

introduction



Papers included in this first volume of *Glimpse*, the Proceedings of the Society for Phenomenology and Media (SPM), speak admirably for themselves, making praise unnecessary but pleasant. The articles in this volume, originally delivered at the first gathering of the society in La Jolla, California, February 26 and 27, 1999, address both the relationship between phenomenology and media and the application of phenomenological methodology to contemporary questions of mass media. Selection of papers for presentation at the first meeting of the SPM was guided by an encumencism that favored no specific discourse within the phenomenological movement.

SPM is grateful for the co-sponsorship of its first conference by Universidad Iberoamericana, Tijuana, and National University, San Diego. Without the warm support and efforts of faculty and staff at both universities, the conference would surely not have enjoyed success. Of special importance to this success were Professor Bernardo Torres Diaz, Chair of the Department of Arts and Communication of Universidad Iberoamericana, Tijuana, and two of his colleagues. Professors Cecilia Castellanos and Sergio Zermeno. Without their efforts, the conference would not have been publicized widely in Mexico and, as a consequence, the outstanding contributions of Professors Canan and Jarquin would not be included. Professor Torres Diaz' long experience in academia, his commitment to the contemplative life, and his concern and promotion of younger colleagues on both sides of the border are qualities too often left unnoticed. The scope of Professor Torres Diaz' understanding of the philosophical scene in Mexico, in particular, and the world, generally, is as impressive as it is practical.

SPM also owes much to the consistent support of Dean Elizabeth Shutler of the School of Arts and Sciences, National University. An archeologist by training, Dean Shutler encouraged the conference from the start, offering staff assistance, financial backing, and space. Because of her keen interest in promoting such activities at National University, the conference was able to reach out to an international audience of scholars and thinkers who would otherwise have been inaccessible. The work of Felipe Orandain, secretary of the School of Arts and Sciences, and Sarah Weekly, Keith Kanzel, Christopher Higginson, and Robin Jones of the Graphics Department, which designed the poster, program, and this book, were invaluable.

Two keynote speakers set the context and tone of the conference: Alison Leigh Brown and Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka. Their papers included here delimit those concerns. Brown's previous study of deception, continued in the paper included here, observes that "writing is a form of the desire for power, a form of love, a form of communication." In a manner that calls to mind two of her influences, Cixous and Irigaray, Brown completes the thought she began in the

book that originally drew her to my attention, *Subjects of Deceit: A Phenomenology of Lying*. Brown concludes that writing in electronic media has a dishonesty inherent in all communications.

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka presented an understanding of media within a philosophical context that not only stretches back to the Spanish and English renaissances, but seeks greater insight by the introduction of key concepts of her own philosophy of life, starting with a question that all contemporary phenomenologists face: "What does the so rapidly unfolding sphere of artificial intelligence that underpins these media signify with respect to our experience of the world, the other, life?"

Another observation of phenomenological importance for the description of new electronic media comes from Alberto Carrillo Canan, who notes that "To put the picture in some notation means to lose pictorial information, for this is essential to digitalization."

Kevin Fisher, explaining cinematic spectatorship within an existential structure, relies on notions derived from Vivian Sobchach and Martin Heidegger. Fisher argues that "film is a privileged medium not only in which to ask philosophical questions, but in its ability to embody the modes of experience which lead to philosophical reflection." He demonstrates his point with a scene from Antonioni's *Red Desert*.

Drawing on ethical philosophy, Miguel Jarquin argues that "El *entre-los-dos* es un modo de ser, co-presencia, *co-esse*, y el ser sigue siendo la última referencia de sentido." Firmly rooted in continental thought, Jarquin suggests that "Aquí se separa de Buber para quien el encuentro habita en el lenguaje, para Marcel, el nosotros habita en el misterio del ser." This is seen best, he holds, in Buñuel. "Los medios pueden ser colaboradores en esta tarea: Luis Buñuel, después de los años cincuenta nos llevó a comprender el mundo de *Los olvidados*, de aquellos que vivían en la periferia."

Those who consciously attempt to remain within the tradition established by Edmund Husserl were also represented at the conference. Sebastian Luft and Paul Majkut gave papers unabashedly inspired by Husserlian transcendental phenomenology, although Majkut attempted to reach beyond phenomenology.

Luft's presentation was particularly well received, bringing a clearer understanding of Husserl's later thought into focus for others who came from decidedly existential discourses within the phenomenological movement. In Luft's talk, transcendental phenomenology was presented as a bright worldview. He commented, "If I may say so, phenomenology is emphatically a 'joyful science.'"

In a series of rambling notes, Majkut juxtaposed the dialectical materialism of Tran Duc Thao and Husserl's transcendental phenomenology in order to approach the concept of *film noir*, suggesting that "*noir* is an expression of contemporary nominalism."

Lars Lundsten, using frameworks provided by Adolf Reinach and Roman Ingarden, set parameters for popular culture and mass media, noting that "Presentations of events are significant as far as they instantiate certain significant universals," and Chris Nagel, relying on Merleau-Ponty, suggested that watching television "is a perceptual field of tightly constrained potentialities where lively modulation of my perceptual activity avails me nothing. . . ."

Together, the papers presented in this volume speak in a variety of voices within a single philosophical discussion.

—Paul Majkut