

Prickles and goo

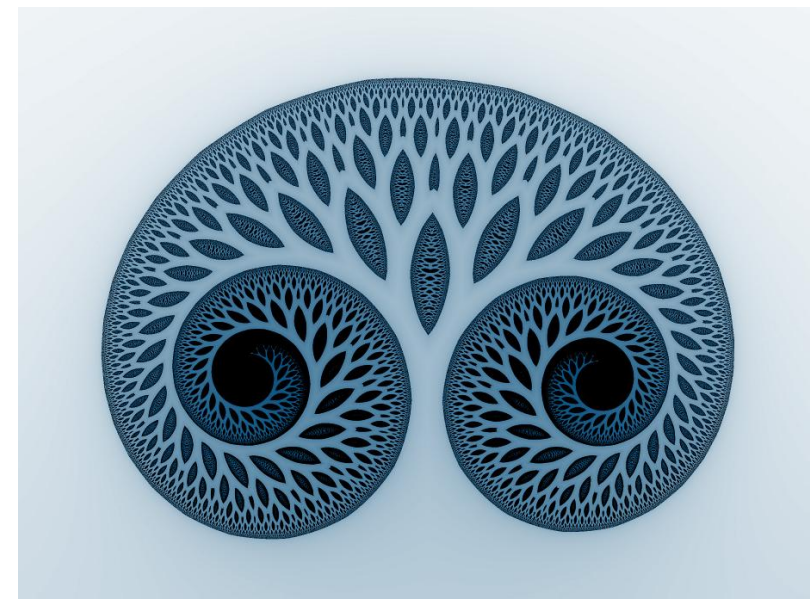
Exploring shared metaphors between analytical and intuitive traditions



"But we know very well that this natural universe is neither prickles nor goo exclusively: it's gooey prickles and prickly goo [and] we're always playing with the two."

- Alan Watts

Why is this important?

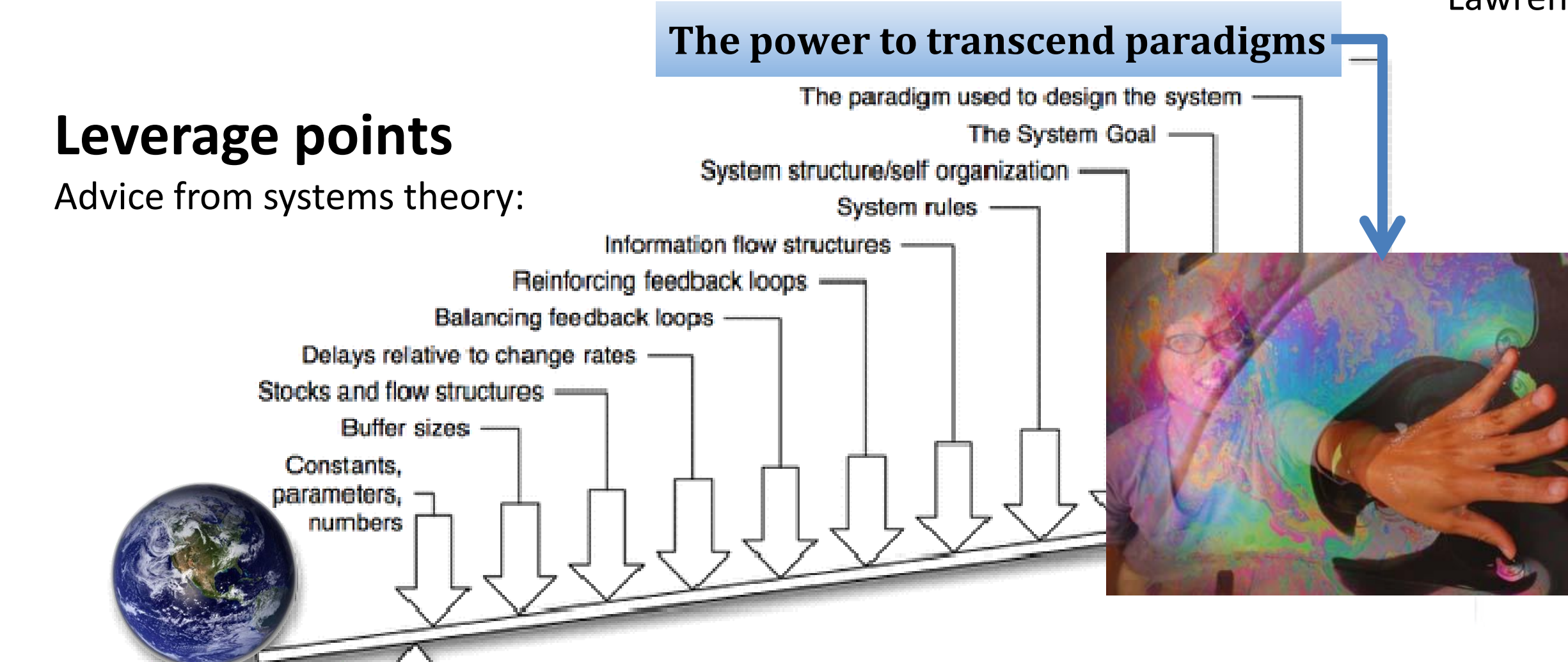


"[M]ystics understand the roots of the *Tao* but not its branches; scientists understand its branches but not its roots."

Science does not need mysticism and mysticism does not need science; but men and women need both. - Fritjof Capra

"Although human activity cannot destroy the global ecosystem, we can change it in ways that will be unpleasant for us."

