

# **Introduction to Ground State Density Functional Theory**

## **Part II**

**Adam Wasserman**  
Department of Chemistry and  
Department of Physics and Astronomy  
Purdue University

**TDDFT School, Rutgers – Newark, June 30, 2023**

# Eleven references for basics of ground-state DFT

1. K. Burke, *ABC of DFT* ; <http://dft.uci.edu>
2. J.P. Perdew and S. Kurth, *Density Functionals for Non-relativistic Coulomb Systems in the New Century*, in *A Primer in Density Functional Theory*, edited by C. Fiolhais et al. (Springer-Verlag, NY, 2003).
3. R.M. Dreizler and E.K.U. Gross, *Density Functional Theory* (Springer-Verlag, Berlin, 1990).
4. R. Parr and W. Yang, *Density Functional Theory of Atoms and Molecules* (Oxford, New York, 1989).
5. J.P. Perdew, *What do the Kohn-Sham energies mean? How do atoms dissociate?*, in NATO ASI Ser., Ser.B 123 (Density Funct. Methods Phys.), 265 (1985).
6. G.F. Giuliani and G. Vignale, Chapter 7 in *Quantum Theory of the Electron Liquid*, (Cambridge University Press, 2005).
7. E.J. Baerends, O.V. Gritsenko, and R. van Meer, *Perspective: The Kohn-Sham gap, the fundamental gap, and the optical gap: the physical meaning of occupied and virtual Kohn-Sham orbital energies*, Phys. Chem. Chem. Phys. **15**, 16408 (2013).
8. E.J. Baerends, *Chemical Potential, etc.* Phys. Chem. Chem. Phys. **24**, 12745 (2022).
9. A. Ruzsinsky and J.P. Perdew, *Twelve outstanding problems in ground-state density functional theory: A bouquet of puzzles*, Comp. Theor. Chem. **963**, 2 (2011).
10. A.J. Cohen, P. Mori-Sanchez, and W. Yang, *Challenges for Density Functional Theory*, Chem. Rev. **112**, 289 (2012).
11. A. Wasserman, J. Nafziger, K. Jiang, M-C.Kim, E. Sim, and K. Burke, *The Importance of Being Inconsistent*, Ann. Rev. Phys. Chem. **68**, 555 (2017).

# Outline

**Method for this lecture: Go back to the basics from yesterday and discuss selected FAQ and FHM**

- Simple examples of density functionals
- Chemical Potential
- Derivative Discontinuities
- Key errors (self-interaction, delocalization, static-correlation)

Real system

Fictitious system

$$I = I_S$$

$$N \int dx_1 \dots \int dx_N |\Psi_0|^2 = n(\mathbf{r}) = \sum_i |\phi_i|^2$$

$$\left( -\frac{1}{2} \nabla^2 + v_S(\vec{r}) \right) \phi_i = \epsilon_i \phi_i$$

$$\downarrow$$

$$v(\vec{r}) + v_H(\vec{r}) + v_{xc}(\vec{r})$$

$$E = E_S + E_{HXC} - \int d\vec{r} \frac{v_{HXC}(\vec{r})}{n(\vec{r})} \quad E_S = \sum_{i, occ} \epsilon_i$$

### Self-Consistent Equations Including Exchange and Correlation Effects\*

W. KOHSE AND L. J. SHAM

University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, California

(Received 21 June 1965)

*Note added in proof.* We should like to point out that it is possible, formally, to replace the many-electron problem by an exactly equivalent set of self-consistent one-electron equations. This is accomplished quite simply by using the expression (2.2) [without the approximation (2.5)] in the energy variational principle. This leads to a set of equations, analogous to Eqs. (2.4)–(2.9), but with  $\mu_{xc}(n)$  replaced by an effective one-particle potential  $v_{xc}$  defined formally as

$$v_{xc}(\mathbf{r}) = \delta E_{xc}[n] / \delta n(\mathbf{r}).$$

Of course, an explicit form of  $v_{xc}$  can be obtained only if the functional  $E_{xc}[n]$ , which includes all many-body effects, is known. This effective potential will reproduce the exact density and the exact total energy is then given by

$$E = \sum_i \epsilon_i - \frac{1}{2} \iint \frac{n(\mathbf{r})n(\mathbf{r}')}{|\mathbf{r}-\mathbf{r}'|} d\mathbf{r} d\mathbf{r}' + E_{xc}[n] - \int v_{xc}(\mathbf{r}) n(\mathbf{r}) d\mathbf{r}.$$

Of course, if we make the approximation (2.5) for  $E_{xc}$  the above exact formulation reverts to the approximate theory of Sec. II.

We first write

$$G[n] = T_e[n] + E_{xc}[n], \quad (2.2)$$

where  $T_e[n]$  is the kinetic energy of a system of non-interacting electrons with density  $n(\mathbf{r})$  and  $E_{xc}[n]$  is, by our definition, the exchange and correlation energy of an interacting system with density  $n(\mathbf{r})$ . For an arbitrary  $n(\mathbf{r})$ , of course, one can give no simple exact expression for  $E_{xc}[n]$ . However, if  $n(\mathbf{r})$  is sufficiently slowly varying, one can show<sup>8</sup> that

$$E_{xc}[n] = \int n(\mathbf{r}) \epsilon_{xc}(n(\mathbf{r})) d\mathbf{r}, \quad (2.3)$$

## FAQ and FHM:

**#1: Since  $F[n]$  is independent of the external potential, why not calculate  $F$  extremely accurately for one system and then use it for all others?**

*Misunderstood the meaning of "functional".*

The most you can do for one system is calculate its energy and density very accurately and that will give you one point of the functional: The value of  $F$  for *that* density.

Then you could write down an expression for  $F[n]$  that would reproduce your answer for that density, but there are infinitely many ways to do this.

Some expressions for  $F[n]$  produce the exact answer for infinitely many systems.

# Outline

- **Simplest examples of density functionals**
- Chemical Potential
- Derivative Discontinuities
- Key errors (self-interaction, delocalization, static-correlation)

For only 1 electron,  $\Psi(\vec{r}) = \sqrt{n(\vec{r})}$

$$\int d^3r \sqrt{n(\vec{r})} \left( -\frac{1}{2} \nabla^2 \sqrt{n(\vec{r})} + v(\vec{r}) \sqrt{n(\vec{r})} \right) = \int_{d^3r} E \sqrt{n(\vec{r})} \sqrt{n(\vec{r})}$$

$$-\frac{1}{2} \int d^3r \sqrt{n(\vec{r})} \nabla^2 \sqrt{n(\vec{r})} + \int d^3r v(\vec{r}) n(\vec{r}) = E[n]$$

$$-\frac{1}{2} \int d\mathbf{r} \sqrt{n(\mathbf{r})} \nabla^2 \sqrt{n(\mathbf{r})} + \int d\mathbf{r} v(\mathbf{r}) n(\mathbf{r}) = E[n]$$

$$F[n] = \frac{1}{8} \int d\mathbf{r} \frac{|\nabla n(\mathbf{r})|^2}{n(\mathbf{r})}$$

$$E_0 = \min_n \left\{ F[n] + \int d^3r v(\mathbf{r}) n(\mathbf{r}) \right\}$$

Reminders from yesterday:

$$F[n] = T_s[n] + E_H[n] + E_{XC}[n]$$

$$E_H + E_{XC} = 0 \text{ for 1 electron}$$

Difficult and, in some ways still unresolved problem in DFT: approximate expressions for  $E_{XC}$  often do not cancel the Hartree for 1-electron systems.

Approximations for  $F[n]$  that are explicit functionals of the density are generally too crude to be very useful.

## “Orbital-free DFT”

$$\frac{\delta F[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} + v(\mathbf{r}) = \mu$$

Reference: *ABC of DFT*, by Kieron Burke  
<http://dft.uci.edu>  
Ref.1

Kinetic energy of  $M$  non-interacting and spinless fermions in 1d:

$$T_s[\{\phi_j\}] = \frac{1}{2} \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} dx \sum_{j=1}^M \left| \frac{d\phi_j(x)}{dx} \right|^2$$

Is there some way to get  $T_s$  *without* evaluating all the orbitals?

Yes: Write it as a density functional, i.e., an integral over some function of  $n(x)$ ,

$$n(x) = \sum_{j=1}^M |\phi_j(x)|^2$$

Simplest choice: a local approximation:

$$T_s^{\text{loc}}[n] = \frac{\pi^2}{6} \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} dx n^3(x)$$



Construction motivated by:

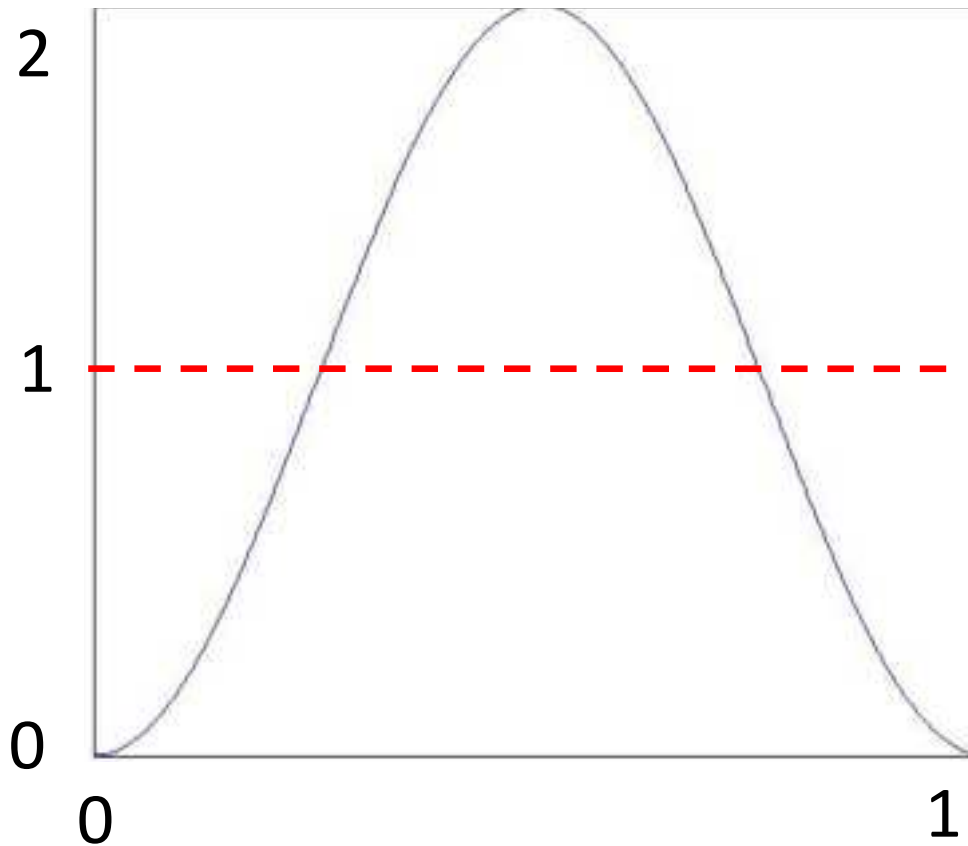
$$\varepsilon_j = \frac{\pi^2 j^2}{2L^2} \quad j = 1, 2, 3, \dots$$
$$E = \frac{\pi^2}{2L^2} \sum_{j=1}^M j^2 = \frac{\pi^2}{2L^2} M(M+1)(2M+1)/6$$

As  $M$  increases, density inside the box tends to constant  $n = M/L$ , so:

$$E \rightarrow \frac{\pi^2}{6} n^3 L$$

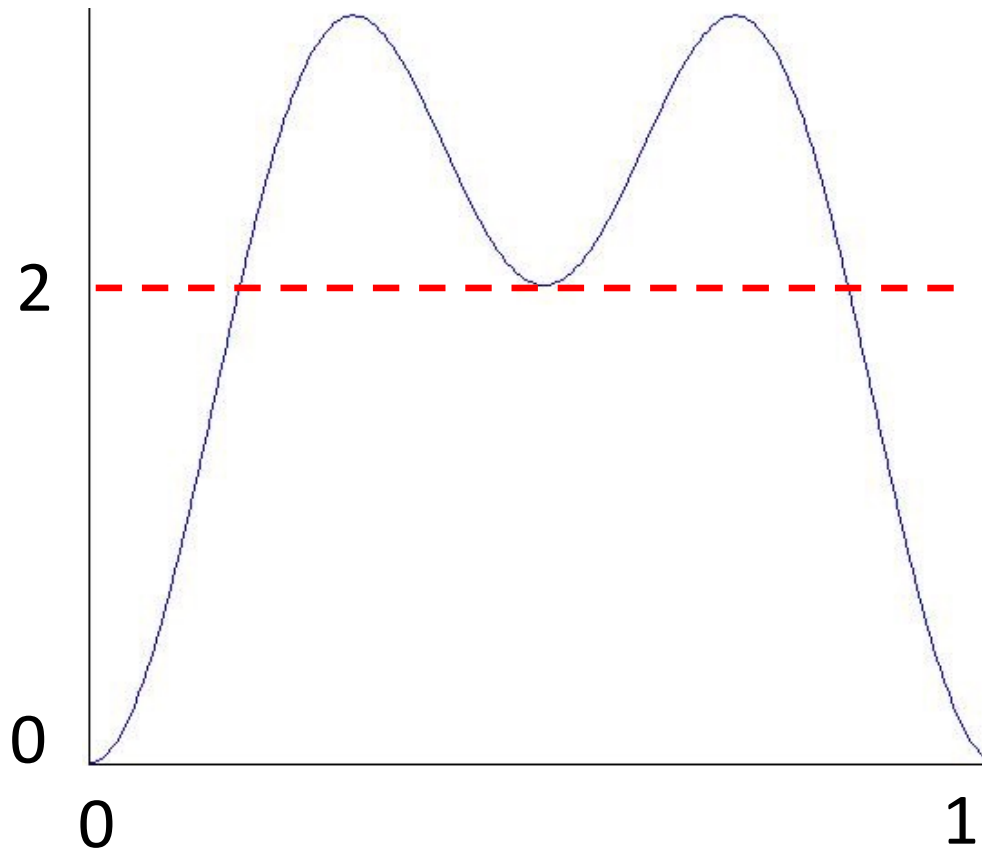
$$\frac{\pi^2}{6} \int dx n^3(x)$$

# Particles in 1d-box



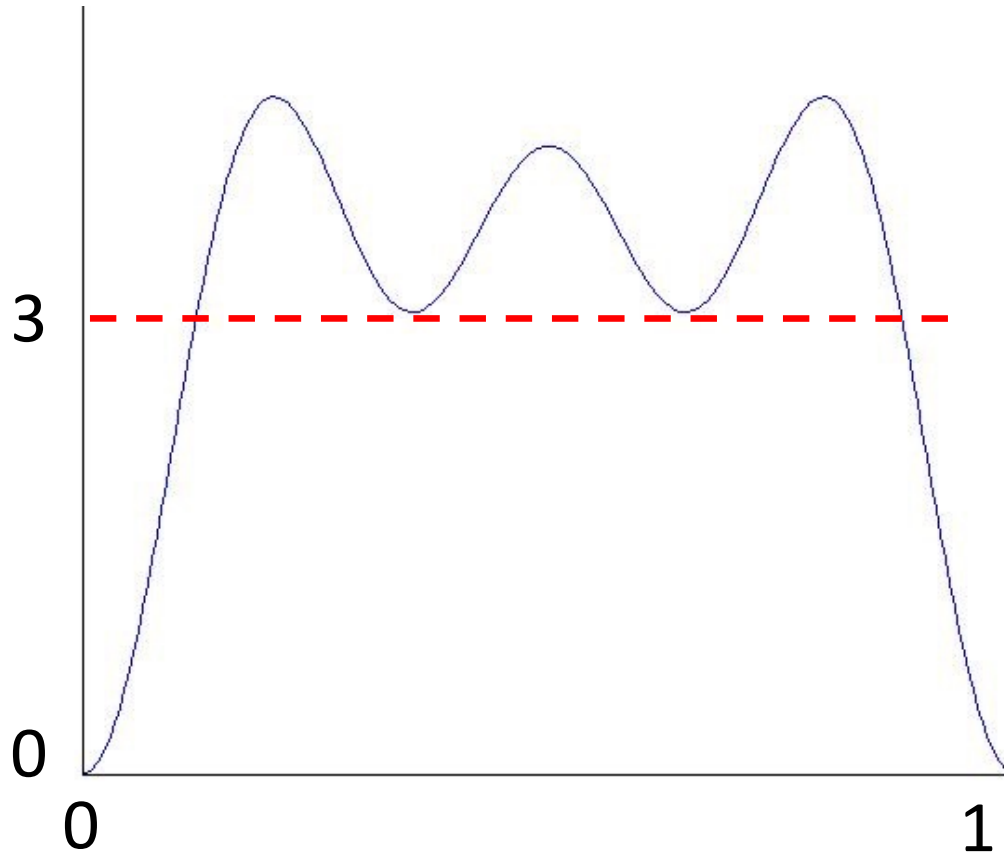
$M$	$T_s^{\text{loc}}$	$T_s$	%err
1	4.112	4.934	-17
2	21.79	24.67	-12
3	62.92	69.09	-9
25	26875	27264	-1

