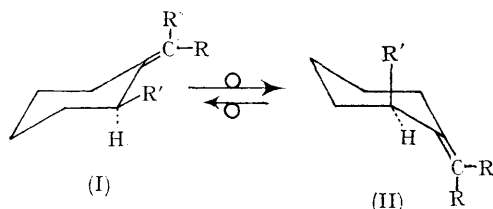


Steric Interference in Allylic and Pseudo-allylic Systems:¹ Magnitude of $A^{(1,3)}$ Methyl-Hydrogen Interactions and $A^{(1,3)}$ Methyl-Methyl Interaction

By S. K. MALHOTRA* and FRANCIS JOHNSON

(The Dow Chemical Company, Eastern Research Laboratory, Wayland, Massachusetts 01778)

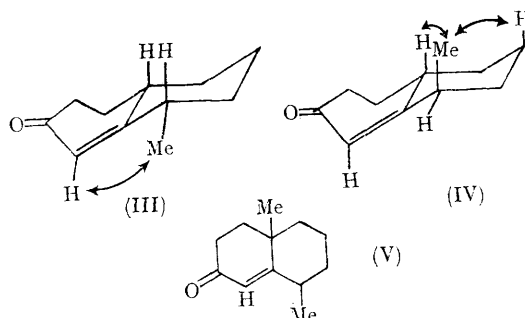
WE have recently pointed out² that in six-membered ring systems containing exocyclic double bonds as in (I) there exists a severe non-bonded steric interaction between the substituents R and R', since the dihedral angle between them is ~ 0 . This interaction was classified as $A^{(1,3)}$ strain and it was proposed that in mobile systems relief from this strain can be attained by conformational inversion to that conformer in which the sp^3 substituent becomes axial as in (II). In rigid systems R' may



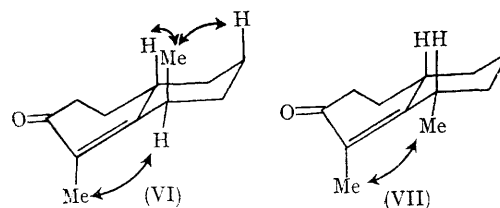
attain this orientation by epimerization. We have now determined the approximate magnitude of $A^{(1,3)}$ strain in (I) when $R=H$ and $R'=Me$ and when both R and $R'=Me$.

$A^{(1,3)}$ Methyl-Hydrogen Interaction: The equilibration of 8-methyl- $\Delta^{1(9)}$ -octalin-2-one³ with sodium methoxide in methanol gave a 2:1 mixture of epimers (III) and (IV).[†] Their stereochemical assignments were based on the n.m.r. spectrum of the mixture. It exhibited (in benzene) a broad singlet at 5.75 p.p.m. (vinylic, 1H), a doublet centred at 0.95 (J 7, 1H) and another doublet centred at 0.87 (J 6 c./sec., 2H). The latter doublet can be assigned to the equatorial C-8 methyl group in (III) and that at 0.95 p.p.m. to the axial methyl group in (IV), since (a) axial methyl groups appear at a lower field than the equatorial methyl groups and (b) the J -values for the former are larger than those for the latter.⁴ Moreover the chemical shift of the C-8 methyl group in 8,10-dimethyl- $\Delta^{1(9)}$ -octalin-2-one (V), in which this group is almost exclusively equatorial on steric grounds,[‡] also occurs at 0.87 p.p.m. (benzene). Consideration of the two 1,3-diaxial methyl-

hydrogen interactions (0.9 kcal./mole each) associated with (IV) and the free energy difference of 0.4 kcal./mole between the epimers in favour of (III) implies that $A^{(1,3)}$ methyl-hydrogen interaction [in (III)] is *ca.* 1.4 kcal./mole.



$A^{(1,3)}$ Methyl-Methyl Interaction: In order to determine the magnitude of this interaction 1,8-dimethyl- $\Delta^{1(9)}$ -octalin-2-one was prepared by treating ethyl vinyl ketone with the pyrrolidine enamine of 2-methylcyclohexanone at reflux followed by acid hydrolysis. After treatment with sodium methoxide in methanol the product (b.p. 87—89°/1 mm.) was found to be homogenous by g.l.c. It exhibited in the n.m.r. spectrum (benzene solution) a doublet centred at 1.77 (J 2 c./sec., C-1 Me, 3H) and another doublet at 0.94 p.p.m. (J 7.2, C-8 Me, 3H) showing it to consist almost entirely of the C-8 axial epimer (VI).[§] The corresponding C-8 equatorial epimer (VII) if present to the extent of 1–2%



might have escaped detection. On taking into account one $A^{(1,3)}$ methyl-hydrogen interaction

[†] Composition determined by g.l.c. with a column packed with 20% Carbowax on Chromosorb W.

[‡] The C-8 axial methyl epimer suffers from a severe 1,3-diaxial Me-Me interaction.

[§] The appearance of the C-1 methyl group as a doublet (J 2 c./sec.) is due to long range homo-allylic coupling with the C-10 proton. This signal would have appeared as a triplet or a doublet of doublets if an axial proton were present at the C-8 position; see J. T. Pinhey and S. Sternhell, *Tetrahedron Letters*, 1963, 275.

ca. 1.4 kcal./mole, and two 1,3-diaxial methyl-hydrogen interactions (0.9 kcal./mole each) associated with (VI) and the free energy difference of 2.7—3 kcal. between the two epimers in favour of (VI), we conclude that $A^{(1,3)}$ methyl-methyl interaction in VII) is about 5.9—6.2 kcal./mole.

Our values for these interactions are in a good

agreement with those obtained by Allinger by machine calculations.⁵

We thank Mr. William Cobb and Mrs. Ann F. Lundin for technical assistance and Professor Norman L. Allinger for making available to us his results prior to their publication.

(Received, June 24th, 1968; Com. 837.)

Previous paper in this series: S. K. Malhotra, D. F. Moakley, and F. Johnson, *Chem. Comm.*, 1967, 448.

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⁵ Personal communication.