I don’t know what textbook this chapter on cellular automata came out of, but I hope it wasn’t a computer science book. It’s not that uncommon to see CS textbooks that have a lot of math in them. Sometimes it’s necessary to prove an algorithm, or show the underlying equation being solved. This, however, is not one of those cases. There are three useful parts in this chapter of this book and those are three of the four pictures. If you read in between paragraphs, you find out that the underlying concept is cellular automata and gas models.

The concept is pretty easy to understand, and I won’t repeat it here, but the annoying part is how difficult the chapter makes it. The same goes with so many research papers out there. They’re way too complicated when they’re explaining simple things. To whose advantage is it to make the research paper difficult to understand? The idea of getting something published is to share the knowledge that you’ve learned with other people so that they can build on that.

My suspicion is that many people just want to get their name out there as part of an important paper, so they try to make mediocre research sound like they did something revolutionary. Unfortunately this doesn’t help their cause, papers become important because the research was important. If you do something amazing, then its in your best interest to make it as easy for people to understand as possible. If your research isn’t interesting, then no amount of obfuscation is going to make it interesting, it will just be difficult to understand how uninteresting it is.

References