# Particles in 1d-box



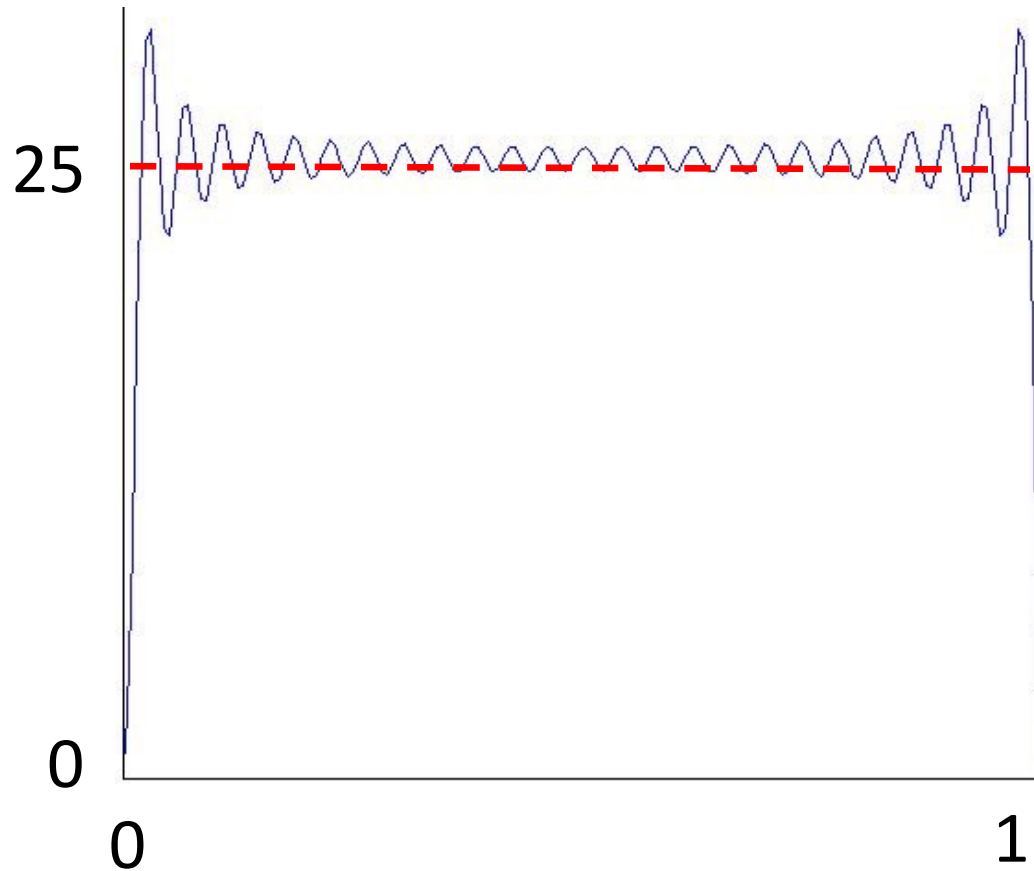
$M$	$T_s^{\text{loc}}$	$T_s$	%err
1	4.112	4.934	-17
2	21.79	24.67	-12
3	62.92	69.09	-9
25	26875	27264	-1

# Particles in 1d-box



$M$	$T_s^{\text{loc}}$	$T_s$	%err
1	4.112	4.934	-17
2	21.79	24.67	-12
3	62.92	69.09	-9
25	26875	27264	-1

# Particles in 1d-box



$M$	$T_s^{\text{loc}}$	$T_s$	%err
1	4.112	4.934	-17
2	21.79	24.67	-12
3	62.92	69.09	-9
25	26875	27264	-1

In KS-DFT,  $T_s$  is not calculated this way, but it is obtained “exactly” from the orbitals.

- $T_s^{\text{loc}}[n]$ : simplest example of functional design by satisfaction of exact constraint.
- Local approximations work best for large  $M$ , worst for small  $M$ .
- Local approximations are crudely correct, but miss details.
- OK, I have a functional. What do I do with it?

$$\frac{\delta F[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} + v(\mathbf{r}) = \mu$$

For our non-interacting 1d-spinless fermions:

$$\frac{\delta T_s}{\delta n(x)} + v(x) = \mu \quad T_s[n] = \frac{\pi^2}{6} \int dx n^3(x)$$

$$\frac{\pi^2}{6} 3 n^2(x) + v(x) = \mu$$

$$\frac{\pi^2}{2} n^2(x) = \mu \quad \text{inside the box}$$

$$n(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{\pi} \sqrt{2\mu} & , \text{ inside the box.} \\ 0 & , \text{ outside.} \end{cases}$$

So:  $\frac{1}{\pi} \int_0^L dx \sqrt{2\mu} = M$

and:  $\mu = \frac{M^2 \pi^2}{2L^2} = -(E(M-1) - E(M))$

## FAQ and FHM:

#1: Since  $F[n]$  is independent of the external potential, why not calculate  $F$  extremely accurately for one system and then use it for all others?

*Misunderstood the meaning of "universal functional".*

#2: What is the physical meaning of the Lagrange multiplier  $\mu$ ?

$$\frac{\delta F[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} + v(\mathbf{r}) = \mu$$

↓  
"Chemical potential"

$$\mu = \left. \frac{\partial E}{\partial N} \right|_v$$

M electrons

$$\int d^3r \delta n(\vec{r}) = 0$$

$$\int d^3r \underbrace{\frac{\delta F[n]}{\delta n(\vec{r})}}_{+C} \delta n(\vec{r})$$

Derivative of the energy with respect to an average number of electrons; e.g. system in contact with a reservoir of electrons.

**Inhomogeneous Electron Gas\***

F. HENNINGSTADT†

*École Normale Supérieure, Paris, France*

AND

W. KÖHN‡

*École Normale Supérieure, Paris, France and Faculté des Sciences, Orsay, France*

and

*University of California at San Diego, La Jolla, California*

(Received 18 June 1964)

$$\frac{\delta}{\delta n} \left\{ E_v[n] - \mu \int n(\mathbf{r}) d\mathbf{r} \right\} = 0. \quad (67)$$



$$\int d\mathbf{r} \delta n(\mathbf{r}) = 0$$

$$\delta F = \int d\mathbf{r} \left( \frac{\delta F[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} \right) \delta n(\mathbf{r})$$

So,  $\frac{\delta F[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})}$  is only defined to within an arbitrary additive constant.

$$\int d\mathbf{r} n(\mathbf{r}) = M$$

e.g., for only 1 electron,

$$F[n] = \frac{1}{8} \int d\mathbf{r} \frac{|\nabla n(\mathbf{r})|^2}{n(\mathbf{r})}$$

$$\frac{\delta F[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} = \frac{1}{8} \left( \frac{|\nabla n(\mathbf{r})|^2}{n(\mathbf{r})^2} - 2 \frac{\nabla^2 n(\mathbf{r})}{n(\mathbf{r})} \right)$$

Schrödinger's equation  $\frac{\delta F[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} + v(\mathbf{r}) = \mu = E(1) = -I(1)$

$$\mu \sim \left( \frac{\partial E}{\partial N} \right)_{v(\mathbf{r})}$$

$$\frac{\partial E}{\partial N} = \lim_{\Delta N \rightarrow 0} \frac{E(N + \Delta N) - E(N)}{\Delta N}$$

What can this mean?  
(Check [Ref.8](#))

Why generalize DFT to non-integer numbers of electrons?:

- (1)** DFT is based on a variational principle, so it is convenient to not have to worry about density variations that do not conserve the number of particles.
- (2)** Many physical situations where it is convenient to treat  $N$  as a continuous variable.

Chapter 7 in  
"Quantum Theory of  
the Electron Liquid",  
G.F. Giuliani and G.  
Vignale (Cambridge  
University Press,  
2005). [Ref.6](#)

$$\hat{K} = \hat{H} - \mu \hat{N}$$

$$\mu \longleftrightarrow N$$

$$v(\mathbf{r}) \longleftrightarrow n(\mathbf{r})$$

Molecule with  
 $M$  electrons



Metal with work  
function  $-\mu$

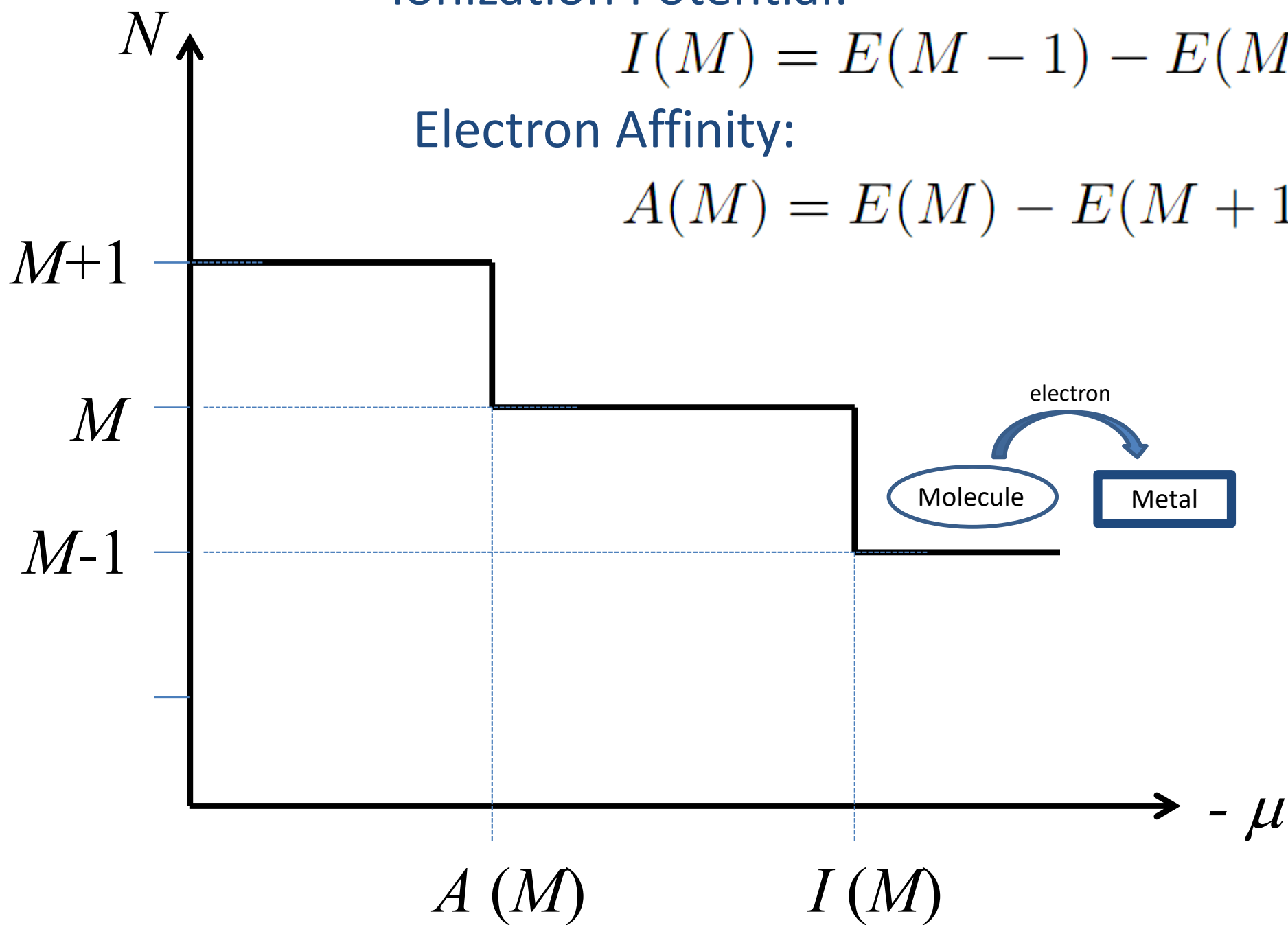
*J.P. Perdew, in NATO ASI Ser.,  
Ser.B 123 (Density Funct.  
Methods Phys.), 265 (1985). [Ref.5](#)*

Ionization Potential:

$$I(M) = E(M - 1) - E(M)$$

Electron Affinity:

$$A(M) = E(M) - E(M + 1)$$

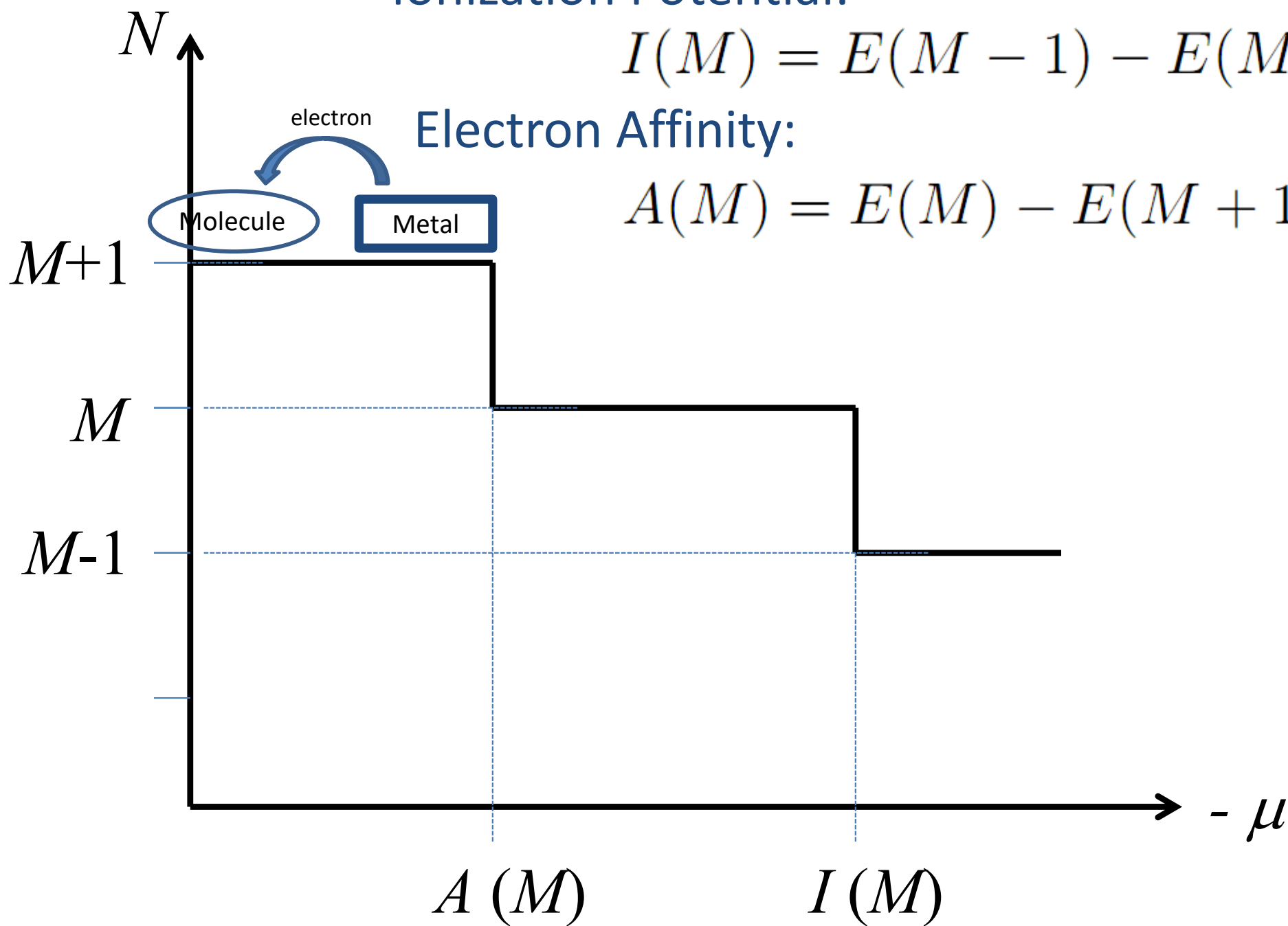


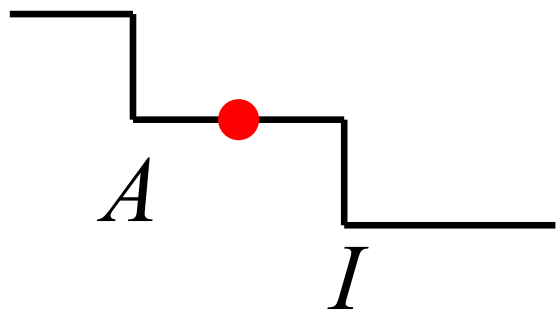
Ionization Potential:

