

- As a community, we have just experienced an extraordinary cluster of 8 deaths of ISSS Presidents in the 2-year period culminating before our last Asilomar meeting in 2004.
- They were inspiring role models to our community, & close friends to many.
- Among them was one of the original SGSR-ISSS Founders, a Nobel Laureate, a Crafoord Prize winner, & founders of national and international movements,
- There is simply no way to adequately express the extent of our loss & sorrow or our determination to carry on their important work.....

## Stafford Beer, ISSS President for 1971

1926-2002

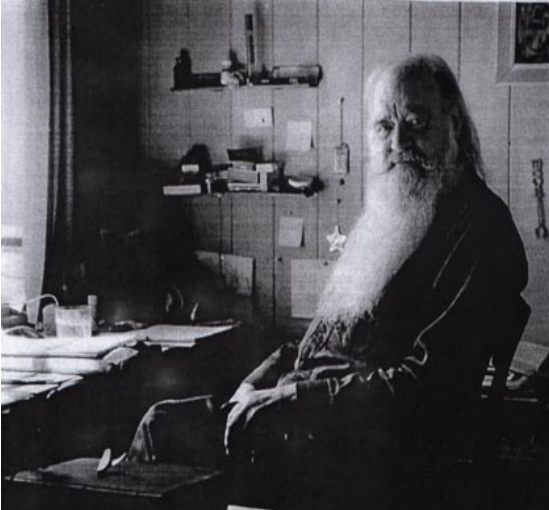


- Stafford Beer was considered by some to be the Father of the new field of Management Cybernetics.
- Books he authored, such as *Decision and Control*, *Brain of the Firm*, and *Heart of the Enterprise* influenced an entire generation of managers and led to the beginnings of the then new field of Operation Research.



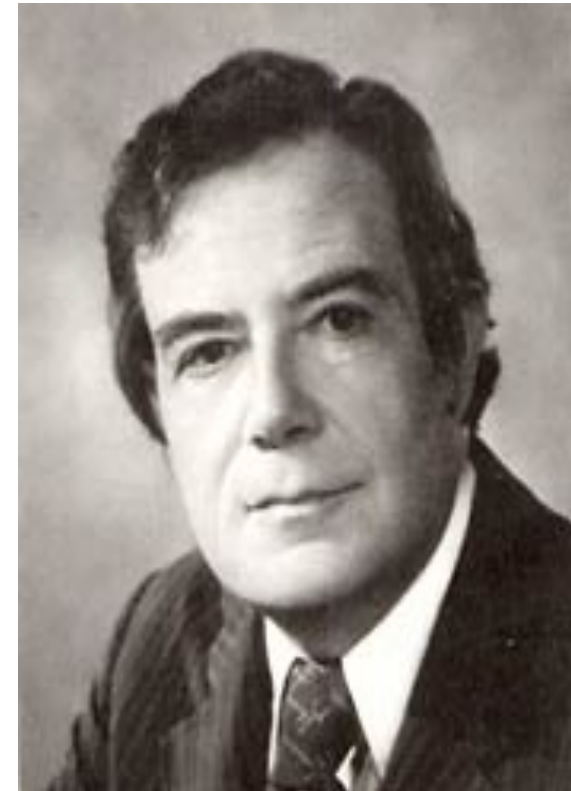
- Stafford was architect of perhaps the biggest cybernetic project ever attempted; Cybersyn, the complete redesign of the Chile's entire government and economy for President Allende.
- He created and championed the Viable Systems Model to improve management systems and the addition of appropriate feedback loops in society.
- He believed in the effectiveness of the scientific approach, but argued against anything like ultra reductionism as restricting freedom and openness.
- He championed keeping all levels of the organization as free to act as possible, in fact, favoring non-hierarchical, open structures over the typical rigidity of authoritarian organization.
- Beer served as a President of the Operational Research Society in 1970 and received awards of many honorary degrees and visiting chairs.

- Professor Beer was a “charismatic and even flamboyant figure.” In later years, he was Biblical in his mannerisms and appearance as shown in the picture; a classic image of a system's guru
- His showmanship and personality attracted many and he was very loyal to and affectionate with his students and followers.
- “I can remember him as both a swashbuckling, cigar-smoking businessman in a dark suit, and later as a Old Testament prophet figure in a long gown and flowing grey beard...”



