be too involved for a first course in lasers. Thus, the entire chapter can be skipped if the focus of the course is on the *generation* portion of photonics.

Chapter 9 has been rewritten and reorganized to emphasize the dynamics of the laser: the approach to CW oscillation, Q switching, and various aspects of mode locking. The latter has been greatly expanded, but, even so, there are important topics not included.

Various additions have been included in Chapter 10 on specific laser systems. The example of a semiconductor laser pumping a YAG system was carried through in some detail so as to emphasize the application of the theoretical tools developed in the previous chapters and to indicate a significant application of the semiconductor laser. The *erbium doped fiber amplifier* (EDFA) is also discussed here, and a fairly long-winded simplified “problem” (with answers) is given to emphasize some of the unique considerations of the topic and to encourage further investigation of the literature. The multiplicity of levels of the EDFA serves as an introduction to gain/absorption between bands and to tunable vibronic lasers such as alexandrite, Ti:sapphire, and dye lasers.

Much of the expansion in photonics is being led by the improvements in the semiconductor laser, which has become the dominant laser for communication and control. Its use as a pump for the fiber amplifiers and solid-state lasers has also become most important. Chapter 11 has been expanded somewhat but is still intended to be an introduction to a course devoted entirely to that laser.

Most students have a fair grasp of the beauty and elegance of electromagnetic theory but have the mistaken view that the word *photon* somehow weakens its applicability. That is unfortunate. The lowest power laser generates literally billions of photons per second, and thus the classical field description of it is quite adequate. Even when the photon flux becomes small—say 10 to 100 s^{-1} , the classical field description will handle the practical cases. Many of the advances in semiconductor lasers, in particular, can be traced to classical electromagnetic theory of guidance of the modes by the heterostructures. Chapter 12 is included to introduce the student to some of the more advanced topics, possibly to be studied in a second course.

Chapters 13 and 14 are aimed at the student who wants a gradual transition to a quantum theory of the laser while the simple theory is fresh. Chapter 14 is an attempt to provide a bridge between the simple rate equation description of a laser and the more formal quantum theory using the density matrix. The two approaches agree, precisely, for the case of a CW two-level system, but the former is much easier and more akin to the student’s background. The latter will handle the transient cases, scattering, two-photon phenomena, etc., at the expense of considerably more mathematics. The serious student should become aware of the transition between the two approaches, have confidence in both, and be aware of the pitfalls and limitations, again in a second course. One of the main conclusions is that

a simple rate equation of laser phenomena is quite adequate and accurate most of the time. A few cases that do not follow this rule are included.

Many more problems are included in this third edition with the primary purpose of convincing the student of the transparent simplicity of the rate equation approach. Rate equations are no more difficult than coupled circuit equations (or the differential equation describing the student's finances): There is always a source (a salary) and a loss (expenses) that may or may not be in steady state equilibrium.

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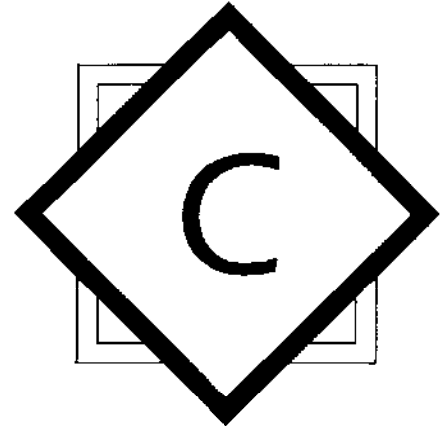
It is a pleasure to acknowledge my present and former colleagues at the University of Illinois for their help, encouragement, and many discussions of the topics included here. I am particularly grateful to: N. Holonyak, Jr., for his ability and patience in communicating his masterful insight into semiconductor electronics; to J.J. Coleman for the initial encouragement to write the book and general discussions on semiconductor materials; to T.A. DeTemple, who has been most patient and helpful with my attempt to simplify some of the topics included here; to S. Bishop for his leadership as the Director of the Microelectronics Laboratory; and to P.D. Coleman who had a significant impact on my view of electrodynamics.

