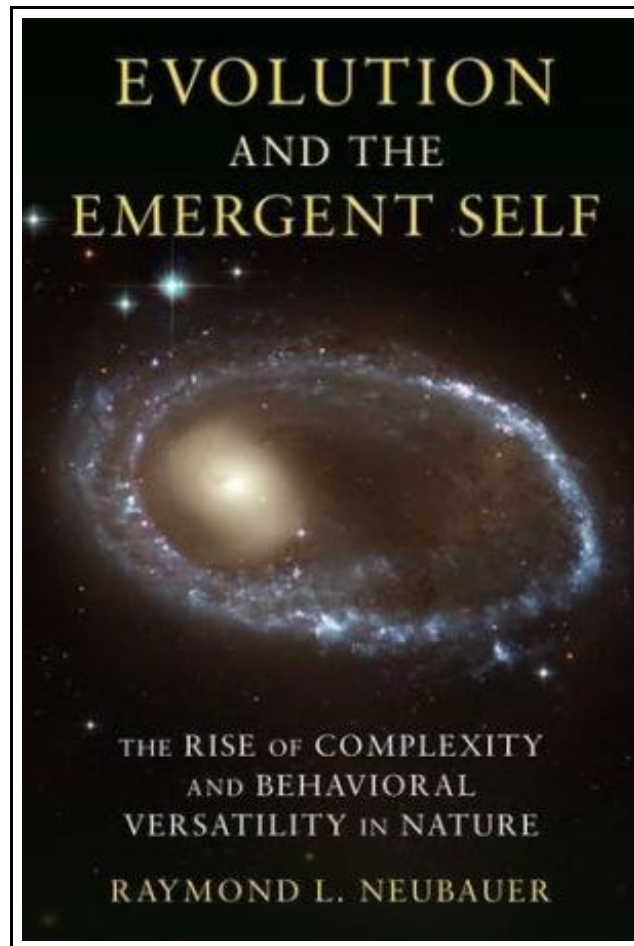# Evolution and the Emergent Self: The Rise of Complexity and Behavioral Versatility in Nature (Hardback)

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(Ms. Chanel Streich)

EVOLUTION AND THE EMERGENT SELF: THE RISE OF COMPLEXITY AND BEHAVIORAL VERSATILITY IN NATURE (HARDBACK)

Columbia University Press, United States, 2011. Hardback. Book Condition: New. 226 x 160 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Evolution and the Emergent Self is an eloquent and evocative new synthesis that explores how the human species emerged from the cosmic dust. Lucidly presenting ideas about the rise of complexity in our genetic, neuronal, ecological, and ultimately cosmological settings, the author takes readers on a provocative tour of modern science s quest to understand our place in nature and in our universe. Readers fascinated with Big History and drawn to examine big ideas will be challenged and enthralled by Raymond L. Neubauer s ambitious narrative. How did humans emerge from the cosmos and the pre-biotic Earth, and what mechanisms of biological, chemical, and physical sciences drove this increasingly complex process? Neubauer presents a view of nature that describes the rising complexity of life in terms of increasing information content, first in genes and then in brains. The evolution of the nervous system expanded the capacity of organisms to store information, making learning possible. In key chapters, the author portrays four species with high brain:body ratios-chimpanzees, elephants, ravens, and dolphins-showing how each species shares with humans the capacity for complex communication, elaborate social relationships, flexible behavior, tool use, and powers of abstraction. A large brain can have a hierarchical arrangement of circuits that facilitates higher levels of abstraction. Neubauer describes this constellation of qualities as an emergent self, arguing that self-awareness is nascent in several species besides humans and that potential human characteristics are embedded in the evolutionary process and have emerged repeatedly in a variety of lineages on our planet. He ultimately demonstrates that human culture is not a unique offshoot of a language-specialized primate, but an analogue of fundamental mechanisms that organisms have used since the beginning of...

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