

**HIGH-PRECISION MEASUREMENTS IN
ATOMIC CESIUM SUPPORTING A
LOW-ENERGY TEST OF THE STANDARD
MODEL**

by

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B. A., Middlebury College, 1992

M. S., University of Colorado, 1995

A thesis submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Colorado in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Physics

1998

This thesis entitled:
High-Precision Measurements in Atomic Cesium Supporting a Low-Energy Test of
the Standard Model
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The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.

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High-Precision Measurements in Atomic Cesium Supporting a Low-Energy Test of the Standard Model

Thesis directed by Professor Carl E. Wieman

The measurement of parity nonconservation (PNC) in atomic cesium provides the most precise low-energy test of the standard model of electroweak interactions. However, the test is limited by the uncertainty in the *ab initio* calculations that are required to interpret the measurement. This thesis describes one measurement that suggests that the accuracy of the theory may be better than its authors claim, and a second measurement that may be used in place of a less accurate calculation.

A 0.11% measurement of the dc Stark shift of the $6S \rightarrow 7S$ transition in cesium using high-precision laser spectroscopy removes the largest discrepancy between experiment and theory. With this new measurement, and several recently improved measurements by other groups, the uncertainty of the theory is re-evaluated. We find that the standard deviation of the differences between experiment and theory is 0.40%. This standard deviation suggests that the quoted uncertainty of the theory can be reduced from 1% to 0.40%.

A 0.16% measurement of M_{hf}/β using similar methods is also presented. The quantity M_{hf} is the off-diagonal hyperfine-interaction-induced magnetic dipole amplitude, and β is the tensor transition polarizability; both are for the $6S \rightarrow 7S$ transition in cesium. This ratio is combined with a 0.25% semi-empirical determination of M_{hf} from another group to determine the value of β with a precision of 0.30%. Previously, the value of β used in the test of the standard model was calculated using the *ab initio* theory, thus increasing the uncertainty due to theory in the final test. Using the new measured value of β , the current values of the theory with improved precision, and the previous measurement of PNC in cesium we make a 0.61% test of the standard model.

The precision of this test is likely to motivate further work in this field. Therefore, two experiments are discussed that may be useful in improving the signal-to-noise ratio on a future PNC measurement: an experiment that phase modulates the dye laser used to drive the $6S \rightarrow 7S$ transition to eliminate the spatial intensity variation inside a Fabry-Perot etalon, and an experiment that transversely cools the atomic cesium beam. Finally, a different—but related—PNC measurement is discussed.

For Rebecca.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document has but a single author; every other document upon which my name has been placed has at least two, and usually more. The simple fact of the matter is that in all of these works, the number of people who contributed is far larger than the author list would suggest. I could not have produced this thesis without the help of a very long list of people both inside JILA and out, where they helped me along my professional and personal journeys. The list is, of course, too long to remember to thank everyone, but here is where I shall try.

First and foremost I must thank my advisor Dr. Carl Wieman. Somehow Carl saw something in me worth growing when I was a first-year graduate student. Although he was uncertain, at times, whether I **would** finish graduate school with a Ph. D., he never doubted that I **could**. He has taught me a great deal about high-precision experiments and how to do them right. I probably taught him a thousand ways he never dreamed about to do them wrong. I am a much better scientist because of his tutelage, and for that he has my gratitude.

There are two colleagues who worked with me daily until they went their separate ways: Jake Roberts and Chris Wood. Chris, being the senior graduate student, taught me lots about the ins and outs of the experimental details. Jake, despite being the “junior” graduate student, was an excellent source of ideas, and was always a valuable resource for when I did not completely understand the theory, or when I needed someone to figure out how to analyze the data I just took while I slaved away taking more. Thanks to you both.

I am convinced that JILA is a such a great place to work because of the support staff.

In no particular order, Hans Greene, Hans Rohner, Blaine Horner, Dave Alchenberger, and Seth Wieman, were always around in the shop to help me build that part I needed yesterday, or to solve what I usually thought was an unsolvable problem. Terry Brown, Paul Buckingham, James Fung-A-Fat, and Mike Whitmore were invaluable for their help with electronics. Whether it was trying to figure out what was wrong with my high-voltage amplifier, or trying to get my favorite oscilloscope fixed, they were always willing to help.

There is a group of people in JILA who some would call “secretaries” or “assistants.” I call them saviors. Many, many thanks to Karen Melcher, Fran Haas, Leslie Haas, Lisa Perry, LaReina Romero, Agnes Polanowski, and Susannah Jarvis, who take care of all the details, make the coffee, and make JILA a more pleasant place to live. . . um, I mean work.

The first time I ordered something from the Supply Office, I think I got on Ed's bad side. I quickly corrected that mistake and stayed on his good side ever since (I think). Everyone should give Ed Holliness a big thanks, because his office makes buying equipment painless, and without him we'd have to buy our own stuff!

I did not find out how valuable the Scientific Reports Office is until I started writing real papers. Many thanks must go to Marilee DeGoede and Laurie Kovalenko for taking care of a lot of the little details I never realized existed.

On a more personal note, I have had many friends who have helped me out along the way. Thanks to Andy Steinbach for studying with me for comps. Thanks to Thomas Crawford for commiserating with me during the bad times. Thanks to Ruth Rhodes for all the trips up to Dairy Queen for Blizzards (and where are you now?). Thanks to Michelle—then Pierce, now Ruprecht—and Pete Ruprecht for all the card playing (do you still owe me a bomber?). Thanks to everyone at the “Physics House” for all our Thanksgivings and Christmases together. Thanks to Matt Wingate for being a great roommate until Rebecca came along. Thanks to Mrs. Sama for making me hate English. Thanks to Rich Wolfson and Jeff Dunham for helpful advice when making big decisions. Thanks to Mom, Dad, and Kristy for being proud.

One friend and colleague deserves special mention: Kristan Corwin. I am not sure how it worked out this way, but Kristan always seemed to be around when I wanted to talk to someone because I was bored, because I had an exciting new result to share, because I had a problem I did not understand, because I needed someone to cheer me up—whatever. My graduate school experience was much more pleasant, and I have a different outlook because of her. Thank you very much, Kristan.

Finally, there are no words to express my gratitude to my dear wife Rebecca. This is the second thesis she has had to live through, and I promise there will not be a third. Rebecca has been with me through thick and thin and has supported my every decision, even when she felt that she did not. It is no understatement to say that without her support I would not still be in physics. Thank you, Rebecca. Now it is your turn.

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