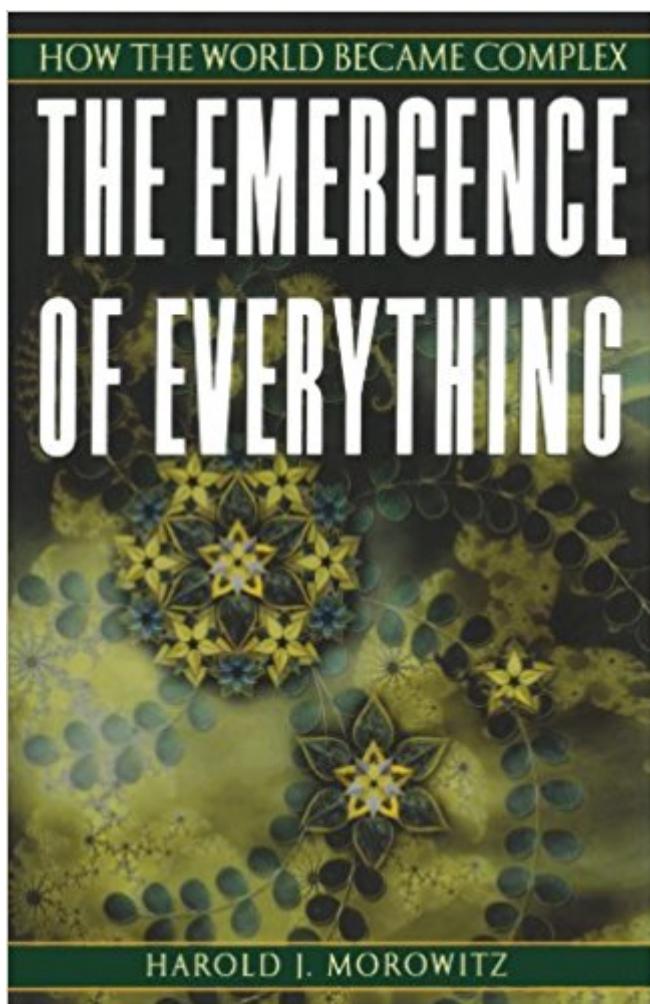


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# The Emergence Of Everything: How The World Became Complex



## Synopsis

When the whole is greater than the sum of the parts--indeed, so great that the sum far transcends the parts and represents something utterly new and different--we call that phenomenon emergence. When the chemicals diffusing in the primordial waters came together to form the first living cell, that was emergence. When the activities of the neurons in the brain result in mind, that too is emergence. In *The Emergence of Everything*, one of the leading scientists involved in the study of complexity, Harold J. Morowitz, takes us on a sweeping tour of the universe, a tour with 28 stops, each one highlighting a particularly important moment of emergence. For instance, Morowitz illuminates the emergence of the stars, the birth of the elements and of the periodic table, and the appearance of solar systems and planets. We look at the emergence of living cells, animals, vertebrates, reptiles, and mammals, leading to the great apes and the appearance of humanity. He also examines tool making, the evolution of language, the invention of agriculture and technology, and the birth of cities. And as he offers these insights into the evolutionary unfolding of our universe, our solar system, and life itself, Morowitz also seeks out the nature of God in the emergent universe, the God posited by Spinoza, Bruno, and Einstein, a God Morowitz argues we can know through a study of the laws of nature. Written by one of our wisest scientists, *The Emergence of Everything* offers a fascinating new way to look at the universe and the natural world, and it makes an important contribution to the dialogue between science and religion.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"We are clearly at the beginning of viewing science from the new perspective of emergence,"