$$I(M) = E(M - 1) - E(M)$$

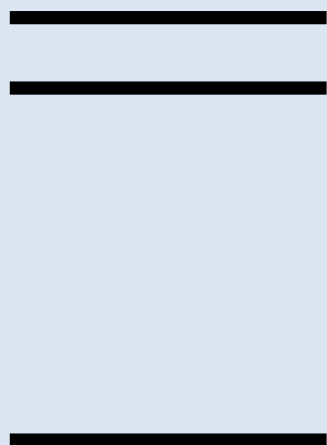
Electron Affinity:

$$A(M) = E(M) - E(M + 1)$$

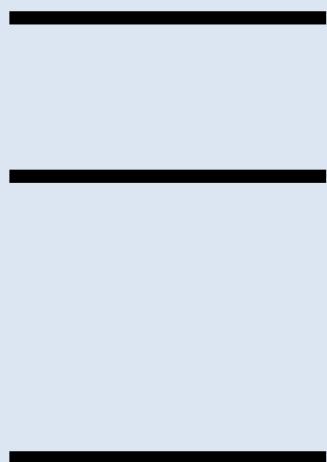




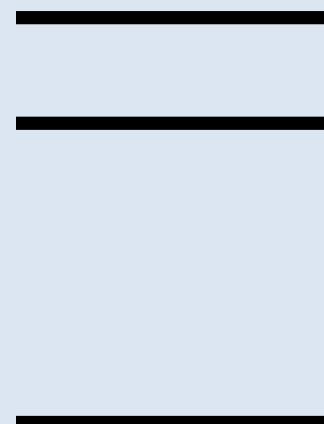
$$A(M) < -\mu < I(M)$$



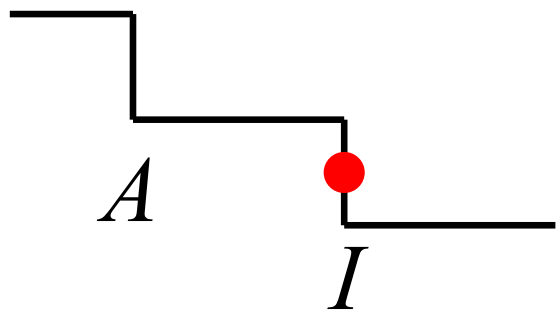
$$K(M - 1)$$



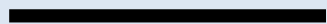
$$K(M)$$



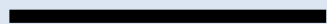
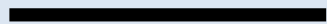
$$K(M + 1)$$



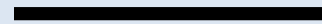
$$-\mu = I(M)$$



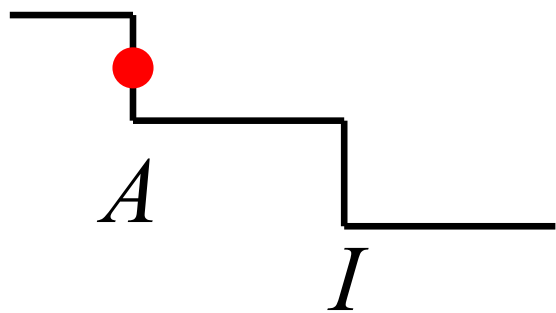
$$K(M - 1)$$



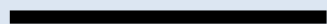
$$K(M)$$



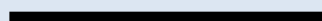
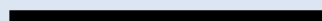
$$K(M + 1)$$



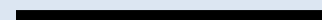
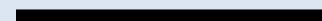
$$A(M) < -\mu < I(M)$$



$K(M - 1)$



$K(M)$



$K(M + 1)$

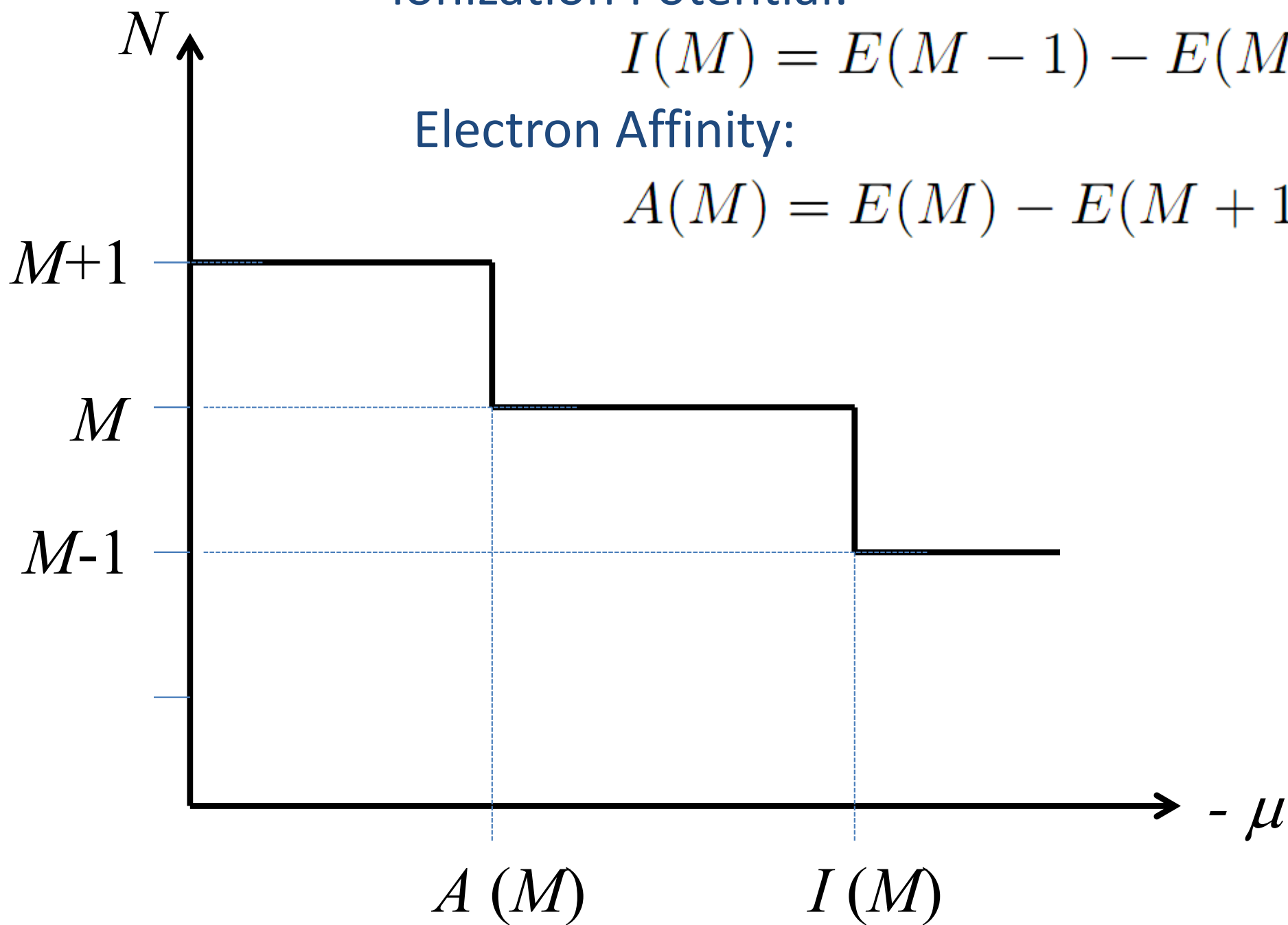


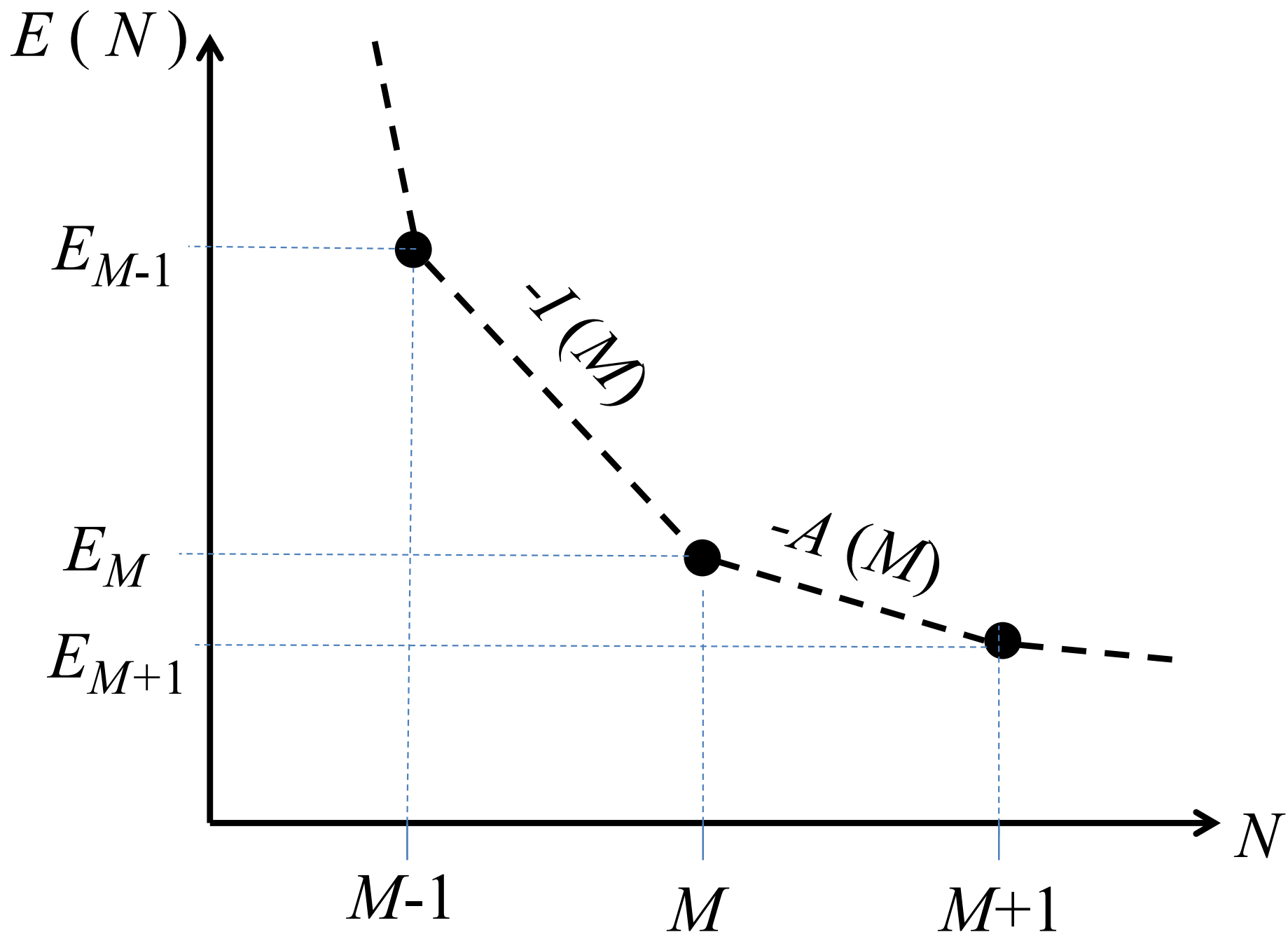
Ionization Potential:

$$I(M) = E(M - 1) - E(M)$$

Electron Affinity:

$$A(M) = E(M) - E(M + 1)$$





## FAQ and FHM:

**#1:** Since  $F[n]$  is independent of the external potential, why not calculate  $F$  extremely accurately for one system and then use it for all others?

*Misunderstood the meaning of “universal functional”.*

**#2:** What is the physical meaning of the Lagrange multiplier  $\mu$ ?

*That depends. Could be  $-I$  or could be  $-A$ .*

## FAQ and FHM:

**#1:** Since  $F[n]$  is independent of the external potential, why not calculate  $F$  extremely accurately for one system and then use it for all others?

*Misunderstood the meaning of “universal functional”.*

**#2:** What is the physical meaning of the Lagrange multiplier  $\mu$ ?

*That depends. Could be  $-I$  or could be  $-A$*

**#3:** I’m doing a band-structure calculation with a good semi-local functional. Why is my band-gap “wrong”?

# Outline

- Simplest possible examples of density functionals
- Chemical Potential
- **Derivative Discontinuities**
- Key errors (self-interaction, delocalization, static-correlation)

$$\Omega[n] = \tilde{F}[n] + \int d\mathbf{r} [v(\mathbf{r}) - \mu] n(\mathbf{r})$$

$$\tilde{F}[n] \equiv \min_{\hat{\Gamma} \rightarrow n(\mathbf{r})} Tr \left[ \hat{\Gamma} \left( \hat{T} + \hat{V}_{ee} \right) \right]$$

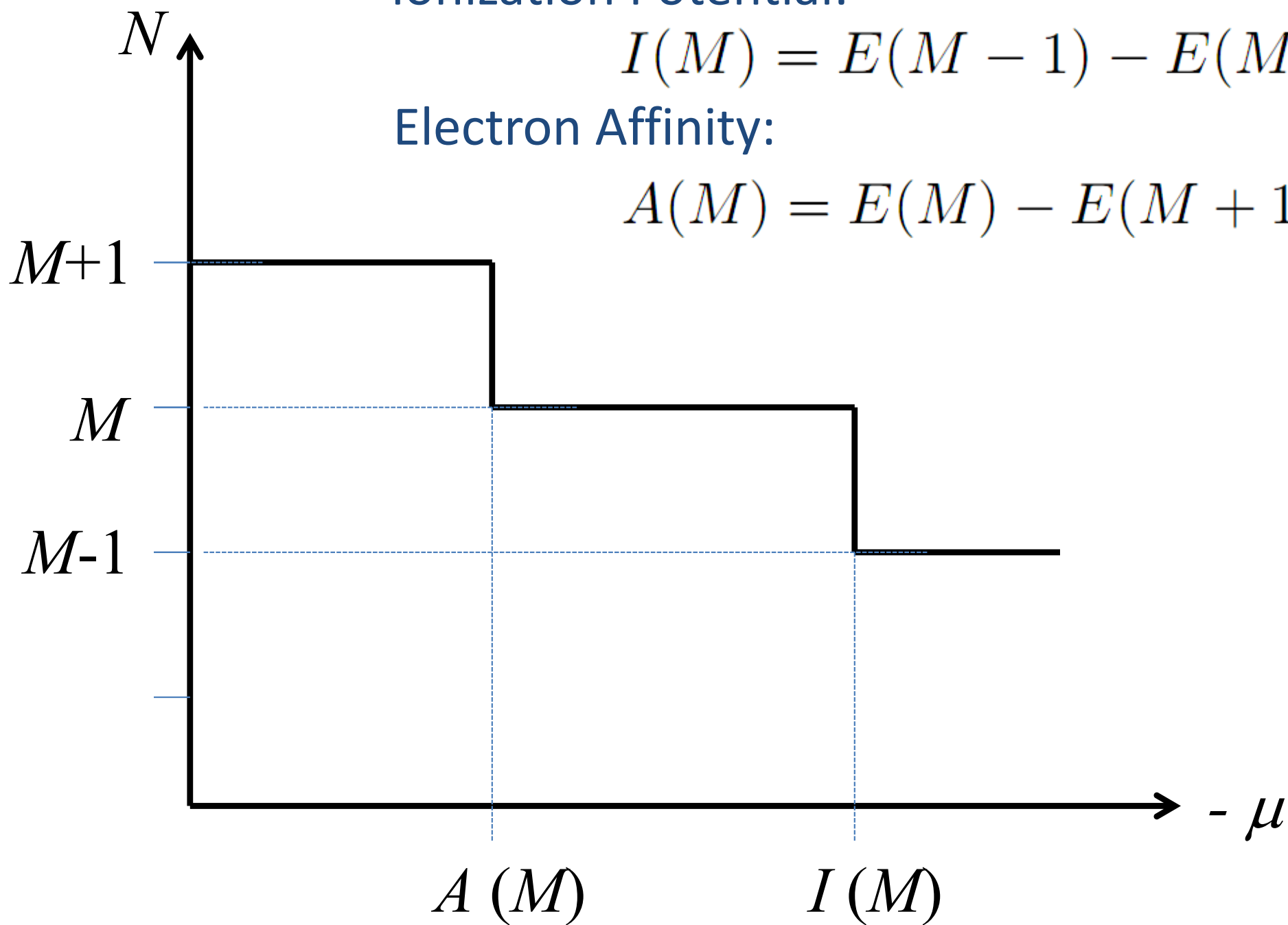
$$\frac{\delta \tilde{F}[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} = \mu - v(\mathbf{r})$$