I would also like to thank the reviewers: Jorge Rocca of Colorado State University, Daniel Elliott of Purdue University, Raymond Rostuk of the University of Arizona, and Sally Stevens-Tammens of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

I especially wish to thank the many students who have helped "write" and modify this book while keeping their good humor. Their enthusiasm for photonics has really been an inspiration to me. I hope that I have taught them as well as they have educated me. I am also grateful to Ms. Galena Smirnov who patiently checked much of the new material.

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Joseph T. Verdeyen



Contents

List of Symbols	xx
0 Preliminary Comments	1
Note to the students	3
References	6
1 Review of Electromagnetic Theory	8
1.1 Introduction	8
1.2 Maxwell's Equations	9
1.3 Wave Equation for Free Space	10
1.4 Algebraic Form of Maxwell's Equations	11
1.5 Waves in Dielectrics	12
1.6 The Uncertainty Relationships	13
1.7 Spreading of an Electromagnetic Beam	15

1.8	Wave Propagation in Anisotropic Media	16
1.9	Elementary Boundary Value Problems in Optics	20
	1.9.1 Snell's Law,	20
	1.9.2 Brewster's Angle,	21
1.10	Coherent Electromagnetic Radiation	23
1.11	Example of Coherence Effects	28
	Problems	31
	References and Suggested Readings	34
2	Ray Tracing in an Optical System	35
2.1	Introduction	35
2.2	Ray Matrix	35
2.3	Some Common Ray Matrices	37
2.4	Applications of Ray Tracing: Optical Cavities	39
2.5	Stability: Stability Diagram	42
2.6	The Unstable Region	44
2.7	Example of Ray Tracing in a Stable Cavity	44
2.8	Repetitive Ray Paths	47
2.9	Initial Conditions: Stable Cavities	48
2.10	Initial Conditions: Unstable Cavities	49
2.11	Astigmatism	50
2.12	Continuous Lens-Like Media	51
	2.12.1 Propagation of a Ray in an Inhomogeneous Medium,	53
	2.12.2 Ray Matrix for a Continuous Lens,	54
2.13	Wave Transformation by a Lens	56
	Problems	57
	References and Suggested Readings	62
3	Gaussian Beams	63
3.1	Introduction	63
3.2	Preliminary Ideas: TEM Waves	63
3.3	Lowest-Order TEM _{0,0} Mode	66

3.4	Physical Description of TEM _{0,0} Mode	70
	3.4.1 Amplitude of the Field,	70
	3.4.2 Longitudinal Phase Factor,	71
	3.4.3 Radial Phase Factor,	72
3.5	Higher-Order Modes	73
3.6	<i>ABCD</i> law for Gaussian beams	76
3.7	Divergence of the Higher-Order Modes: Spatial Coherence	79
	Problems	80
	References and Suggested Readings	84
4	Guided Optical Beams	86
4.1	Introduction	86
4.2	Optical Fibers and Heterostructures: A Slab Waveguide Model	87
	4.2.1 Zig-Zag Analysis,	87
	4.2.2 Numerical Aperture,	89
4.3	Modes in a Step-Index Fiber (or a Heterojunction Laser): Wave Equation Approach	90
	4.3.1 TE Mode ($E_z = 0$),	92
	4.3.2 TM Modes ($H_z = 0$),	94
	4.3.3 Graphic Solution for the Propagation Constant: “ <i>R</i> ” and “ <i>V</i> ” Parameters,	95
4.4	Gaussian Beams in Graded Index (GRIN) Fibers and Lenses	96
4.5	Perturbation Theory	102
4.6	Dispersion and Loss in Fibers: Data	105
4.7	Pulse Propagation in Dispersive Media: Theory	109
4.8	Optical Solitons	116
	Problems	122
	References and Suggested Readings	127
5	Optical Cavities	130
5.1	Introduction	130
5.2	Gaussian Beams in Simple Stable Resonators	130
5.3	Application of the <i>ABCD</i> Law to Cavities	133
5.4	Mode Volume in Stable Resonators	137

