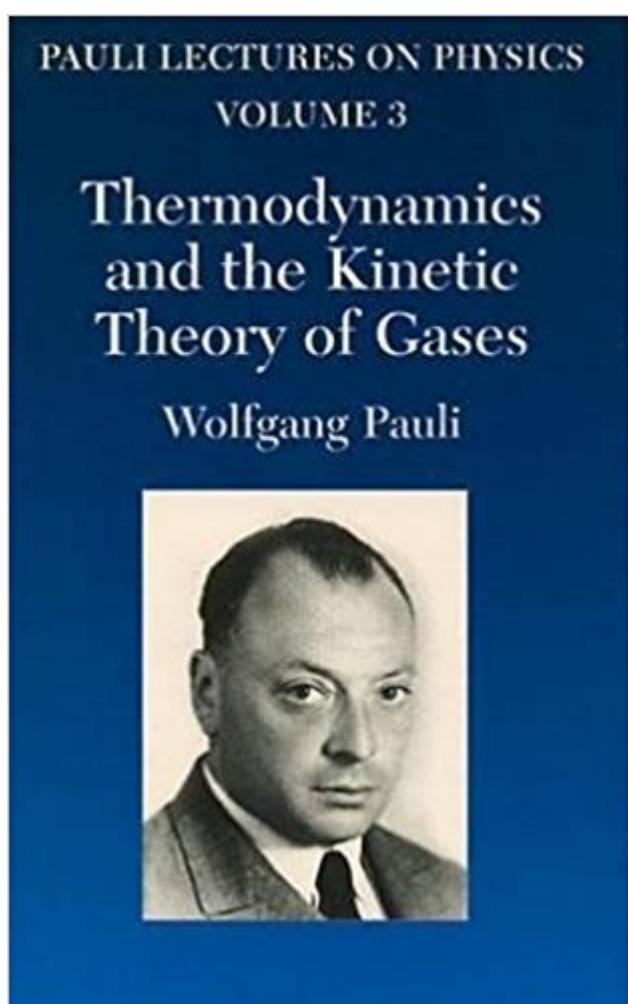


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Thermodynamics And The Kinetic Theory Of Gases: Volume 3 Of Pauli Lectures On Physics (Dover Books On Physics)



Synopsis

In the 1950s, the distinguished theoretical physicist Wolfgang Pauli delivered a landmark series of lectures at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich. His comprehensive coverage of the fundamentals of classical and modern physics was painstakingly recorded not only by his students, but also by a number of collaborators whose carefully edited transcriptions resulted in a remarkable six-volume work. This volume, the third in that series, offers a superb course on phenomenological thermodynamics, with emphasis given to historic development and the logical structure of the theory. Topics include basic concepts and the First Law, the Second Law, equilibria, Nernst's heat theorem, and the kinetic theory of gases. Originally published in 1973, the text remains an important resource for physicists and students thanks to Pauli's manner of presentation. As Victor F. Weisskopf notes in the Foreword to the series, Pauli's style is "commensurate to the greatness of its subject in its clarity and impact []. Pauli's lectures show how physical ideas can be presented clearly and in good mathematical form, without being hidden in formalistic expertise." Alone or as part of the complete set, this volume represents a solid introduction to thermodynamics that will be invaluable to individuals, as well as to libraries and other institutions.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Text: English (translation) Original Language: German

This is a short and light book that addresses the main subject clearly and concisely and, at various points, brings some different foci than those often dealt with by reference books. It worth have all six books of the serie. In addition, the book arrived within de estimated delivery time and in excellent condition. I recommend!

OK, having said that, here's a caveat. It says lectures. Don't expect WP to "teach" you physics. These books are stuffed with equations and WP begins his lectures without preamble and starts to write equations. You ought to have had a great deal of calculus to wade through his backyard. Its not easy but when you start to read it, you also notice that this guy makes precise his lectures. No wishy washy way of telling you of physical reality. It is there, Pauli sees it and tells you the equation for it and takes it from there. I do not agree with the other person who thinks WP is not as good as Einstein. Einstein once answered to someone that he thought that W. Pauli is the only one he can think of as his successor. Besides do not forget that if Sommerfeld felt that Pauli was not VERY good, he would not have had him contribute to the Mathematical Encyclopedia at age 20! He wrote a full blown account of the Special and General theories for Goettingen's Math encyclopedia in 1920! This account is still considered contemporary and a best seller. A mere 4 years after it was invented when most physicists could not even figure out what it was all about. That in itself speaks volumes. He also had the courage to tell anyone, including Einstein that they were wrong when they were wrong (or not even wrong). In my humble opinion, Pauli was probably as good as Einstein and about as good as Heisenberg or Dirac.

Max Born, who knew both, rated Pauli as good as Einstein. I don't agree, but, OK, it's a nice compliment! Anyway, Pauli was really great, and a great writer, in this case far surpassing Einstein. These are his lectures (mostly) on Thermodynamics at the ETH, Zurich, which, by the way, was Einstein's alma mater. Pauli lectured on all of theoretical physics there, for several years. He was revered, and the students carefully took notes of whatever he said and wrote. These notes were then carefully edited by senior colleagues, like Charles Enz. The result was a slim, compact, wonderful text of Carnot-cycle thermodynamics which has even some originality: the master deemed it necessary to reformulate the treatment of chemical equilibrium (using van't Hoff boxes) to reach his standards of excellence. This is not a text-book on thermodynamics for beginners: it is aexquisite booklet to polish your understanding and reveal the great elegance and depth of the thermodynamical formalism and, most importantly, ideas.

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