The culture industry runs sign systems rampant, the projections of its media exacting immeasurable influence on minds young and not so young. It does not discriminate between those possessing innocence and those wanting knowledge in the age of consumer-oriented global economies where the desire for instant gratification is driven by the digital mantra of the day. The culture industry treats the psyche of the neophyte and the mature reader of media phenomena quite equally—with the same amount of discourtesy when it comes to arbitrarily evaluating, sorting, and commodifying the signs of culture through the media and its simulations of reality. To yoke ethics with representational concerns is only natural for critical readers of culture and media: that is, aimed at raising human consciousness toward the effects of the signs of culture and media upon our everyday practices of making meaning in and of the life-world (Trifonas, 2015). Especially if we consider a sign to be an image or a text that we learn through, about, and from. For those who participate in and run the culture industry, it is a means of focusing and obsessing subjective desire in an economy of intellectual and material self-fulfilment based on an empire of signs whose terms and values are to be worked out and actualized at any and all costs. A sign has no analogous, motivational, or correlational link with what it represents in reality because it is arbitrarily produced and mediates for our understanding of reality. A sign is an interpretant of experience, an idiosyncratically constructed mental tool used to reference and understand the world. The sign is all surface, all projection, all image: complete in itself and for itself. Thus, it has a directive force of its own that defies the reciprocity of a two-way model of communication. It sends the logic of itself and attempts to make plain its raison d’être for all to see or perhaps to miss. It re-presents information and dissimulates reality through its power to initiate and
sustain a form of symbolic violence upon those who engage in, create and apprehend, the values of the sign as a model of reality (Trifonas, 2015). That is, the semiotic force of its re-presentation of information enhances the effects of its message as the effects of the sign are internalized by the viewer/consumer of the image. The viewer/consumer cannot alter the form of the sign but only imbibe and complete its intentionality by aesthetic and cognitive, conscious and unconscious responses in relation to the image. On the one hand, the sign in itself is therefore intransitory, both subject and object, and needs no mediative completion by way of a subjective predicate that puts its meaning into action (Trifonas, 2015). It suffices as the symbolic representation of meaning itself. On the other hand, the sign is its own pedagogy: it teaches, but it needs a viewer/consumer to fulfil the intentional and extensional limits of its communicative potential as a meaning making tool. Wrestling, in this sense, is a sign that leads to other signs and back again in quite arbitrary and surprising ways. The image is like a rhizome or a labyrinth, a trap of openings and closures where conjecture and infinite possibility rule over certainty and structure to destabilize the notion of a fixed truth waiting somewhere out there to be discovered. So, what does the sign of “wrestling” signify? What does it promise or fulfil in culture? What are the sources and openings of the real and symbolic violence of wrestling? What is its pedagogy? If, indeed, wrestling has a teaching and learning. How does it inform subjectivity and the living text of cultural and social practices? How can we engage the real and symbolic violence of the sign of wrestling?

Popular culture filters through the media the interests and obsessions of an audience yearning for an “ethics of fun” into easily digestible forms of entertainment not always morally sanguine. This is easy to see if we take a look at the spectacle of professional wrestling and what it teaches the spectator. Let us put aside for the time being the intellectual and ethical questions of why anyone would want to watch professional wrestling in the first place. You might object: “Yeah, I know it’s fake. So what? I like to watch professional wrestling anyway!” Its remarkable popularity worldwide as a form of entertainment is indisputable (Elliot & Greenberg, 2001). But there are also those who dismiss professional wrestling as an event that exploits the strongest of human emotions—love and hatred—for profit, not for the edification of the spectator. It is easy to reject professional wrestling on aesthetic or moral grounds. Shapely female courtesans with ample lung capacity buttress their weighty cleavage with the tiniest of band aids while groping the slippery thighs of an equally stunning opponent for a firm hold during a corn oil match to the death. Long-haired bodybuilders in spandex tights strike menacing poses for the frenetic female and male fans in the audience as they recount with surgical precision the anatomical details of last night’s slaughter of a fellow wrestler as he was “taken apart, piece by piece” (Dell, 1998). Tales of betrayal, adultery, greed, jealousy, and even theft abound in a morality play of human drama and its plot conventions (Craven & Moseley, 1972). Wrestling is but one of these signs of popular culture, among others in the media, based on a lie but constructing a bizarre fandom of faith in fakes. It cannibalizes and carnivalizes culture—uses its
systems of representation according to its own arbitrary rules—to make it play a
game of make-believe that is taken quite seriously and sometimes has grave
consequences (Mazer, 1998). The implications of this hypothesis will be evident
soon enough. Suffice to say that a theatre of games is not real life and should not
be taken as such, or so the story goes (Archer, 1998). It becomes quite necessary
then to ask: Why does wrestling arouse powerful displays of emotion if it is only
a game?

