

Atoms Entropy Quanta



Einstein's Statistical Physics of 1905

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Einstein writes
to a friend in 1905

“Dear Habicht....”

Einstein to Conrad Habicht
18th or 25th May 2005



Handwritten letter in German, dated May 18th or 25th, 2005. The text is written in cursive and appears to be a letter from Einstein to Habicht. The right page is addressed to 'Lieber Habicht!' and discusses financial matters, mentioning 'Hilffspersonen', 'Zinsen', and 'Kaufmann'. The left page contains the main body of the letter, including a signature 'Ihr A. E.' and a postscript 'Einsicht von dem in 17 Jahren...'. There is a small number '44' written in the middle of the right page.





“...you frozen whale, you smoked, dried, canned piece of sole...”

...So, what are you up to, you frozen whale, you smoked, dried, canned piece of sole...? ... Why have you still not sent me your dissertation? ... Don't you know that I am one of the 1.5 fellows who would read it with interest and pleasure, you wretched man? I promise you four papers in return...

The [first] paper deals with radiation and the energy properties of light and is very revolutionary, as you will see if you send me your work *first*.

The second paper is a determination of the true sizes of atoms from the diffusion and the viscosity of dilute solutions of neutral substances.

The third proves that, on the assumption of the molecular kinetic theory of heat, bodies on the order of magnitude $1/1000$ mm, suspended in liquids, must already perform an observable random motion that is produced by thermal motion;...

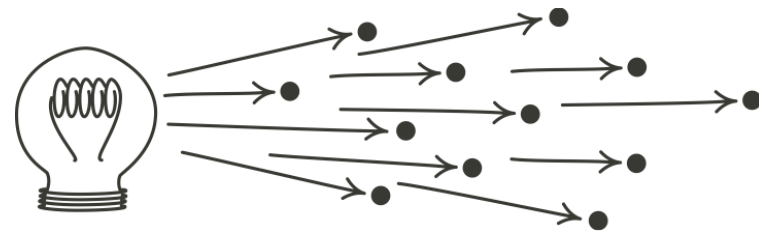
The fourth paper is only a rough draft at this point, and is an electrodynamics of moving bodies which employs a modification of the theory of space and time; the purely kinematical part of this paper will surely interest you.



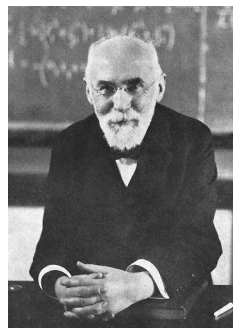
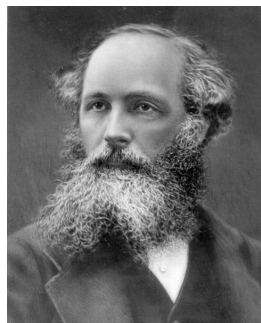
“...and is very revolutionary”

Einstein's assessment of his light quantum paper.

Light as depicted by Maxwell-Lorentz electrodynamics, the greatest theoretical achievement of 19thc. Science



"Monochromatic radiation of low density behaves--as long as Wien's radiation formula is valid [i.e. at high values of frequency/temperature]--in a thermodynamic sense, as if it consisted of mutually independent energy quanta of magnitude $[h\nu]$."



Why is the light quantum alone “very revolutionary”?

1 "Light quantum/photoelectric effect paper"

"On a heuristic viewpoint concerning the production and transformation of light."

Annalen der Physik, 17(1905), pp. 132-148.(17 March 1905)

The great achievement of 19thc. physics, Maxwell-Lorentz electrodynamics, is overturned.



2 Einstein's doctoral dissertation

"A New Determination of Molecular Dimensions"

Buchdruckerei K. J. Wyss, Bern, 1905. (30 April 1905)

Also: *Annalen der Physik*, 19(1906), pp. 289-305.

Atoms are real and must appear in our treatments of matter. The Maxwell-Boltzmann program is fulfilled.

3 "Brownian motion paper."

"On the motion of small particles suspended in liquids at rest required by the molecular-kinetic theory of heat."

Annalen der Physik, 17(1905), pp. 549-560.(May 1905; received 11 May 1905)

4 Special relativity

"On the Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies,"

Annalen der Physik, 17 (1905), pp. 891-921. (June 1905; received 30 June, 1905)

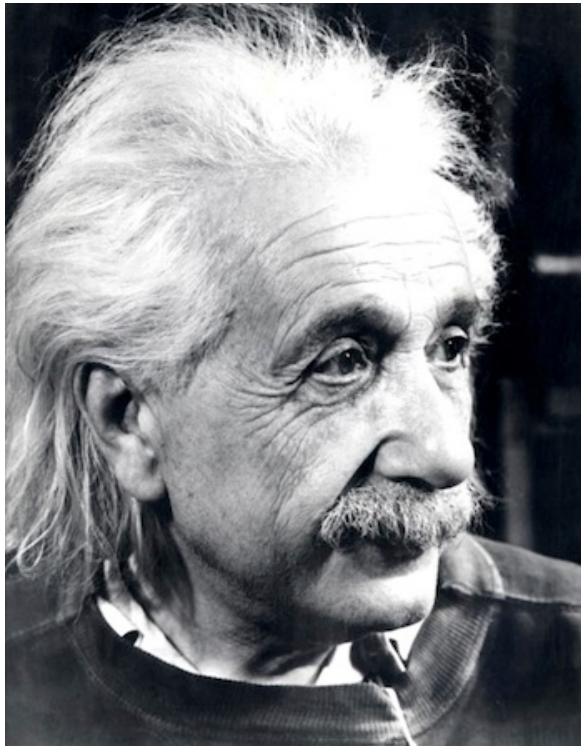
Results implicit in Maxwell-Lorentz electrodynamics are extracted and made general.

5 $E=mc^2$

"Does the Inertia of a Body Depend upon its Energy Content?"

Annalen der Physik, 18(1905), pp. 639-641. (September 1905; received 27 September, 1905)

Einstein's light quantum paper initiated a reappraisal of the physical constitution of light that is not resolved over 100 years later.



“All these fifty years of conscious brooding have brought me no nearer to answering the question, What are light quanta? Nowadays every Tom, Dick and Harry thinks he knows it, but he is mistaken.”

Einstein to Besso, Dec. 12, 1951

This talk.

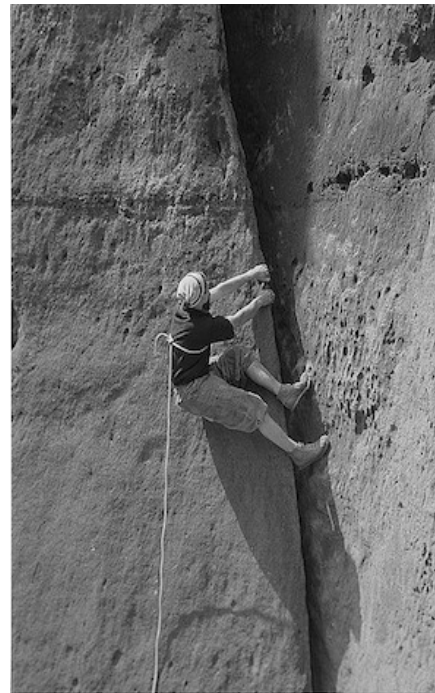
How
did he do it?

Was it....

Inscrutable
inspiration?



Systematic
exploration?



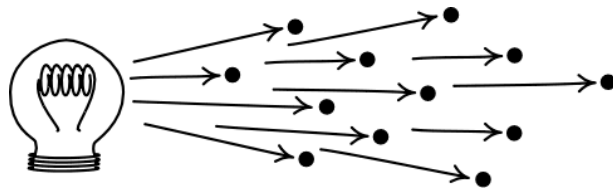
...it was a bit of both...

The *content*

of Einstein's discovery was quite extraordinary:

High frequency light energy exists in

- many,
- independent,
- spatially localized points.



The *method*

of Einstein's discovery was familiar and secure.

Einstein's research program in statistical physics from first publication of 1901:

How can we infer the microscopic properties of matter from its macroscopic properties?

The statistical papers of 1905: the analysis of thermal systems consisting of

- many,
- independent
- spatially localized, points.

Ideal gases,
Dilute sugar solutions,
Small particles in suspension



My goal is NOT...

