

An Argument for Indeterminism from the Postscript to the Logic of Scientific Discovery



The Open Universe: An Argument for Indeterminism From the Postscript to The Logic of Scientific Discovery

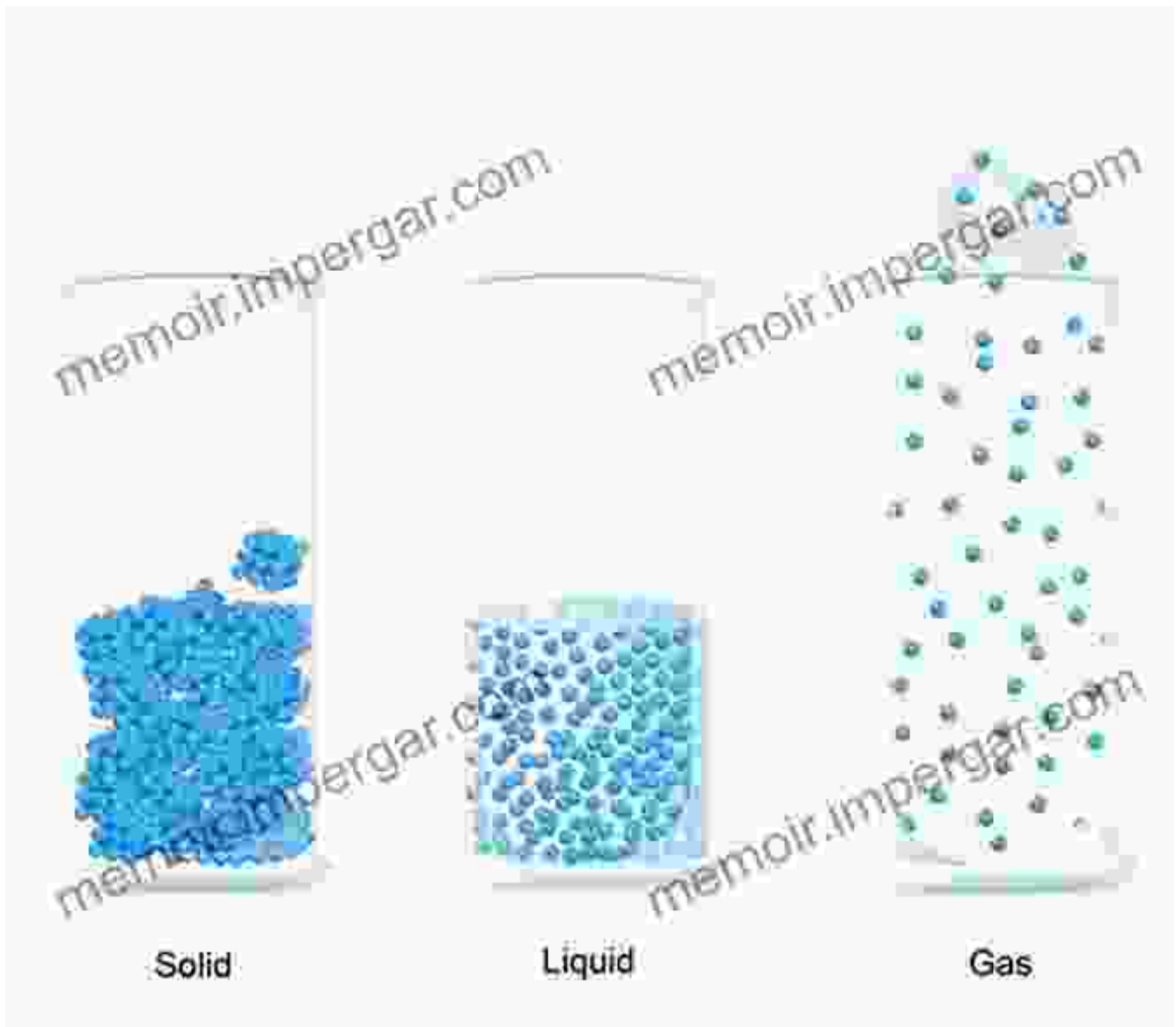
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The Postscript to the Logic of Scientific Discovery is a seminal work by philosopher Karl Popper, published in 1959. In the Postscript, Popper develops an argument for indeterminism, the idea that the future is not completely determined by past events.

Popper's Argument for Indeterminism

Popper's argument for indeterminism is based on the idea that quantum mechanics is a non-deterministic theory. In quantum mechanics, the

behavior of subatomic particles is governed by probabilities, not by deterministic laws.

Popper argues that if quantum mechanics is a non-deterministic theory, then the future cannot be completely determined by past events. This is because the behavior of subatomic particles is not determined by past events, and the behavior of subatomic particles can have a significant impact on the future.

Implications of Indeterminism

The implications of indeterminism are profound. If the future is not completely determined by past events, then it means that we have free will. We are not simply the products of our genes and our environment. We have the ability to make choices that are not completely determined by our past.

Indeterminism also has implications for the nature of reality. If the future is not completely determined by past events, then it means that the world is not a deterministic system. The world is a place of chance and uncertainty.

Criticisms of Popper's Argument

Popper's argument for indeterminism has been criticized on a number of grounds. One criticism is that Popper's argument relies on the assumption that quantum mechanics is a non-deterministic theory. However, some physicists argue that quantum mechanics is actually a deterministic theory.

Another criticism of Popper's argument is that it does not take into account the possibility of hidden variables. Hidden variables are variables that are not currently known to science but that could potentially explain the

behavior of subatomic particles. If hidden variables exist, then the future could be completely determined by past events.

Despite these criticisms, Popper's argument for indeterminism remains a powerful and influential argument. Popper's argument provides a compelling case for the idea that the future is not completely determined by past events. This has profound implications for our understanding of free will and the nature of reality.



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