There is more to professional wrestling than meets the eye. Understanding its
appeal, especially to adolescent males—their main market share demographic—but
also females spectators (Dell 1998) is like trying to explain why stopping your
vehicle to gawk at the morbid aftermath of a car accident is construed as a “natural
human response”. We thrive on spectacles. Sometimes we don’t know why.
Spectacles that display the struggle between luck and destiny make us feel alive as
we witness the tragedy of someone else we neither know nor will likely ever see
again. So, we stop to look at the traffic accident in order to unconsciously reaffirm
our sense of safety and well being—we are alive while somebody else is suffering.
In professional wrestling, the sense of survival is conveyed through the spectacle
we know is fake (Archer, 1998). There is no point in watching a match we know
is fixed other than to release our anxiety in a scapegoat, the bad person who suffers
for our sins. In this light, wrestling can be read as a “neurosis” of culture. That is,
an external manifestation of something gone awry in the human psyche for which
there is neither a reasonable explanation nor an effective cure. For those who are
stricken by its debilitating effects, there is no definitive treatment, no painless
therapy or intervention to be worked through; there is only the endless suffering
of watching the exquisite agon of this game of shadows that takes place in the ring
(see Trifonas, 2001). Such is the joy and the curse of the wrestling fan. The irony
is that the punishment is self-inflicted. Or is it? Is wrestling a psychopathology of
repressed desire?

It is quite easy to use the Freudian theory of obsessive compulsive behaviour
and voyeurism to characterize the ongoing psychic state of the stereotypical
wrestling fan. Each and every broadcast, a massive audience will watch for no other
reason than simply because there is a wrestling match on. Like the seemingly
illogical fascination of the child playing alone with a top in the absence of the
mother and saying fort/da to himself while watching it, with great anticipation, go
forward and come back, the wrestling fan is doomed to repeat the desire of past
experience in the role of spectator. There is no choice. Not a conscious one, at
least, as the unconscious tensions between the ego, superego, and id are worked
out through the instrumentalism of the wrestlers. The “repetition compulsion” is
what Freud calls the need to fill the void of the loss of meaning provided by the
absence of the mother, who of course stands for all that is good and wholesome
in the child’s world. In fact, the mother is the child’s world, satiating all wants and
needs until cracks in the unity of its world create a consciousness that mirrors the
self. Like the motherless child who needs to substitute the anxiety of that loss with
the full presence of the top upon which all emotion—grief and joy—is transferred

The Symbolic Violence of Wrestling

297
in an infinite plenitude, the wrestling fan needs and craves wrestling (Trifonas, 2001). There is no substitute. Not an obvious one, anyway. This psychological theory grounds the point about the motivation of wrestling fans. Besides being driven by an obsessive compulsion, the wrestling fan as spectator and not participant in the game itself is even worse off than Freud’s poor child because the fan’s relationship with wrestling is a second-hand and consequently voyeuristic ritual (Ball, 1990). The incapacity for performance motivates the need for the vicarious thrill of spectating so as to try to stimulate—subliminally and physically—the release of anxiety via engaging in a form of visual pleasure that affects the body. The spectatorly focus on the “match” is therefore a transitive experience—utterly incomplete in itself and, in the end, unsatisfying—and it becomes a visually based type of substitute that seeks to replace the real experience of actually wrestling but never does. Of course, we can use Freudian psychology to analyse the spectatorship of other sports fans and we very well could come to similar conclusions (Trifonas, 2001). It therefore becomes necessary to look at specific cases to test out the theory within an analysis of “the wrestling imagination”. And there is not just one overriding mentality.