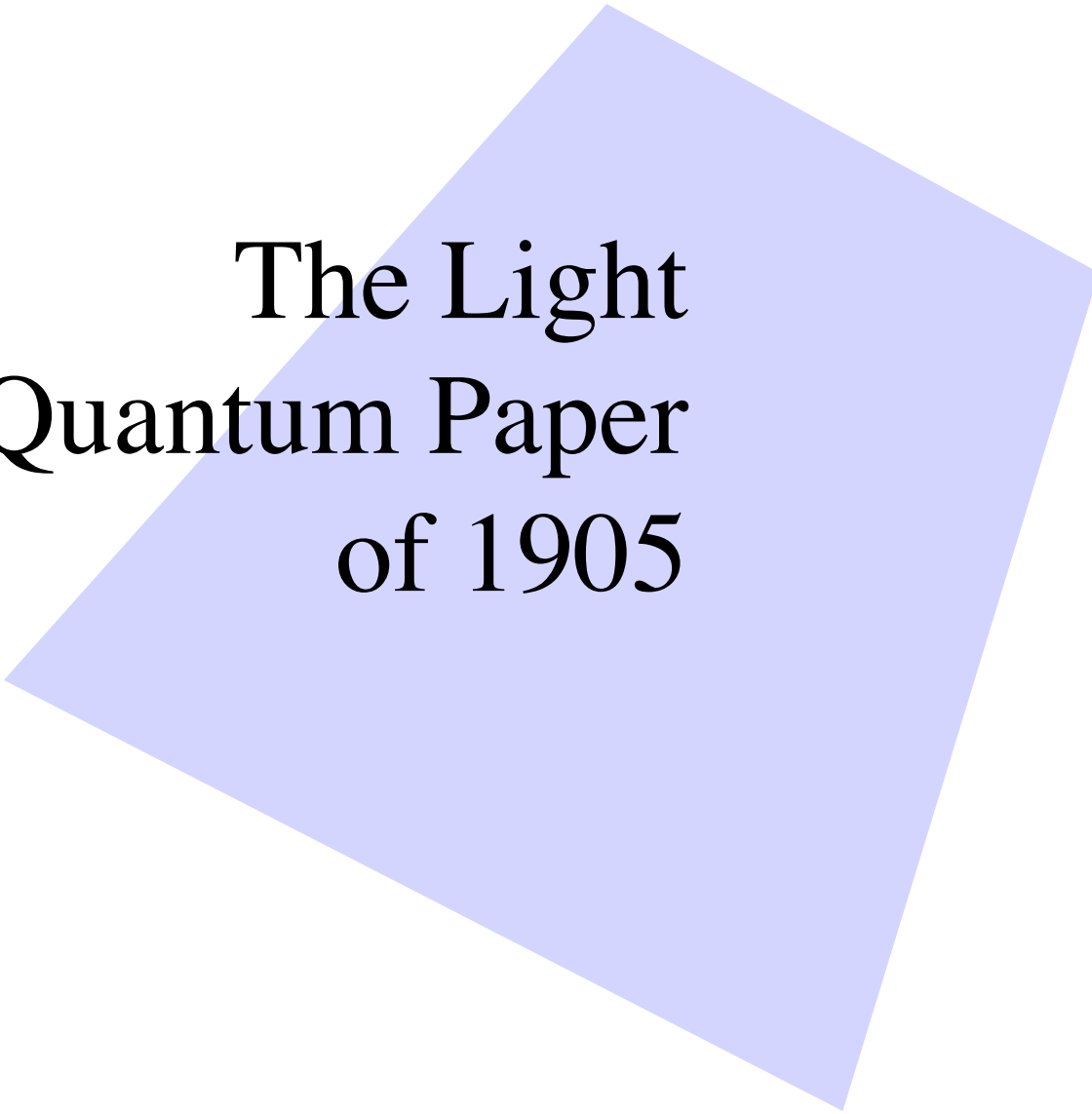
...to give a fine-grained reconstruction of Einstein's pathway to the light quantum.



My goal IS to show...

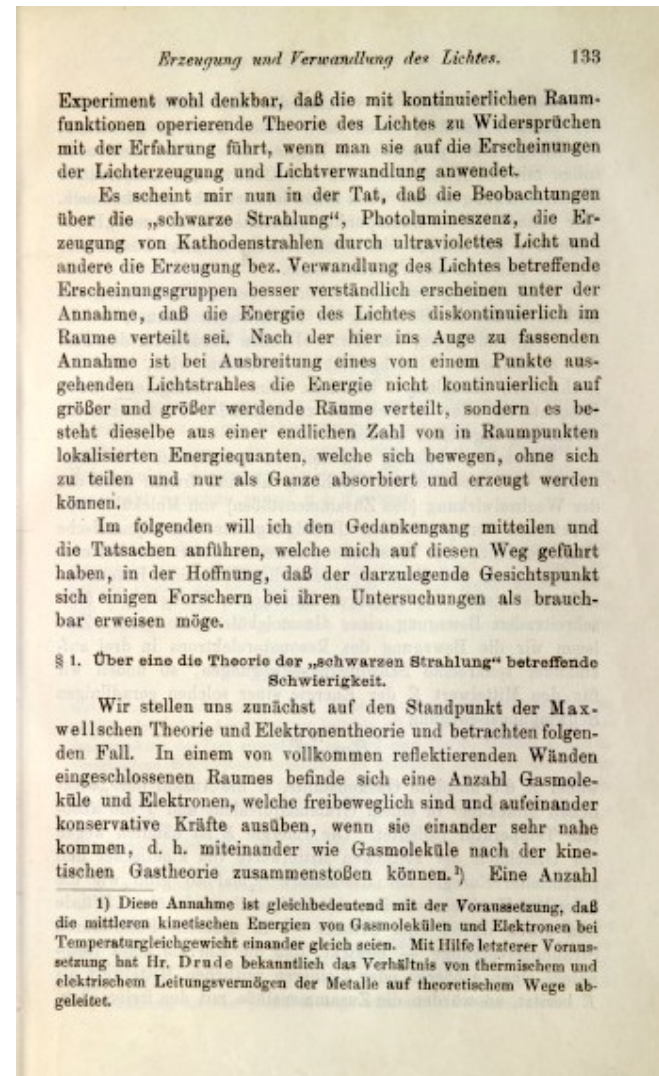
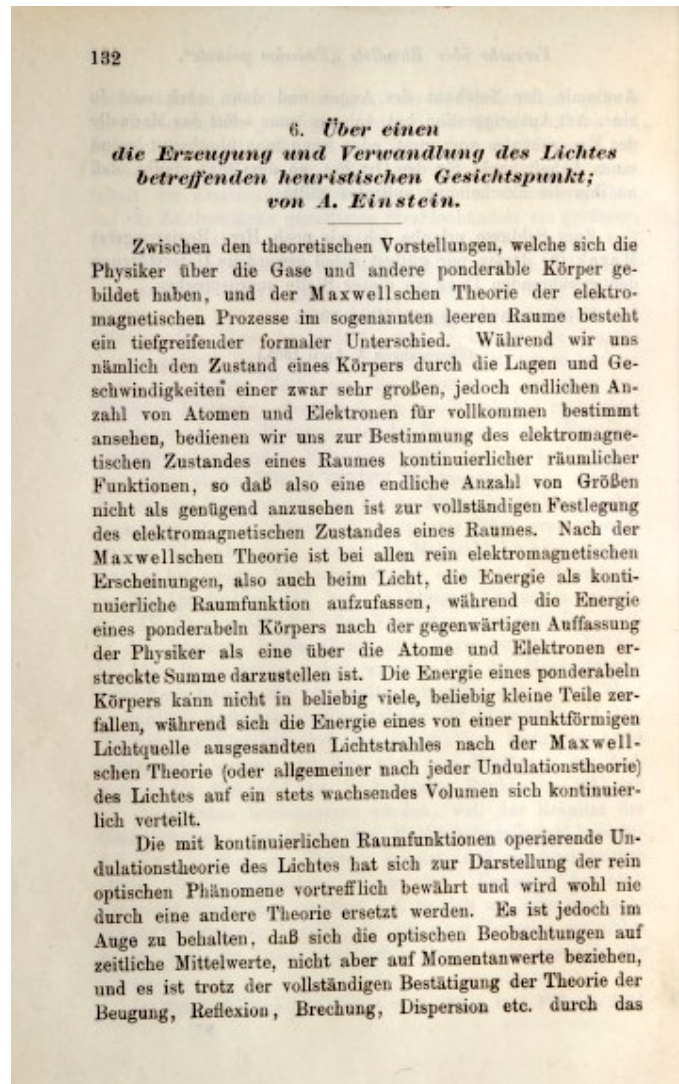
If we locate Einstein's light quantum paper against the background of electrodynamic theory, its claims are so far beyond bold as to be foolhardy.