- Lawrence Slobodkin



The need for shared metaphors

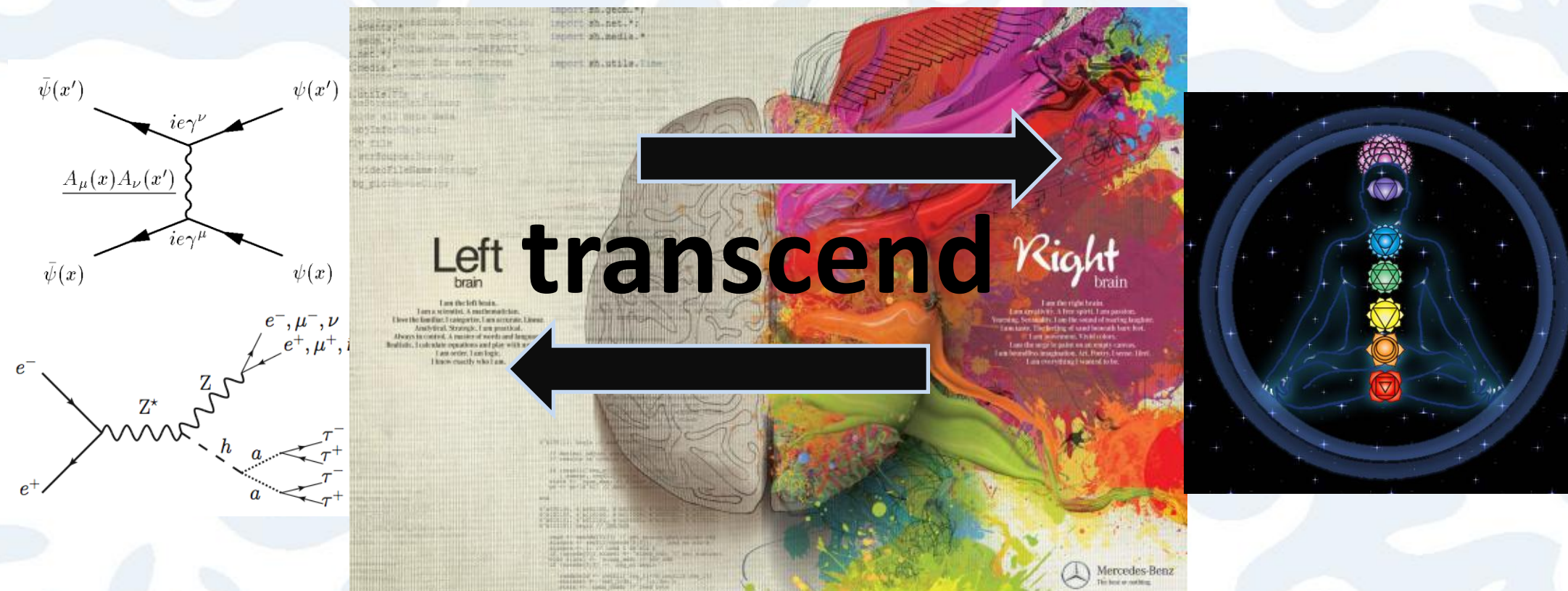
Metaphors not mutually accessible

- Different foundational and functional myths
- Lack of common ground/basis for understanding

Richard Feynman, on first trying to introduce his diagram system:

"I had too much stuff."

My machines came from too far away."



Metaphors in science

"All perception of truth is the detection of an analogy" - Henry David Thoreau

"Essentially, all models are wrong, but some are useful."

- George Box and Norman Draper

"The map is not the territory." - Alfred Korzybski

"We have a method, and that method helps us to reach not absolute truth, only asymptotic approaches to the truth - never there, just closer and closer, always finding vast new oceans of undiscovered possibilities."

- Carl Sagan

"The electron is a theory that we use; it is so useful in understanding the way nature works that we can almost call it real."

- Richard Feynman

A metaphorical toolbox



sat • cit • ānanda
existence - consciousness - bliss



"We are a way for the cosmos to know itself" - Carl Sagan



"A physicist is an atom's way of knowing about atoms." - George Wald

"Natural science does not simply describe and explain nature; it is part of the interplay between nature and ourselves."

- Werner Heisenberg

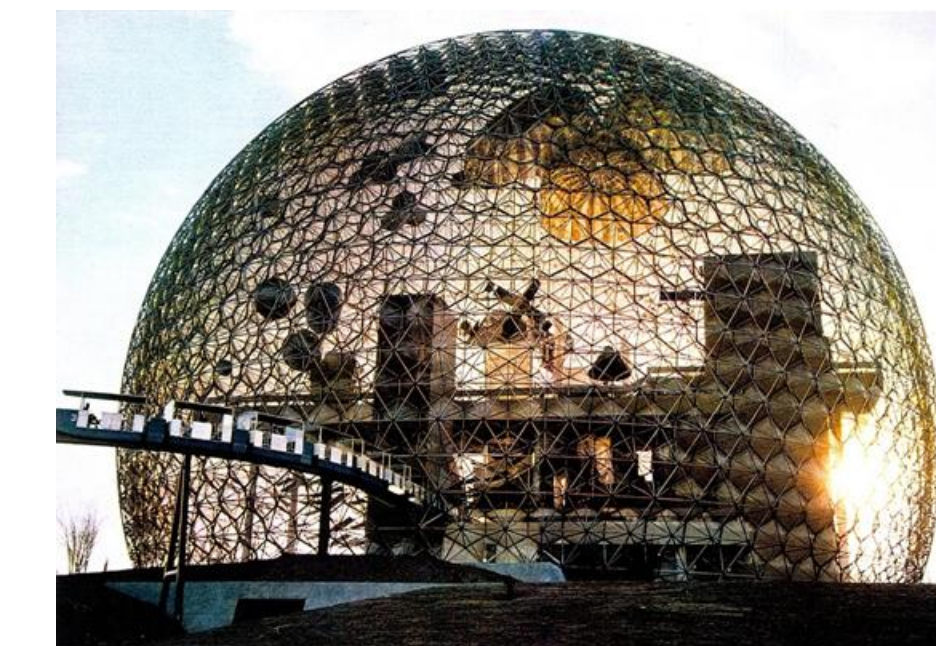
"The requisite care flows naturally if the self is widened and deepened so that protection of free nature is felt and conceived of as protection of our very selves."