The idiosyncratic nature of the cultural values we find represented in the world of professional wrestling is peculiarly naturalized. The big, sweaty men in tights are more than their muscle-bound, greased, and hairy selves. They are cultural icons of meaning—moral archetypes, musculely overdeveloped signs—that we engage and interpret as we would competing ideas and values (Bell 1990). Arbitrary notions of “what is good” and “what is bad” are symbolized through the dress, speech, and actions of characters who are combatants in the ring (Craven & Moseley, 1972). For this reason, professional wrestling cannot be classified as a sport: that is, a true competition among equals. Like a play, professional wrestling is scripted. The outcome is determined in advance of actual matches. Sport depends on competition fuelled by the technical mastery of the participants. Its entertainment value derives from the fact that the contest is always up for grabs, the destiny of the players nebulous. Sport is drama. Anything can happen. Uncertainty fuels the drama and sustains the desire to watch until the outcome is apparent. Some would say that sport is “honest”. Sport is supposed to be good. But, unlike wrestling, sport is “lifeless” in its portrayal of an explicit morality (Trifonas, 2001). Good against evil does not convey the strategic intentions of a soccer game, for example. That is not to say that in sport the participants and spectators are without emotion and don’t take sides, cause riots, or take up arms against each other in the name of loyal allegiances to individual players and teams (Elliot & Greenberg, 2001). You know that the expression of emotions associated with sports are very real—and can be dangerous. But contests of skill are not allegories of heroes set up to combat villains (Archer 1998). Sport itself, as a game of abilities with fixed rules, depends upon the outcome and not on the spectacle itself. Reactions determined by the conventions of sports do not directly relate to the great struggles experienced in life or represent them in a plot (Craven & Moseley, 1972). Rather, they relate to the performance of sport played as a game. It is an artificial contest—not real life.
No moral judgement is required of the player to participate in the game of soccer or of the spectator to watch it. One cannot go outside the rules of competition to interpret the meaning of the action on the field. For example, it would be absurd to say, “Maradona scored a goal to punish research scientists supporting the opposing team because he doesn’t believe in using live animals to test cosmetics”. Social morality isn’t on display through every action the players perform for the sake of sporting competition. It would be as absurd and meaningless to say that the spectators began to bludgeon each other with fists because they disagreed about the validity of Maradona’s ethical stance regardless of the goal. Life does not intervene in the performance of sport. Every time a fan makes an aesthetic or ethical judgement about a sport or its players it is in relation to the rules of the game and its code of morality construed by the dictates of skilful performance. Otherwise the basis for the opinion would be ridiculous. Wrestling is not simply a sport but a type of semiotic guerrilla warfare where the signifying systems that encircle it construct the symbolic field of fandom by communicating an economy of values to participants and spectators through media representations (Trifonas, 2001). The sign forms produced evoke positive and negative valences, some properties of each are blown up and others are narcotized, depending on the content of the message to be conveyed through its structures of representation. The media apparatus—lexical and visual—actively frames how the signs of wrestling are perceived. Signs are constructed to aim toward affectively motivated responses supressing critical analysis (Ball, 1990). An intentionality informs their representational form toward achieving an ideal of pure affective responsivity (e.g. surprise, suspense, drama, disgust, joy, and so on) where the emotive associations are peaked, so that all the images of the wrestling—whether experienced live or second hand—cannot be accessed purely, that is, in and of themselves: in other words, without the ideological predisposition of the spectator being affected by media intervention or socially constructed responses. Fanzines and tabloids, marketing campaigns, and chat shows have made cultural idols and celebrities of wrestlers. Reality takes a back seat to the myth-making of a well-crafted persona developed for solely for public consumption (Maze, 1998).

The enjoyment of professional wrestling, however, flourishes and increases primarily through witnessing the raw spectacle of life’s great stories acted out in the ring as a play of moralities. Not to mention the ethical diatribes, free psychoanalysis, pop philosophy, and generous smatterings of sexual counselling that constitute the narrative thread of each and every match and entangle the stories of the wrestlers with our own lives. Wrestling consumes life. Nothing more, nothing less. It swallows life whole and spits it back out at the audience as a simulated form of experience. It is an allegory of human existence that begs a response from you and me (Ball, 1990). Spectator emotion is driven by moral judgements that go outside the rules of the “contest” itself. The outcome becomes secondary because the power of wrestling lies in the ability of the wrestlers to stage the event, the struggle, which is a real product of conflicts in human affairs outside the ring. Who wins does not really matter. What is of concern to an audience is
the extent to which judgements about professional wrestlers and wrestling matches can be made by drawing on a knowledge of life experience itself. Spectators use aesthetic and moral principles that they have learned in their everyday lives to form allegiances and antipathies (Ball, 1990). Which is why it is so easy to condemn the models of masculinity, femininity, ethics, and morality that professional wrestling constructs. Life intervenes. Wrestling makes plain the struggle of good and bad and universalizes it for the viewer by establishing moral archetypes to which the spectator responds regardless of whether they want to or not. The spectacle is predicated on the play of ethical and social norms of behaviour that we experience in our everyday lives and take for granted (Maze, 1998). We cannot but respond.

