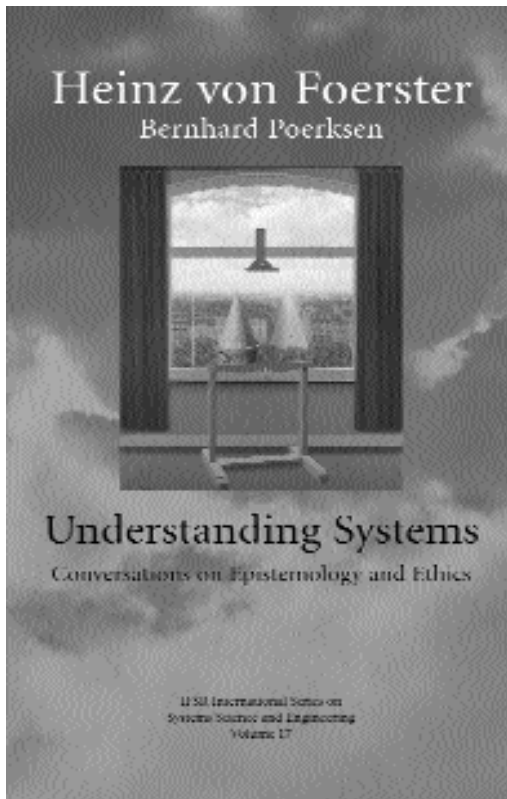


Heinz von Foerster/Bernhard Poerksen

Understanding Systems

Conversations on Epistemology and Ethics



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→ Understanding Systems

Conversations on Epistemology
and Ethics

Translated by Karen Leube

161 Pages, Hardcover, 2002

€ 25,50

How real is reality? Are our images of the world mere inventions, or does an external reality correspond to them? Is it possible to know truth?

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Heinz von Foerster, born in 1911, was known as the "Socrates of cybernetic thought". After studying physics in Vienna, he was employed by various research laboratories in Germany and Austria. Von Foerster emigrated to the U.S. in 1949. There he was welcomed into a circle of scientists who came together regularly at the invitation of the Macy Foundation during the 1950s (Norbert Wiener, John von Neumann, Gregory Bateson, Margaret Mead, Warren McCulloch). Here cybernetic thought was given its shape. In 1957 Heinz von Foerster established the Biological Computer Laboratory (BCL) at the University of Illinois, where he had a professorship until his retirement in 1976. He died in 2002.

Bernhard Poerksen studied German language and literature, journalism and biology at the University of Hamburg and Pennsylvania State University. He works as a journalist for numerous newspapers and teaches media and communication studies at the University of Hamburg. Poerksen is the author of a study on the language of Neonazis entitled "The Construction of the Images of the Enemy". His recent publications include the book "The Certainty of Uncertainty – Dialogs on Constructivism" and "From Being to Doing", written together with Humberto Maturana.

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