- Arne Naess



"Once we have experienced the fierce joy of life that attends extending our identity into nature, once we realize that the nature within and the nature without are continuous, then we too may share in the exquisite beauty and effortless grace associated with the natural world."

- John Seed

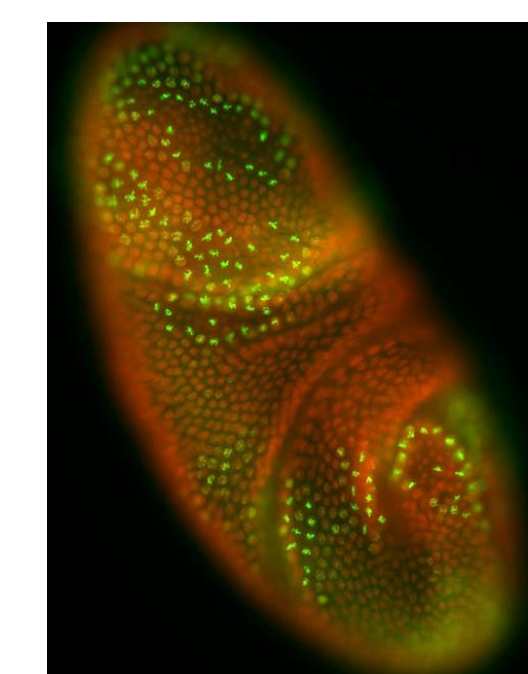
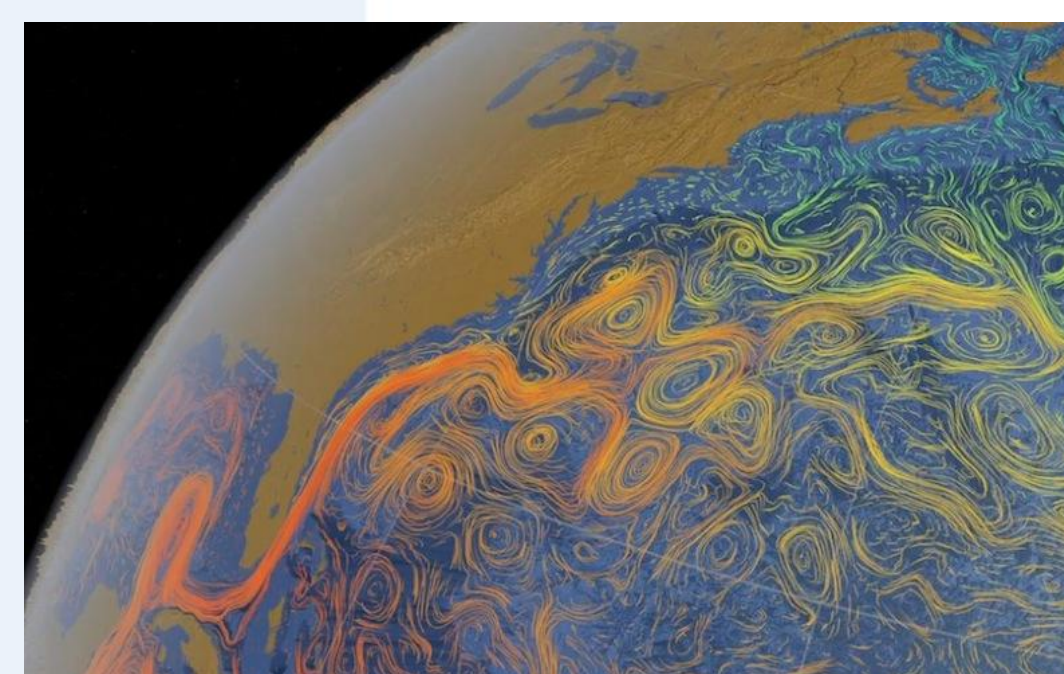


"I live on Earth at present, and I don't know what I am. I know that I am not a category. I am not a thing - a noun. I seem to be a verb, an evolutionary process an integral function of the universe."

- Buckminster Fuller

"We are but whirlpools in a river of ever-flowing water. We are not stuff that abides, but patterns that perpetuate themselves."

