

the information provided, it is not a prerequisite. The value of the catalog might have been enhanced had an article about some of Somalia's oral poets been included, or some specific biographical information about its artisans. Such personalized information may have compensated for the "lack of context" problem. Nonetheless, as in the exhibition, the catalog illustrates the richness of Somali material culture, and captures the eloquence of its people.

The Punch and Judy Show. History, Tradition, and Meaning. By Robert Leach. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985. Pp. 192. Notes, bibliography, index, 100 line illustrations, 30 black and white photographs. Cloth, \$25.00.

Parades of Power. Street Theatre in Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia. By Susan G. Davis. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986. Pp. xi + 235. Note on sources, index, 11 illustrations. No price.

Reviewed by Regina Bendix.

Although socially marginal, theater tackles the most fundamental issues in society, cutting across otherwise firmly established divisions. It would seem, then, that social scientists would be keen on contributing their outlook to the literary scholars' text and author-centered analyses of the theater. But though theater analogies have been frequently used even in folkloristics, theater proper has received far less attention than analyses of ritual, narrative, or everyday interaction as if they were theater. Constricting folklore definitions have made it difficult to include a phenomenon as amorphous as theater, and thus folk theater has led a marginal existence in the discipline as well. The two books reviewed here contribute to

both versions. Susan Davis's study of parades in Philadelphia from the late 18th to early 20th century approaches street spectacles "as" theater, and reads out of them the changing social drama of a developing urban society. Robert Leach looks at the popular glove puppet Punch and the development of the Punch and Judy Show in Britain, illuminating thereby a performance tradition which "is" theater and which takes place out-of-doors as well.

There are some similarities between the studies. Both authors have done extensive historical research and have found a way to not only thematically organize their histories, but also to do so in an engaging, highly readable style. In theoretical outlook, the works differ considerably, although both authors are, in the final analysis, interested in linking the theatrical phenomenon to a larger social context. Davis seeks the connections between street drama and political power; Leach interprets the Punch and Judy show in socio-psychological terms.

Robert Leach is a British lecturer of drama and theater arts, but he competently uses folkloristic, anthropological, and psychological perspectives to find out, as he says in the preface, why the British continue to be delighted with the fairly coarse drama of Punch and Judy, and what exactly they laugh at. The first chapter sketches a show recorded in the early 19th century, establishing the basic pattern of the play that has Punch literally punching to death most every other character, including, as a finale, the devil. In the eleventh chapter, Leach discusses the oral-formulaic nature of the play. He makes a convincing case for the similarity between the puppeteers' creativity with a sketchy formulaic plot and other oral performance arts studied by folklorists. One chapter is devoted entirely to the "swatchel omi," that is the carriers of a family Punch tradition. A variety of skills make the performer self-suffi-

cient: he makes the puppets themselves, performs with them and masters the swazzle technique used to create Punch's falsetto voice, and he also adapts the plays to new audiences and changing times (one rather telling change is the replacement of the devil with a puppet of J.R. Ewing by one swatchel omi...). Portraits of the different family styles and their preferred regions and contexts for performance complement the understanding of the performer's perspective. The last chapter links Punch to trickster figures in other cultural contexts. Breaking social norms and arousing subconscious sexual desires already bring Punch into a liminal - though perhaps envied - position. Yet the devil clearly moves Punch into a realm between human and divine and thus closer to other trickster figures humankind has devised. Leach is refreshingly unattached to a particular theoretical outlook but rather uses diverse analytic perspectives to gain an understanding of the phenomenon. With its variety of illustrations, *The Punch and Judy Show* makes for delightful as well as insightful reading.

Susan Davis uses communication as a central framework of her study. In her first two chapters, she describes the transformation of public streets into places of performance and charts the history of parades as enactments of power. A parade certainly has spectators and performers, yet it lacks the dramatic text essential in the theater proper. Rather, the text is the enacted social drama which is analytically teased out by the researcher. Thus there are upper-class demonstrations of wealth and superiority through the volunteer militias, the poor and working man's burlesques implicitly mocking and protesting against the urban rich, and the increasingly formalized protests of organized workers. In Chapter Four, Davis links the street spectacles to the customary folk maskings usually grouped under the rubric of folk drama: some parades, such as the "Christmas fantastics," do include

a dramatic script. Most of the events Davis analyzes are, however, only metaphorically theatrical, and it may be more useful to accept the parade as a genre akin to but not the same as theater. Davis' last chapter underscores this distinction, in a summary comparison of the characteristics of parade makers, parade-making occasions, and parade styles. Davis' study offers some astonishing insights into post-Revolutionary life in Philadelphia, and the social and political make-up of a city on its way to industrialization and urbanization. The once open streets offered room for intentional or implicit demonstrations of or against power, and only the architectural changes of the 20th century reduced the effectiveness of the parade as a means of communicating a given group's understanding of itself relative to others.

Killings: Folk Justice in the Upper South. By William Lynwood Montell (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1986). Pp. 184, introduction, notes, bibliography, illustrations. \$17.95.

Reviewed by Gregory Hansen.

Studies using oral history have sometimes been criticized for describing rather than interpreting folklife, and the study of folklife itself can be criticized for often avoiding the negative aspects of a community's history and culture. Lynwood Montell's most recent work, **Killings**, can not be indicted on either of these charges. In this book he successfully uses tape-recorded interviews to study the history of violence within a four county region located along the border of Kentucky and Tennessee. From the 1880's until the 1940's this region was characterized by an unusually high number of homicides. The reason for these frequent kill-