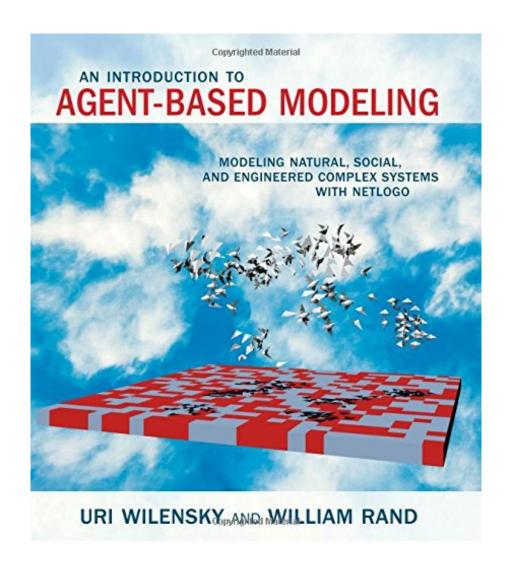


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Review

This book eloquently captures the excitement of understanding natural and social phenomena by recreating them in computer simulations. The agent-based approach championed here provides deeply satisfying scientific explanations because it provides a bridge between levels of description, showing how high-level, macroscopic properties, such as crystal formation, tumor shape, flocking, population cycles, social coordination, and transportation networks, can spontaneously emerge from lower-level interactions among agents rather than being explicitly programmed into a model. When combined with active exploration using Uri Wilensky's free and widely used NetLogo programming environment, reading this book equips students and researchers with a new language for generating and expressing scientific theories.

(Robert Goldstone, Chancellor's Professor of Psychological and Brain Sciences, Indiana University Bloomington)

A clear, comprehensive, and up-to-date introduction. This is the best book out there for learning (or teaching) the art and science of agent-based modeling. I highly recommend it for anyone interested in this essential area of complex systems science.

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This outstanding book offers a tour d'horizon of agent-based modeling for students, teachers, and scientists at all levels, using NetLogo, the 'low-threshold/unknown-ceiling' language developed by Uri Wilensky. With this Introduction to Agent-Based Modeling, he and William Rand have set the standard for textbooks on this topic. An essential contribution.

(Joshua M. Epstein, Johns Hopkins University and the Santa Fe Institute)

About the Author

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The advent of widespread fast computing has enabled us to work on more complex problems and to build and analyze more complex models. This book provides an introduction to one of the primary methodologies for research in this new field of knowledge. Agent-based modeling (ABM) offers a new way of doing science: by conducting computer-based experiments. ABM is applicable to complex systems embedded in natural, social, and engineered contexts, across domains that range from engineering to ecology. An Introduction to Agent-Based Modeling offers a comprehensive description of the core concepts, methods, and applications of ABM. Its hands-on approach -- with hundreds of examples and exercises using NetLogo -- enables readers to begin constructing models immediately, regardless of experience or discipline.

The book first describes the nature and rationale of agent-based modeling, then presents the methodology for designing and building ABMs, and finally discusses how to utilize ABMs to answer complex questions. Features in each chapter include step-by-step guides to developing models in the main text; text boxes with additional information and concepts; end-of-chapter explorations; and references and lists of relevant reading. There is also an accompanying website with all the models and code.

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Review

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Most helpful customer reviews

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful.

Great book but too little explanation of advanced Netlogo computational methods.

By Miklos N Szilagyi

I developed a Netlogo-based course on Agent-Based Simulation for seniors and graduate students ten years ago and have been teaching this course continuously since that time. I chose Netlogo because of its extremely good documentation and simplicity to learn its basics. Naturally, I have read this new book with great interest.

The book thoroughly explains all aspects of Agent-Based Modeling (ABM): how to create, explore, and extend such models; how to analyze them; what are their components; how to verify, validate, and replicate ABM models; advanced topics and applications. In addition, they provide 28 carefully selected models to illustrate these aspects. This is an excellent textbook for Agent-Based Modeling courses.

Professor Wilensky is a world figure in ABM. He is the creator and developer of the Netlogo language and has conducted ABM research, development, and teaching with Netlogo for over twenty years. Netlogo is a language with "low threshold, no ceiling." Indeed, my students have had no difficulty learning its basics very fast. They have created a large number of simple but meaningful simulations using this language.

Therefore, the authors are right to assume that the reader is familiar with the introductory material in the Netlogo manual. This is followed through the first chapters of the book. Then, I was surprised to read 19 pages of painstaking explanation of virtually every command of an elementary predator-prey simulation in Chapter 4. I thought that the authors had decided to abandon their prerequisite and would follow this liberal approach in the rest of the book. This, however, does not happen. Difficult codes in the following models are explained only superficially.

The authors recognize this and write on p. 391: "While this textbook is not meant as a Netlogo instructional manual, there are a few advanced computational methods in Netlogo that are useful in ABM and merit discussion here." It is unfortunate that only 9 pages of excellent discussion of some advanced methods follow this important statement. My experience shows that the students need much more explanation of these

and other advanced methods.

I will make this book the required text in my class and recommend it to my colleagues elsewhere but emphatically ask the authors: please write a continuation of this textbook devoted entirely to the explanation of advanced Netlogo computational methods.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Great book, I was exposed to netlogo during undergrad ...

By jeremy adsitt

Great book, I was exposed to netlogo during undergrad research and at that time knew the principals, but lacked more concrete application of the language and tool. This book more than did the job by filling in the gaps, it did code walk through, explanation and comparison. It also dove into exploration of multi-run automation and data output using the behaviour space tool. With this knowledge I got my first ABM created to explore some rather complex relationships... Highly recommend it.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Great Intro to ABM

By John K

One of the best introductions to Agent-based Modeling I've seen. Extensive explanations of the paradigm and perspective, lots of easy-to-understand examples dissected for the reader, and clear concise guidance on how to start using NetLogo to build one's own ABMs.

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