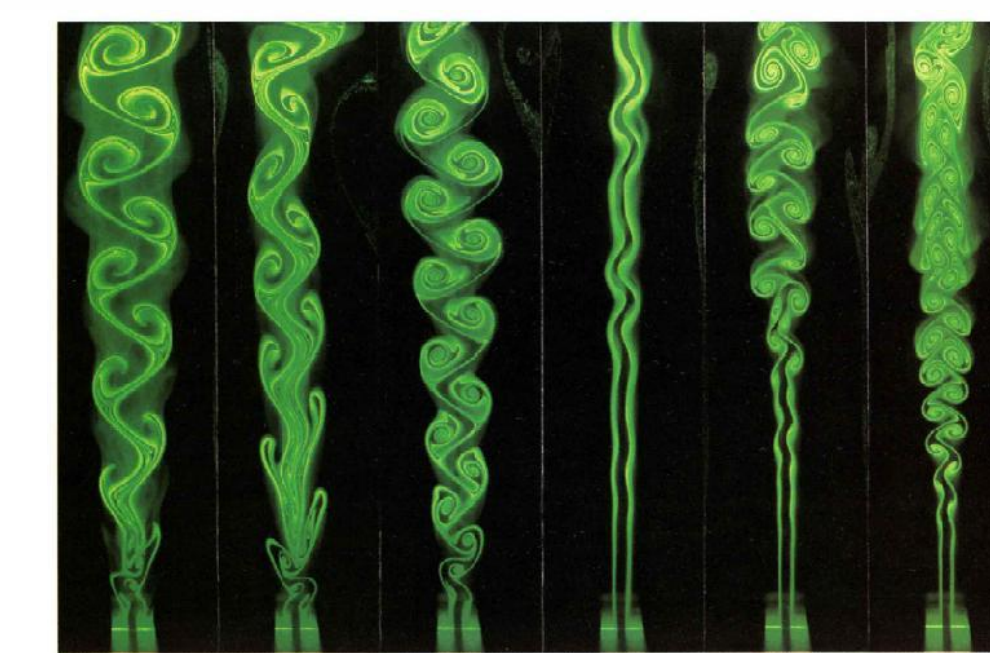
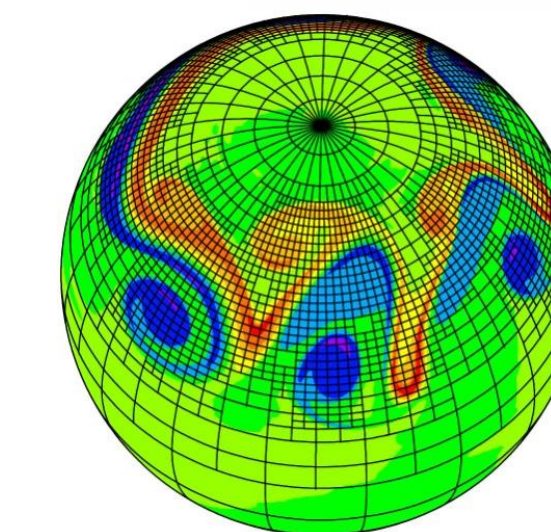
- Norbert Wiener



