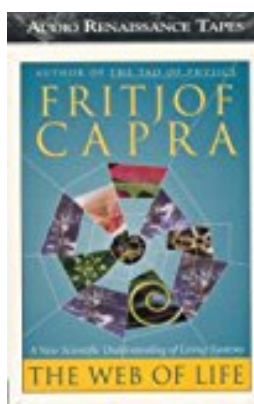


[PDF] The Web Of Life: A New Scientific Understanding Of Living Systems

Michael Prichard, Fritjof Capra - pdf download free book



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Description:

From Publishers Weekly In his bestsellers, *The Tao of Physics* and *The Turning Point*, physicist Capra charted a paradigm shift from a mechanistic to an ecological worldview. In his new book, a rewarding synthesis that will challenge serious readers, he claims that a comprehensive theory of living systems is now emerging. Applicable to cells, chemical structures, people, ecosystems and social systems, such a theory flows from deep ecology (which assumes humanity's embeddedness in

nature's processes), systems thinking and the new mathematics of complexity. Capra identifies a pattern of organization common to all living systems, characterized by internal feedback loops and self-organizing behavior. His own theorizing builds upon the work of important scientists, including American microbiologist Lynn Margulis and British atmospheric chemist James Lovelock, the co-founders of the Gaia hypothesis, who see planet Earth as a living, self-regulating organism. Capra also draws from the work of Chilean neuroscientists Francisco Varela and Humberto Maturana, whose theory of autopoiesis ("self-making") defines organisms as "network patterns" whose components continually transform one another. Extrapolating from ecosystems research, he sets forth guidelines for building sustainable human communities based on interdependence, cyclical flow of resources, partnership and conflict resolution. Illustrated.

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From Library Journal In previous books (The Tao of Physics, Shambhala, 1991; Belonging to the Universe, LJ 2/1/92), Capra was never timid about expounding grand, scientific/philosophical theories of the physical universe. Now, he offers this sweeping discourse on the life sciences. Incorporating elements from such contemporary schools of thought as the Gaia hypothesis, deep ecology, complexity theory, systems theory, and even eco-feminism, Capra herein pronounces a new synthesis that integrates all into a single conceptual context. Many of these ideas are still being developed, though, and many disputes remain unresolved. Advocates will find Capra's theories intellectually and spiritually satisfying. Others will quibble; some will rage. For this to become a true synthesis, it must gain consensus, which will be difficult. Regardless, this book is breathtakingly ambitious and certain to generate response. Public and academic libraries will need it. Gregg Sapp, Univ. of Miami Lib., Coral Gables, Fla.

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