Wrestling produces its own forms of communication that mobilize signs and systems of signs to assemble codes and codic frameworks wherein meaning is made and interpreted (Trifonas, 2015). The rules of engagement are a right of initiation to the exegetic code of the game. One needs to know them to understand and explain what is happening regardless of ideology. Wrestling thus produces its own model reader or, in this case, the “model fan”, that is, one who can apprehend, apply, and reproduce the cognitive and aesthetic structures at play within the interpretative and performative levels of the spectacle of wrestling itself including the text of its discourse. The problem is not wrestling but what wrestling and its signifying machinery teach the fan about relating to the world and, more importantly, to others. In the ring, the melodrama flourishes: the wrestlers as performers, not simply athletes, support moral values (Craven & Moseley, 1972). The spectator is forced to take sides according to the moral codes and cultural values of a society. For example, “good” characters are referred to as “technically accomplished athletes”. They are well-spoken defenders of dominant but arbitrary ideologies and cultural institutions like “the family”, “the American way”, “civil rights”, “justice”, and “democracy”. Professional wrestling in the United States during World War II depicted clean-cut “good old boys” of unimpeachable character taking on monocled Nazi caricatures with bad German accents. The nationalistic spirit of the times made it possible to exploit the situation of real violence that was being experienced on the battlefield for the purpose of entertainment and patriotic moralizing (Maze, 1998). American wrestling heroes exacting symbolic revenge on the representative of an enemy nation was indeed a cathartic experience for a nation in turmoil. The good guy always won! Consequently, there was hope that evil would not triumph in the real world.

“Bad” characters use “dirty tricks” to subvert what the “good” characters stand for, in order to bring about a “New World Order”—which incidentally was also the name of a wrestling cohort of evil doers and misfits. This group of characters walk on the dark side of the fine edge between good and evil and usually have a fetish obsession attached to a prop (e.g., a shrunken head, a snake, a baseball bat, a branding iron, etc.). They punctuate their talk with profanity, a distinctly pejorative masculine bravado replete with homophobic and misogynistic references. That is, if they speak at all. Sometimes menacing grimaces, guttural growls, the pumping of fists, and the gnashing of teeth are enough to make a point. These
“less than savoury” characters might include a Satanic high priest, an ex-porn star, or even a raving lunatic who, having escaped from an unidentified asylum, wears a mask to conceal his identity. Whether it be raising the dead, seducing a wrestler’s companion, or talking to a sock puppet, their actions are exaggerations of real life episodes intended to make visible the inner state of their troubled souls. Nothing is left to the imagination. We see and hear everything except the depth of their capacity for the evil that men do (Ball, 1990).

The ethics of masculinity and femininity is tied to the moral standards that guide the interpretation of human behaviour which generalizes the experience of viewing in the wrestling spectacle for the viewer using gender as binary nonperformative category (Dell, 1998). Wrestling tries to bring about a consensus of how we perceive reality, encounter the human condition, and act in respect to the difference of others as a community. From a hyper-masculine perspective, it sets any ideologies in opposition performatively to this norm as aberrant decoding of the meaning of reality and acting it out via concrete traits of gender (Trifonas, 2017; 2016). There is always a “good” character and a “bad” character but each possesses traits that are plastic and can change. The female wrestlers act out hyper-sexualized personas or reinforce misogynist semi-pornographic stereotypes of femininity along the lines of strict gender roles in order to create the spectacle of the “diva”, a character whose power resides truly in the vain celebration of her body and looks that have exaggerated female features that are supposed to attract and reaffirm her superior status as an uber-woman (Dell, 1998). Morally upright male figures never fight each other. Never! One of them has to turn “bad” and betray the trust of the other. These explosive situations involve double-crosses, seducing a wrestler’s mate, or just plain old jealousy. Even though we know the world of wrestling is a stage-managed sport, its excessive spectacles of human experience—its exhibitions of pain, suffering, betrayal, guilt, treachery, cruelty, desire, and elation—allow the viewer an identification with the main actors. Some of the wrestlers’ symbolic names also facilitate stock responses: for example, “the Rock”, “Stone Cold”, “the Undertaker”, “The Phenom”, “Mankind”, “The Patriot”, “Sergeant Slaughter”, “Kane” (the man whose face no one has ever seen!), and, of course, “Vader”. The whole point is to have raw-nerved, unadulterated emotion take over the intellectual response required to recognize these men as human (Ball, 1990). It is an exposed and untempered sentiment but not without an ideological bent that is coloured by a moral sense. The audience quickly has to take sides for the spectacle of wrestling to be effective. They are separated into communities of “the good” versus “the bad”.