If we locate Einstein's light quantum paper against the background of his work in statistical physics, its methods are an inspired variation of ones repeated used and proven effective in other contexts on very similar problems.



The Light Quantum Paper of 1905

The Light Quantum Paper



The Light Quantum Paper

Development of the
“miraculous
argument”

§1 On a difficulty encountered in the theory of “black-body radiation”

§2 On Planck’s determination of the elementary quanta

§3 On the entropy of radiation

§4 Limiting law for the entropy of monochromatic radiation at low radiation density

§5 Molecular-theoretical investigation of the dependence of the entropy of gases and dilute solutions on the volume

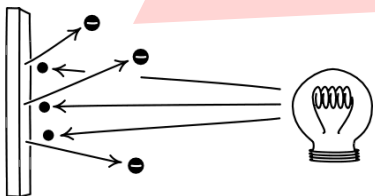
§6 Interpretation of the expression for the dependence of the entropy of monochromatic radiation on volume according to Boltzmann’s Principle

§7 On Stokes’ rule

§8 On the generation of cathode rays by illumination of solid bodies

§9 On the ionization of gases by ultraviolet light

Photoelectric
effect



The Miraculous Argument. Step 1.

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A. Einstein.

Wir fragen: Wie groß ist die Wahrscheinlichkeit des letzterwähnten Zustandes relativ zum ursprünglichen? Oder: Wie groß ist die Wahrscheinlichkeit dafür, daß sich in einem zufällig herausgegriffenen Zeitmoment alle n in einem gegebenen Volumen v_0 unabhängig voneinander beweglichen Punkte (zufällig) in dem Volumen v befinden?

Für diese Wahrscheinlichkeit, welche eine „statistische Wahrscheinlichkeit“ ist, erhält man offenbar den Wert:

$$W = \left(\frac{v}{v_0}\right)^n;$$

man erhält hieraus durch Anwendung des Boltzmannschen Prinzipes:

$$S - S_0 = R \left(\frac{n}{N}\right) \lg \left(\frac{v}{v_0}\right).$$

Es ist bemerkenswert, daß man zur Herleitung dieser Gleichung, aus welcher das Boyle-Gay-Lussacsche Gesetz und das gleichlautende Gesetz des osmotischen Druckes leicht thermodynamisch ableiten kann¹⁾; keine Voraussetzung über das Gesetz zu machen braucht, nachdem sich die Moleküle bewegen.

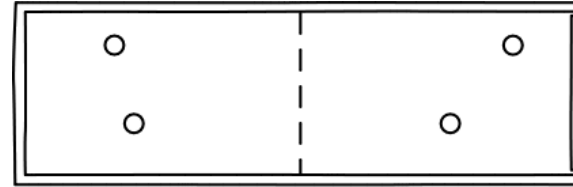
1) Ist E die Energie des Systems, so erhält man:

$$-d(E - TS) = p dv = T dS = R \frac{n}{N} \frac{dv}{v};$$

also

$$pv = R \frac{n}{N} T.$$

The Miraculous Argument. Step 1.



Probability that n independently moving points all fluctuate into a subvolume v of volume v_0

$$W = (v/v_0)^n$$

e.g molecules in a kinetic gas, solute molecules in dilute solution

Boltzmann's Principle
 $S = k \log W$



Entropy change for the fluctuation process

$$S - S_0 = kn \log v/v_0$$

Standard thermodynamic relations



Ideal gas law for kinetic gases and osmotic pressure of dilute solutions

$$Pv = nkT$$

The Miraculous Argument. Step 2.

§ 6. Interpretation des Ausdruckes für die Abhängigkeit der Entropie der monochromatischen Strahlung vom Volumen nach dem Boltzmannschen Prinzip.

Wir haben in § 4 für die Abhängigkeit der Entropie der monochromatischen Strahlung vom Volumen den Ausdruck gefunden:

$$S - S_0 = \frac{E}{\beta \nu} \lg \left(\frac{v}{v_0} \right).$$

Schreibt man diese Formel in der Gestalt:

$$S - S_0 = \frac{R}{N} \lg \left[\left(\frac{v}{v_0} \right)^{\frac{N}{R} \frac{E}{\beta \nu}} \right].$$

und vergleicht man sie mit der allgemeinen, das Boltzmannsche Prinzip ausdrückenden Formel

$$S - S_0 = \frac{R}{N} \lg W,$$

so gelangt man zu folgendem Schluß:

Ist monochromatische Strahlung von der Frequenz ν und der Energie E in das Volumen v_0 (durch spiegelnde Wände) eingeschlossen, so ist die Wahrscheinlichkeit dafür, daß sich in einem beliebig herausgegriffenen Zeitmoment die ganze Strahlungsenergie in dem Teilvolumen v des Volumens v_0 befindet:

$$W = \left(\frac{v}{v_0} \right)^{\frac{N}{R} \frac{E}{\beta \nu}}.$$

Hieraus schließen wir weiter:

Monochromatische Strahlung von geringer Dichte (innerhalb des Gültigkeitsbereiches der Wienschen Strahlungsformel) verhält sich in wärmetheoretischer Beziehung so, wie wenn sie aus voneinander unabhängigen Energiequanten von der Größe $R \beta \nu / N$ bestünde.

The Miraculous Argument. Step 2.

Observationally derived entropies of high frequency ν radiation of energy E and volume v and v_0