## James G. Miller, ISSS President for 1973

1916-2002



- James Grier Miller was one of the original founders of the general systems movement and its professional society, the Society for General Systems Research (SGSR) which later became the ISSS.
- It was Dr. Miller who was the practical organizer who created a stable and supportive institutional home for the founders of general systems theory in his Mental Research Institute at the University of Michigan.
- Dr. Miller founded the Systems Science Institute as President of the University of Louisville, Kentucky. This Institute was considered the international leader in systems education for a decade and produced many systems scholars.
- Jim founded both the field & the journal *Behavioral Science* which recently was fused with *Systems Research*

- Dr. Miller published *Living Systems* in 1978 as a synthesis of a vast biological and social science literature. He called his candidate for a general theory of systems, Living Systems Theory (LST).
- The 1,102 page text cited 3,335 research articles; all literature results were consistently and systematically organized according to the same 7 hierarchical levels and 20 repeating sub-systems resulting in significant unification of many disciplines.
- One unique contribution of Miller's Living Systems Theory was his creation of 173 specific “cross-level” hypotheses and his emphasis on “measurables” to test those hypotheses as critical to an improved and improvable, or a more science-based, general systems theory.
- A well-connected member of the intellectual lineage from Harvard, to U. of Chicago, to UCLA, from Darwin to Whitehead to today's scholarly giants, James sponsored many new workers in systems.
- The ISSS-SIG on Living Systems Analysis is still today one of the most active and productive units of the ISSS.
- At every venue Dr. Miller praised his wife Jessie as an important partner, co-contributor, and author of all of his work.

## Heinz von Foerster, ISSS President for 1976

1911-2002

- Heinz was there at the very beginning. He was a participant in and editor of the famous Macy Conferences (with Weiner, McCullogh, Bateson, Mead, & Von Neumann) that are recognized as the start of cybernetics.
- Dr. von Foerster was also President, frequently godfather, and always the inspiration of the American Society for Cybernetics.
- As Founder & Director of the Biological Computer Lab at the University of Illinois, he led it to international status in many interdisciplinary fields.

- Heinz von Foerster was regarded as a leading information theorist. And Information theory is at the heart of general systems theories.
- On the conventional engineering side, he was a pioneer of parallel computing, a potent technical achievement just now reaching its full potential.



- Both in the ISSS and the ASC, Heinz was an early champion of more intense discussion and less delivery of formal papers.
- He extended cybernetics to include second order effects, & the effects of observer on observed.
- von Foerster was a Guggenheim Fellow and a Fellow of the AAAS.

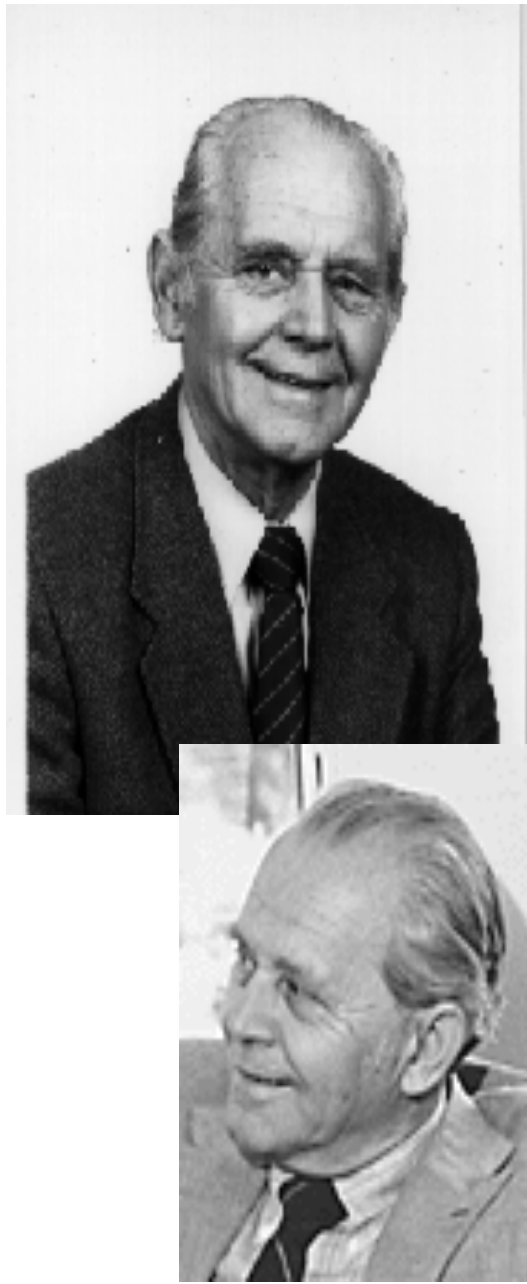
- Heinz possessed an attractive, vibrant, and vigorous personality that actively sought and overcame challenges.
- Blessed with a distinguished family history in Vienna, he experienced the strongest European intellects from his childhood and youth. (He participated in the famed “Vienna Circle”)
- This philosophical bent led him to extend beyond information theory to a theory of knowledge itself eventually leading to a set of ideas that became known as “constructivism.”



