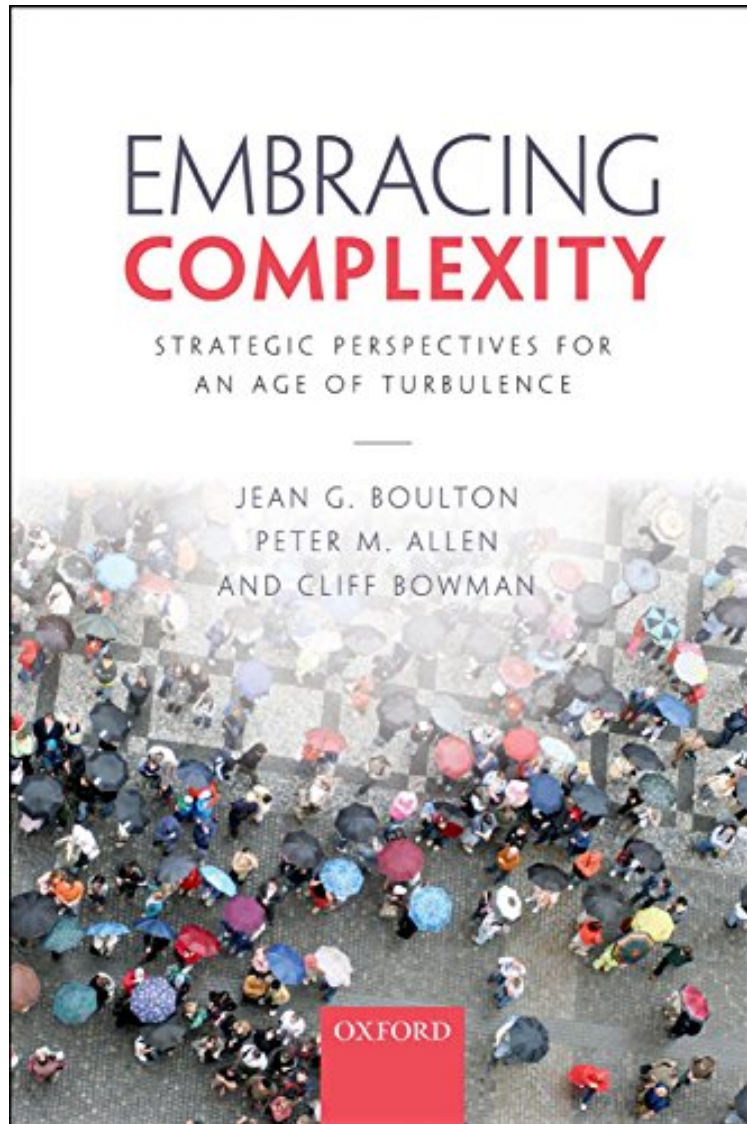


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# Embracing Complexity: Strategic Perspectives for an Age of Turbulence

*Jean G. Boulton, Peter M. Allen, Cliff Bowman*  
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**Jean G. Boulton, Peter M. Allen, Cliff Bowman : Embracing Complexity: Strategic Perspectives for an Age of Turbulence** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Embracing Complexity: Strategic Perspectives for an Age of Turbulence:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Why complexity thinking matters. By SteveA good explanation of the complexity mindset. I come at this from a background on Agile practices which work for complex projects. This book doesn't cover agile development but helps with some common ideas (self-organizing) and how they apply to

strategy, management and more. Not a book of how but more on what and why. Supports George Box's thought that "All models are wrong but some are useful". This book is very useful. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Highly recommended By CESAREO R. GUILLERMO Great introductory book. Buy with confidence. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Worth the read By Howard Gross Very good primer for anyone wanting to get familiar with complexity theory

