

Exploiting the analog of the concept of electrical “voltage” – *i.e.* a difference in electrical potential  $\Delta\Phi_e^{b-a} \equiv \Phi_e^b - \Phi_e^a = \int_a^b \vec{\nabla}\Phi_e(\vec{r}) \cdot d\vec{\ell} = -\int_a^b \vec{E}(\vec{r}) \cdot d\vec{\ell}$  we can also define a complex particle velocity potential **difference** (*aka* particle velocity “voltage”) as:

$$\Delta\tilde{\Phi}_u^{b-a}(t) \equiv \tilde{\Phi}_u^b(t) - \tilde{\Phi}_u^a(t) = \int_a^b \vec{\nabla}\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t) \cdot d\vec{\ell} = -\int_a^b \tilde{\vec{u}}(\vec{r},t) \cdot d\vec{\ell}$$

From the mass continuity equation:  $\vec{\nabla} \cdot \tilde{\vec{u}}(\vec{r},t) = -\frac{1}{\rho_o}(\partial\tilde{\rho}(\vec{r},t)/\partial t)$  and:  $\tilde{\vec{u}}(\vec{r},t) = \vec{\nabla}\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t)$ , then for “everyday” audio sound over-pressure amplitudes in {bone-dry} air at NTP of  $|\tilde{p}(\vec{r},t)| \ll 100 \text{ RMS Pascals}$  {  $SPL \ll 134 \text{ dB}$  }, then:  $\vec{\nabla} \cdot \vec{\nabla}\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t) = -\frac{1}{\rho_o}(\partial\tilde{\rho}(\vec{r},t)/\partial t)$ , which can be written as  $\nabla^2\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t) = -\frac{1}{\rho_o}(\partial\tilde{\rho}(\vec{r},t)/\partial t)$ ; this is Poisson’s equation for the complex particle velocity potential!

Thus, we can thus solve {certain classes of} acoustical physics problems simply by solving Poisson’s equation  $\nabla^2\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t) = -\frac{1}{\rho_o}(\partial\tilde{\rho}(\vec{r},t)/\partial t)$  for the complex particle velocity potential  $\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t)$ , subject to the boundary condition(s) {and/or initial conditions at  $t = 0$ } associated with the specific problem using techniques/methodology similar to that used for solving Poisson’s equation  $\nabla^2\tilde{\Phi}_e(\vec{r}) \neq 0$  in E&M problems!

Note that {again} using the {linearized} adiabatic relationship between complex overpressure and mass density,  $\tilde{\rho}(\vec{r},t) = \frac{1}{c^2}\tilde{p}(\vec{r},t)$  we also have:  $\partial\tilde{\rho}(\vec{r},t)/\partial t \simeq \frac{1}{c^2}\partial\tilde{p}(\vec{r},t)/\partial t$ . Hence for “everyday” audio sound fields, the above differential equation for the complex velocity potential can equivalently be written as:  $\nabla^2\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t) = -\frac{1}{\rho_o c^2}(\partial\tilde{p}(\vec{r},t)/\partial t)$ .

If  $\tilde{\vec{u}}(\vec{r},t) = \vec{\nabla}\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t)$ , the {linearized} Euler equation can be written as:

$$\frac{\partial\vec{\nabla}\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t)}{\partial t} = \vec{\nabla}\frac{\partial\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t)}{\partial t} \simeq -\frac{1}{\rho_o}\vec{\nabla}\tilde{p}(\vec{r},t), \text{ which implies that: } \frac{\partial\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t)}{\partial t} \simeq -\frac{1}{\rho_o}\tilde{p}(\vec{r},t), \text{ and}$$

hence that:  $\frac{\partial^2\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t)}{\partial t^2} \simeq -\frac{1}{\rho_o}\frac{\partial\tilde{p}(\vec{r},t)}{\partial t}$ . From above, we also have:  $\frac{\partial\tilde{p}(\vec{r},t)}{\partial t} \simeq c^2\frac{\partial\tilde{\rho}(\vec{r},t)}{\partial t}$ , thus:

$$\frac{\partial^2\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t)}{\partial t^2} \simeq -\frac{c^2}{\rho_o}\frac{\partial\tilde{\rho}(\vec{r},t)}{\partial t}, \text{ but from the above Poisson equation: } \nabla^2\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t) = -\frac{1}{\rho_o}\frac{\partial\tilde{\rho}(\vec{r},t)}{\partial t},$$

thus, we obtain the wave equation for the complex velocity potential:

$$\boxed{\nabla^2\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t) - \frac{1}{c^2}\frac{\partial^2\tilde{\Phi}_u(\vec{r},t)}{\partial t^2} = 0}$$