## Bela H. Banathy, ISSS President for 1984

1919-2003

- Dr. Banathy was a specialist in educational research, systems design, and improvement of human conditions through self-empowerment and self-organization.
- Bela served as Program Director and Associate Lab Director for the Far West Research and Development Lab in San Francisco; one of five major national educational labs in the U.S.
- He authored 7 books and edited many others. His most recent book, *Guided Societal Design: A Systems View* captures the range of his interests and many contributions to improving society.
- Dr. Banathy was a founding member of the International Federation for Systems Research in Europe (an association of 25 systems professional societies), served on its Board of Director's, and was its President for four years.



- Bela was Founder and President of the International Systems Institute (ISI) which as a non-profit agency organized more than 30 international conferences in several countries.
- Bela was so loved in the international systems community that he was named Honorary Editor of several professional journals, served as Contributing Editor for *Educational Technology*, was on the Board of Editors for *World Futures*, and on the IAC for *Systems Practice*.
- One of the most memorable aspects of Bela's career would be his devotion to his students and their devotion to him. He guided many new systems practitioners as a Professor of the Saybrook Graduate School.
- Another hallmark of Bela's work was his dedication to values & ethics.
- Bela designed the leadership development model still used by the Boy Scouts international movement and was active in the BSA since 1933.
- Bela served the ISSS in just about every capacity possible. He started as co-Chair of the Far West Region in the seventies; served as Managing Director, as President, as Editor of Annual Proceedings, as member of the Board of Directors and the first Board of Trustee's.

## Ilya Prigogine, ISSS President for 1988

1917-2003



- Dr. Prigogine was a theoretical chemist; he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1977 for his work on non-equilibrium thermodynamics and dissipative structures.
- Dr. Prigogine was a member of 30 professional societies including our own National Academy of Sciences.
- He was awarded more national awards and prizes than could be listed on this poster including 53 honorary degrees from international universities in 20 countries.
- He was a professor of Physics and Chemical Eng at the University of Texas at Austin, with the Center he founded there now named after him, the Ilya Prigogine Center for Studies in Statistical Mechanics and Complex Systems.

- Dr. Prigogine's research focus was elucidation of the role of time in biological and physical systems. He revised our understanding and appreciation of systems far from equilibrium and those exhibiting irreversible processes.
- Hailed as one of the most influential thinkers of this century and as the “grandfather of chaos theory” some would say that his work predestined the widespread attention now being paid to emergence & complex systems. He published 20 books & >1,000 research articles
- As ISSS President, he presided over our international meeting (that year in Edinburgh, Scotland) that was characterized by a greater participation of natural scientists than before or since.
- He continued to contribute to ISSS as the keynote speaker and panel member for discussions at our annual meeting in Seoul, South Korea under the leadership of then ISSS President Yong Pil Rhee.



## C. West Churchman, ISSS President for 1989

1913-2004

- Dr. Churchman was recognized widely as a ground breaking philosopher and management expert.
- He has been credited with bringing the concepts of values and ethics into management science.
- He and his lifelong collaborator, Russell Ackoff, are often cited as originators of the very successful new field of Operations Research.
- Dr. Churchman served as Chairman of the Philosophy Dept. at University of Pennsylvania, and as Professor of Systems Management at UC, Berkeley.
- He authored 12 books on a wide range of topics.



- An expert in systems design, Churchman emphasized the similarities between many different sociological, corporate, and management systems.
- In 1983, Churchman became a Professor with the unique title, Peace and Conflict Studies, which was a culmination of his passion for insisting on responsibility and values in management and making philosophy very practical.
- His most acclaimed books were on systems topics, namely *Challenge to Reason*, *The Design of Inquiring Systems* and *The Systems Approach*.