Wrestling exploits the mythological archetypes that preoccupy a consciousness of judgement when a darkly masked figure, a face of evil, squares off against a crowd favourite who displays and defends all that is good in a culture. Indeed, “Myth Today”, the last essay of the English version of Roland Barthes’s (1972) Mythologies, offers an extended meditation on semiological method and its uses to expose the belief, desires, and values expressed in the grand narratives of petit-bourgeois culture, its objects, and its spectacles, as a vehicle for demonstrating how
to unlock the signifying structure of myth. Myth naturalizes the idiosyncrasies of
culture, universalizes them, and makes them social norms through its rhetorical
flourishes. The danger that Barthes (1972) sees in myth is that it allows layers of
meaning to accumulate within its representations of nature and culture and
encourages unreflective practices. Critique exposes the ethical dilemma of leaving
representations, objects and practices, unexamined as a cultural substratum of what
is “natural” and “what is real” in the life-world and its media. Without an
examination of archetypes of myth, “ideological abuse” takes place because there
is unquestioning faith in the message. The status quo of cultural norms is fed by
the imagination of mythology. For Barthes (1972), the truth of myth characterizes
“what-goes-without-saying”. The cultural logic that is expounded through
mythology attempts to reduce differences of interpretation and limit the excesses
of meaning. Its ideological dimensions structure the terms of our responses to signs,
texts, and media representations but, more importantly, to history as a discourse of
truth. Myths generalize experience to bring about a consensus of how we perceive
reality, encounter the human condition, and act in respect to the difference of
others as a community. The ethical, social, and political boundaries of society and
culture are framed by mythology. Myths provide interpretative archetypes for
deciphering the meaning of the life-world we inhabit with a view to the present
through the past. Mythology animates reality, translates and naturalizes it for us, by
infusing it with levels of ideological significance. According to Barthes (1972),
myths give us critical models of understanding we can use to map the meaning of
experience on by staggering one system atop another to create two levels of
interpretation. Both levels work singularly and in tandem to first highlight reality
and then to gloss reality. In *Mythologies*, Barthes (1972) details how the primary
level contains the “factual” system of representation where objects are signified.
Barthes calls this the “signifying plane”. It gives an alibi for keeping the form of
representation separate from the content of representation. The secondary level
promotes a symbolic system where connections to meaning are made. Barthes
(1972) calls this symbolic realm of associations the “signifiant vide”, a living signifier.
It generates another plane of meaning beyond the cultural object or practice by
giving representation the power of truth as presence. Empirical facts—buoyed with
this `signifiant` presence—thus take on a metaphorical or symbolic lustre that seduces,
thus causing the reader to jump from simply repeating mundane interpretations to
making value judgements that have ethical and moral implications. That is why,
Barthes (1972) explains, even though we know the world of wrestling is a “stage-
managed sport”, its excessive spectacles of human experience—e.g. its exhibitions
of pain, suffering, betrayal, guilt, treachery, cruelty, desire, and elation—allow the
viewer a purer identification with the actors. Emotion takes over, raw but not
without an ideological bent. The audience quickly has to take sides for the spectacle
of wrestling to be effective. As in mythology, in wrestling matches imaginary sagas
of life and death struggles pitting good against evil are played out before an
audience ready to identify within such a play the primordial ethical situations of
the human condition.
Wrestling exploits the mythological archetypes that preoccupy consciousness. A darkly masked figure, a face of evil, squares off against a crowd favourite who displays and defends the all that is good in a culture. The mythical spectacle of wrestling relies on viewers’ unconscious desire to work out the psychic and ethical tensions within the ideology of culture. It feeds on it. This symbolic element of identification—or gloss—demands the viewer’s attention and accounts for the tremendous popularity of wrestling. For Barthes (1972), myth distorts reality for ideological effect. It turns bias and prejudice into history. It quietly suspends the need for a questioning of representations in culture. Myth naturalizes this distortion of reality and glosses over its rough-hewn text to make prevalent a point of view that can be taken on as a ready-made truth regarding existence. Needless to say, Barthes does not trust myth. He believes its imaginary rendering of history, society, and culture to be a cause of human self-deception when it becomes the source for truth. The contention is that mythology asserts itself as “history” when meaning needs to be fixed publicly and when reality demystified for the sake of asserting claims to clarity and universal truth. Myth functions to resist the fragmentation of cultural memory by allowing us to take for granted all that is happening around us in everyday life. Reality is demystified for easy consumption. Myth exudes ideology because it transubstantiates meaning into form.