Ionization Potential:

$$I(M) = E(M - 1) - E(M)$$

Electron Affinity:

$$A(M) = E(M) - E(M + 1)$$



$$\Omega[n] = \tilde{F}[n] + \int d\mathbf{r} [v(\mathbf{r}) - \mu] n(\mathbf{r})$$

$$\tilde{F}[n] \equiv \min_{\hat{\Gamma} \rightarrow n(\mathbf{r})} \text{Tr} \left[ \hat{\Gamma} \left( \hat{T} + \hat{V}_{ee} \right) \right]$$

$$\frac{\delta \tilde{F}[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} = \mu - v(\mathbf{r})$$

A bit above  $M$ :

$$\left. \frac{\delta \tilde{F}[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} \right|_{n_M^+(\mathbf{r})} = -A(M) - v(\mathbf{r})$$

A bit below  $M$ :

$$\left. \frac{\delta \tilde{F}[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} \right|_{n_M^-(\mathbf{r})} = -I(M) - v(\mathbf{r})$$



Fundamental gap:

$$\frac{\delta \tilde{F}[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} \Big|_{n_M^+(\mathbf{r})} - \frac{\delta \tilde{F}[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} \Big|_{n_M^-(\mathbf{r})} \stackrel{-\epsilon_{\text{HOMO}}}{\underset{\text{Koopmans'}}{=} I(M) - A(M) \equiv E_g}$$

Kohn-Sham gap:

$$\frac{\delta \tilde{T}_s[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} \Big|_{n_M^+(\mathbf{r})} - \frac{\delta \tilde{T}_s[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} \Big|_{n_M^-(\mathbf{r})} \stackrel{-\epsilon_{\text{HOMO}}}{=} I_s(M) - \stackrel{-\epsilon_{\text{LUMO}}}{=} A_s(M) \equiv E_{g,KS}$$

$$\tilde{E}_{\text{XC}}[n] = \tilde{F}[n] - \tilde{T}_s[n] - E_{\text{H}}[n]$$

$$\Delta_{\text{XC}} \equiv \frac{\delta \tilde{E}_{\text{XC}}[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} \Big|_{n_M^+(\mathbf{r})} - \frac{\delta \tilde{E}_{\text{XC}}[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} \Big|_{n_M^-(\mathbf{r})} = E_g - E_{g,KS}$$

# Band gaps (eV) of selected semiconductors and insulators

(table 7.1 from Ref. 6)

	Diamond	Si	Ge	LiCl	GaAs
LDA	3.9	0.52	0.07	6.0	0.12
Expt.	5.48	1.17	0.744	9.4	1.52

$$\Delta_{\text{XC}} \equiv \left. \frac{\delta \tilde{E}_{\text{XC}}[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} \right|_{n_M^+(\mathbf{r})} - \left. \frac{\delta \tilde{E}_{\text{XC}}[n]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})} \right|_{n_M^-(\mathbf{r})} = E_g - E_{g,KS}$$

**#3: I'm doing a band-structure calculation with a good semi-local functional. Why is my band-gap "wrong"?**

*Lack of derivative discontinuity in approximate functional.*

## FAQ and FHM:

**#1:** Since  $F[n]$  is independent of the external potential, why not calculate  $F$  extremely accurately for one system and then use it for all others?

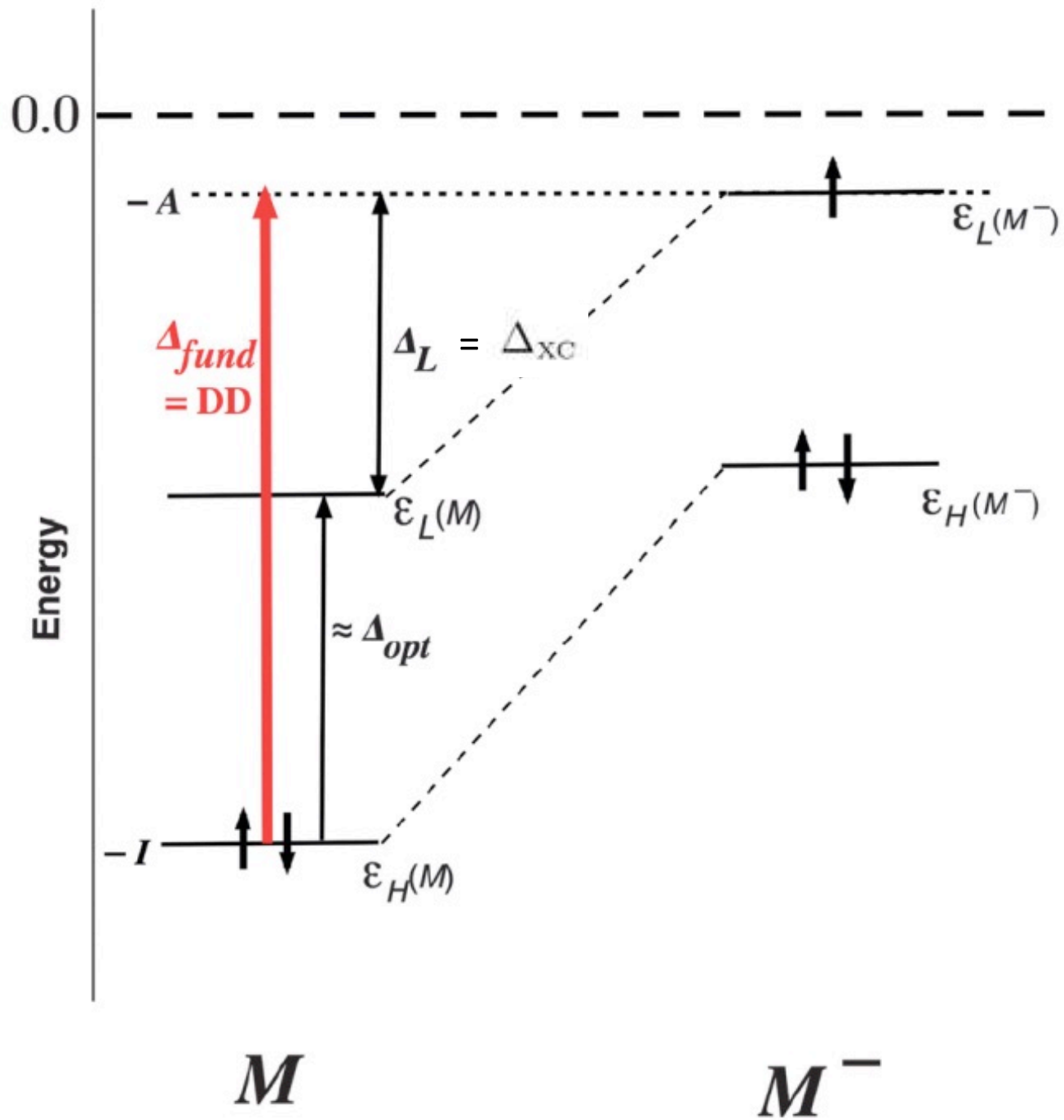
*Misunderstood the meaning of “universal functional”.*

**#2:** What is the physical meaning of the Lagrange multiplier  $\mu$ ?

*That depends. Could be  $-I$  or could be  $-A$*

**#3:** I’m doing a band-structure calculation with a good semi-local functional. Why is my band-gap “wrong”?

*Lack of derivative discontinuity in approximate functional.*



Ref.7

From: E.J. Baerends, O.V. Gritsenko, and R. van Meer, Phys. Chem. Chem. Phys. **15**, 16408 (2013).

## FAQ and FHM:

**#1:** Since  $F[n]$  is independent of the external potential, why not calculate  $F$  extremely accurately for one system and then use it for all others?

*Misunderstood the meaning of “universal functional”.*

**#2:** What is the physical meaning of the Lagrange multiplier  $\mu$  ?

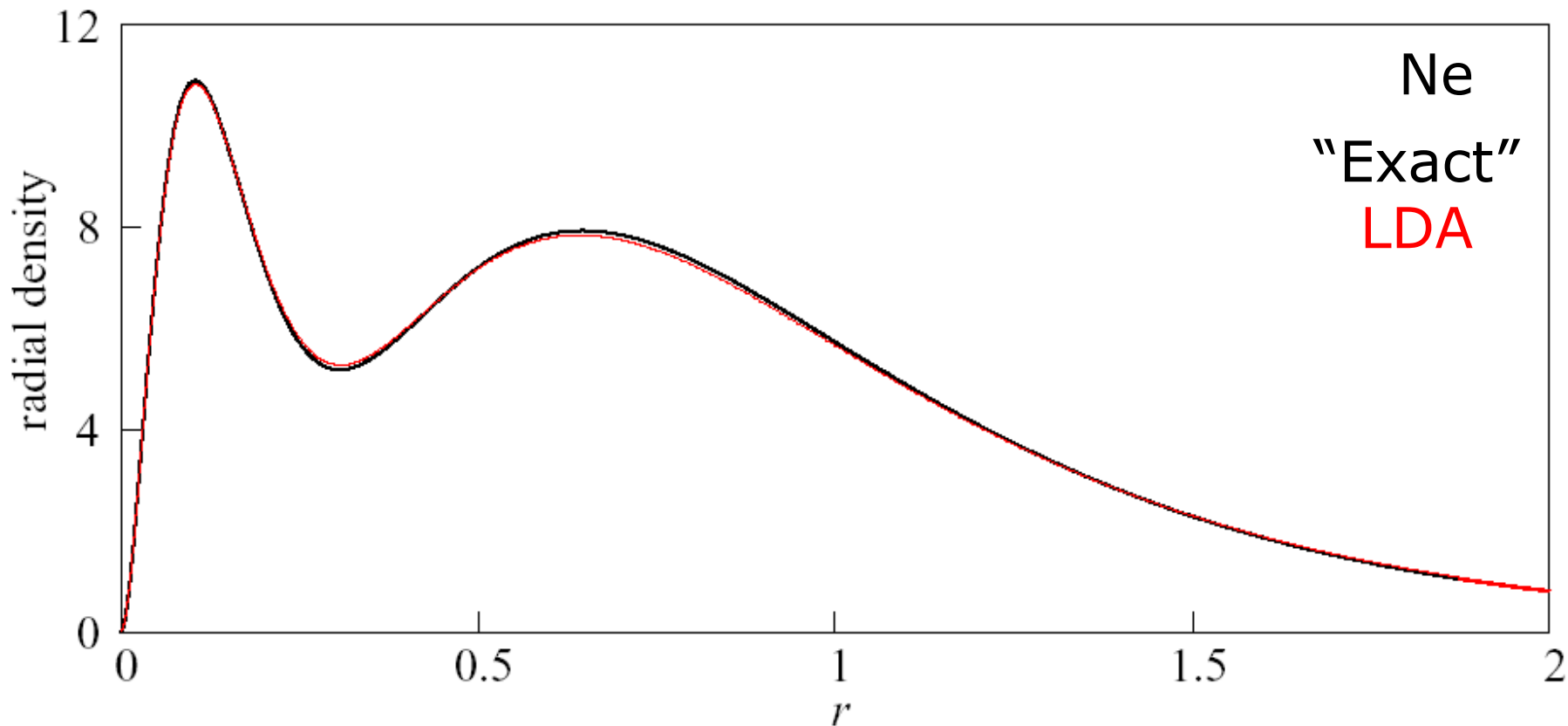
*That depends. Could be  $-I$  or could be  $-A$*

