

# Video – The Universe Story (7:58)

*(Extract from “The Awakening Universe” used in Be The Change Symposium)*

## **NARRATOR:**

One way to describe our collective world view and the unexamined assumptions that comprise it would be to call it our story.

Anthropologists tell us that a culture’s story about how the universe came to be created, and how the human community came to be a part of the universe, is really the background for everything else the culture believes – their values, ethics, laws, institutions... everything.



A new cultural story, supported by scientific discoveries, is emerging at this time in history. It’s a story that says we are not separate; that everything – all of humanity, all of creation, all of the universe – is profoundly connected at both the macro and micro level. Children today are being raised within this new “operating system,” and with it they are beginning to shape the consciousness on our planet.

One way of telling this story comes from cultural historian Thomas Berry, and from mathematical cosmologist Brian Swimme who wrote a book called “The Universe Story”. Here is an excerpt from a film by Neal Rogin about this new way of seeing the world.



## **THOMAS BERRY:**

*To tell the story of anything,  
you have to tell the story of Everything.*

-Thomas Berry

We will be alienated from the universe until we have a story, an adequate story of the universe, that tells the story of the human as well as the story of everything else, because it is part of one single process that has been going through a sequence of transformative episodes.

**MIRIAM MAC GILLIS:** This idea of an emergent universe is very, very new. There is no culture, no tradition, no sage, no prophet that could know that the way our generation is blessed to know it.

**MARY EVELYN TUCKER:**

When we begin to realize this tremendous sense of time that's orienting us and space that's grounding us, we are energized in a new way to take responsibility for the planet and its ecosystems. In other words, our response to the magnificence of cosmology and this story is a responsibility to its continuity.



**BRIAN SWIMME:**

The Universe Story shows how profoundly related we are...It shows that we are involved with each other and have been for a long time. So, it is not the case that the Earth was assembled and then we were added to the Earth, and it was there for our purposes. Rather, we came out of the Earth.

**MATTHEW FOX:**

Now the recovery of cosmology brings back a sense of community, or it ought to. To rediscover that we are kin with all other beings. And if you run the film of the universe backward 14 billion years, you realize we all descend from an original pin prick smaller than a zygote. It's really one being here. We're all relatives.

**NARRATOR:**



Imagine nothing. Not Space. Not darkness. Not even a vast emptiness. But nothing. Now, imagine... everything! In a stupendous explosion of light, heat and energy, radiating out in every direction, the universe erupted into existence 13.7 billion years ago.

**DREW DELLINGER:**

We can see that everything that ever was, is or will be, was compressed into a space smaller than a seed, tinier than a tear, more minuscule than a molecule. All space, all time, and the potential for everything that would ever exist started as a single point. So in a very real sense science has discovered what indigenous people have known all along: we are all one; we are all connected; we all come from the very same source.

**NARRATOR:**

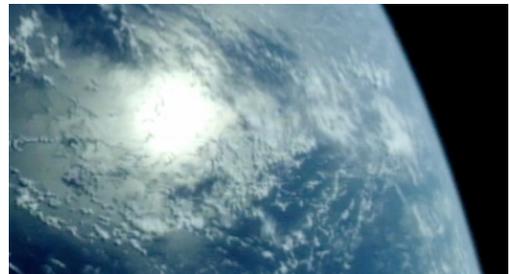
This massive fireball continued expanding, eventually cooling enough for the very first atoms to form.

**BRIAN SWIMME:**

If the expansion had just been a little bit slower, the universe would have collapsed into an enormous black hole. Or if the expansion had just been a little bit faster the universe would have expanded just too fast for the galaxies to form and so we'd have simply dust. If you altered the expansion just one millionth of one per cent the entire universe would collapse. So what it suggests is that there is a profound wisdom at work in the universe.

**MIRIAM MACGILLIS:**

Earth as we see her now, has arrived at such a complexity, such a development, such a journey of that original fireball, that she is now alive in her own right. In other words, the universe, in earth, has reached a complexity in which universe awakens into life and is alive.



**DREW DELLINGER:**



Think about it. Everything we see around us has developed from the boiling cauldron of the early earth, a sphere of lava that miraculously gave rise to the sea and the atmosphere, and then life in its infinite expressions. As Brian Swimme says: “The Earth was once molten rock and now sings operas”, so all creativity and all consciousness arises, in some mysterious way, from the depths of the Earth itself.

**MIRIAM MACGILLIS:**

Why out of stardust has this come to be? Why birdsong? Why green? Why the lushness of palm and the stability of cypress, and the grandeur of the mountains? And why the oceans, with their billions of teeming life forms? We are part of a journey so much more than we ever could even imagine



**BRIAN SWIMME:**



As we move into this understanding, we have a new identity of ourselves as cosmological beings. We're not just Americans; we're not just French; we're not just Democrats. We're not any small category.

We are the universe in the form of a human. And it is true of everyone. It's an amazing new understanding of ourselves that is so profoundly inclusive and everyone is part of this.



Everything is part of this, and we discover as well a profound kinship.



That no matter what being we're talking about on the planet, we are related. We are related in terms of energy. We're related in terms of genetics. We're all in one way or another like a form of kin and that just – It's overwhelming.

So it's just now coming into human awareness. It's going to take a lot of reflection to embody this fully, but it is a massive change... in human consciousness.