

Location:
The George Washington University
Mt. Vernon Campus
2100 Foxhall Road
Washington, DC



The Egg, Chicken *and* Rooster: Designing Triadic Relations When Doing Cybernetics

Judy Lombardi

Once, when visiting Heinz Von Foerster on Rattlesnake Hill in California, he gave me an article he had written in the 1970s entitled "The Cybernetics of Cybernetics." In this article, among other things, he writes about observing, language, circular relations and the importance of designing triadic relations when describing social systems.

As a professor I have found the practice of nesting three concepts together to be useful in generating circular distinctions and clarifications rather than linear ones. That is, triadic thinking and doing provoke a relational language that helps me, and hopefully my students, to think circularly and systemically about social issues.

During my presentation I will explore the idea of designing triadic relations when explaining social systems. I will introduce a variety of triadic relations that might be interesting to those interested in cybernetics. For Example:

Morals, Ethics and Manners
Conversation, Conflict and Contradiction
Physical Constraints, Social Constraints and Human Agency
Social Structures, Floating Hierarchies and Consensus Model
Structural Determinism, Radical Constructivism and Social Systems

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