The mythical spectacle of wrestling relies on viewers’ unconscious desire to work out the psychic and ethical tensions within the ideology of culture. It feeds on the audience’s sense of right and wrong. One side or the other is supported on the basis of aesthetic and moral judgements. But, ultimately, the ethical, social, and political boundaries of society and culture frame the way we perceive the mythic struggles among the wrestlers in the ring (Ball, 1990). Spectators are publicly judged—praised or mocked—according to a display of sympathies and choices about what it is to be a man fighting another man for your principles. Any rejection or show of support reveals a response that is morally categorized as “good” or “bad”. The saleable commodities that accompany the marketing of professional wrestling—T-shirts, belts, flags, hats, pins, pens, belt buckles, stickers, water bottles, coffee mugs, bikinis, etc.—brand the sport and sell its ideas and values for public consumption. Such items provide others with a quick and easy way to interpret the ideological nature of the life-world we inhabit with a view to explaining our present through the archetypes of the past. In other words, your fan gear and paraphernalia represent the “world order” you support and consider yourself to be a part of, the ideological orientations you embrace, and the narratives you spin, with respect to the schematic of life and living provided by the professional wrestling scene. The hyperbole “parodies” reality, exposes its absurdity, and drives the point home with the bludgeoning effect of a hammer. Wrestling brings about curious allegiances, extreme ideologies, contradictory emotions. It also causes illogical behaviour. People wear the outlandish outfits decorated in the fashion of their favourite wrestler as identifiable markers of a community of worshippers; they collect memorabilia, buy authentic merchandise, or sometimes engage in violent confrontations with supporters of a hated rival. Given the excesses of wrestling
“fanhood”, it is surprising that the word “fan” is now more or less sanitized in the popular vernacular of media culture. Responses to what it signifies about the cultural practices of spectatorship and fandom are ambivalent if not positive. The negative connotations of fanaticism as an illogical commitment on the part of an individual to a game, sport, or activity no longer dominate the semantic field of the word “fan”. Its reclamation has allowed a new set of mental associations to evolve around the cultural politics of the structure of wrestling spectatorship and support, even though closed-circuit surveillance cameras, security pens, and cages now keep fanatical activity in check. Ideological presuppositions characterize the paradigmatic gist of this fresh look at the ethos of fanaticism and its real-world consequences.

Perhaps none of this “sober analysis” matters because the public interest in wrestling is akin to drug addiction or religious rapture, or both, functioning something like the proverbial Marxian opiate for the masses—where the temperament of fixation most certainly does not depend on logic. On the contrary, it thrives on charismatic mysticism, myth-making, and the unencumbered zeal of fanaticism which is driven by pathos or passion. Professional wrestling reinforces in a most crude way the aesthetic and ethical stereotypes of morality and the performance of masculinity as a binary of good and bad. It allows us to gloss over the unsavoury elements of violence and verbal abuse that form the seedy underbelly of each match by forcing us to search for a higher meaning that can be taken on as a ready-made truth about existence and what it means to be a man. The reward of finding the goodness of truth in such an unlikely place would redeem us from the sense of guilt we feel watching the sordid spectacle of professional wrestling. A renewed sense of morality becomes the emotional and psychological after effect of an uneasy viewing. The sign of what wrestling teaches spectators is made so clear in the ring that any child can understand the meaning behind the ritual, the dramatic conventions, and the symbolism. We all know that “good guys don’t wear black”. And never will!

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