$$S - S_0 = k (E/h\nu) \log V/V_0$$

Boltzmann's Principle
 $S = k \log W$



Probability of constant energy fluctuation in volume from v to v_0

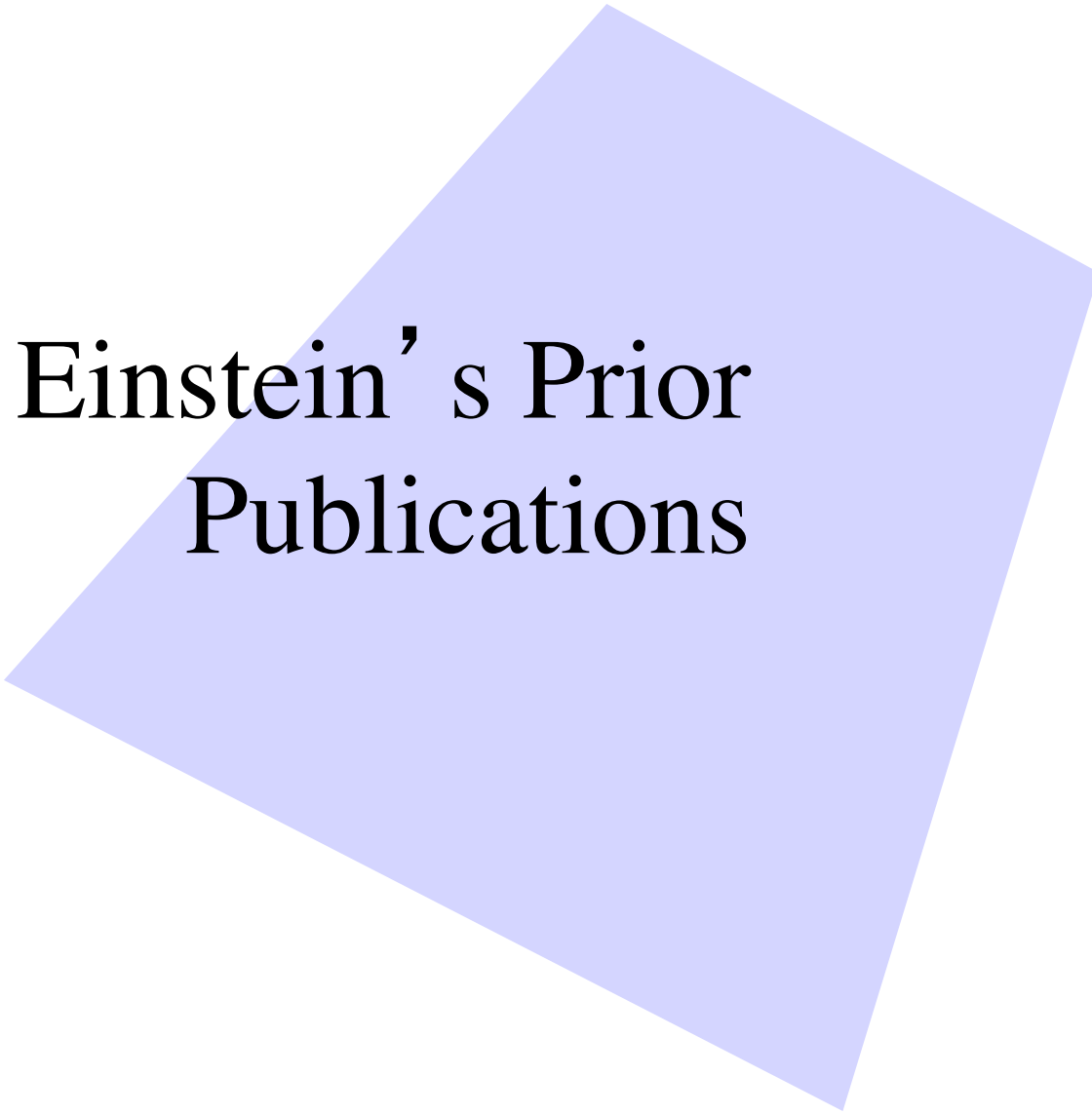
$$W = (V/V_0)^{E/h\nu}$$



Restate in words



"Monochromatic radiation of low density behaves-- as long as Wien's radiation formula is valid --in a thermodynamic sense, as if it consisted of mutually independent energy quanta of magnitude $h\nu$."



Einstein's Prior Publications

Patent clerk and published expert in statistical physics

1901. "Folgerungen aus dem Capillaritätserscheinungen," *Annalen der Physik*, 4, pp. 513-23.

1902. "Ueber die thermodynamische Theorie der Potentialdifferenz zwischen Metallen and vollständig dissociirten Lösungen ihre Salze and über eine elektrische Methode zur Erforschung der Molecularkräfte," *Annalen der Physik*, 8, pp. 798-814.

1902. "Kinetische Theorie des Wärmegleichgewichtes und des zweiten Hauptsatzes der Thermodynamik," *Annalen der Physik*, 9, pp. 417-433. *Papers*, Vol. 2, Doc. 3.

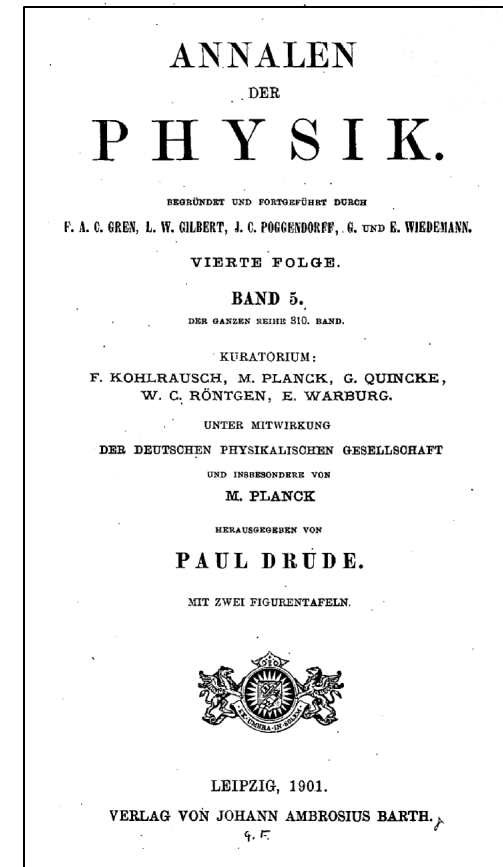
1903. "Eine Theorie der Grundlagen der Thermodynamik," *Annalen der Physik*, 11, pp. 170-87. *Papers*, Vol. 2, Doc. 4.

1904. "Zur allgemeinen molekularen Theorie der Wärme," *Annalen der Physik*, 14, pp. 354-62.

"worthless
beginner's
papers"
Einstein to Stark 1907

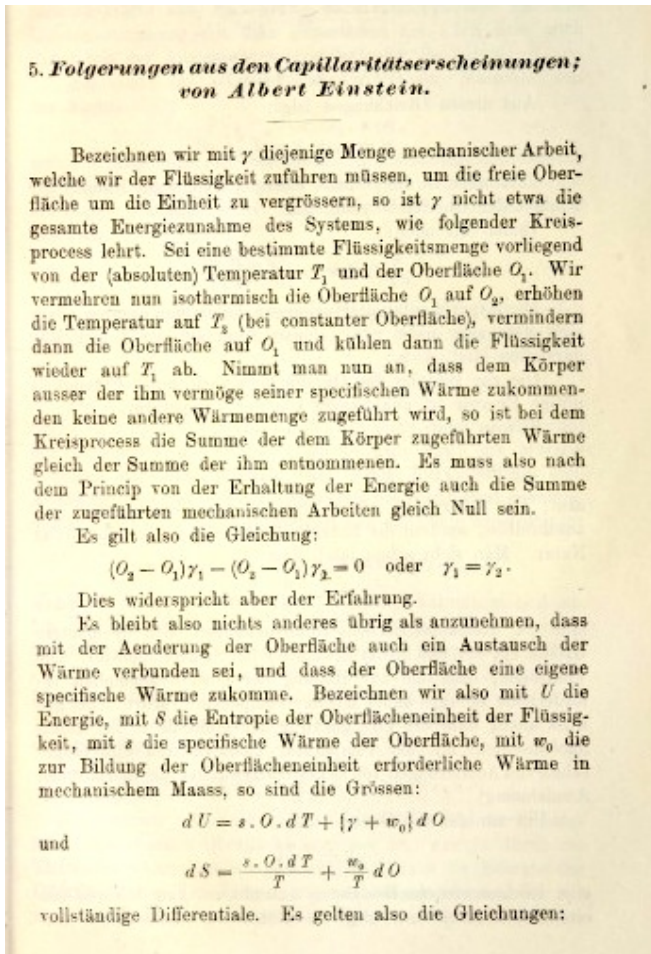
Independently
discovered Gibbs
approach to
statistical physics.

Later: would not have
published them had he known
of Gibbs book.



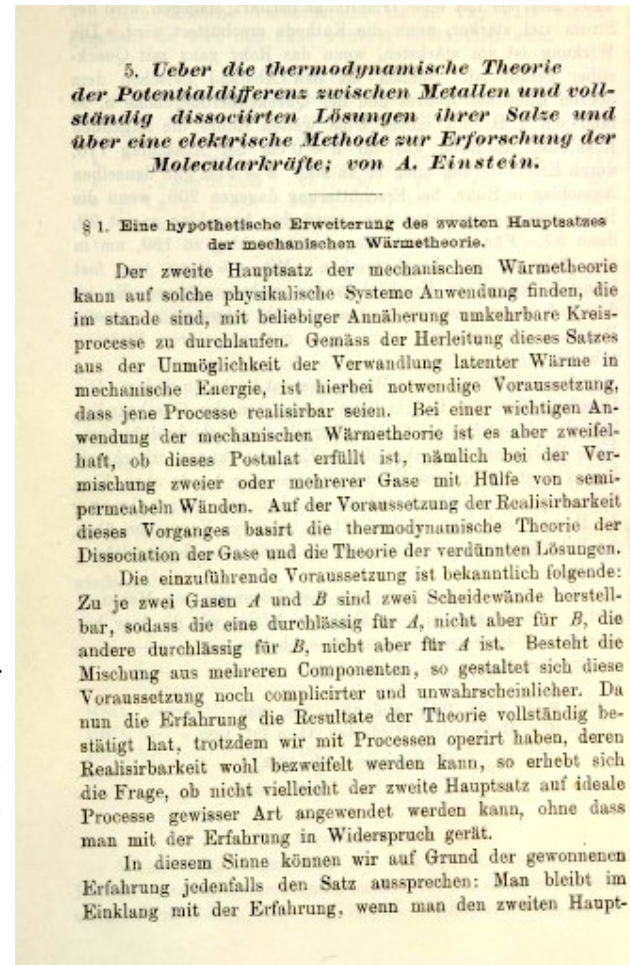
Einstein's first two "worthless" papers

Einstein to Stark, 7 Dec 1907, "...I am sending you all my publications excepting my two worthless beginner's works..."



