An Introduction to Statistical Mechanics and Thermodynamics (Oxford Graduate Texts)

Robert H. Swendsen

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This text presents the two complementary aspects of thermal physics as an integrated theory of the properties of matter. Conceptual understanding is promoted by thorough development of basic concepts. In contrast to many texts, statistical mechanics, including discussion of the required probability theory, is presented first. This provides a statistical foundation for the concept of entropy, which is central to thermal physics. A unique feature of the book is the
development of entropy based on Boltzmann's 1877 definition; this avoids contradictions or ad hoc corrections found in other texts. Detailed fundamentals provide a natural grounding for advanced topics, such as black-body radiation and quantum gases. An extensive set of problems (solutions are
available for lecturers through the OUP website), many including explicit computations, advance the core content by probing essential concepts. The text is designed for a two-semester undergraduate course but can be adapted for one-semester courses emphasizing either aspect of thermal physics. It is also suitable for graduate study.

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