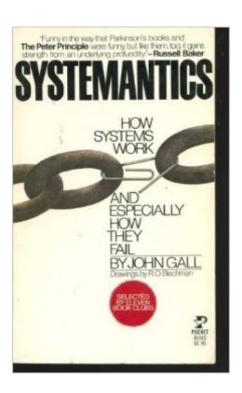
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Systemantics: How Systems Work And Especially How They Fail





Synopsis

Systemantics: How Systems Work and Especially How They Fail

Book Information

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> Physics > System Theory

Customer Reviews

Things are not working, that much we agree about. For me, these'things' are mostly software systems which drive me closer to the edgeof insanity the more I work with them, and for the author of this bookit's mostly human organizations. The arguments of the book are supposed to apply to all systems, so we can ignore this minordifference. Who or what is to blame for this state of affairs? Or evenbetter, how can we navigate it? The culprit, according to the author, is the systems that we see everywhere, enjoined and entangled permeating our lives, and pulling us in all directions. The solutionproposed by the author is to be suspicious of systems, and know their tricky ways ("We must learn to live with systems, to control them lest they control us", p. xiii). An extensive definition of a system is notattempted by the author, rather wisely, because this gives the readerthe drive to look for systems in their own life. There is oneroundabout way of defining systems towards the end of the book which Ifound rather enlightening, however: "The system represents someone's solution to a problem. It does not solve the problem" (p. 74). Morethan systems per se, the author targets what he calls systemism, thevacuous belief in the fundamental usefulness of systems, and the bookaims to cast it out of the reader by succinct statements of the flawsof systems. The book is written in a tongue-in-cheek style. The authormakes claims of systematicity, and orders his argument in axioms that should somehow lead up to a consistent theory, but that's not really the case. This doesn't mean that the book is inconsistent, however.

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