

Although this fascinating book is a work of philosophy, it is addressed to any educated lay person. It confronts and challenges the prevailing “binary model” of reality—and the explicit belief held by many modern physical scientists that “consciousness” is born of complexity and that binary coding can theoretically model that complexity completely. Briefly stated: we are unwitting robots in a digital Universe.

Are we, in fact, embedded in a giant machine, operating with discoverable rules? Is reality whatever satisfies our equations as some mathematicians have held? Are “consciousness” and “choice” illusions, mere aspects of the universal coding which keeps the parts (us) from feeling hopeless or going insane?

A binary model of reality (plus-minus, mind-matter, male-female, zero-one) begins to run into its own contradictions, as all theoretical models do. What would impel a universal computer code, in a self-referential, evolving process, to create fluid feelings and a sense of sanity to begin with?

Such questions are the meat and potatoes of philosophy! Few of us have any professional training in philosophy, but we live lives governed by the beliefs or “philosophies” we hold. We more or less unconsciously act on the basis of our “paradigms,” as McDaniel rightly calls them. Not to question our paradigms gives them control over us and often causes us to act against our own best interests. To question them, they must first be recognized and then dispassionately considered.

I call this book, fascinating, because it grapples with these fundamental questions and with the limiting, negative effects of the prevailing binary paradigm.

Through much of human history, feelings, thoughts and morality have been reified, or even deified. Such paradigms survive and cause immeasurable harm in the common religious systems of our time. Theosophies have their own contradictions that expose their own limitations. There are provable facts that have nothing to do with humanity and that follow a design that mathematicians can elegantly model. The earth is not flat. Long before space travel we had proof of that. Hydrogen is benign until put in contact with oxygen when it erupts in the fiery fury of the Graf Zeppelin.

In the sixteenth century, provable science began to overtake intangible belief systems mediated through an authority. Reason replaced faith in the intangible and unprovable. Are we, though, now pushing the boundaries of the scientific belief system? Can we believe that we are part of a vast Turing machine that is generating consciousness as a by-product? Are we on the verge of discovering the “theory of everything” that will reduce the universe and all that’s in it to a complex (or amazingly simple) bit of binary coding? Are consciousness, free-will, creativity and the sense of beauty nothing but charming myths, thrown off as a by-product of this code?

For those who feel a growing need for “balancing” and for reconciling both rational science and human consciousness, this book provides a framework. It requires careful reading. It is a scaffolding that can support a variety of contents, but the various contents chosen to clarify and illustrate this scaffolding must not be taken as preaching a new dogma. It is proposing a fresh way to think, the setting aside of preconceptions, a new paradigm, and perhaps a healing of the myriad ways the prevailing binary paradigm polarizes and destroys. It is a journey whose time has come.

The pathway may sometimes seem steep, but the climb is worth the effort.

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