Morowitz writes. "I believe that it will provide insights into the evolutionary unfolding of our universe, our solar system, our biota, and our humanity." Emergence is the opposite of reductionism. "In the domain of emergence, the assumption is made that both actual systems as well as models operate by selection from the immense space and variability of the world of the possible, and in carrying out this selection, new and unanticipated properties emerge." Morowitz, professor of biology and natural philosophy at George Mason University, provides 28 examples of emergence, from the primordium through the appearance of hominids to their progression to philosophy and the spiritual. His argument is closely reasoned and rich in scientific and philosophical background. Editors of Scientific American --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Morowitz claims that emergence supplies us with a new foundation for religion-one that enables the natural sciences to supply a foundation for spiritual realities." -- C.P. Goodman, The Polyani Society Periodical "Closely reasoned and rich in scientific and philosophical background." -- Scientific American "This is a brilliant book. Morowitz has provided the first state-of-the-art overview of the theory of emergence across the scientific disciplines. Neither too detailed nor too abstract, his 28 stages of emergence trace the history of the universe from the Big Bang through the appearance of culture, philosophy and spirituality. No other work has laid out the core case for emergence--and hence against the ultimacy of reductionism--across the whole spectrum of science. This introduction to emergence theory should guide philosophers of science and anthropologists, theologians and metaphysicians, as they reflect on the nature of *Homo sapiens* and our place in the cosmos." -- Philip Clayton, Harvard University

Excellent; understandable by a retired mechanical engineer with no previous knowledge of topics such as biochemistry.

An informative read--fairly clear for the layperson (myself), with some jargon and technical spots. Successful in presenting the basic principle of 'emergence', but most of the book is spent in a long-winded struggle to further flesh out emergence and provide examples. . . . as a result I felt that I had to learn quite a bit of biology and geological history just so that they could be drawn into basic examples of emergence. (Not necessarily a bad thing, but a lot of time was spent on the outskirts just to support the theme). I know that the concept (and field) of 'emergence' is new, but I expected to learn more on the dynamics, not just see exemplification. There are a few broad assumptions and much of the author's personal bias can be seen. However, (to me) the author was redeemed when

they turned away from the empirical science aspects to cite philosophers (such as Kant) and draw up major points about emergence as a bridge between worldviews of science and religion. This brings surprising balance and broadens the topic, making it more of an insightful work rather than a murky scientific textbook. This exemplifies the broadness of emergence, rather than trapping it in empirical views.

Excellent review about the theory of emergence. I do not agree with the authors conclusion on how religion or a supreme being plays a roll in such emergence. But the book is insightful.

An incredibly important book. Harold Morowitz is a treasure. He literally spans all of human knowledge in one magnificent book.

Good product, as expected.

The reviewers angrily decrying Dr. Morowitz's non-scientific perspective ignore his reductionist credentials. He is a biophysicist. He clearly understands reductionism including its limitations. I don't believe he advocates the replacement of reduction by construction (In my opinion, the methodology for studying emergence). Dr. Anderson at Princeton said it best; we must start with reduction. He also says that, "More is different." We all know in our hearts that more is definitely different. Science is now mature enough to tackle that age old observation. In the process, science will evolve. With any change, resistance almost always seems to emerge. Truth will win out in the end. This book is the tip of the iceberg in what is probably a watershed moment in the story of science.

What an overwrought waste of time. I was excited to read this book because I love the concept of emergence and emergent properties. I was interested in discovering some insight into the emergence of consciousness and how it might relate this to theoretical emergence of spirit and even deity. Unfortunately, Morowitz either doesn't fully understand what he's writing about, or he's extremely naïve as to how to supplement intriguing ideas with actual intelligent explanations. Though technically proficient in writing about emergences throughout the timeline of the universe (with a few embarrassingly inadequate explanations and guesses thrown in), he misses what makes this topic interesting. He brushes past emergence as merely a bridge from one scientific/astronomical/biological topic to the next. This book was a relatively concise refresher on topics stellar and planetary formation as well as evolution, it does nothing to add to the study of

emergence, and in my opinion does it an injustice with his attempt to reconcile his God of Spinoza and Teilhard with the scientific understandings of emergent properties.

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