

# From Attention to Meaning: Explorations in Semiotics, Linguistics, and Rhetoric (European Semiotics / Sémiotiques Européennes)

Todd Oakley

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Of all the tasks you perform, perhaps none is more consequential for the performance of other tasks than paying attention. When you attend, you perceive. When you attend and perceive, you remember. When you attend, perceive, and remember, you learn. When you learn, you have the option of acting deliberately. Perceiving, thinking, learning, deciding, and acting require the constant adjustment of the attention system. The author proposes a model of the greater attention system as comprising three distinct but interdependent sub-systems: the signal system, the selection system, and the interpersonal system, with eight elements distributed among them: altering, orienting, detecting, sustaining, controlling, sharing, harmonizing, and directing. The chapters in this book develop an «attentional» analysis of meaning under the unifying framework of mental spaces theory. In addition, each chapter explores the implications of an attention based approach to meaning for research in semiotics, linguistics, and rhetoric. Data for the investigation originate from the author's own field work carried out in cultural institutions.

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