Problems	139
References and Suggested Readings	142
6 Resonant Optical Cavities	144
6.1 General Cavity Concepts	144
6.2 Resonance	144
6.3 Sharpness of Resonance: Q and Finesse	148
6.4 Photon Lifetime	151
6.5 Resonance of the Hermite-Gaussian Modes	154
6.6 Diffraction Losses	156
6.7 Cavity With Gain: An Example	157
Problems	159
References and Suggested Readings	170
7 Atomic Radiation	172
7.1 Introduction and Preliminary Ideas	172
7.2 Blackbody Radiation Theory	173
7.3 Einstein's Approach: A and B Coefficients	179
7.3.1 Definition of Radiative Processes,	179
7.3.2 Relationship Between the Coefficients,	181
7.4 Line Shape	183
7.5 Amplification by an Atomic System	187
7.6 Broadening of Spectral Lines	191
7.6.1 Homogeneous broadening mechanisms,	191
7.6.2 Inhomogeneous Broadening,	196
7.6.3 General Comments on the Line Shape,	200
7.7 Review	200
Problems	201
References and Suggested Readings	205
8 Laser Oscillation and Amplification	207
8.1 Introduction: Threshold Condition for Oscillation	207

- 8.2 Laser Oscillation and Amplification in a Homogeneous Broadened Transition 208
- 8.3 Gain Saturation in a Homogeneous Broadened Transition 212
- 8.4 Laser Oscillation in an Inhomogeneous System 223
- 8.5 Multimode Oscillation 229
- 8.6 Gain Saturation in Doppler-Broadened Transition: Mathematical Treatment 230
- 8.7 Amplified Spontaneous Emission (ASE) 234
- 8.8 Laser Oscillation: A Different Viewpoint 238
 - Problems 242
 - References and Suggested Readings 258

9 General Characteristics of Lasers

260

- 9.0 Introduction 260
- 9.1 Limiting Efficiency 260
 - 9.1.1 Factors in the efficiency, 260
 - 9.1.2 Two, 3, 4 : : : , n level lasers, 261
- 9.2 CW Laser 263
 - 9.2.1 Traveling Wave Ring Laser, 264
 - 9.2.2 Optimum Coupling, 267
 - 9.2.3 Standing Wave Lasers, 269
- 9.3 Laser Dynamics 274
 - 9.3.1 Introduction and model, 274
 - 9.3.2 Case a: A sub-threshold system, 276
 - 9.3.3 Case b: A CW laser: threshold conditions, 276
 - 9.3.4 Case c: A sinusoidal modulated pump, 277
 - 9.3.5 Case d: A sudden "step" change in excitation rate, 280
 - 9.3.6 Case e: Pulsed excitation \rightarrow gain switching, 282
- 9.4 Q Switching, Q Spoiling, or Giant Pulse Lasers 284
- 9.5 Mode Locking 296
 - 9.5.1 Preliminary considerations, 296
 - 9.5.2 Mode locking in an inhomogeneous broadened laser, 298
 - 9.5.3 Active mode locking, 304
- 9.6 Pulse Propagation in Saturable Amplifiers or Absorbers 311
- 9.7 Saturable Absorber (Colliding Pulse) Mode Locking 317

9.8	Additive-Pulse Mode Locking	322
	Problems	324
	References and Suggested Readings	344
10	Laser Excitation	347
10.1	Introduction	347
10.2	Three- and Four-Level Lasers	348
10.3	Ruby Lasers	351
10.4	Rare Earth Lasers and Amplifiers	358
	10.4.1 General Considerations,	358
	10.4.2 Nd:YAG lasers: Data,	359
	10.4.3 Nd:YAG Pumped by a Semiconductor Laser,	362
	10.4.4 Neodymium-Glass Lasers,	369
	10.4.6 Erbium-Doped-Fiber-Amplifiers,	371
10.5	Broad-Band Optical Gain	376
	10.5.1 Band-to-Band Emission and Absorption,	376
	10.5.2 Theory of Band-to-Band Emission and Absorption,	377
10.6	Tunable Lasers	385
	10.6.1 General Considerations,	385
	10.6.2 Dye Lasers,	386
	10.6.3 Tunable Solid State Lasers,	391
	10.6.4 Cavities for Tunable Lasers,	395
10.7	Gaseous-Discharge Lasers	396
	10.7.1 Overview,	396
	10.7.2 Helium-Neon Laser,	397
	10.7.3 Ion Lasers,	403
	10.7.4 CO ₂ Lasers,	405
10.8	Excimer Lasers: General Considerations	411
	10.8.1 Formation of the Excimer State,	412
	10.8.2 Excitation of the Rare Gas-Halogen Excimer Lasers,	415
10.9	Free Electron Laser	417
	Problems	423
	References and Suggested Readings	434
11	Semiconductor Lasers	440
11.1	Introduction	440

