

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910965776803321
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Titolo	The Road to Maxwell's demon / / Meir Hemmo, Orly Shenker
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge : , : Cambridge University Press, , 2012
ISBN	1-139-88875-7 1-139-57949-5 1-139-09516-1 1-139-57346-2 1-139-57092-7 1-139-56911-2 1-139-57267-9 1-283-63867-3 1-139-57001-3
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xii, 327 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Disciplina	536/.71
Soggetti	Maxwell's demon Second law of thermodynamics Statistical thermodynamics
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
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Sommario/riassunto

Time asymmetric phenomena are successfully predicted by statistical mechanics. Yet the foundations of this theory are surprisingly shaky. Its explanation for the ease of mixing milk with coffee is incomplete, and even implies that un-mixing them should be just as easy. In this book the authors develop a new conceptual foundation for statistical mechanics that addresses this difficulty. Explaining the notions of macrostates, probability, measurement, memory, and the arrow of time in statistical mechanics, they reach the startling conclusion that

Maxwell's Demon, the famous perpetuum mobile, is consistent with the fundamental physical laws. Mathematical treatments are avoided where possible, and instead the authors use novel diagrams to illustrate the text. This is a fascinating book for graduate students and researchers interested in the foundations and philosophy of physics.