“Conclusions drawn from the phenomenon of Capillarity,” *Annalen der Physik*, 4(1901), pp. 513-523.

“On the thermodynamic theory of the difference in potentials between metals and fully dissociated solutions of their salts and on an electrical method for investigating molecular forces,” *Annalen der Physik*, 8(1902), pp. 798-814.

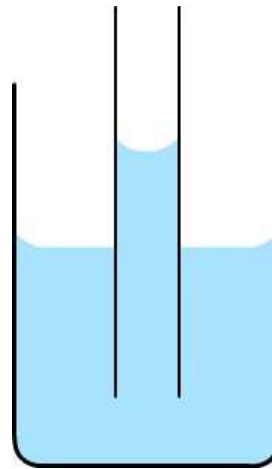


Einstein's first two "worthless" papers

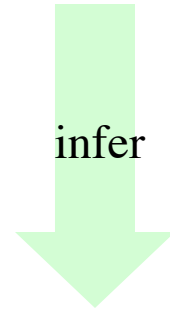
Einstein's hypothesis:
 Forces between molecules at distance r apart are governed by a potential P satisfying

$$P = P_{12} - c_{12}c_{21}\Psi(r)$$

for constants c_{12} and c_{21} characteristic of the two molecules and universal function $\Psi(r)$.

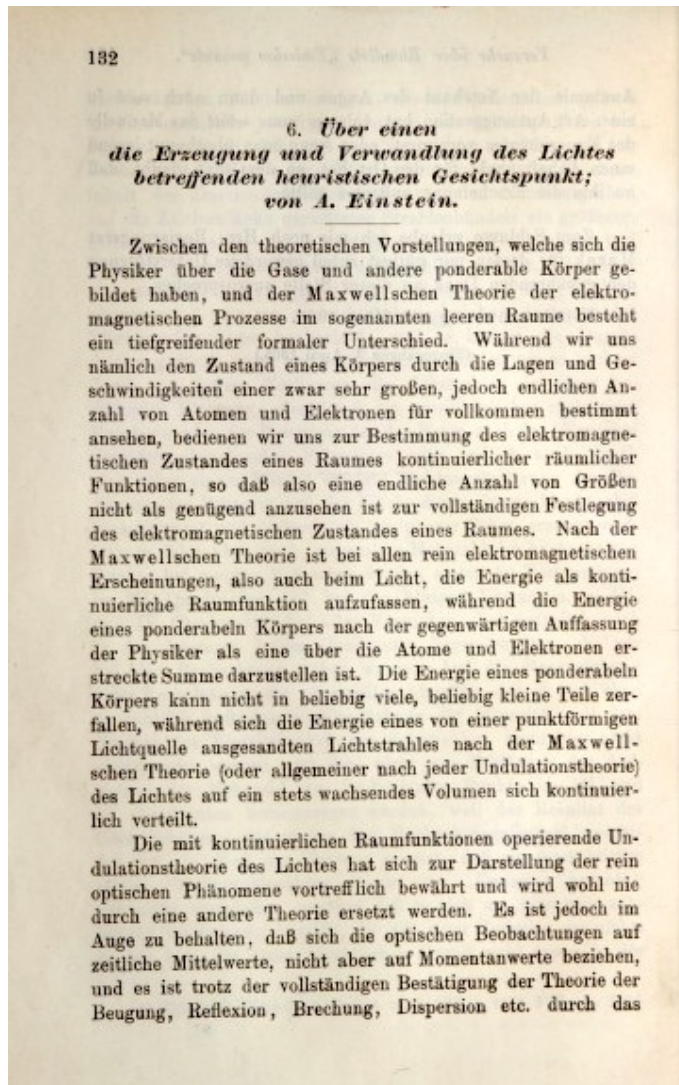


From
 macroscopic properties of
 capillarity and
 electrochemical potentials



coefficients in the
 microscopic force law.

The Light Quantum Paper



From
macroscopic
thermodynamic
properties of heat
radiation

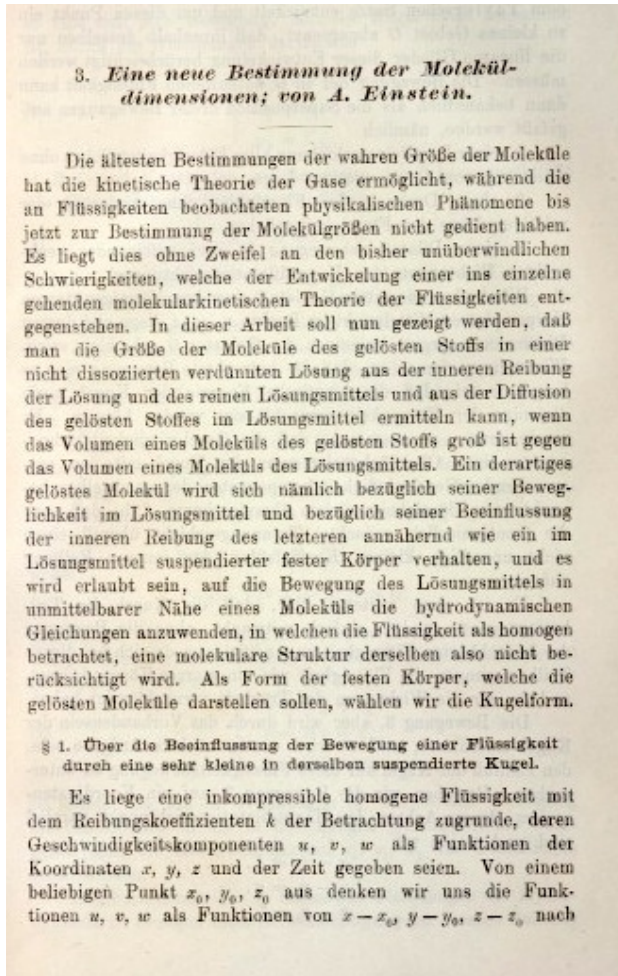
infer

microscopic
constitution of
radiation.



The Molecular Projects of 1905

Einstein's Doctoral Dissertation

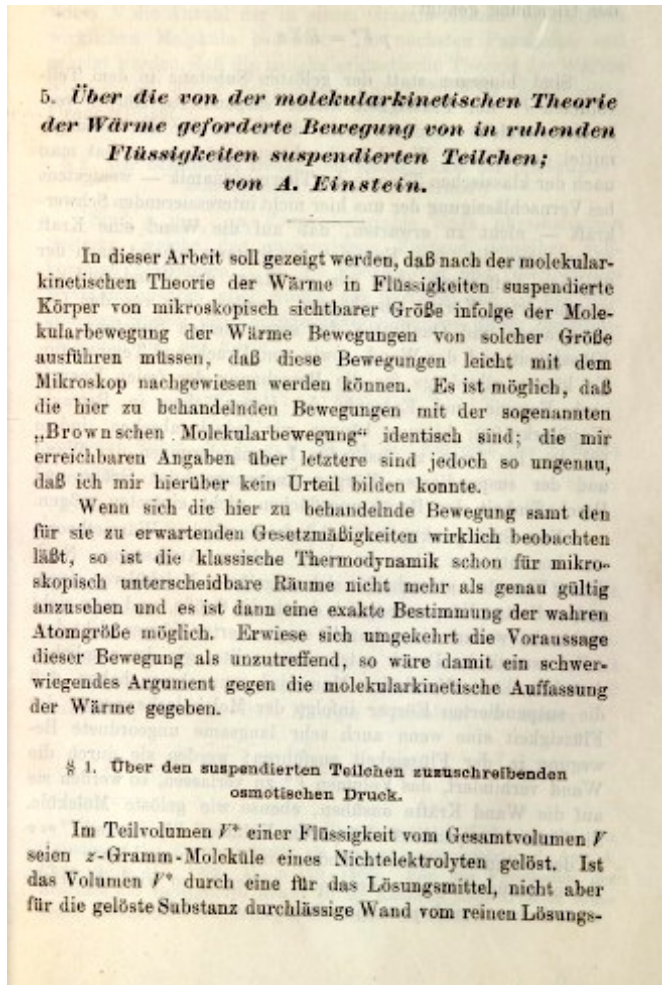


From
macroscopic
thermodynamics of
dilute sugar solutions
(viscosity, diffusion)

infer

microscopic
constitution
(size of sugar
molecules)