	11.1.1	Overview, 440	
	11.1.2	Populations in Semiconductor Laser, 442	
11.2		Review of Elementary Semiconductor Theory	444
	11.2.1	Density of States, 445	
11.3		Occupation Probability: Quasi-Fermi Levels	449
11.4		Optical Absorption and Gain in a Semiconductor	450
	11.4.1	Gain Coefficient in a Semiconductor, 454	
	11.4.2	Spontaneous Emission Profile, 459	
	11.4.3	An Example of an Inverted Semiconductor, 460	
11.5		Diode Laser	464
	11.5.1	Homojunction Laser, 464	
	11.5.2	Heterojunction Lasers, 467	
11.6		Quantum Size Effects	470
	11.6.1	Infinite Barriers, 470	
	11.6.2	Finite Barriers: An Example, 476	
11.7		Vertical Cavity Surface Emitting Lasers	482
11.8		Modulation of Semiconductor Lasers	486
	11.8.1	Static Characteristics, 488	
	11.8.2	Frequency Response of Diode Lasers, 489	
		Problems	492
		References and Suggested Readings	499

12 Advanced Topics in Laser Electromagnetics

502

12.1		Introduction	502
12.2		Semiconductor Cavities	503
	12.2.1	TE Modes ($E_z = 0$), 505	
	12.2.2	TM Modes ($H_z = 0$), 507	
	12.2.3	Polarization of TE and TM Modes, 508	
12.3		Gain Guiding: An Example	509
12.4		Optical Confinement and Effective Index	516
12.5		Distributed Feedback and Bragg Reflectors	517
	12.5.1	Introduction, 517	
	12.5.2	Coupled Mode Analysis, 520	
	12.5.3	Distributed Bragg Reflector, 524	
	12.5.4	A Quarter-Wave Bandpass Filter, 525	

	12.5.5	<i>Distributed Feedback Lasers (Active Mirrors)</i> , 528
	12.5.6	<i>Tunable Semiconductor Lasers</i> , 531
12.6		Unstable Resonators 534
	12.6.1	<i>General Considerations</i> , 534
	12.6.2	<i>Unstable Confocal Resonator</i> , 540
12.7		Integral Equation Approach to Cavities 543
	12.7.1	<i>Mathematical Formulation</i> , 543
	12.7.2	<i>Fox and Li Results</i> , 547
	12.7.3	<i>Stable Confocal Resonator</i> , 550
12.8		Field Analysis of Unstable Cavities 555
12.9		<i>ABCD Law for “Tapered Mirror” Cavities</i> 562
12.10		Laser Arrays 568
	12.10.1	<i>System Considerations</i> , 568
	12.10.2	<i>Semiconductor Laser Array: Physical Picture</i> , 568
	12.10.3	<i>Supermodes of the Array</i> , 570
	12.10.4	<i>Radiation Pattern</i> , 574
		Problems 574
		References and Suggested Readings 585

13 Maxwell's Equations and the “Classical” Atom

589

13.1		Introduction 589
13.2		Polarization Current 590
13.3		Wave Propagation With Active Atoms 592
13.4		The Classical A_{21} Coefficient 596
13.5		(Slater) Modes of a Laser 597
	13.5.1	<i>Slater Modes of a Lossless Cavity</i> , 598
	13.5.2	<i>Lossy Cavity With a Source</i> , 600
13.6		Dynamics of the Fields 602
	13.6.1	<i>Excitation Clamped to Zero</i> , 602
	13.6.2	<i>Time Evolution of the Field</i> , 603
13.7		Summary 609
		Problems 610
		References and Suggested Readings 615

