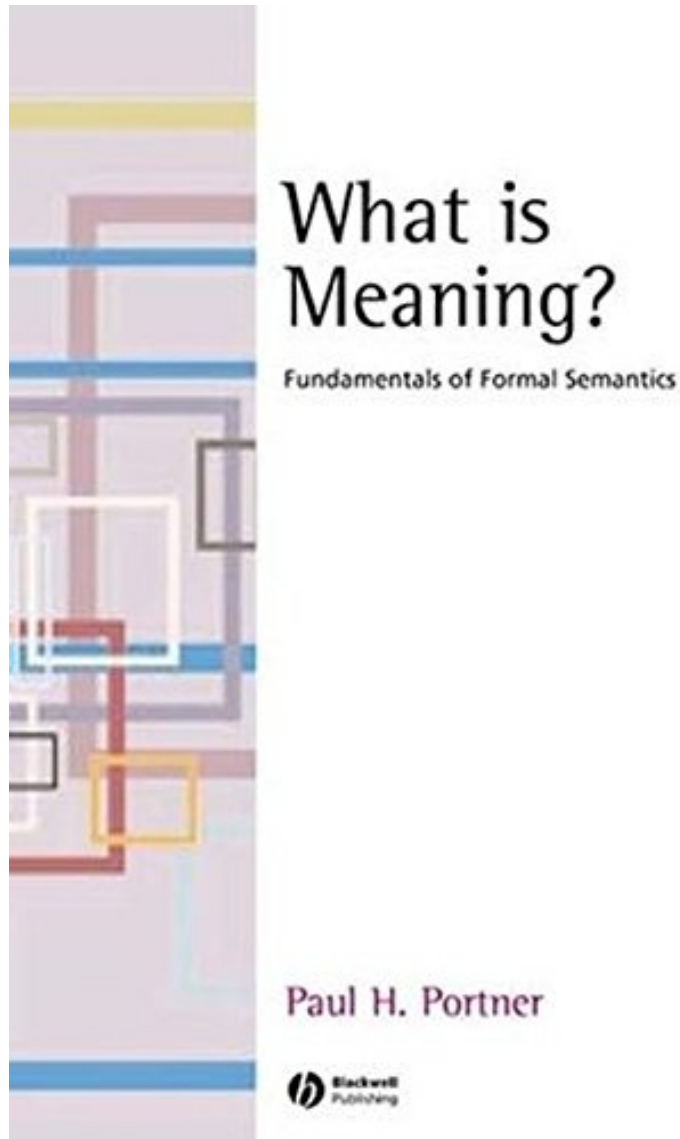


What is Meaning?: Fundamentals of Formal Semantics (Fundamentals of Linguistics)

Paul H. Portner

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Paul H. Portner : What is Meaning?: Fundamentals of Formal Semantics (Fundamentals of Linguistics) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised What is Meaning?: Fundamentals of Formal Semantics (Fundamentals of Linguistics):

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Clearly wrritten but...By KotoschovAlthough Portner writes with a

charming style and makes difficult problems of semantics clear, yet I feel he didn't answer the question printed on its cover. The different approaches to semantics, and their relation to the formal approach, still remain mystery to me. The lambda-abstraction was barely touched, and semantic calculus wasn't even mentioned. I've enjoyed reading it, but I must say I'd rather have purchased a more comprehensive textbook.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I just love this book!

By Rafael L. Dublin This textbook gets the highest rating, for it's simply the go-to text on college-level semantics. I do really appreciate the fact that the book's chapters can be read in either a sequential fashion or as stand-alone learning resources. The Portner textbook is the absolute authority in introductory linguistics.

8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A terrific introduction

By Customer Although all have their merits, out of the three introductory semantics texts I read, I would recommend this book to those who are curious or beginning to explore the subject. Portner's writing is exceptionally paced, and at times quite entertaining (relative to textbooks in general, not just those for formal semantics). The thought exercises and line-art diagrams are well constructed and organized, and the discussions related to set theory and pragmatics were especially helpful.

What is Meaning? Fundamentals of Formal Semantics is a concise introduction to the field of semantics as it is actually practiced. Through simple examples, pictures, and metaphors, Paul Portner presents the fields key ideas about how language works. Explains the fundamental ideas and some of the most significant results of modern semantic theory. Combines foundational discussion with simplified analyses of complex phenomena to provide readers with a sense of the fascination to be found in the details of the human language. Includes exercises and thought-provoking questions to facilitate learning

An excellent book for advanced undergraduates and beginning graduate students. Portner's approachable, yet serious, presentation gives the reader a firm understanding of the breadth and depth of the science of natural language meaning.

Kai von Fintel, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

From the Back Cover **What is Meaning? Fundamentals of Formal Semantics** is a concise introduction to the field of semantics as it is actually practiced. The book explains the fundamental ideas and some of the most significant results of modern semantic theory in an intuitive, engaging manner without relying on formalization or getting bogged down in technical skills. Through simple examples, pictures, and metaphors, Paul Portner presents the fields key ideas about how language works. By combining foundational discussion with simplified analyses of complex phenomena, **What is Meaning?** provides readers with a sense of the fascination to be found in the details of human language.

About the Author Paul H. Portner is Associate Professor of Linguistics and Director of the Interdisciplinary Program in Cognitive Science at Georgetown University. He is co-editor of **Formal Semantics: The Essential Readings** (with Barbara H. Partee, Blackwell, 2002) as well as the author of numerous articles on topics such as mood and modality, tense and aspect, and the syntax/semantics interface.