The book describes what it means to say the world is complex and explores what that means for managers, policy makers and individuals. The first part of the book is about the theory and ideas of complexity. This is explained in a way that is thorough but not mathematical. It compares differing approaches, and also provides a historical perspective, showing how such thinking has been around since the beginning of civilisation. It emphasises the difference between a complexity worldview and the dominant mechanical worldview that underpins much of current management practice. It defines the complexity worldview as recognising the world is interconnected, shaped by history and the particularities of context. The comparison of the differing approaches to modelling complexity is unique in its depth and accessibility. The second part of the book uses this lens of complexity to explore issues in the fields of management, strategy, economics, and international development. It also explores how to facilitate others to recognise the implications of adopting a complex rather than a mechanical worldview and suggests methods of research to explore systemic, path-dependent emergent aspects of situations. The authors of this book span both science and management, academia and practice, thus the explanations of science are authoritative and yet the examples of changing how you live and work in the world are real and accessible. The aim of the book is to bring alive what complexity is all about and to illustrate the importance of loosening the grip of a modernist worldview with its hope for prediction, certainty and control.

Embracing Complexity takes a critical stance in relation to dominant ways of thinking about the social world. It presents complexity thinking as a way of understanding how the world works, and challenges the dominant expectation that leaders can control the evolution of the social and the organisational world. Those willing to take a critical approach will find this an important book. \* Ralph Stacey, Complexity and Management Group, Hertfordshire Business School \* In the social and physical sciences, complexity is everywhere, changing how we think and act. But how? This book provides an excellent overview both of the underlying concepts and also their implications for how we think about change in economics, organizations and international development. Highly recommended. \* Duncan Green, Strategic Adviser, Oxfam GB \* Enjoyable, thought provoking, and insightful. A superb introduction to complexity science for all readers! \* W. Brian Arthur, author of Complexity and the Economy and Recipient of the Lagrange Prize in Complexity Science \* An important contribution to our understanding of complexity science and its relevance for tackling the problems being faced in today's world. \* Gareth Morgan, author of Images of Organization \* About the Author Jean G. Boulton, Visiting Fellow, Cranfield School of Management and Director, Claremont Management Consultants Ltd, Peter M. Allen, Emeritus Professor, Cranfield University, Cliff Bowman, Professor of Strategic Management, Cranfield University Jean Boulton is a director, strategy consultant and part-time academic at both Bath and Cranfield universities. She teaches, consults, researches and writes about the implications of complexity thinking to management, research and policy development. She has been Chair of Sustain Ltd, Chair of Social Action for Health, a non-executive director of IOPP and Head of Engineering Operations for BAe Commercial Aircraft. She was previously a Senior Lecturer at Cranfield School of Management. She has consulted many blue chip companies and charities including Carillion, RBS, ICI, Lloyds TSB and Oxfam. Her background in theoretical physics coupled with her practical engagement in the fields of management and social research - both through academia, consulting, hands-on management and working as a director and trustee - give her a multi-faceted, informed and practical perspective on the implications of embracing complexity. Peter Allen developed and ran the Complex Systems Research Centre in the School of Management at Cranfield University since the late 1990s. He has a Ph.D. in Theoretical Physics and from 1970 to 1987 worked with Professor Ilya Prigogine at the Universite Libre de Bruxelles on research that led on to the development of Complexity Science. He is an Editor in Chief of the Journal, Emergence: Complexity and Organization. He has written and edited several books in the field of complexity and socio-economic modelling and published well over 200 articles in a range of fields including ecology, social science, urban and regional science, economics, systems theory, and physics. In 2011 he co-edited the Sage Handbook on Complexity and Management. He has been a consultant to DERA, the Civil Contingencies Secretariat, Department of Trade and Industry, the Canadian Fishing Industry, Elf Aquitaine, the United Nations University, the European Commission and the Asian Development Bank. Cliff Bowman's research interests focus on the creation and capture of value, complexity, strategy processes and the development and leveraging of strategic assets. He has undertaken consulting assignments for a wide range of organizations and is the author of ten books and sixty articles. Cliff is a past Chairman of the European Case Clearing House, was Faculty Dean of Cranfield School of Management from 1998 to 2006, and holds two non-executive director positions.