**#3:** I’m doing a band-structure calculation with a good semi-local functional. Why is my band-gap wrong?

*Lack of derivative discontinuity in approximate functional.*

**#4:** Do “good densities” imply “good energies” ?

*Not necessarily.*

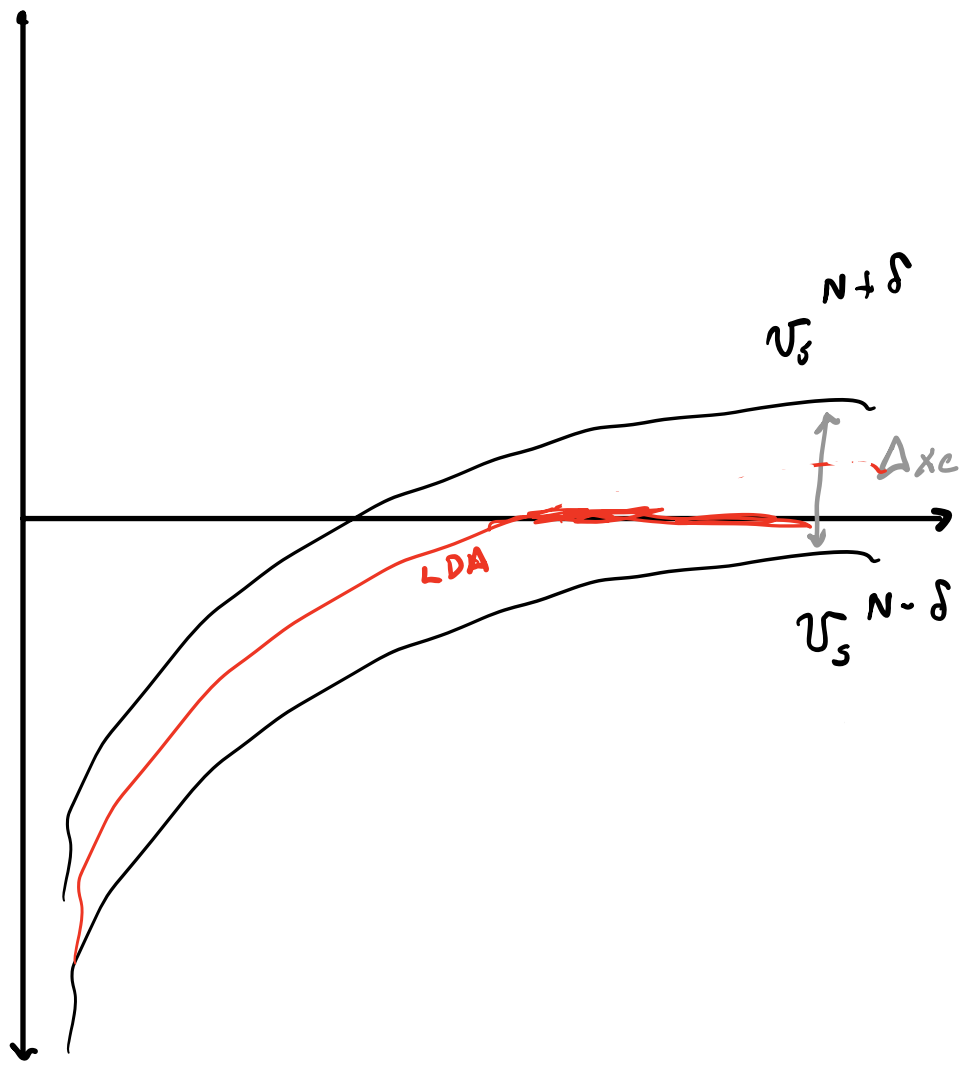


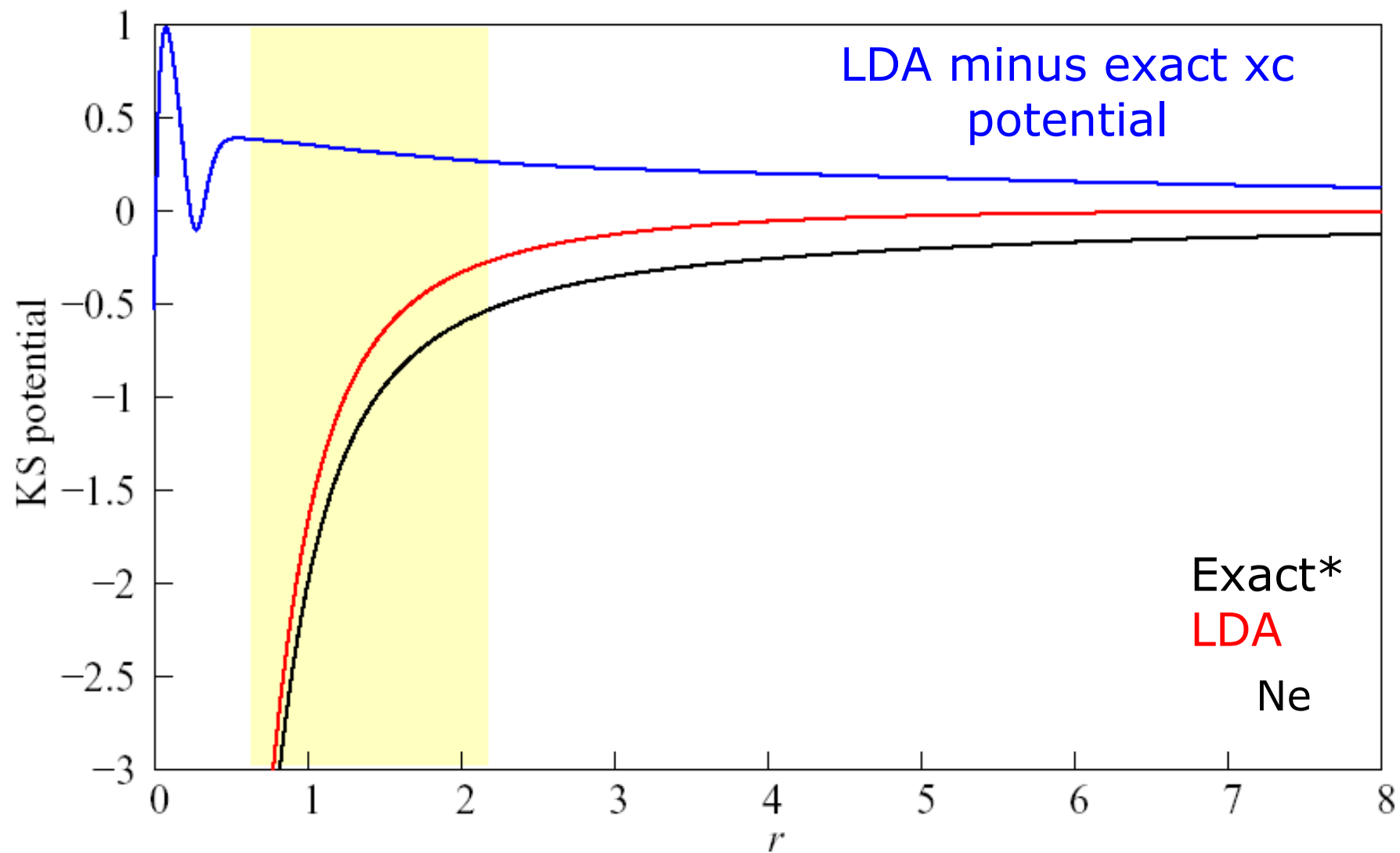
$$\varepsilon_{\text{HOMO}} = -I = -0.793 \text{ H} = E(\text{Ne}) - E(\text{Ne}^+)$$

$$\varepsilon_{\text{HOMO}} = -0.793 \text{ H}$$

$$\varepsilon_{\text{HOMO}} = -0.498 \text{ H}$$

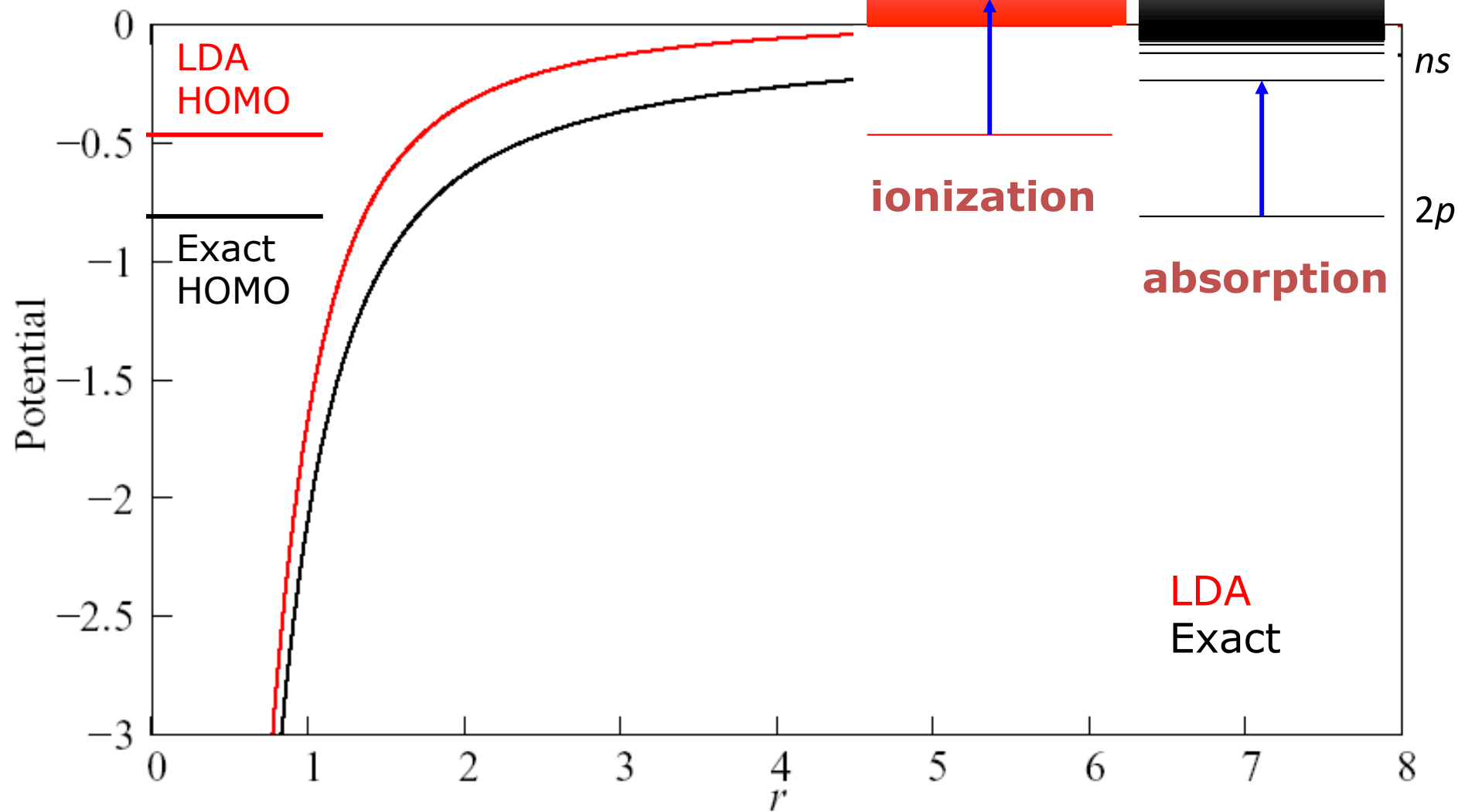
$$E(\text{Ne}^+) - E(\text{Ne}) = -127.400 + 128.233 = 0.833 \text{ H}$$





\* C.J. Umrigar and X. Gonze, in *Proceedings of the Mardi Gras '93 Conference*, ed. D.A. Browne *et al.*, (World Scientific, 1993).






*Understanding and Reducing Errors in Density Functional Theory*, M. Kim et al., Phys. Rev. Lett. **111**, 073003 (2013).

$E_{xc}^{\text{LDA}} [n_{\text{accurate}}]$   Very little improvement

i.e. It's a “functional error”

Example: Stretched homonuclear diatomics.

As opposed to:

$E_{xc}^{\text{LDA}} [n_{\text{accurate}}]$   Significant improvement

“density-driven error”

Example: Electron affinities.

**Ref.10** AW, J. Nafziger, K. Jiang, M-C.Kim, E. Sim, and K. Burke, *The Importance of Being Inconsistent*, Ann. Rev. Phys. Chem. **68**, 555 (2017).

**Total error:**  $\Delta E = \overset{\text{Approximate}}{\tilde{E}} - \overset{\text{Exact}}{E} = \Delta E_F + \Delta E_D.$

**Functional error:**  $\Delta E_F = \tilde{F}[n] - F[n]$

**Density-driven error:**

$$\Delta E_D = \tilde{F}[\tilde{n}] - \tilde{F}[n] + \int d^3r (\tilde{n}(\mathbf{r}) - n(\mathbf{r})) v(\mathbf{r})$$

In “normal” calculations,  $\Delta E_F \gg \Delta E_D$

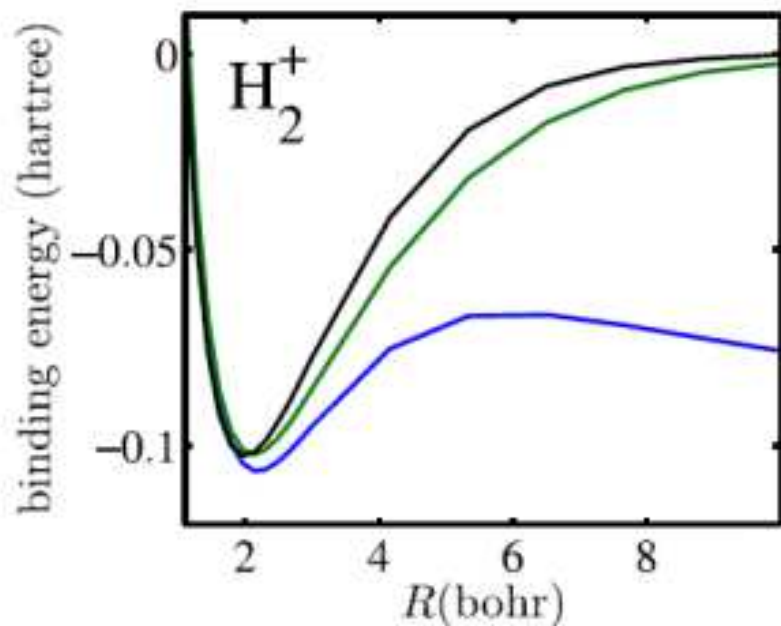
M. Kim et al., *Understanding and Reducing Errors in Density Functional Theory*, Phys. Rev. Lett. **111**, 073003 (2013).

M. Vuckovic et al., *Density Functional Analysis: The Theory of Density-Corrected DFT*, J. Chem. Theory Comput. **15**, 6636 (2019).

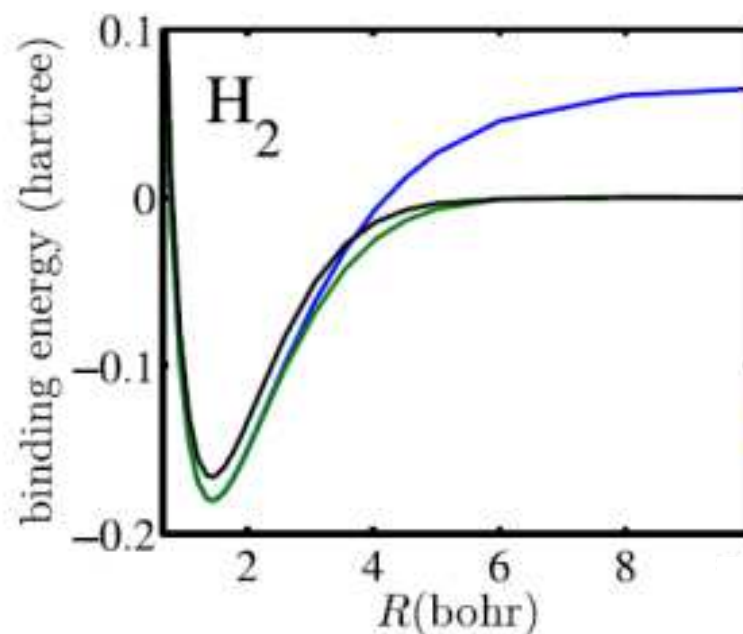
# Outline

- Simplest possible examples of density functionals
- Chemical Potential
- Derivative Discontinuities
- **Key errors (self-interaction, delocalization, static-correlation)**

For detailed error analysis when stretching bonds, check [Ref.9](#): Cohen, Mori-Sanchez, and Yang, Chem. Rev. (2012).



