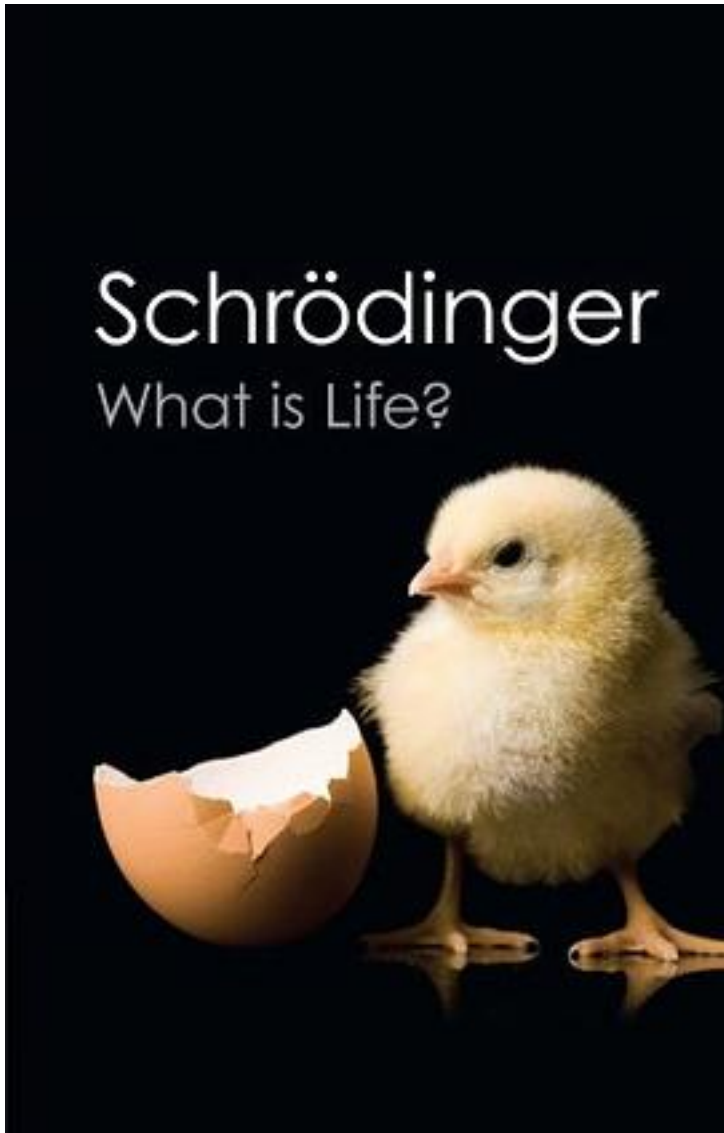


What is Life?



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著者:Addy Pross

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- Reconsiders the big question: how did life emerge from non-life?
- Draws on recent results from the new field of systems chemistry to articulate an answer
- Shows how chemical systems become complex and acquire the properties of life
- Demonstrates that Darwinian evolution is the expression of a much deeper principle in the physical sciences
- With a new Epilogue highlighting the latest developments in the ideas discussed, and their implications

Seventy years ago, Erwin Schrödinger posed a profound question: 'What is life, and how did it emerge from non-life?' This problem has puzzled biologists and physical scientists ever since.

Living things are hugely complex and have unique properties, such as self-maintenance and apparently purposeful behaviour which we do not see in inert matter. So how does chemistry give rise to biology? What could have led the first replicating molecules up such a path? Now, developments in the emerging field of 'systems chemistry' are unlocking the problem. Addy Pross shows how the different kind of stability that operates among replicating molecules results in a tendency for chemical systems to become more complex and acquire the properties of life. Strikingly, he demonstrates that Darwinian evolution is the biological expression of a deeper, well-defined chemical concept: the whole story from replicating molecules to complex life is one continuous process governed by an underlying physical principle. The gulf between biology and the physical sciences is finally becoming bridged.

This new edition includes an Epilogue describing developments in the concepts of fundamental forms of stability discussed in *What is Life?*, and their profound implications.

Oxford Landmark Science books are 'must-read' classics of modern science writing which have crystallized big ideas, and shaped the way we think.

作者介绍:

Addy Pross received a Ph.D in Organic Chemistry from Sydney University in 1970. He is currently a Professor of Chemistry at Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel, and a recognized authority in the area of chemical reactivity to which he contributed with the highly cited and acclaimed Pross-Shaik model of chemical reactivity. He has held visiting positions in many universities world-wide, including the University of Lund, Stanford University, Rutgers University, University of California at Irvine, University of Padova, the Australian National University Canberra, and Sydney University. He has served on the editorial board of chemical and biological journals and a variety of academic management boards. In recent years he has directed his attention to the biological arena where he has applied his expertise in chemical reactivity to the Origin of Life problem and the broader question of the problematic chemistry-biology interface.

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