- His wife Gloria described her husband Professor Churchman as a “tremendous teacher. People would flock to his class...He had students from everywhere, all over the world.” due to his international reputation.
- As President of the ISSS, Churchman ushered in an era of focus on systems management with subsequent Presidents Ackoff and Mitroff.

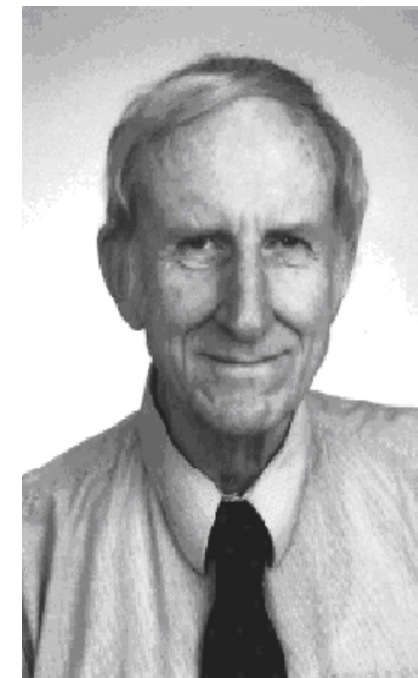
- 4 ISSS Presidents passed away in 2002, and two in 2003 and 2004.
- This occurred after our Annual International Meeting. The 2 subsequent meetings in China and Crete, Greece were at distant sites. The ISSS was unable to organize appropriate Memorials, especially for US members.
- This conference, at the traditional U.S. conference site of Asilomar, enabled the organization of a fitting memorial to honor our fallen Presidents and friends. Notice the wide diversity of disciplines of our Pres.

## Howard T. Odum, ISSS President for 1991

1924-2002



- In the conventional natural sciences, Dr. Odum was a well known and highly respected ecologist who specialized in energy flows in ecosystems. He has been called a founder of the modern science of ecology, of ecological engineering & economics, and of general systems ecology.
- In 1987, he received the Crafoord Prize, the most prestigious award in ecology, from the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (the ecology Nobel).
- Dr. Odum published 15 books and >300 research papers in peer reviewed journals during his career.
- He was loved much by his students and colleagues as a true “agent and steward of the earth”



- His most seminal systems work was the text titled *Systems Ecology*. It is still the most complete and rigorous presentation of general systems in a natural science context. It is also a simulation tool.
- He served as Graduate Research Professor at the University of Florida, Director of its Center for Environmental Policy, and founded the Center for the Wetlands in 1973 long before such concerns became a major issue in U.S. environmental policy.
- He was also part of the vanguard movement of applying ecological ideas to economics at the systems level. He helped integrate both formerly separate fields using general systems concepts and measures he invented such as “transformity” and “emergy”
- As ISSS President, Howard tried to resurrect the activities of natural scientists in the society.
- Like the Millers, Howard Odum and his wife Elisabeth formed a true partnership in systems writing and research. She is his coauthor on many works and is continuing his work in systems ecology.

## Yong Pil Rhee, ISSS President for 1996

1933-2004



- Dr. Yong Pil Rhee was the revered Chair of the National Ethics Studies Department at Seoul National University, the largest and most respected university in South Korea.
- Dr. Rhee authored or co-authored twenty-six books, most on the nexus between systems science, systems analysis, systems theory and political systems.
- He served on the Editorial Board of *Political Studies (Oxford)*, and *Systems Research & Behavioral Science J.*
- Dr. Rhee was a tireless analyst of the changes in political systems that resulted in the separation of North and South Korea and how to help reunification efforts using systems.

- Dr. Rhee brought the ISSS to Korea. He was the organizer and patriarch of systems science in Seoul and was responsible for creating one of the first National Divisions of the ISSS.
- It is a little-known fact that Dr. Rhee saved the ISSS during a drop in its membership by significantly expanding the rolls of international members.
- Yong Pil also served the Society as Director-at-Large and served as Vice President of the Int'l Federation for Systems Research.
- Dr. Rhee served as Co-Editor of the *Korean Political Science Review* and also the *Korean J. of International Relations*.
- He was a Council Member of the Korean Political Science Association and President of the Korean Association of National Ethics Studies.
- As the picture suggests, Dr. Rhee and his wife were elegant hosts at their ISSS'96 meeting and always generous and loving supporters of each other and their colleagues in the systems movement.