Hydrogen

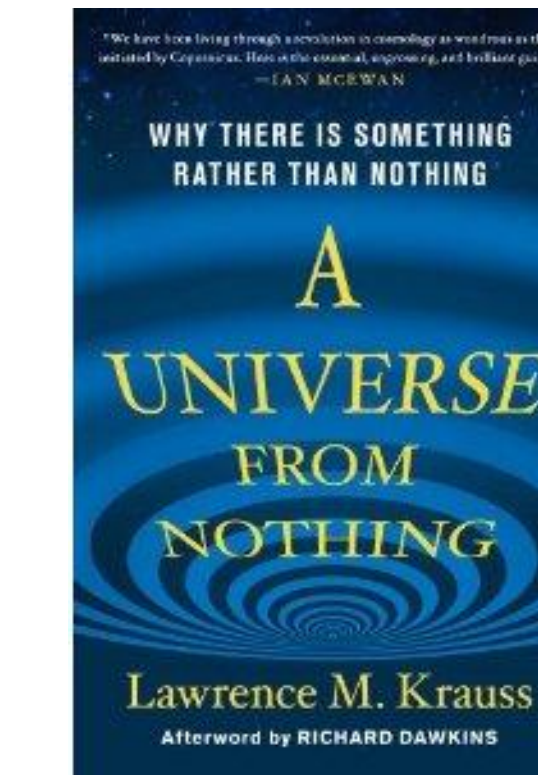


is a colourless, odourless gas, which, given enough time, turns into people

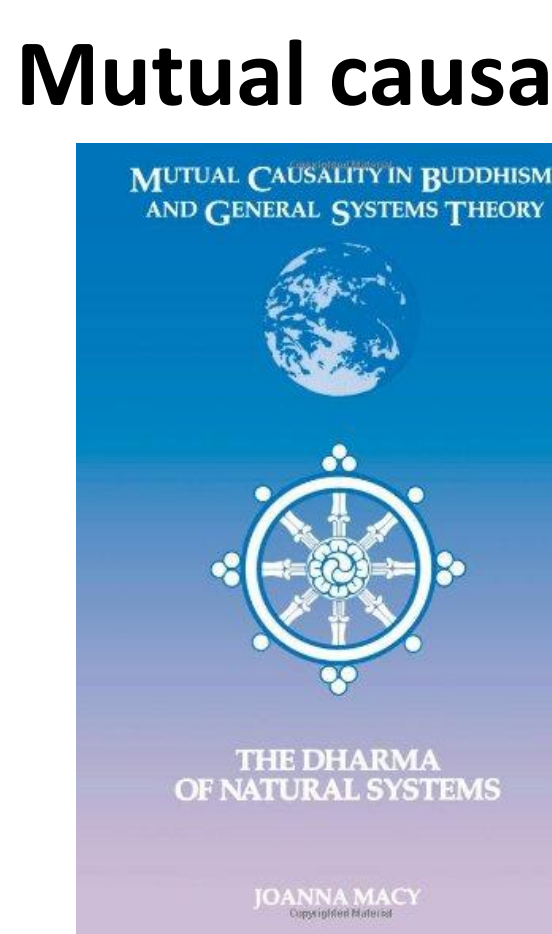


"Organisms are resilient patterns in a turbulent flow" - Carl Woese

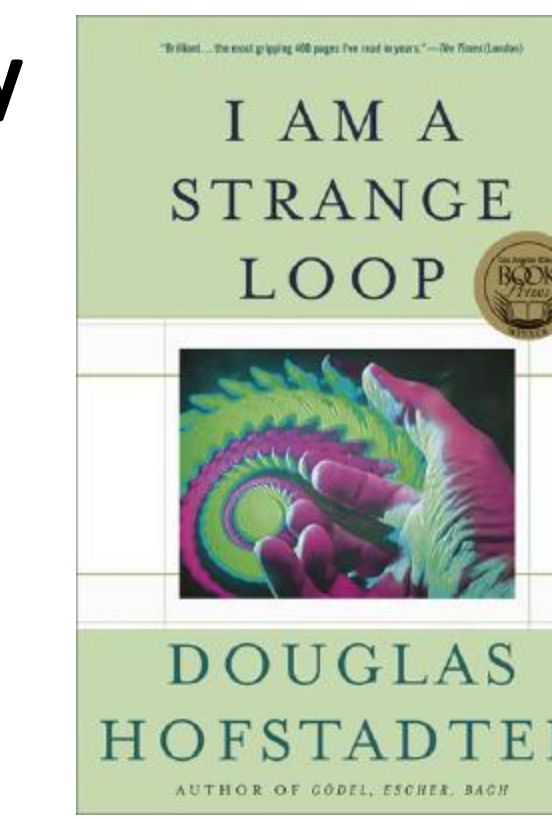
A universe from nothing



