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Briefly Noted

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The "formal features" referred to in this book's title are the various visual and auditory devices (ways of shooting and editing, sound effects, etc.) that distinguish television from other modes of communication and from real-world experience. The book's organizing theme has to do with the role these devices in children's cognitive, emotional, or behavioral responses to television. Seven of the book's eleven essays address this theme from a more theoretical perspective, while the remaining essays are more directly concerned with the application of theory to the production of children's programming. Many of the most prominent scholars in this area are represented in this collection, and since the essays are primarily summaries of bodies of research rather than reports on single projects, the book as a whole should be useful to readers who want a survey of the area.


Considering how many anthropologists and sociologists have turned to theater as a source of organizing metaphors and evocative terminology, it is notable that few scholars of theater and performance have returned the compliment. Richard Schechner is unquestionably the foremost occupant of the borderline between performance, theater, and anthropology. *Studies* readers will recall his "Restoration of Behavior" (7:3), a revised version of which appears in the present book—revised, as are other previously published articles, to fit an impressively coherent structure. Among Schechner's many contributions, as his late friend Victor Turner notes in his foreword, is his bringing to our attention "the indigenous theorizings of non-Western theater, themselves rooted in religious and ethical world views unfamiliar to the tradition deriving from Athens-Rome-Jerusalem, which encompasses our Euro-American outlooks and articulates the texts, scenarios, mise-en-scenes, training, and symbolic codes of our familiar cultural performances from film, telescreen, to stage."

**Umberto Eco, V. V. Ivanov, and Monica Rector.** Carnival! Berlin: Mouton, 1984. 165 pp. 37 color illus. DM 68.00 ($30.90).

Readers familiar with the Mouton/de Gruyter "Approaches to Semiotics" series, of which this book is no. 64, will no doubt have already internalized the caution *caveat emptor*. The present volume, although presented in alphabetical order by authors' names, is not divided into three equal parts. The essay by Eco is a short (8 pages) rumination, "The Frames of Comic 'Freedom,'" which notes, unsurprisingly, that "Carnival can exist only as an authorized transgression." Ivanov's essay, "Carnival as the Inversion of Bipolar Opposites," is also brief, although loaded with scholarly documentation (12 pages of text followed by 6 pages of notes and 6 pages of references), and focuses largely on the role and meaning of transvestism and on the use of carnival images by various writers. The bulk of the book, however, concentrates on the Carnival in Rio de Janeiro. Monica Rector's semiotic analysis of the "Escolas-de-Samba" is accompanied by striking, well-produced color illustrations of dancers. The analysis itself is likely to appeal primarily to the truly devoted fans of structural/semiotic interpretation, but it does contain nuggets of information and illumination that can be mined by diligent unbelievers.


"Thirteen years ago, when I first began making photographs with any seriousness, the medium's paramount attraction was, for me, its unavoidable social referentiality, its way of describing—albeit in enigmatic, misleading, reductive and often superficial terms—a world of social institutions, gestures, manners, relationships. And the problematic character of this descriptive power is itself compelling, compounded by the fact that the life world that beckons is one in which the photographer is already a social actor, never a completely innocent or objective bystander" (p. ix).

Readers familiar with Sekula's all-too-rare and always rewarding essays on photography, from "The Invention of Photographic Meaning" onward, will likely be pleased at the prospect of a volume which brings together five of his essays. They will also likely be grateful for an opportunity to encounter his photo works, tive of which make up the second part of the book. The essays, not surprisingly, match one's high
expectations: they are cogent, well argued, and, to use a somewhat old-fashioned word, engaged. The photo works parallel these; they are intellectual and deeply felt, ironic and highly political—"interventions" as well as commentaries.

After seeing this welcome book, many will want to examine the others in the very impressive "Nova Scotia Series: Source Materials of the Contemporary Arts."

Erratum

Joanna Kirkpatrick, author of "The Painted Ricksha as Culture Theater" (Studies in Visual Communication 10:3, Summer 1984), wishes to call attention to Figure 19, which is a reversed print, a visual typographical error that she regrets not detecting before the article went to press.