14 Quantum Theory of the Field-Atom Interaction 616

- 14.1 Introduction 616
- 14.2 Schrödinger Description 617
- 14.3 Derivation of the Einstein Coefficients 621
- 14.4 Dynamics of an Isolated Atom 624
- 14.5 Density Matrix Approach 627
 - 14.5.1 Introduction, 627
 - 14.5.2 Definition, 628
- 14.6 Equation of Motion for the Density Matrix 633
- 14.7 Two-Level System 635
- 14.8 Steady State Polarization Current 639
- 14.9 Multilevel or Multiphoton Phenomena 643
- 14.10 Raman Effects 651
 - 14.10.1 Phenomena, 651
 - 14.10.2 A Classical Analysis of the Raman Effect., 654
 - 14.10.3 Density Matrix Description of the Raman Effect, 660
- 14.11 Propagation of Pulses: Self-Induced Transparency 665
 - 14.11.1 Motivation for the Analysis, 665
 - 14.11.2 A Self-Consistent Analysis of the Field-Atom Interaction, 666
 - 14.11.3 "Area" Theorem, 670
 - 14.11.4 Pulse Solution, 673
- Problems 676
- References and Suggested Readings 679

15 Spectroscopy of Common Lasers 681

- 15.1 Introduction 681
- 15.2 Atomic Notation 681
 - 15.2.1 Energy Levels, 681
 - 15.2.2 Transitions: Selection Rules, 682
- 15.3 Molecular Structure: Diatomic Molecules 684
 - 15.3.1 Preliminary Comments, 684
 - 15.3.2 Rotational Structure and Transitions, 685
 - 15.3.3 Thermal Distribution of the Population in Rotational States, 686
 - 15.3.4 Vibrational Structure, 687

	15.3.5	<i>Vibration-Rotational Transitions</i> , 688	
	15.3.6	<i>Relative Gain on P and R Branches: Partial and Total Inversions</i> , 689	
15.4		Electronic States in Molecules 691	
	15.4.1	<i>Notation</i> , 691	
	15.4.2	<i>The Franck-Condon Principle</i> , 692	
	15.4.3	<i>Molecular Nitrogen Lasers*</i> , 692	
		Problems 693	
		References and Suggested Readings 695	
16		Detection of Optical Radiation	697
16.1		Introduction 697	
16.2		Quantum Detectors 697	
	16.2.1	<i>Vacuum Photodiode</i> , 698	
	16.2.2	<i>Photomultiplier</i> , 699	
16.3		Solid-State Quantum Detectors 701	
	16.3.1	<i>Photoconductor</i> , 701	
	16.3.2	<i>Junction Photodiode</i> , 703	
	16.3.3	<i>p-i-n Diode</i> , 706	
	16.3.4	<i>Avalanche Photodiode</i> , 707	
16.4		Noise Considerations 707	
16.5		Mathematics of Noise 709	
16.6		Sources of Noise 713	
	16.6.1	<i>Shot Noise</i> , 713	
	16.6.2	<i>Thermal Noise</i> , 714	
	16.6.3	<i>Noise Figure of Video Amplifiers</i> , 716	
	16.6.4	<i>Background Radiation</i> , 717	
16.7		Limits of Detection Systems 718	
	16.7.1	<i>Video Detection of Photons</i> , 718	
	16.7.2	<i>Heterodyne System</i> , 722	
		Problems 725	
		References and Suggested Readings 728	
17		Gas-Discharge Phenomena	729
17.1		Introduction 729	
17.2		Terminal Characteristics 731	

17.3	Spatial Characteristics	732
17.4	Electron Gas	734
	17.4.1 Background,	734
	17.4.2 “Average” or “Typical” Electron,	734
	17.4.3 Electron Distribution Function,	741
	17.4.4 Computation of Rates,	743
	17.4.5 Computation of a Flux,	745
17.5	Ionization Balance	746
17.6	Example of Gas-Discharge Excitation of a CO ₂ Laser	748
	17.6.1 Preliminary Information,	748
	17.6.2 Experimental Detail and Results,	748
	17.6.3 Theoretical Calculations,	750
	17.6.4 Correlation Between Experiment and Theory,	753
	17.6.5 Laser-Level Excitation,	756
17.7	Electron Beam Sustained Operation	758
	Problems	761
	References and Suggested Readings	764

Appendices

I	An Introduction to Scattering Matrices	765
II	Detailed Balancing or Microscopic Reversibility	770
III	The Kramers–Kronig Relations	774
	Index	779

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