resulting descriptions represent relatively crude approximations, suitable for an introductory presentation. A more accurate picture could have been presented in the space available if some of the rather trivial details of certain derivations had been spared.

Although the author is a sophisticated writer of papers on quantum-mechanical topics, the book is most suitable as an elementary introduction for chemistry students to some major aspects of quantum chemistry.

ROBERT S. MULLIKEN University of Chicago Illinois

An Introduction to Gas Lasers: Population Inversion Mechanisms

C. S. Willett 528 pp. Pergamon, New York, 1974. \$45.00

As its title implies, this book emphasizes the basic atomic and molecular collision processes occurring in gas discharges that result in selective electronic or vibrational state excitation and lead to population inversions and lasing. The number of lasers that have been successfully operated using gasdischarge excitation is extremely large, and there is a vast literature on their characteristics. Many of these lasers have been discovered in an Edisonian style, with little attention given to understanding of the specific excitation processes that generate the inversions.

An exhaustive effort is made in this book to review the literature on gas-discharge lasers up through early 1973, classify them according to their excitation mechanisms and, as far as possible, give detailed accounts of the specific mechanisms for each class. The fields of atomic and molecular physics, discharge physics and laser physics are combined here to provide a unified and basic understanding of the behavior and characteristics of gas-discharge lasers.

The book begins with a short chronology of the major events and breakthroughs in the discharge laser field since the discovery of the helium-neon laser. This is followed by a very brief discussion of the basic concepts of collisions, discharges and laser physics. A chapter on specific atomic and molecular excitation processes touches on the several important collision processes, such as excitation transfer, charge transfer, Penning ionization and electron impact. A descriptive chapter on classical discharge physics discusses glow, radio frequency, hollow-cathode, and pulsed discharges. The application of electron-beam sustained and photoinitiated discharges is not included. presumably because of its recent devel-

With this brief but reasonably well documented introduction to basic discharge processes, the book launches into its major task of describing and explaining the characteristics of specific laser systems with particular emphasis on the excitation processes. Chapters are devoted, respectively, to lasers operating on neutral transitions, ionized systems and molecular systems. In each of these chapters, the specific lasers are classified according to their excitation mechanisms, and several examples are discussed in each category. Finally, an extensive appendix gives curves of electron temperature in noble-gas mixtures, a useful set of energy-level and lasertransition diagrams and a comprehensive listing of laser transitions giving the wavelength, identification of transition and references.

Because of its comprehensive coverage of the field of discharge lasers, this book should be an important source for laser technologists for some time to come. As such, it will also be useful to students desiring to understand and use gas-discharge lasers and improve upon their performance. As a convenient source of references to the literature itself, the book will be extremely useful to laser practitioners.

The author, Colin Willett, has been concerned with the problems of understanding discharge-excited lasers since his student days in London. Since that period, he has pursued this effort at the Harry Diamond Laboratories of the Department of the Army. He is to be commended for the exhaustive and often tedious effort that must have been necessary to assemble this useful book.

DONALD C. LORENTS Stanford Research Institute Stanford, California

Image Science: Principles, Analysis and Evaluation of Photographic-type Imaging **Processes**

J. C. Dainty, R. Shaw 402 pp. Academic, New York, 1974. \$26.00

The book Image Science: Principles, Analysis and Evaluation of Photographic-Type Imaging Processes by J. C. Dainty and Rodney Shaw gives a very useful treatment of the properties of photographic materials with respect to information storage and processing configurations.

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