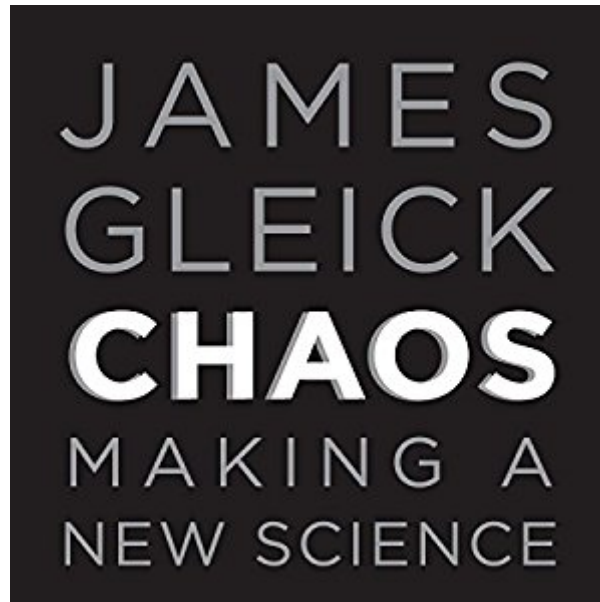




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Chaos: Making A New Science



Synopsis

James Gleick explains the theories behind the fascinating new science called chaos. Alongside relativity and quantum mechanics, it is being hailed as the 20th century's third revolution.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book describes the beginnings of an important theory that explains many patterns and behaviors observed in nature that are not usually discussed in traditional science classes even to this day. It's not an easy read but the book's content is well worth the effort especially to those interested in science and how nature "works". I believe this book will be most rewarding to readers with knowledge of science at high-school & college levels, in particular readers that understand how equations/math are used in sciences to describe and predict the behavior of various systems/objects. 3-stars for the prose. Gleick's writing doesn't flow and is often hard to follow. I can't say it was enjoyable read, most of the time I felt that I had to "extract" what he is trying to say by rereading certain sections. 5-stars for the content, breadth, and depth. Gleick casts a wide net in describing how pieces of Chaos theory emerged from several scientific fields. He did a phenomenal job in researching the topic and immersing himself in technical details. Several keywords to take away from this book are : Chaotic systems, Fractals and Self-Similar patterns, Butterfly effect, Nonlinear systems, Dynamic systems, Bifurcating systems, Attractor. One example of how fractals appear in landscapes: [...]. Chaos theory spawned several new subfields broadly can be labelled as Emergent Complexity.

an amazing book. even for a non-science person like me, it was a great read. gleick has made the language so simple that i found each and every page interesting and understandable. this rates as one of the best books i have ever read in my life. i have understood now the fact that most of the life we have lead or are leading, has to have a component of chaos in it, and it is alright not to fret over it.

James Gleick can WRITE! His book is a great synopsis of the (relatively) recent history of the theory of Chaos. We never dealt with it in my college. Such a shame... this book helps me to understand, without delving deeply into the mathematics. I always liked math, of course the math I covered in school and engineering was mostly linear, with a little excursion into difference equations. Thank you James for making Chaos mostly easy to understand and appreciate. It's difficult for me to realize that our universe is mostly non-linear!

Even science converges in a chaotic way, nay? Well, here we have a bunch of mavericks creating a new branch of science; the struggle to ignite a paradigm shift is everywhere in this book. They saw regular irregularities in deterministic systems (locally unpredictable but globally stable) and built the intuition and mathematical tools to understand it. The adventure includes several paradoxes together with infinite food for thought. For example, a fractal plots infinity within a finite plan. What? We can see infinity!

Great read on the history of the emerging field of chaos theory as a loose multi-disciplinary field applicable to almost every discipline and yet adopted by no discipline as its own. The pioneers are as varied, free-thinking, maverick, and ostracized as the discipline itself. Approach this book from the standpoint of 'history of chaos science' rather than 'technical introduction to chaos theory,' as the work doesn't quite take upon itself to teach the reader the rigorous field of chaos theory even at an introductory level. It is a book for the lover of science for science sake and a qualitative introduction to chaos at that.

My background is electrical engineering, and I really liked this book. It presented a very good history of chaos theory and its development from quirky art into a legitimate branch of science. It also gave interesting personal backgrounds of the pioneers in the field. However, I would have preferred if were written more like a textbook and illustrated with practical examples. The book is a very good

introduction to chaos theory for non-technical readers. It's well-written and easy to read. But it doesn't offer enough detailed information for those of us who really want to delve into this subject and learn more than just superficial facts. I would have given the book five stars if it had presented a bit less historical background and offered more technical information, especially pertaining to the most recent developments in the field. On the positive side, the author was very good at pointing out that chaos is a natural and very necessary feature of our universe. As an engineer, I was taught almost nothing about chaos, other than it is very bad when it appears in electrical system, and so we were trained to eliminate it at all costs. This book shed a whole new positive light on it.

I first heard of this book about 15 years ago when a grad school professor mentioned this in his coral reef ecology class. He said it was a good layperson's intro to nonlinear dynamics. My first thought was that it must certainly be dated by now, plus my background is in marine chemistry, not physics. Although it took a couple of tries to get immersed in the book, I have to say he was right. Gleick covers the technical details in a way that makes them interesting, but he also covers the opinions and personalities in a way that makes this book so readable.

This book was not bad and it taught me a thing or two, but I would have liked more math. It's 75% about 'the who's who on campus', I mean the history of scientists and their discoveries.

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