



# Chaos and Complexity in Psychology: The Theory of Nonlinear Dynamical Systems

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While many books have discussed methodological advances in nonlinear dynamical systems theory (NDS), this volume is unique in its focus on NDS's role in the development of psychological theory. After an introductory chapter covering the fundamentals of chaos, complexity, and other nonlinear dynamics, subsequent chapters provide in-depth coverage of each of the specific topic areas in psychology. A concluding chapter takes stock of the field as a whole, evaluating important challenges for the immediate future. The chapters are written by experts in the use of NDS in each of their respective areas, including biological, cognitive, developmental, social, organizational, and clinical psychology. Each chapter provides an in-depth examination of theoretical foundations and specific applications and a review of relevant methods. This edited collection represents the state of the art in NDS science across the disciplines of psychology.

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**Chaos and Complexity in Psychology: The Theory of Nonlinear Dynamical Systems** From Brand: Cambridge University Press **Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #1357735 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Cambridge University Press
- Published on: 2011-08-29
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.98" h x 1.10" w x 5.98" l, 1.70 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 552 pages

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### **Editorial Review**

#### Review

"Just as did Henri Bergson's *L'Evolution créatrice* in 1907, James Gleick's *Chaos* in 1987 crystallized a community of concern for nonlinear dynamic systems. Major progress thereafter is documented in this collection of essays. The term "nonlinear" designates any departure from the bedrock of human experience in linear causality and expresses the fact that, while there is neither a single nonlinear science, nor can there be, there is mutual enrichment. The fundamental insight endures, that given the right initial conditions, order emerges from disorder in defiance of the laws of thermodynamics. These chapters provide a new set of initial conditions for the growth of shared knowledge and competence among scholars addressing "NDS" in psychology."

**-Walter J. Freeman, University of California at Berkeley**

"This collection of articles by leaders in the field shows how psychology is poised to move beyond the linear, static models of the past to a deeper understanding of complex and chaotic human behavior."

**-Julien Clinton Sprott, University of Wisconsin-Madison**

"The sciences of complexity constitute a source of ideas, methods, and ways of thinking that can deepen understanding of psychology's defining problems. The essential first step in drawing upon this source is relinquishing the conventional metaphors of psychology inherited from philosophy, neurology, and human artifacts, and embracing, in their stead, the metaphor of self-organization - of systems and behaviors composing themselves as they proceed. For psychologists of all stripes, the chapters in this volume give ample reasons for considering this first step and, if they are inclined to take it, ample encouragement to travel further."

**-Michael T. Turvey, University of Connecticut and Haskins Laboratories**

"This is an excellent, very useful book. The editors have assembled a stellar international cast of leaders in nonlinear dynamics and psychology, and the book provides both broad and deep coverage of "hot" areas of contemporary theory and research. Generous and current reference sections, a well-written introductory chapter, and the rigor of the individual contributions combine to make this book useful as a graduate-level text and as a resource for veterans in the field."

**-David Schulberg, The University of Montana-Missoula**

"It's not very often that a new discovery takes my breath away. But once in a while, something so new and so powerful is uncovered that makes me thrilled to work in the leadership space. For more than 25 years, Stephen Guastello has pioneered the application of non-linear dynamic systems science to the workplace."

**-Matt Barney, Infosys, Forbes**

#### About the Author

Stephen J. Guastello is Professor of Psychology at Marquette University, where his teaching and research specialize in industrial-organizational psychology, human factors engineering and ergonomics, and statistics. He is the author of *Chaos*, *Catastrophe*, and *Human Affairs*, *Managing Emergent Phenomena*, and *Human*

Factors Engineering and Ergonomics and is the founding editor of the journal Nonlinear Dynamics, Psychology, and Life Sciences.

Matthijs Koopmans is an officer of educational research and evaluation at the Academy for Educational Development, Center for School and Community Services in New York. He has published papers in the journal Nonlinear Dynamics, Psychology, and Life Sciences and served as president of the Society for Chaos Theory in Psychology and Life Sciences from 2005 to 2007.

David Pincus is an Assistant Professor in the psychology department at Chapman University, California, where his teaching, clinical and research interests focus on applications of nonlinear dynamical systems theory to understanding interpersonal processes underlying healthy exchanges of information. He is the author of Guided Imagery for Pain Management and is co-executive producer and writer of - and appears in - Life Right for Kids, a video-based program aimed at helping families address child weight-management.

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#### **Marcos Anderson:**

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