The “Brownian Motion” Paper



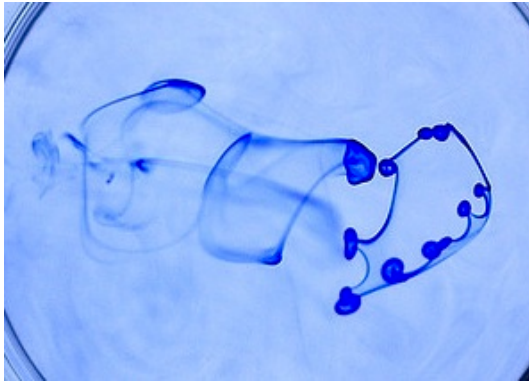
From
microscopically
visible motions of
small particles

infer

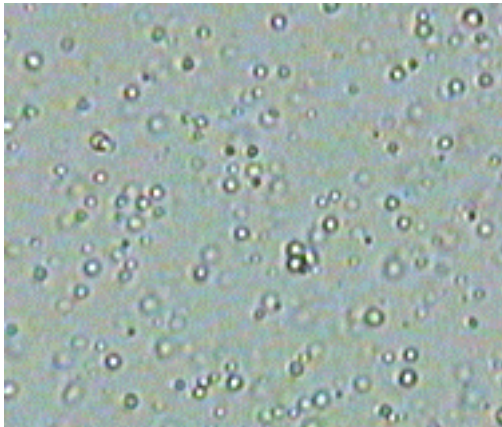
sub-microscopic
thermal motions of
water molecules and
vindicate the
molecular-kinetic
account.

Both analyze systems of many, independent, spatially localized points

Diffusion of sugar molecules in dilute solution




Random motion of small particles suspended in a fluid



Two descriptions

Microscopically...
the spreading is due
to random thermal
motions.

Macroscopically...
the spreading is
driven by osmotic
pressure.



Many, independent,
spatially localized
points

The macroscopic signature of the microscopic constitution of the light quantum paper

Find this dependence
macroscopically

$$\text{Entropy change} = k n \log (\text{volume ratio})$$

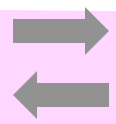
Infer the system consists
microscopically of n ,
independent, spatially
localized points.

There was a much more familiar
signature of the same microscopic
constitution...

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Hancock". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

Ideal Gas Law $PV = nkT$

Microscopically...
many, independent,
spatially localized
points scatter due to
thermal motions



Macroscopically...
the spreading is
driven by a pressure
 $P = nkT/V$

The equivalence was standard. Arrhenius (1887) used it as a standard technique to discern the degree of dissociation of solutes from their osmotic pressure.

Einstein's
molecular
systems of
1905

Ideal gases
Dilute solutions
Small particles in
suspension

obey the ideal gas law because

they consist of
systems of many,
independent, spatially
localized points.

Einstein's 1905 derivation of the ideal gas law from the assumption of very many, independent, localized components

Wir denken uns nun eine in dem Volumen V eingeschlossene Flüssigkeit; in dem Teilvolumen V^* von V mögen sich n gelöste Moleküle bez. suspendierte Körper befinden, welche im Volumen V^* durch eine semipermeable Wand festgehalten seien; es werden hierdurch die Integrationsgrenzen des in den

auftretenden Integrale B beeinflusst, gelösten Moleküle bez. suspendierten. Dies System werde im Sinne der die Zustandsvariablen $p_1 \dots p_i$ voll-

molekulare Bild bis in alle Einzel- loch die Ausrechnung des Integrales B ab an eine exakte Berechnung von F nnte. Wir brauchen jedoch hier nur er Größe des Volumens V^* abhängt, Moleküle bez. suspendierten Körper hen⁴ genannt) enthalten sind.

die rechtwinkligen Koordinaten des Teilchens, x_2, y_2, z_2 die des zweiten etc., Teilchens und geben für die Schwere unendlich kleinen parallelepiped- $y_1 dz_1, dx_2 dy_2 dz_2 \dots dx_n dy_n dz_n$, n seien. Gesucht sei der Wert des enden Integrales mit der Beschränkung, ukte in den ihnen soeben zugewiesenen tegral läßt sich jedenfalls auf die Form $dx_1 dy_1 \dots dz_n \cdot J$

$x_1 dy_1$ etc., sowie von V^* , d. h. von eabeln Wand, unabhängig ist. J ist n der speziellen Wahl der Lagen der von dem Werte von V^* , wie sogleich i nämlich ein zweites System von un- für die Teilchenschwerpunkte gegeben $'_1 dy_1 dz_1, dx_2 dy_2 dz_2 \dots dx_n dy_n dz_n$, den ursprünglich gegebenen nur durch urch ihre Größe unterscheiden mögen enthalten seien, so gilt analog:

$$dx_1' dy_1' \dots dz_n' \cdot J',$$

$$dx_1 dy_1 \dots dz_n = dx_1' dy_1' \dots dz_n'.$$

also:

$$\frac{dB}{dV^*} = \frac{J}{J'}$$

der in den zitierten Arbeiten gegebenen molekularen der Wärme läßt sich aber leicht folgern¹⁾, daß dB/B $/B$ gleich ist der Wahrscheinlichkeit dafür, daß sich beliebig herausgegriffenen Zeitpunkte die Teilchen- nkte in den Gebieten $(dx_2 \dots dz_2)$ bez. in den Ge- $x_1' \dots dz_n'$ befinden. Sind nun die Bewegungen der Teilchen (mit genügender Annäherung) voneinander gig, ist die Flüssigkeit homogen und wirken auf die keine Kräfte, so müssen bei gleicher Größe der Ge- den beiden Gebietssystemen zukommenden Wahr- keiten einander gleich sein, so daß gilt:

$$\frac{dB}{B} = \frac{dF'}{F'}$$

er und aus der zuletzt gefundenen Gleichung folgt aber

$$J = J'.$$

ist somit erwiesen, daß J weder von V^* noch von x_n abhängig ist. Durch Integration erhält man

$$B = \int J dx_1 \dots dz_n = J V^{*n}$$

us

$$F = - \frac{RT}{N} \{ \lg J + n \lg V^* \}$$

$$p = - \frac{\partial F}{\partial V^*} = \frac{RT}{V^*} \frac{n}{N} = \frac{RT}{N} \nu.$$

ch diese Betrachtung ist gezeigt, daß die Existenz otischen Druckes eine Konsequenz der molekular- n Theorie der Wärme ist, und daß nach dieser Theorie oleküle und suspendierte Körper von gleicher Anzahl ezug auf osmotischen Druck bei großer Verdünnung en gleich verhalten.

§ 2. Der osmotische Druck vom Standpunkte der molekular- kinetischen Theorie der Wärme.)

Sind p_1, p_2, \dots, p_i Zustandsvariable eines physikalischen Systems, welche den momentanen Zustand desselben voll- kommen bestimmen (z. B. die Koordinaten und Geschwindig- keitskomponenten aller Atome des Systems) und ist das voll- ständige System der Veränderungsgleichungen dieser Zustands- variablen von der Form

$$\frac{\partial p_v}{\partial t} = \varphi_v(p_1 \dots p_i) \quad (v = 1, 2, \dots, I)$$

gegeben, wobei $\sum \frac{\partial \varphi_v}{\partial p_v} = 0$, so ist die Entropie des Systems durch den Ausdruck gegeben:

$$S = \frac{E}{T} + 2 \times \lg \int e^{-\frac{E}{2 \times T}} dp_1 \dots dp_i.$$

Hierbei bedeutet T die absolute Temperatur, E die Energie des Systems, E die Energie als Funktion der p_v . Das Inte- gral ist über alle mit den Bedingungen des Problems ver- einbaren Wertekombinationen der p_v zu erstrecken. \times ist mit der oben erwähnten Konstanten N durch die Relation $2 \times N = R$ verbunden. Für die freie Energie F erhalten wir daher:

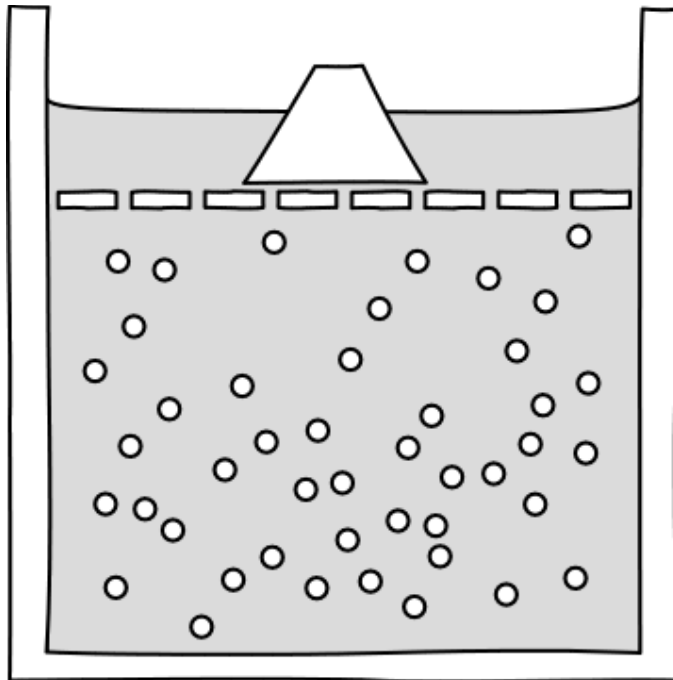
$$F = - \frac{R}{N} T \lg \int e^{-\frac{E}{RT}} dp_1 \dots dp_i = - \frac{RT}{N} \lg B.$$

1) In diesem Paragraph sind die Arbeiten des Verfassers über die Grundlagen der Thermodynamik als bekannt vorausgesetzt (vgl. Ann. d. Phys. 9, p. 417. 1902; 11, p. 170. 1903). Für das Verständnis der Resultate der vorliegenden Arbeit ist die Kenntnis jener Arbeiten sowie dieses Paragraphen der vorliegenden Arbeit entbehrlich.

1) A. Einstein, Ann. d. Phys. 11, p. 170. 1903.

Brownian motion paper, §2 Osmotic pressure from the viewpoint of the molecular kinetic theory of heat.

A much simpler derivation



Very many, independent, small particles at equilibrium in a gravitational field.



Pull of gravity equilibrated by pressure P .



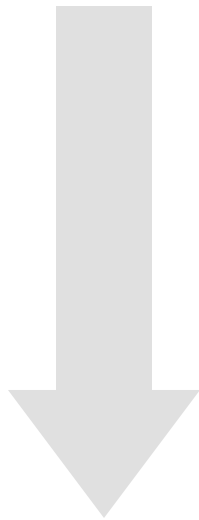
Independence expressed: energy $E(h)$ of each particle is a function of height h only.



Equilibration of pressure by a field instead of a semi-permeable membrane was a device Einstein used repeatedly but casually in 1905, but had been introduced with great caution and ceremony in his 1902 “Potentials” paper.

A much simpler derivation

Boltzmann distribution of energies



Ideal gas law

Probability of one molecule at height h

$$P(h) = \text{const.} \exp(-E(h)/kT)$$

Density of gas at height h

$$\rho(h) = \rho_0 \exp(-E(h)/kT)$$

Density gradient due to gravitational field

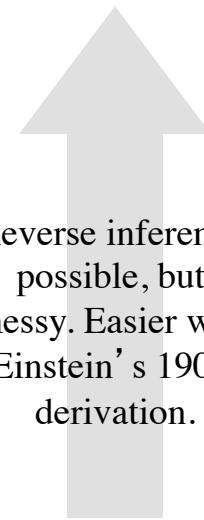
$$d\rho/dh = -1/kT (dE/dh) \rho = 1/kT f = 1/kT dP/dh$$

where $f = -(dE/dh) \rho$ is the gravitational force density, which is balanced by a pressure gradient P for which $f = dP/dh$.

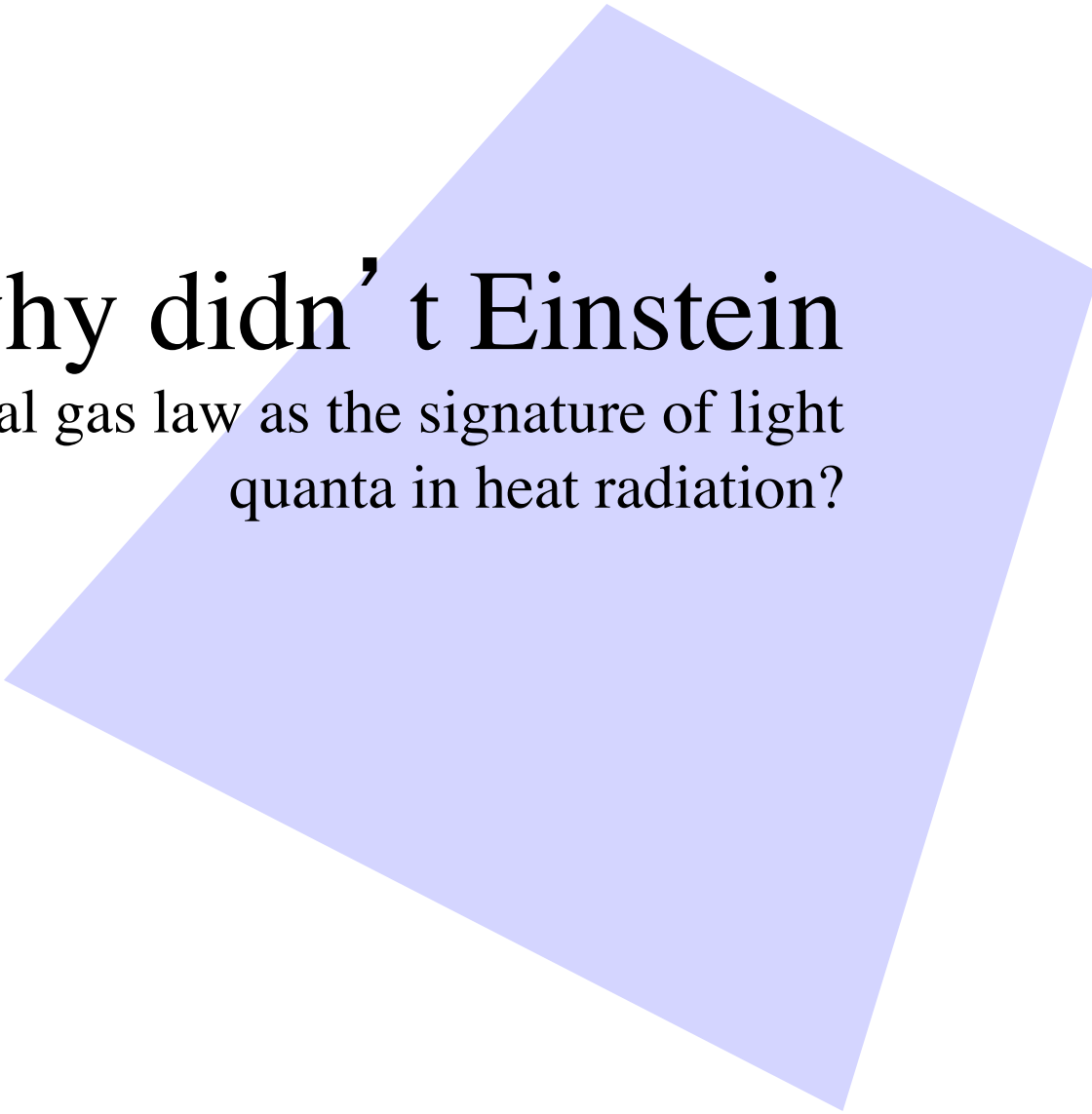
$$\text{Rearrange } d/dh(P - \rho kT) = 0$$

$$\text{So that } P = \rho kT \quad PV = nkT$$

$$\text{since } \rho = n/V$$



Reverse inference possible, but messy. Easier with Einstein's 1905 derivation.

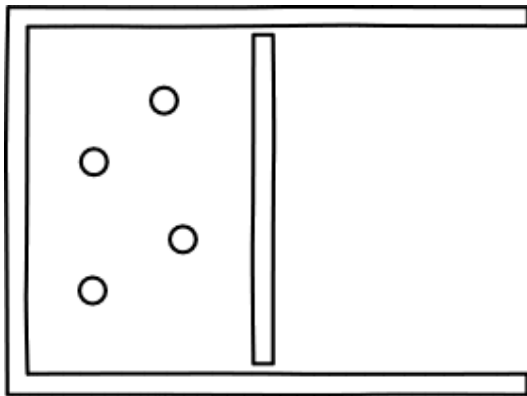


So why didn't Einstein
use the ideal gas law as the signature of light
quanta in heat radiation?