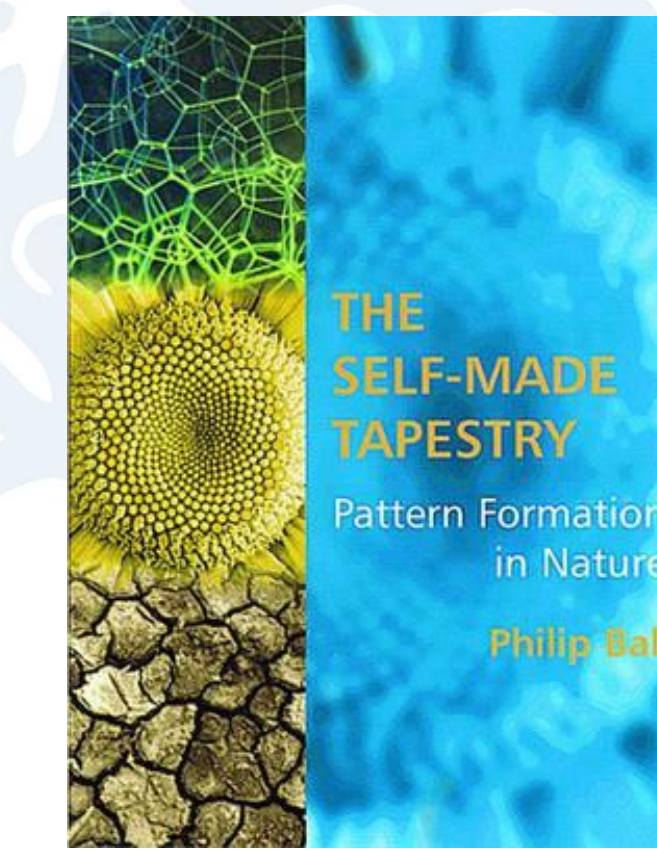
Mutual causality



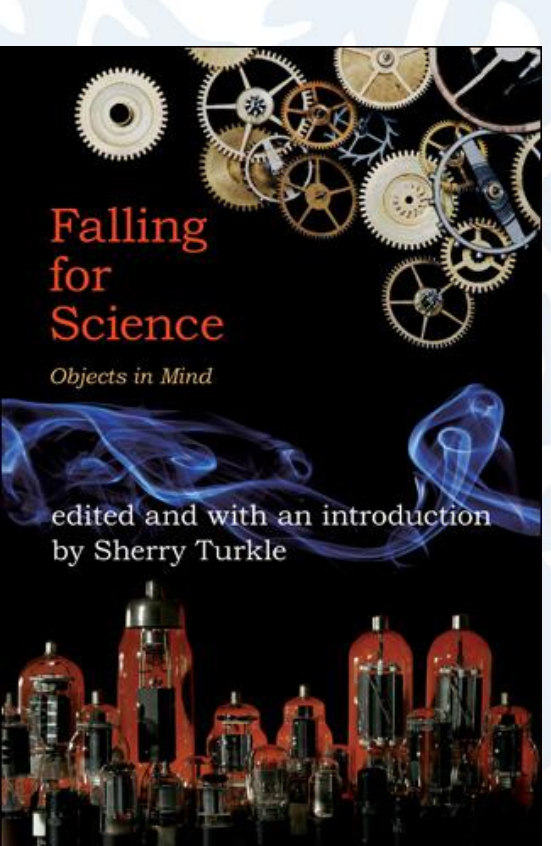
Strange loops and feedback



Pattern formation

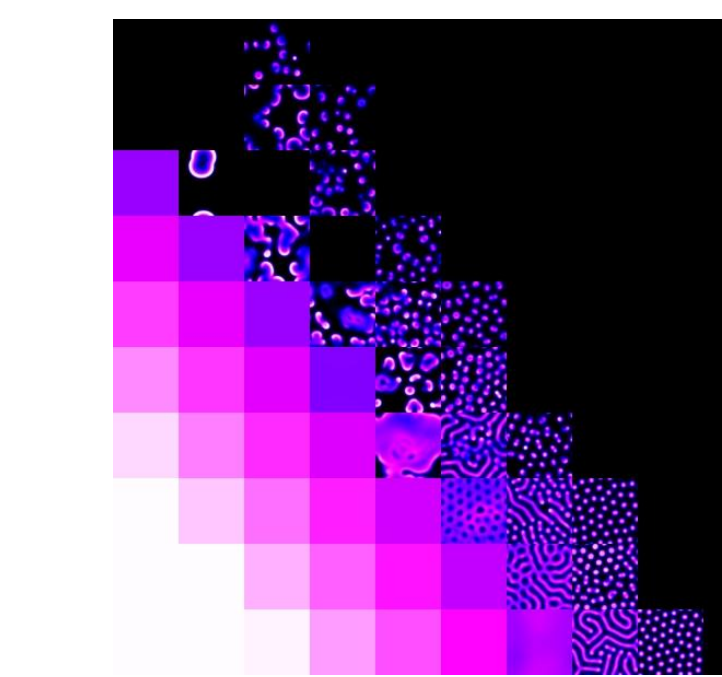


Translational objects

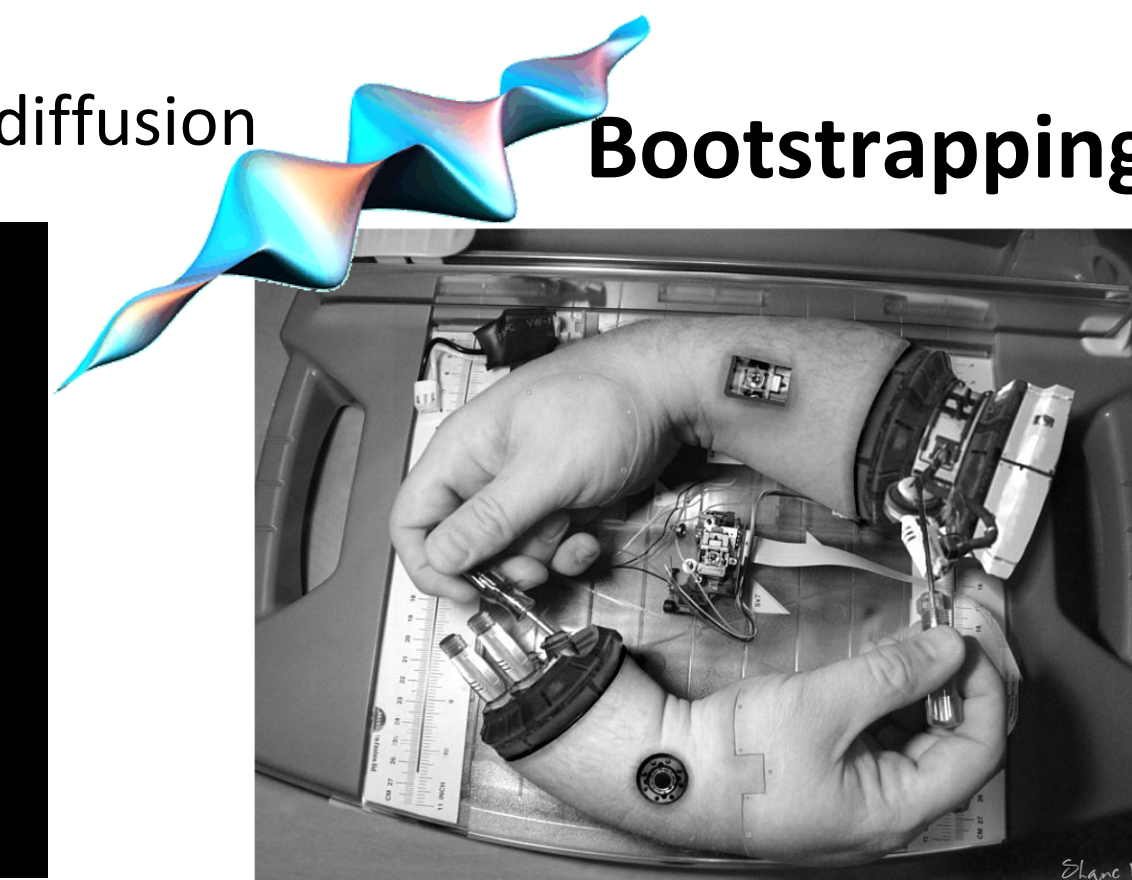


Edge of chaos

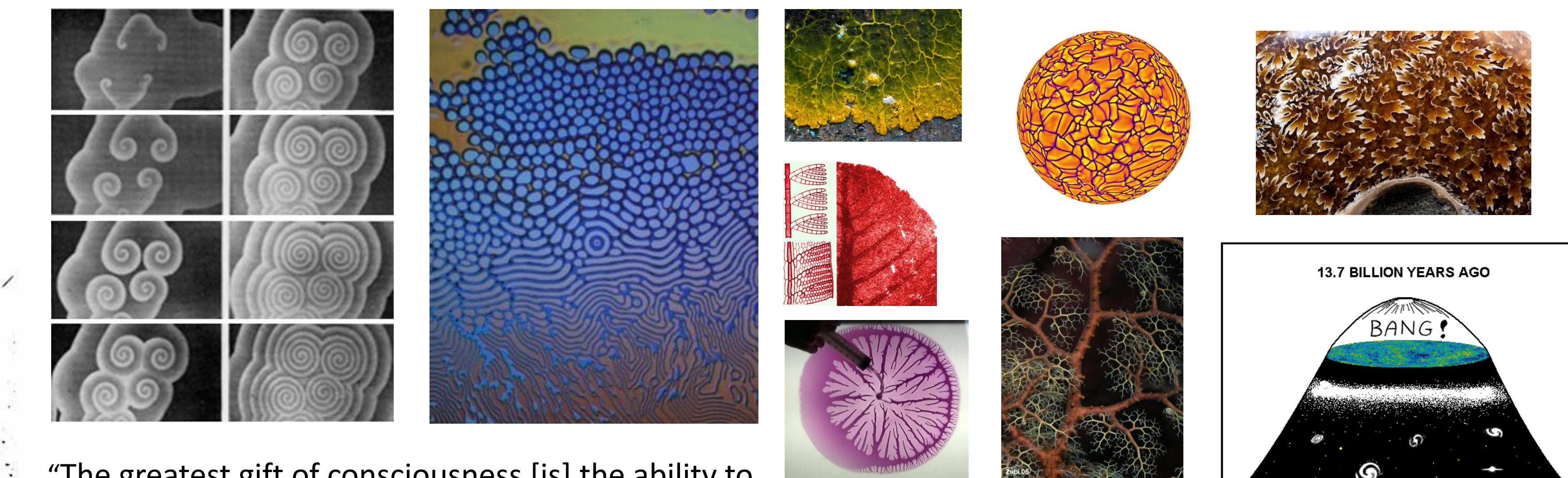