**Delocalization error**

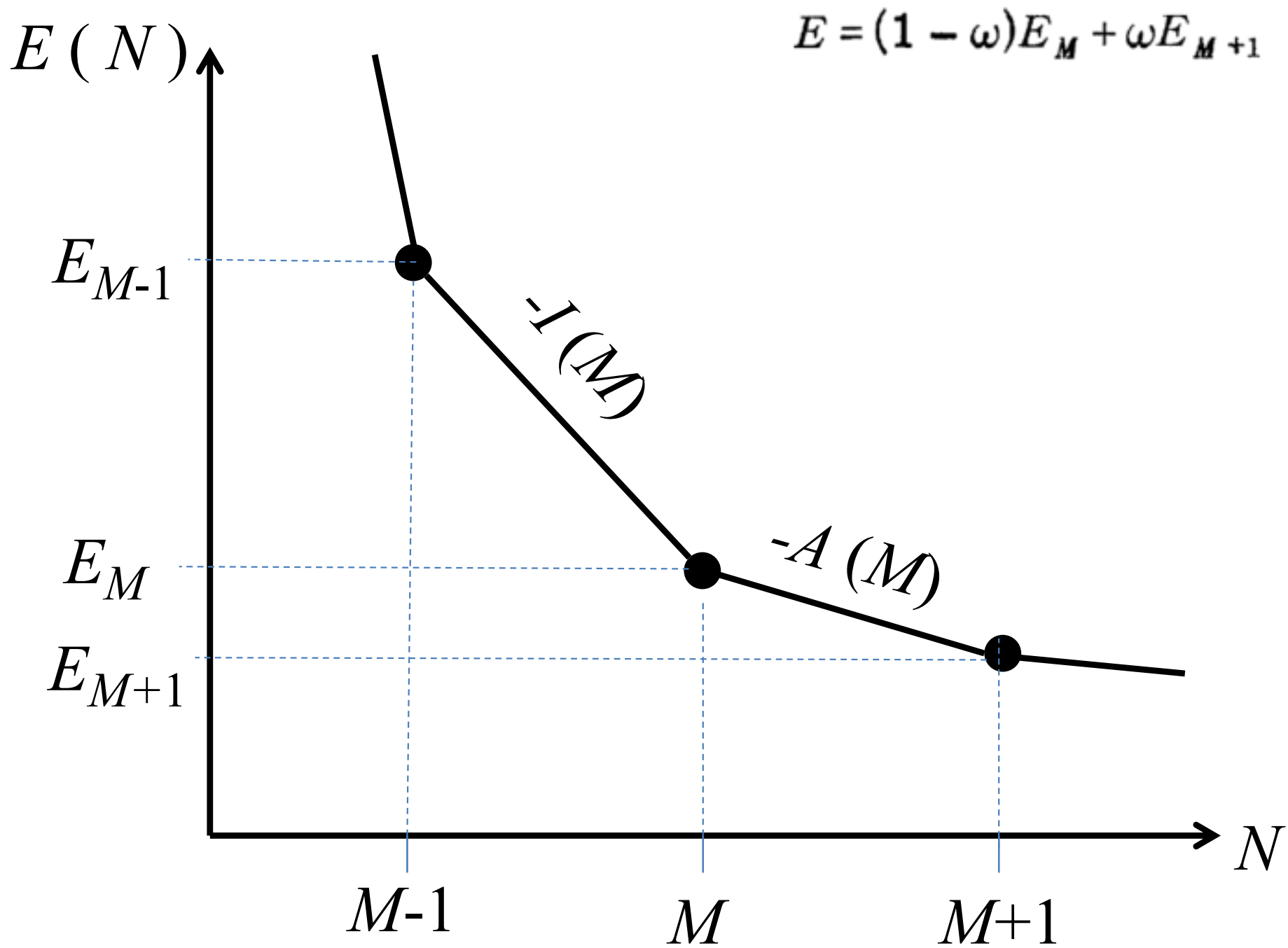


**Static-correlation error**

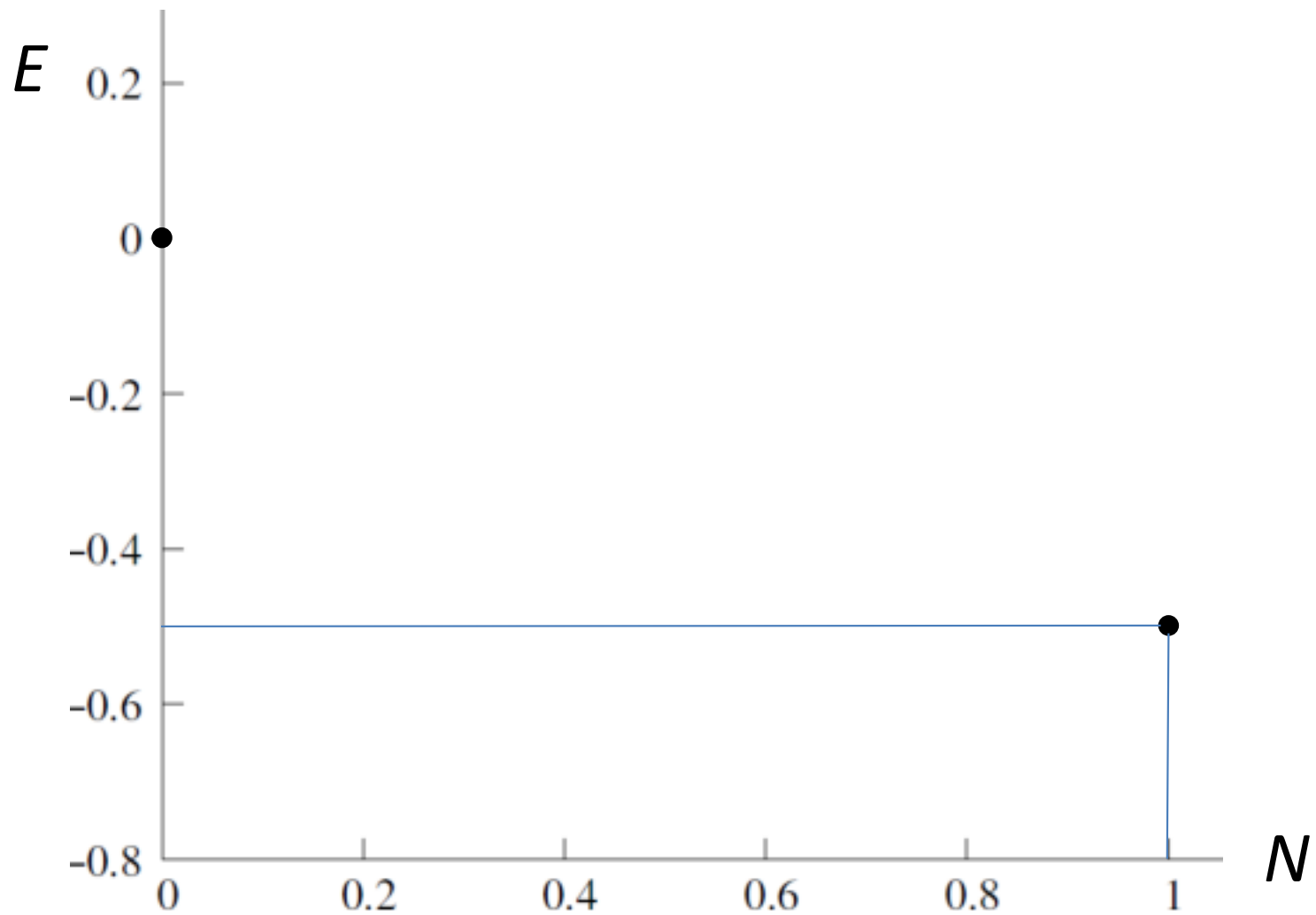
**exact**

**LDA**

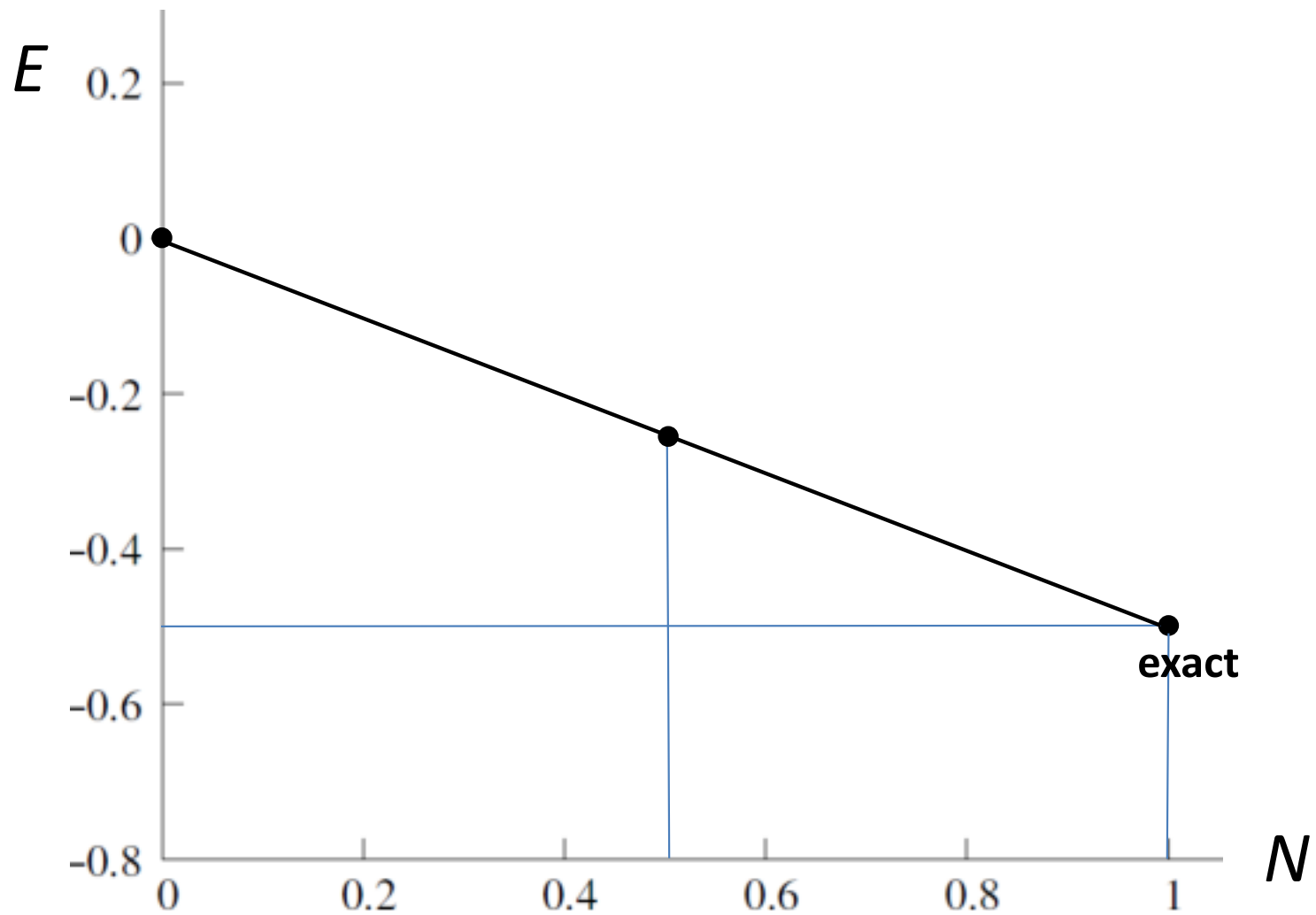
**OA-LDA**



# H atom

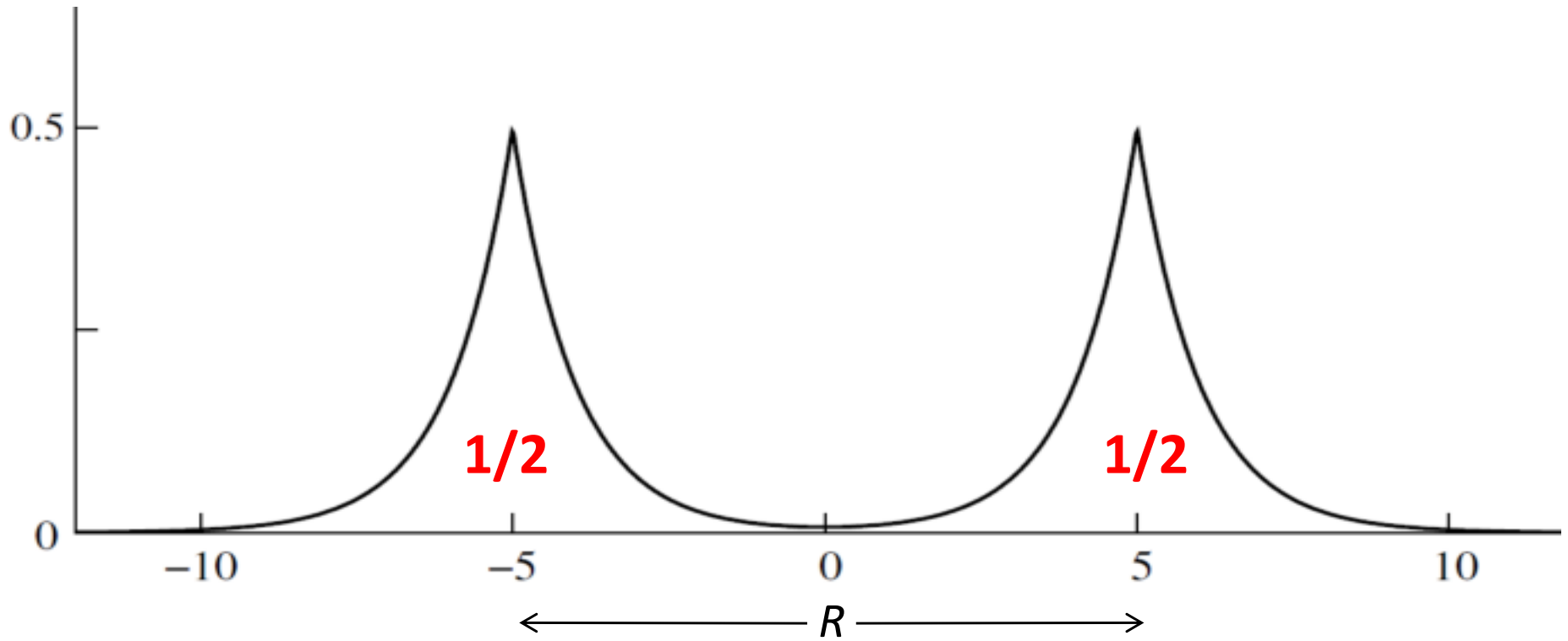


# H atom





# Stretched $H_2^+$



$E (R \rightarrow \infty) \longrightarrow E \text{ of H atom}$

$$F[n] = \frac{1}{8} \int d\mathbf{r} \frac{|\nabla n(\mathbf{r})|^2}{n(\mathbf{r})}$$

Check linearity of the exact functional for (up to) 1 electron:

$$\text{Define } n_N(\vec{r}) = N n(\vec{r})$$

$$F[n_N] = N F[n]$$

$$E[n] = F[n] + \int d\vec{r} v(\vec{r}) n(\vec{r})$$

For 1-electron systems, one expects

$$E_H[n] = -E_{XC}[n]$$

But, for approximate density functionals:

$$\text{SIE} = E_H[n] + E_{XC}[n]$$

Now, consider a density that integrates to a *non-integer* number of electrons  $0 < N < 1$ , defined by

$$n_N(\mathbf{r}) = N n_1(\mathbf{r})$$

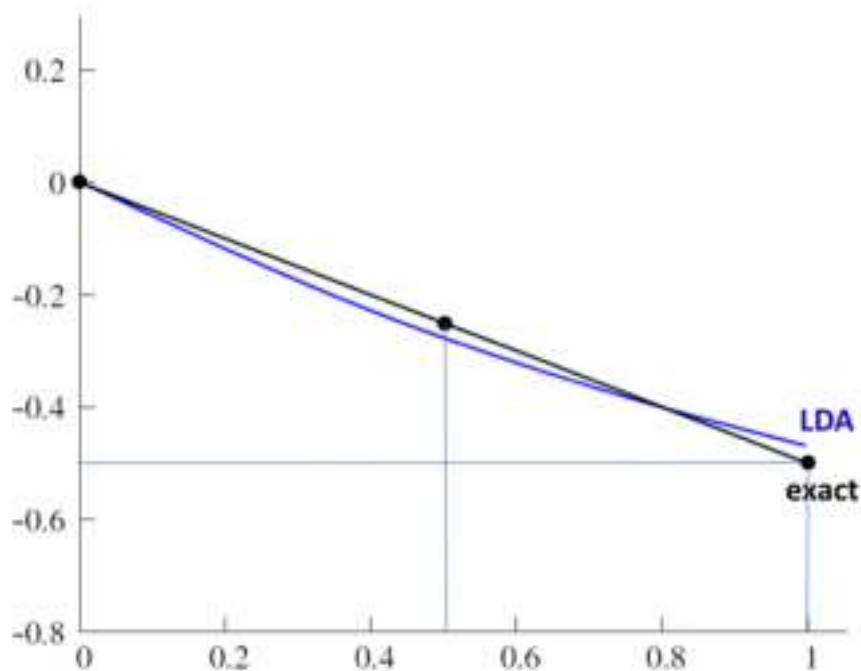
Since 
$$E_H[n] = \frac{1}{2} \int d\mathbf{r} \int d\mathbf{r}' \frac{n(\mathbf{r})n(\mathbf{r}')}{|\mathbf{r} - \mathbf{r}'|}$$