Does the ideal gas law fail for heat radiation?

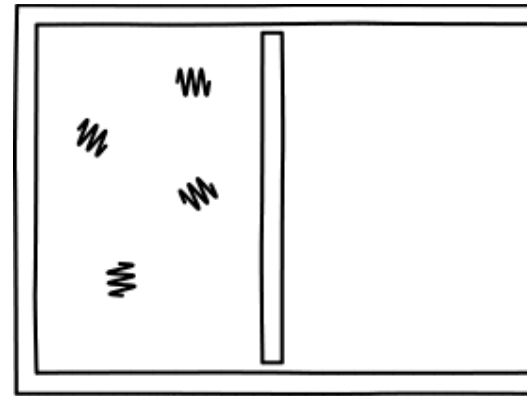
Ideal gas expanding isothermally

$$P \propto 1/V$$



Heat radiation expanding isothermally

P is constant



NO! Disanalogy: expanding heat radiation creates new components.

Ideal gas expanding isothermally

$$P \propto n/V$$

Heat radiation expanding isothermally

$$P \propto n/V$$

but n/v is constant

Ideal Gas Law Does Hold for Wien Regime Heat Radiation...

Wien distribution $u(\nu, T) = \frac{8\pi h \nu^3}{c^3} \exp\left(\frac{-h\nu}{kT}\right)$

Full spectrum radiation

Radiation pressure $P = \frac{\text{energy density } u}{3} = nkT/V$

Same result for single frequency cut, but much longer derivation!

Einstein, light quantum paper, §6.

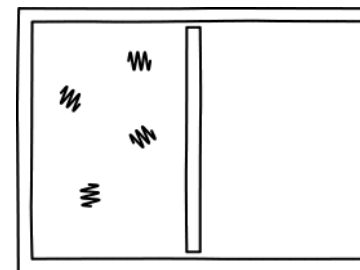
mean energy per quantum $= 3kT$

energy density for n quanta $= 3nkT/V$

...but it is an unconvincing signature of discreteness

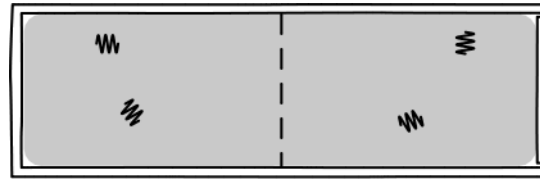
$$P = \frac{u}{3} = \frac{\left(\frac{8\pi^5}{15} \frac{k^4}{15\pi^3 h^3 c^3}\right) T^4}{3} = \left(\frac{8\pi^5}{15} \frac{VT^3}{3k}\right) k T / V = n kT/V$$

Heat radiation consists of $n = \left(\frac{8\pi^5}{15} \frac{VT^3}{3k}\right)$ localized components, where n will vary with changes in volume V and temperature T?



Einstein's solution: find a *rare* process in which no new quanta are created

Volume fluctuation
of heat radiation



Entropy change = $k n \log (\text{volume ratio})$

Virtually no other process has this simple an analysis.

Conclusion



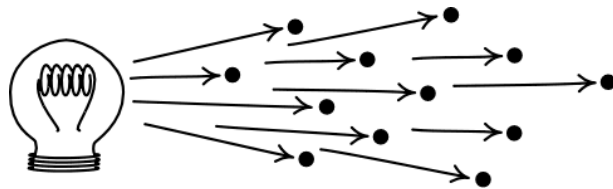
How did Einstein do it?

The *content*

of Einstein's discovery was quite extraordinary:

High frequency light energy exists in

- many,
- independent,
- spatially localized points.



The *method*

of Einstein's discovery was familiar and secure.

Einstein's research program in statistical physics from first publication of 1901:

How can we infer the microscopic properties of matter from its macroscopic properties?

The statistical papers of 1905: the analysis of thermal systems consisting of

- many,
- independent
- spatially localized, points.

Ideal gases,
Dilute sugar solutions,
Small particles in suspension



Read

John D. Norton



hi res pic 1
hi res pic 2
hi res pic 3

Latest

Bio

CV

Includes direct links to my papers.

Research

A synopsis of my research in history and philosophy of physics and general philosophy of science, with links to papers.

Goodies

Some things are just too much fun.

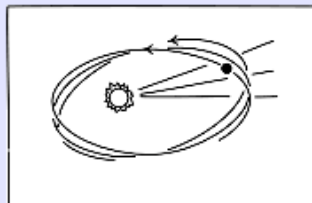
Teaching

Complete syllabi for my courses and the complete text of "Einstein for Everyone."

Editing and Publishing

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Latest



This paper illustrates how the material theory of induction can be used to assess evidence claims made historically in science. Two cases are considered: Einstein's 1905 thermodynamic argument for light quanta and his 1915 recovery of the anomalous perihelion motion of Mercury.

"History of Science and the Material Theory of Induction: Einstein's Quanta, Mercury's Perihelion."
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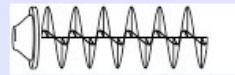
The epistemic state of complete ignorance cannot be a probability distribution. The instruments that characterize it are innocuous

"Ignorance and Indifference."
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John D. Norton Goodies

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Einstein 1905



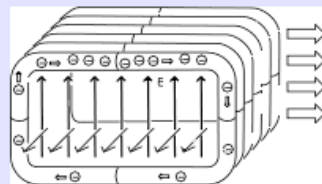
Chasing the Light:
Einstein's Most Famous Thought Experiment

Here's how to make sense of Einstein's famous thought experiment in which he chases after a beam of light and is troubled to conclude that he arrives at a frozen waveform.



How did Einstein Discover the Relativity of Simultaneity?

The celebrated discovery may not have happened through Einstein's reflections on clocks and how to synchronize them with light signals. With the help of Lorentz's work of 1895, Einstein may have recognized that the relativity of simultaneity could be read from two well known experimental results, Fizeau's measurement of the velocity of light in moving water and stellar aberration.



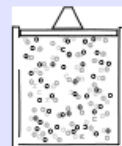
From the Magnet and Conductor to the Relativity of Simultaneity

A simple thought experiment shows that the relative existence of the induced electric field in Einstein's celebrated magnet and conductor thought experiment already forces the relativity of simultaneity.



Atoms Entropy Quanta
Einstein's Statistical Physics of 1905

Einstein's work in statistical physics of 1905--from his dissertation to his light quantum paper--is unified by a single insight: Physical systems that consist of many spatially localized, independent micro-components have distinctive macro-properties.



The Fastest, Simplest, Quickest Derivation Ever of the Ideal Gas Law

The ideal gas law pops up in so many places where there aren't gases because its derivation does not require the system at issue to be a gas. It can be a solute in solution, suspended particles or even independent light quanta.

Atoms, entropy, quanta: Einstein's miraculous argument of 1905

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Received 30 June 2005

Abstract

In the sixth section of his light quantum paper of 1905, Einstein presented the miraculous argument, as I shall call it. Pointing out an analogy with ideal gases and dilute solutions, he showed that the macroscopic, thermodynamic properties of high-frequency heat radiation carry a distinctive signature of finitely many, spatially localized, independent components and so inferred that it consists of quanta. I describe how Einstein's other statistical papers of 1905 had already developed and exploited the idea that the ideal gas law is another macroscopic signature of finitely many, spatially localized, independent components and that these papers in turn drew on his first two, "worthless" papers of 1901 and 1902 on intermolecular forces. However, while the ideal gas law was a secure signature of independence, it was harder to use as an indicator that there are finitely many components and that they are spatially localized. Further, since his analysis of the ideal gas law depended on the assumption that the number of components was fixed, its use was precluded for heat radiation, whose component quanta vary in number in most processes. So Einstein needed and found another, more powerful signature of discreteness applicable to heat radiation and which indicated all these properties. It used one of the few processes, volume fluctuation, in which heat radiation does not alter the number of quanta.

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Keywords: Einstein; Quanta; Atoms; Entropy; 1905

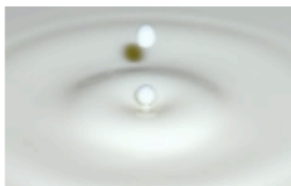
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