Gray-Scott reaction-diffusion



Bootstrapping

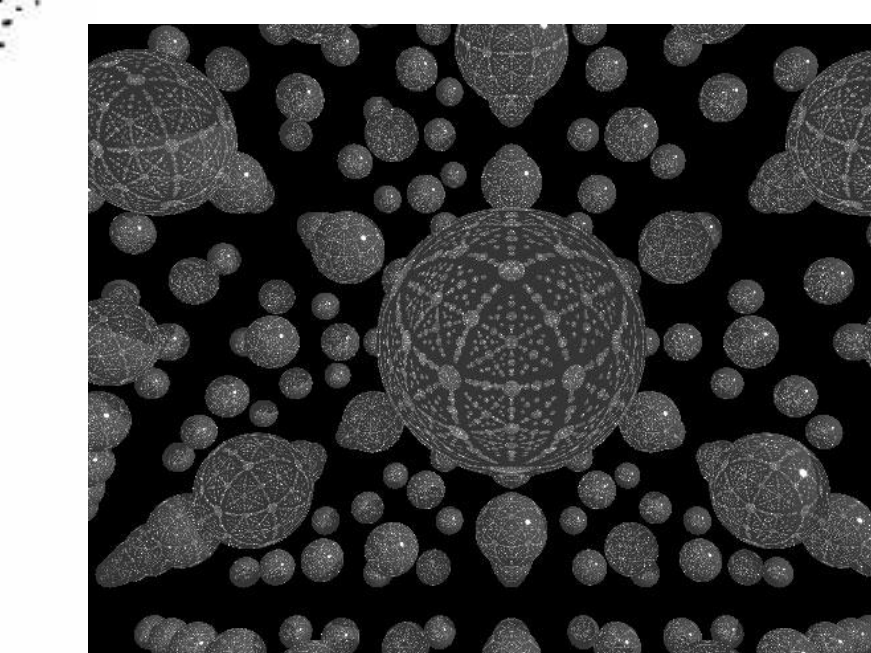


Self-organization and dissipative systems

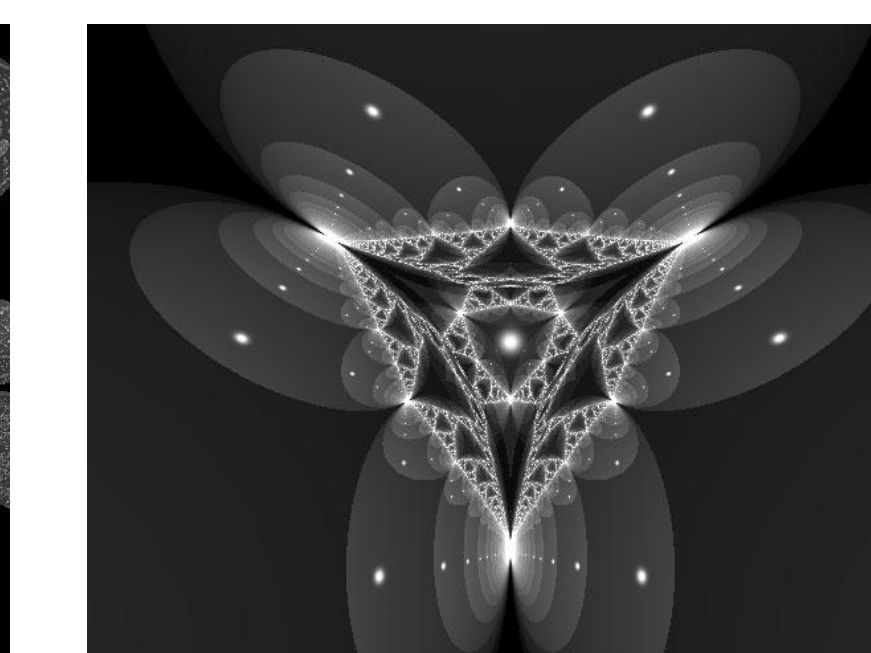


"The greatest gift of consciousness [is] the ability to take the patterns of the world inside you [...]"

