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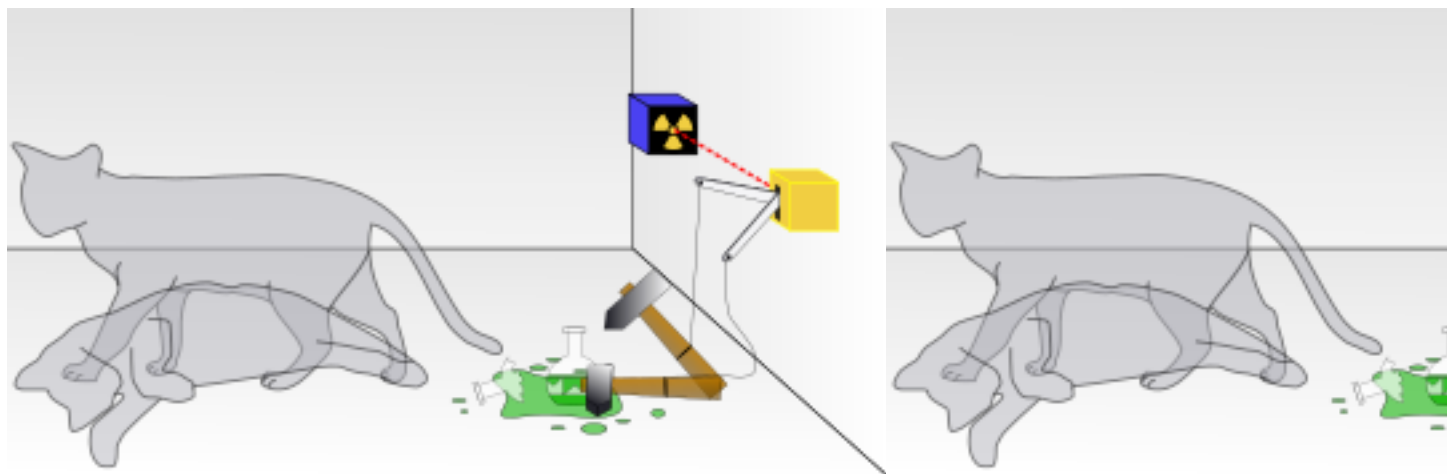
March 21, 2025

#Schrödinger's cat

The Copenhagen interpretation is a collection of views about the meaning of quantum mechanics, stemming from the work of Niels Bohr, Werner Heisenberg, Max Born, and others.[1] While “Copenhagen” refers to the Danish city, the use as an “interpretation” was apparently coined by Heisenberg during the 1950s to refer to ideas developed in the 1925–1927 period, glossing over his disagreements with Bohr.[2][3] Consequently, there is no definitive historical statement of what the interpretation entails.

Features common across versions of the Copenhagen interpretation include the idea that quantum mechanics is intrinsically indeterministic, with probabilities calculated using the Born rule, and the principle of complementarity, which states that objects have certain pairs of complementary properties that cannot all be observed or measured simultaneously.[4] Moreover, the act of “observing” or “measuring” an object is irreversible, and no truth can be attributed to an object except according to the results of its measurement (that is, the Copenhagen interpretation rejects counterfactual definiteness). Copenhagen-type interpretations hold that quantum descriptions are objective, in that they are independent of physicists’ personal beliefs and other arbitrary mental factors.[5]:85–90

Over the years, there have been many objections to aspects of Copenhagen-type interpretations, including the discontinuous and stochastic nature of the “observation” or “measurement” process, the difficulty of defining what might count as a measuring device, and the seeming reliance upon classical physics in describing such devices. Still, including all the variations, the interpretation remains one of the most commonly taught.[6]



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