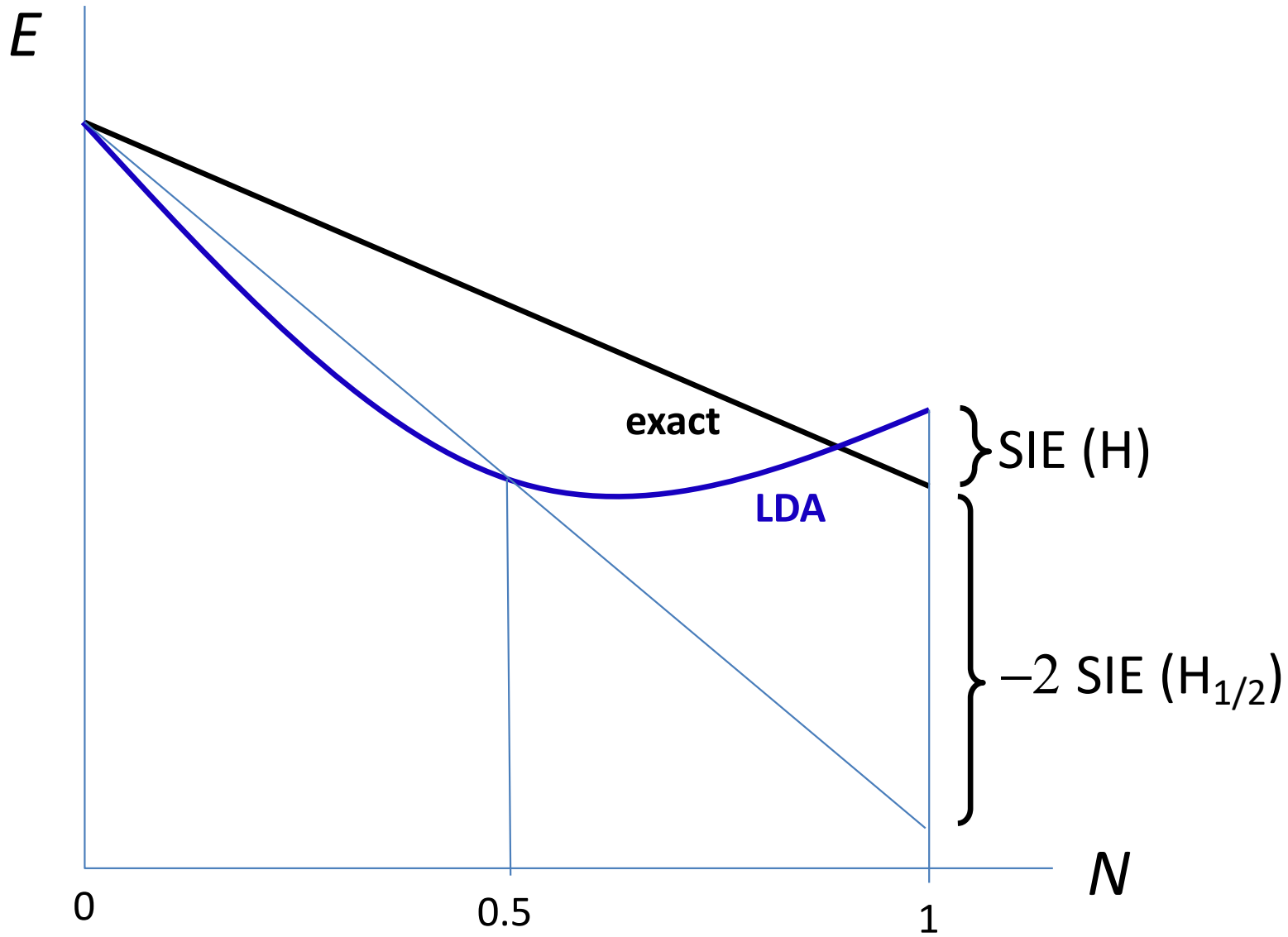
$$E_X^{\text{LDA}}[n] = A_X \int d\mathbf{r} n^{4/3}(\mathbf{r})$$

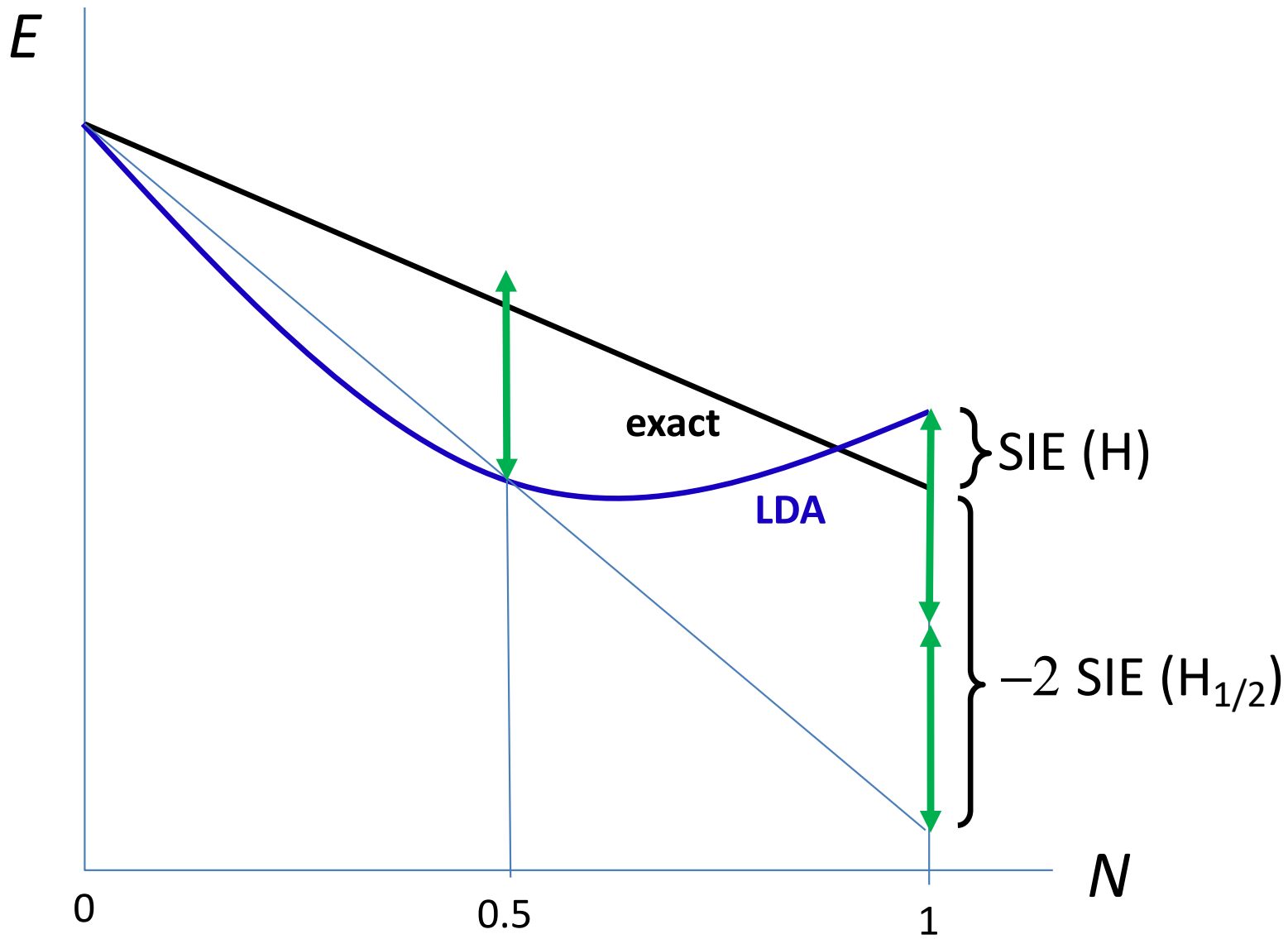
Then: 
$$\text{SIE}^{\text{LDA}}(N) = E_H[Nn_1] + E_{XC}[Nn_1]$$

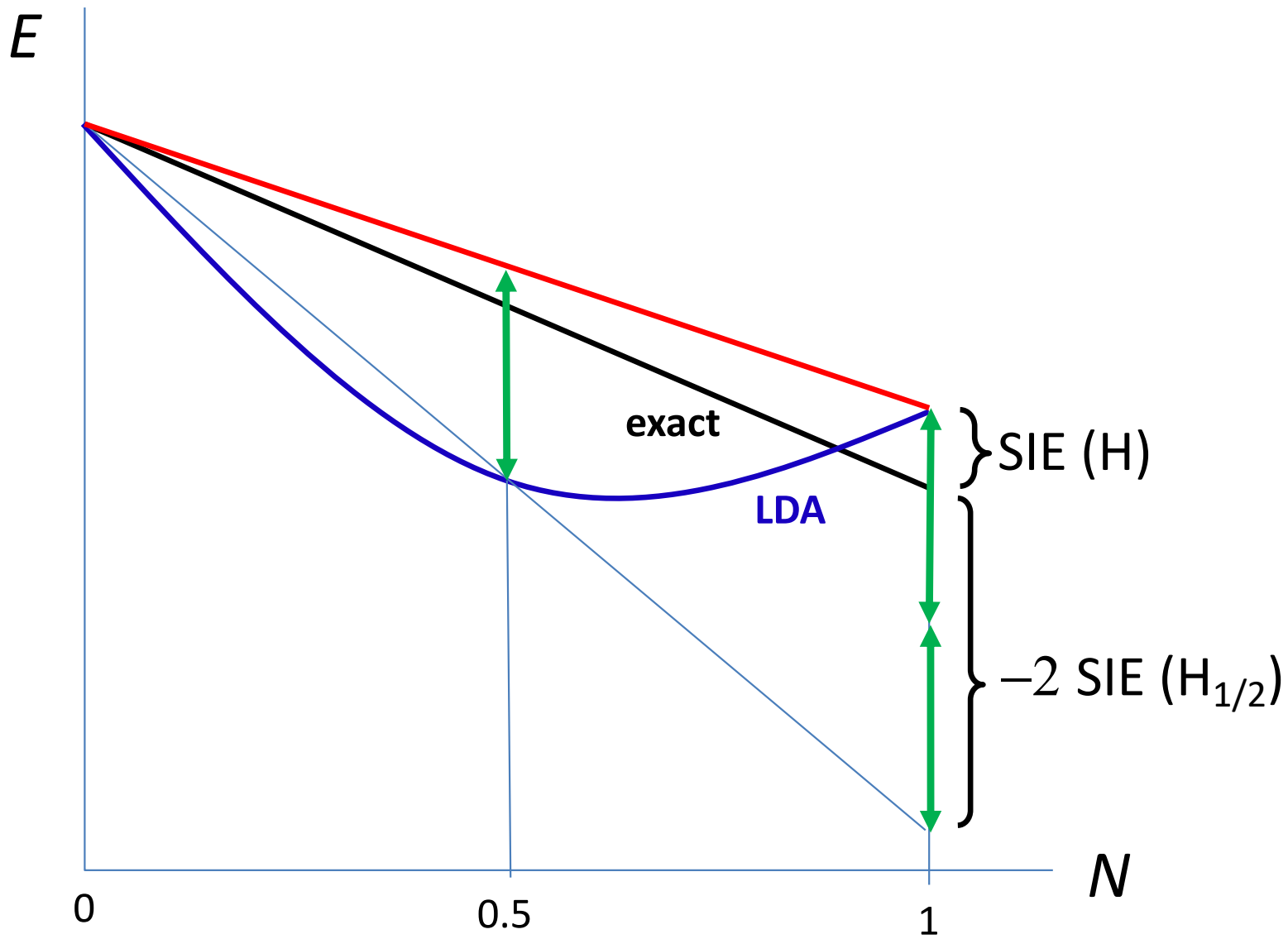
$$\begin{array}{ccc} \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ N^2 E_H[n_1] & & N^{4/3} E_X[n_1] \end{array}$$

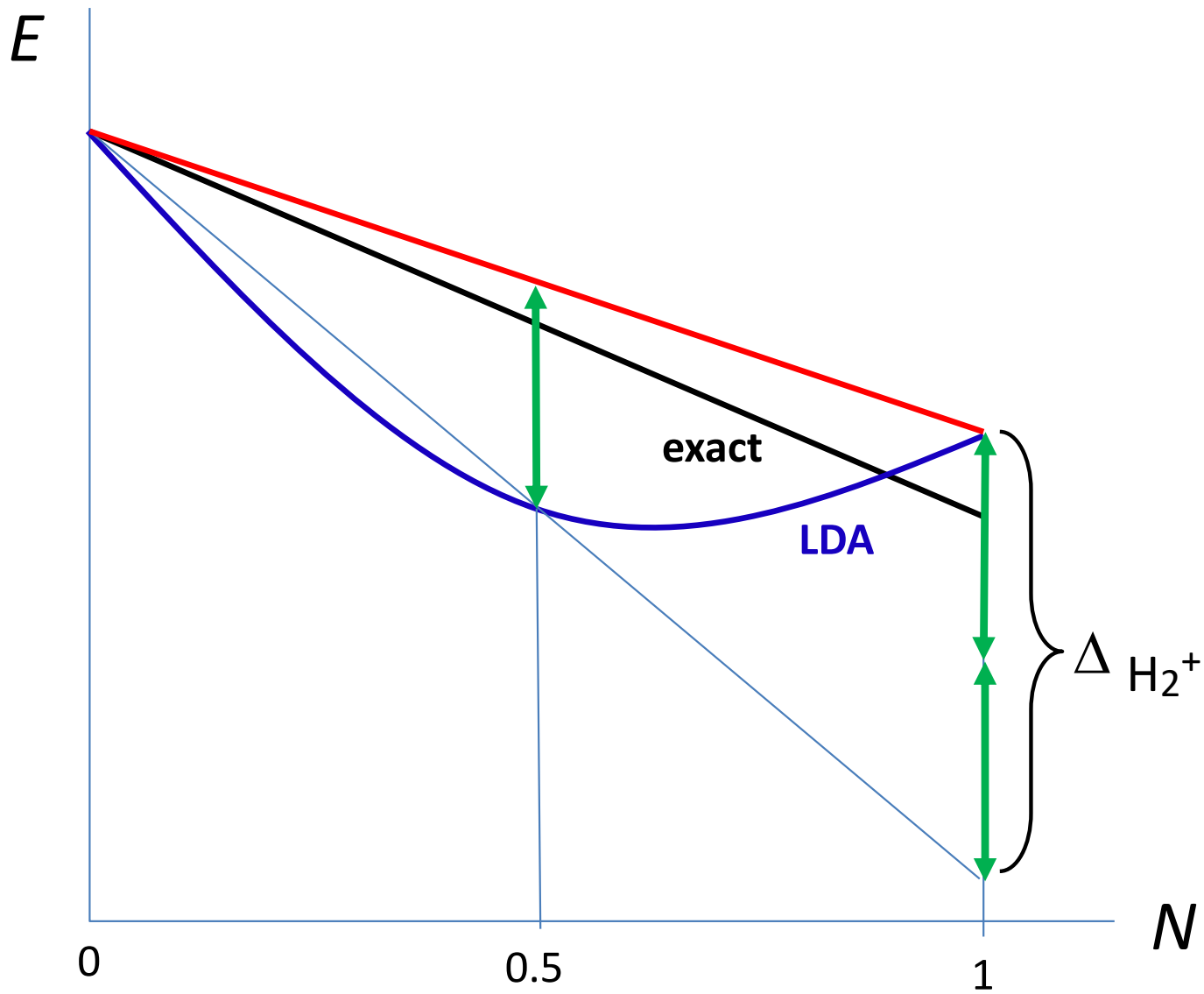
**But LDA is convex**

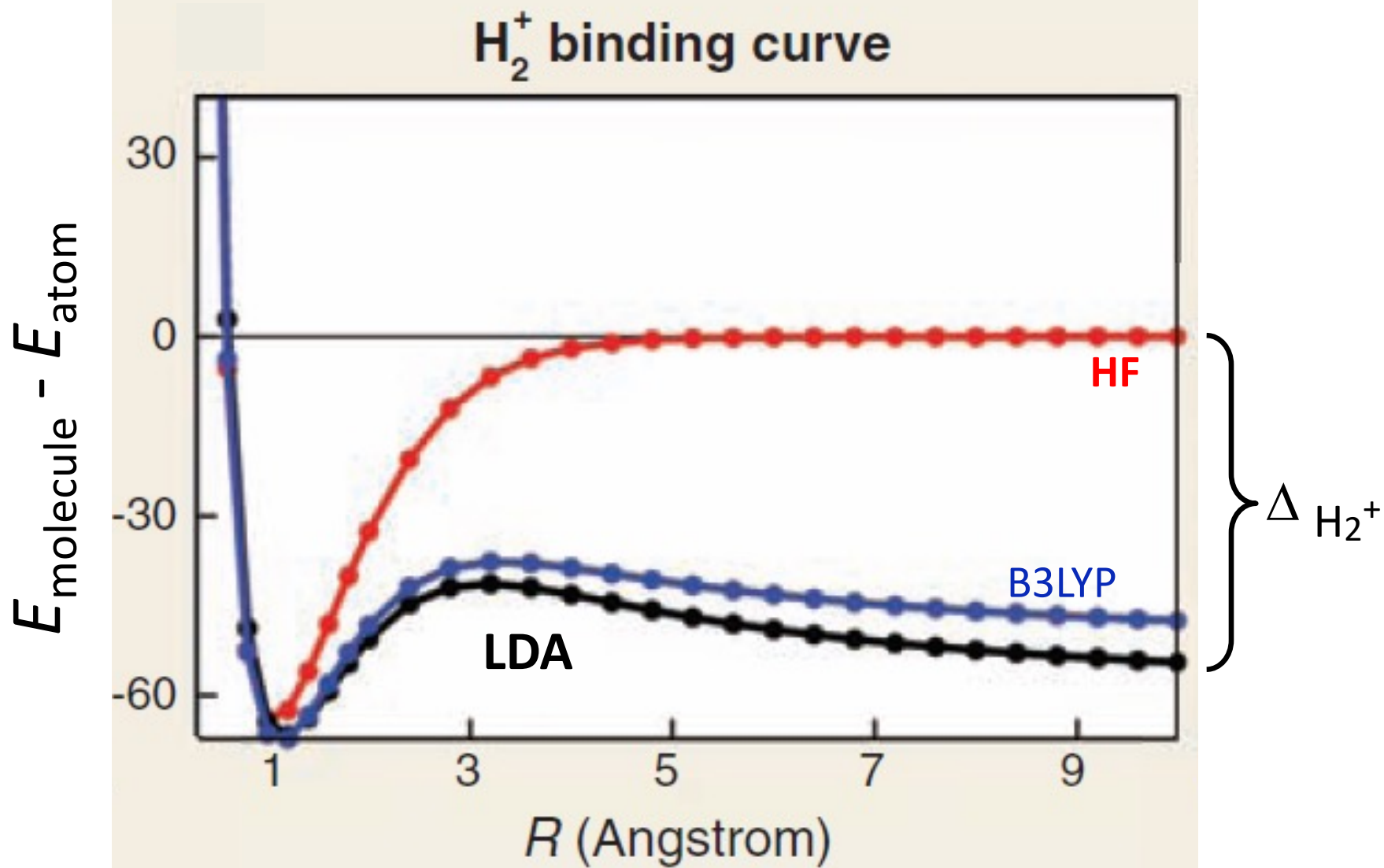












Aron J. Cohen, Paula Mori-Sánchez and Weitao Yang

*Science* **321**, 792 (2008);