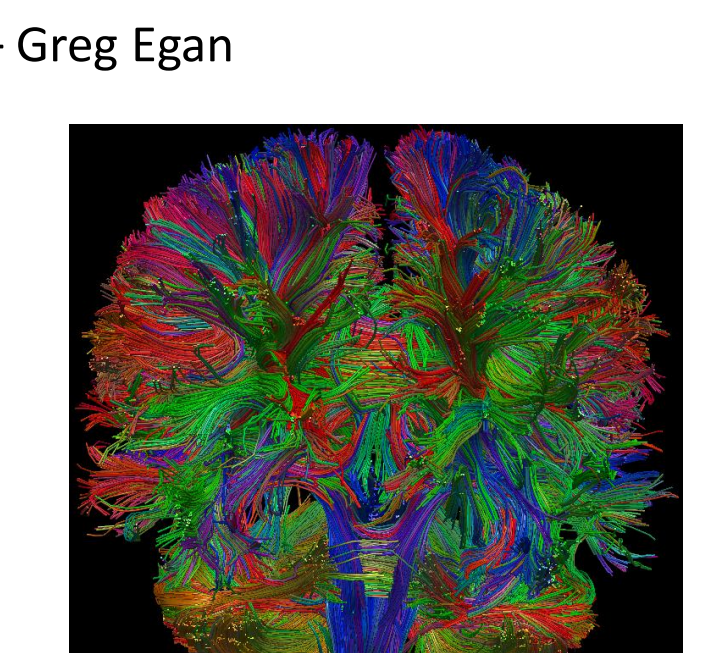
- Greg Egan



Indra's net

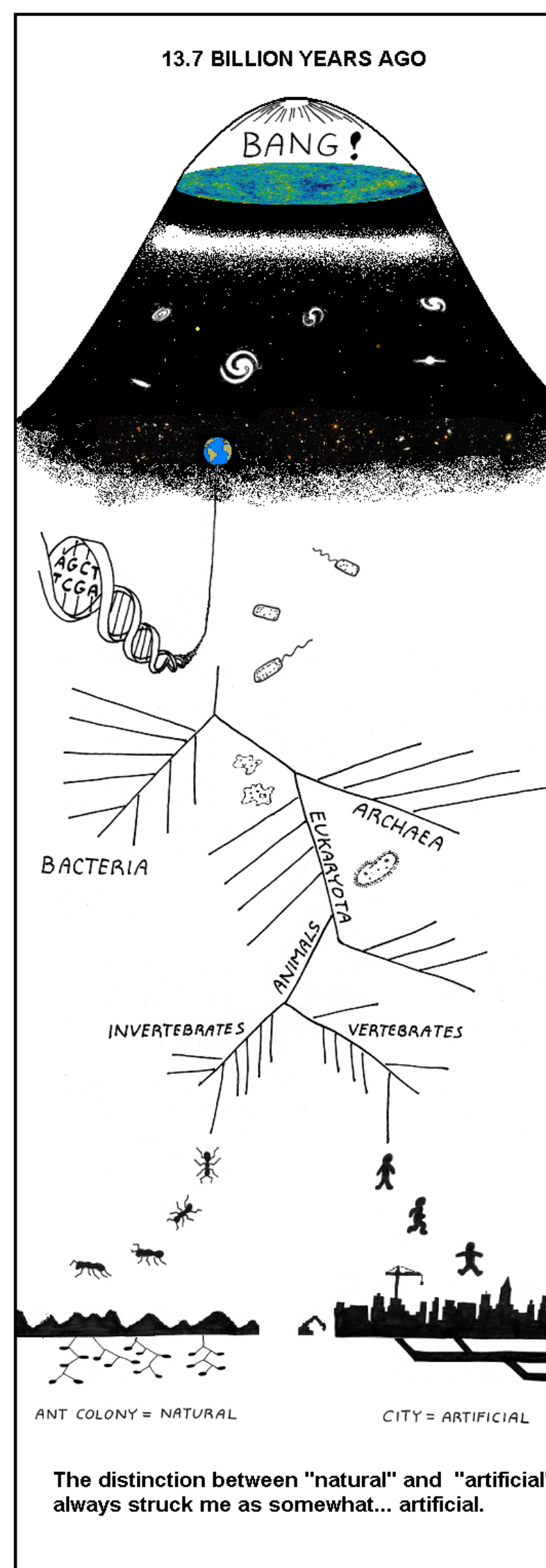
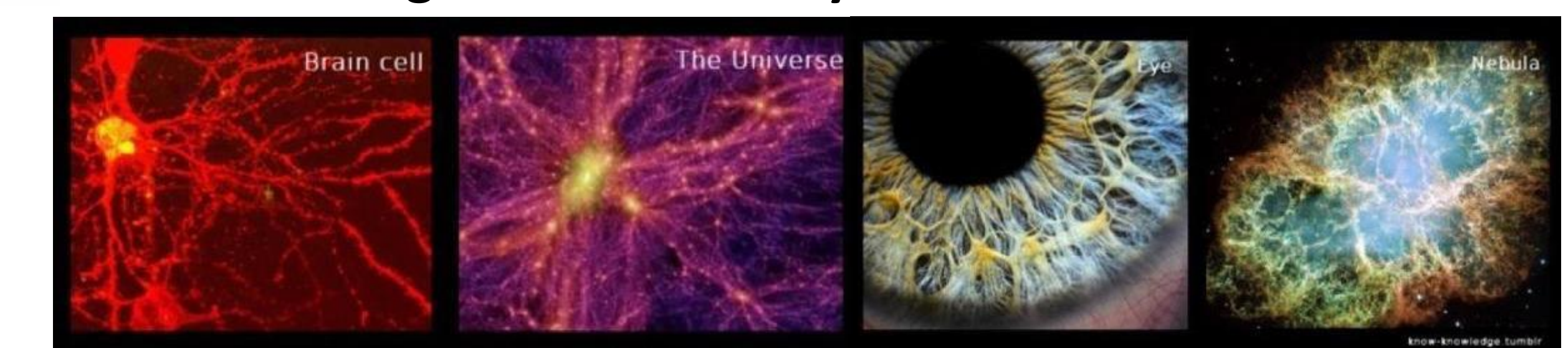


Wada basin



"You are the big bang, the original force of the universe, coming on as whoever you are."

- Alan Watts



Sarah McManus

Odum School of Ecology & Center for Integrative Conservation Research