DOI: 10.1126/science.1158722



## Approximate DFT calculations typically...

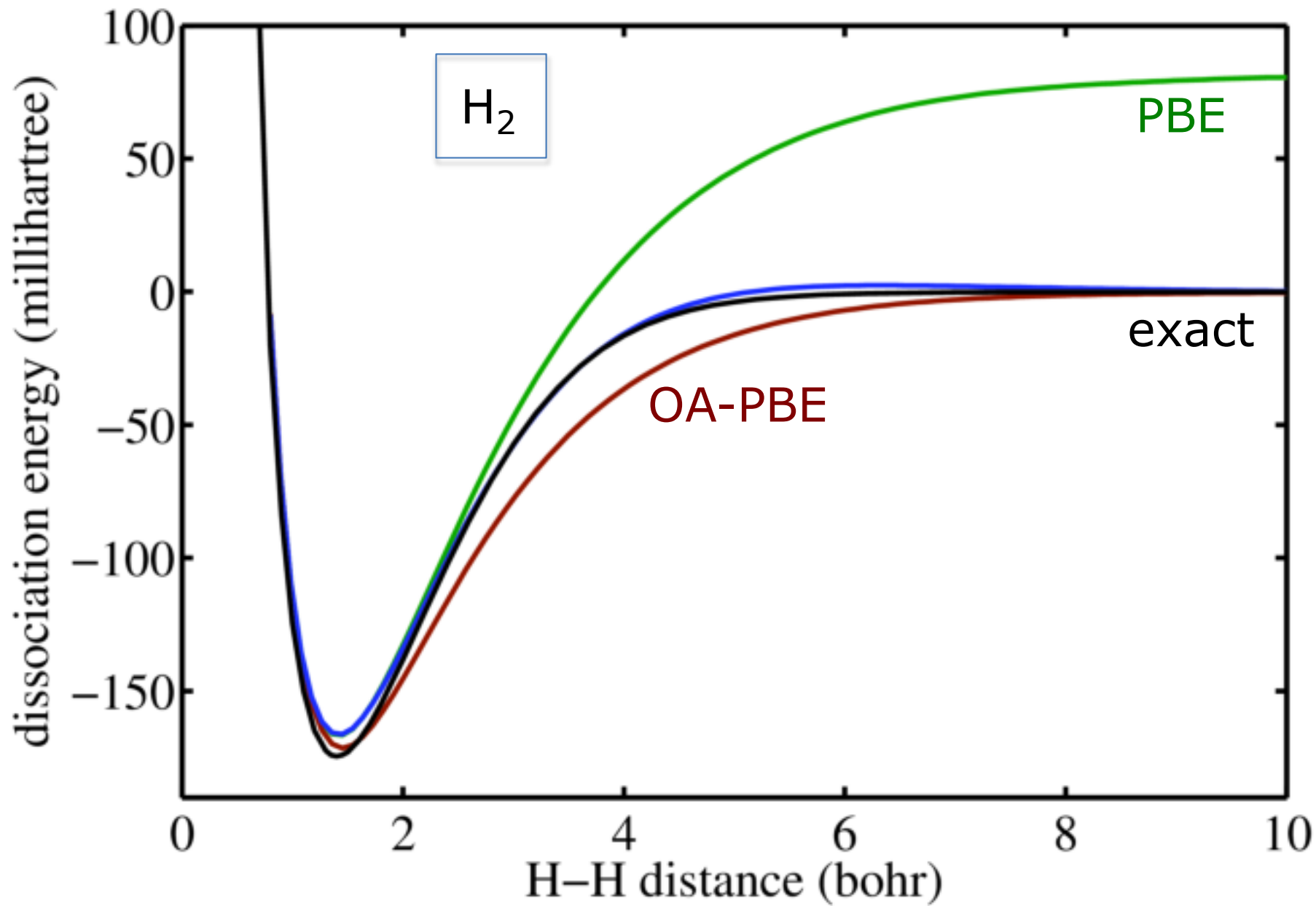
### Underestimate:

- Energies of dissociating molecular ions
- Barriers of Chemical Reactions
- Band gaps of materials
- Charge transfer excitation energies

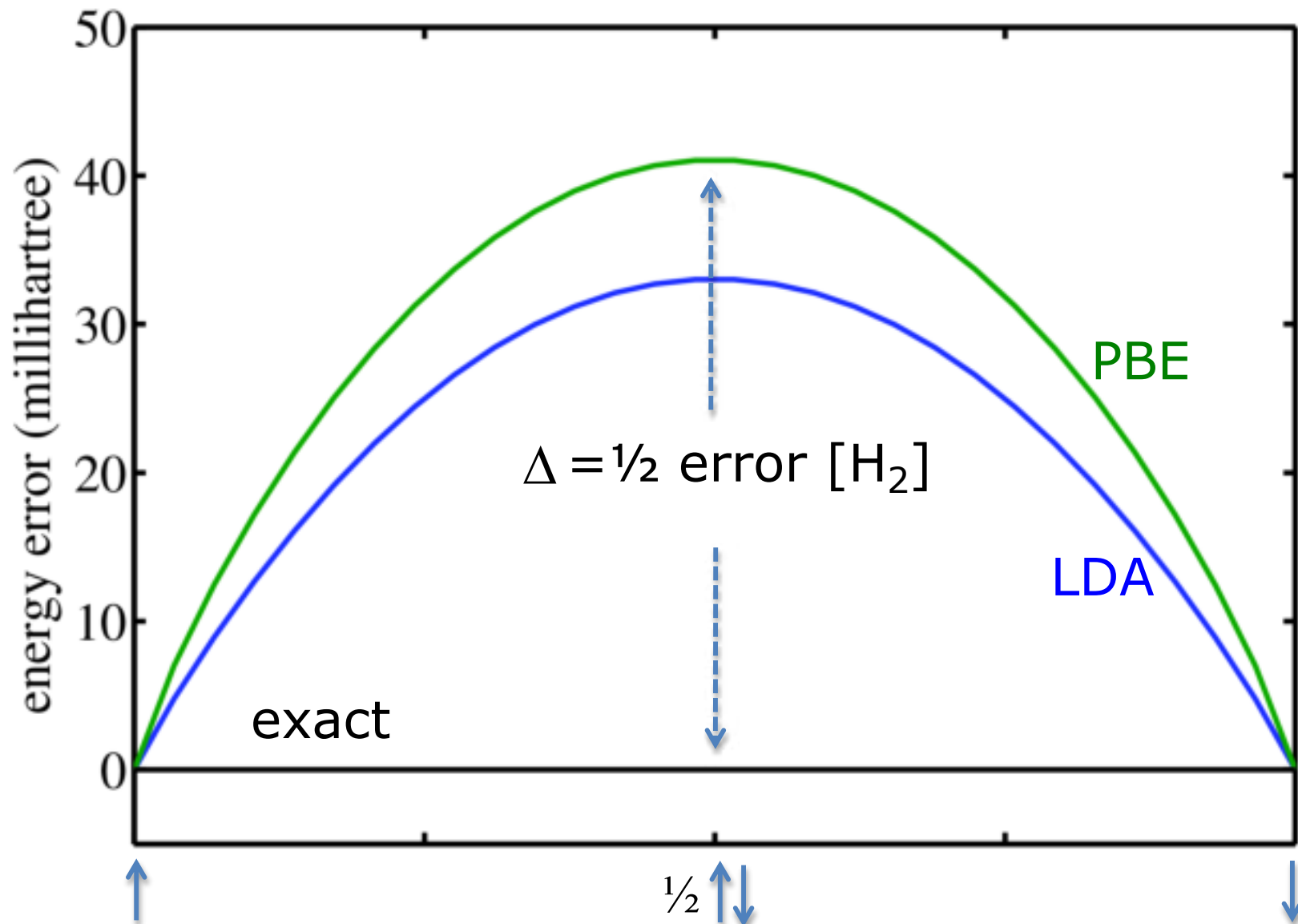
### Overestimate:

- Binding energies of charge-transfer complexes
- Response to Electric fields

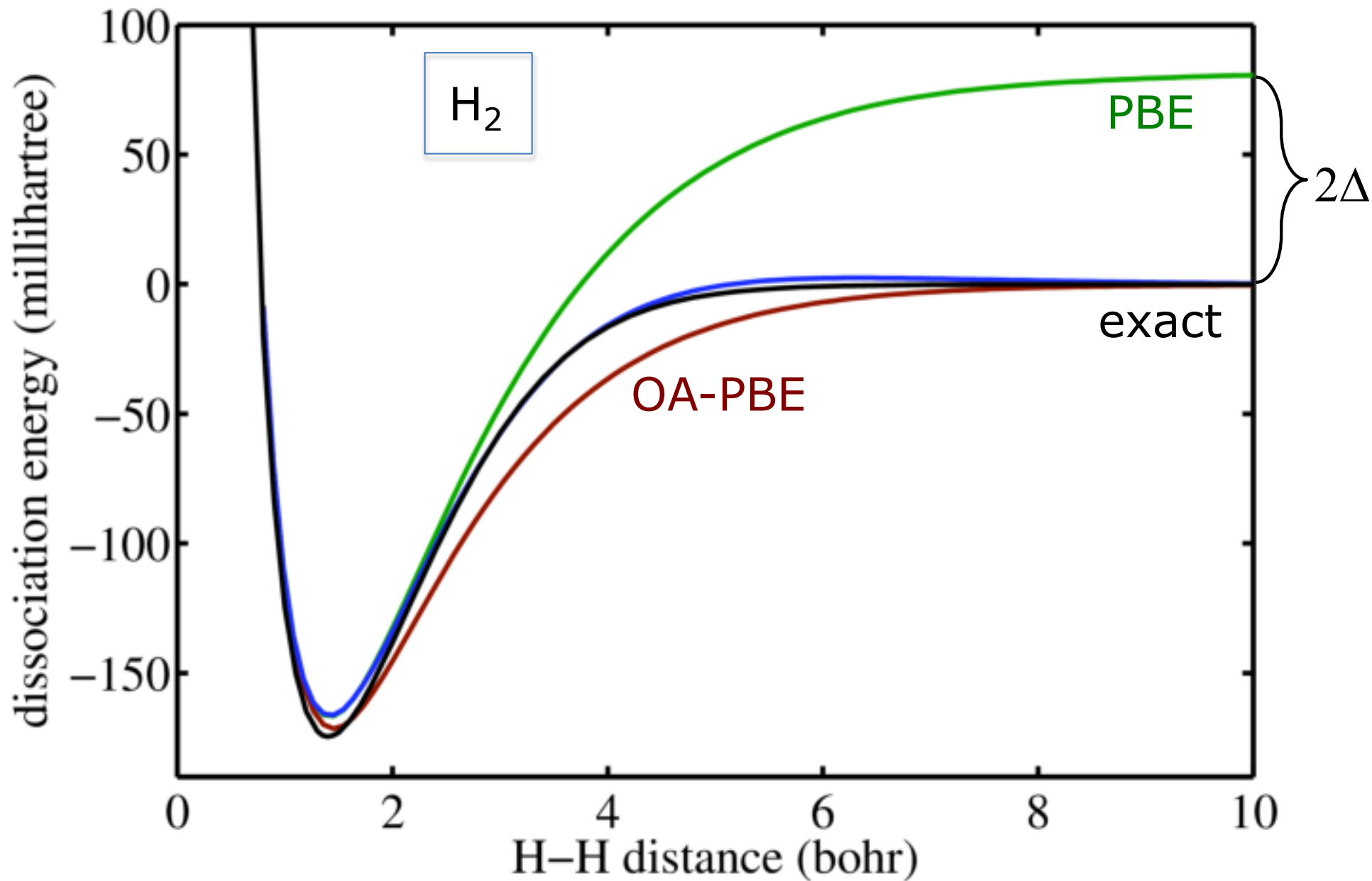
Aron J. Cohen, Paula Mori-Sánchez and Weitao Yang  
*Science* **321**, 792 (2008);  
DOI: 10.1126/science.1158722



# Fractional Spins in the Hydrogen atom:



Static Correlation Error



# FAQ and FHM:

**#1:** Since  $F[n]$  is independent of the external potential, why not calculate  $F$  extremely accurately for one system and then use it for all others?

*Misunderstood the meaning of “universal functional”.*

**#2:** What is the physical meaning of the Lagrange multiplier  $\mu$  ?

*That depends. Could be  $-I$  or could be  $-A$*

**#3:** I'm doing a band-structure calculation with a good semi-local functional. Why is my band-gap wrong?

*Lack of derivative discontinuity in approximate functional.*

**#4:** Do “good densities” imply “good energies” ?

*Not necessarily.*

**#5: Which functional should I choose ?**

*Check out W. Koch and M.C. Holthausen: “A Chemist’s Guide to Density Functional Theory”, Wiley (2001).*



Peter Elliott

1

K. Burke, Perspective on Density Functional Theory, J. Chem. Phys. **136**, 150901 (2012).

“Clearly, when calculating a property to compare with experiment, one could keep trying functionals until agreement with the measured value is reached. Not only is this contrary to the entire spirit of DFT, it is certainly not first principles, and is the worst form of empiricism. The literature today is (mildly) infected with such calculations, and the existence of so many approximations, with so little guidance, makes it ever more difficult for non-specialists to separate the silver from the dross. Users should stick to the standard functionals (as most do, according to Fig. 1), or explain very carefully why not.”

# FAQ and FHM:

**#1:** Since  $F[n]$  is independent of the external potential, why not calculate  $F$  extremely accurately for one system and then use it for all others?

*Misunderstood the meaning of “universal functional”.*

**#2:** What is the physical meaning of the Lagrange multiplier  $\mu$  ?

*That depends. Could be  $-I$  or could be  $-A$*

**#3:** I’m doing a band-structure calculation with a good semi-local functional. Why is my band-gap wrong?

*Lack of derivative discontinuity in approximate functional.*

**#4:** Do “good densities” imply “good energies” ?

*Not necessarily.*

**#5: Which functional should I choose ?**

*That also depends. But after picking one, stick to it.*