



Plurals and Events (Current Studies in Linguistics)

By Barry Schein



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How do we make sense of sentences with plural noun phrases in them? In *Plurals and Events*, Barry Schein proposes combining a second-order treatment of plurals with Donald Davidson's suggestion that there are positions for reference to events in ordinary predicates in order to account for several of the more puzzling features of plurals without invoking "plural objects," with its attendant metaphysics, and also provide an absolute truth-theoretic characterization of the semantics of sentences with plurals in them. Schein's highly original argument should have significant impact on how natural-language semantics is done, with repercussions for philosophy and logic. The book opens with foundational arguments that the logical language should have four major features: reduction to singular predication via a Davidsonian logical form, a mereology of events, a logical syntax that allows the constituents of a Davidsonian analysis to be predicated of distinct events and separated from one another by other logical elements, and descriptive anaphors that cross-refer to the events described by antecedent clauses. A semantics for plurality and quantification is developed in the remaining chapters, which address some of the empirical and formal questions raised by the variety of interpretations in which plurals and quantifiers participate. Barry Schein is Assistant Professor of Linguistics at the University of Southern California.

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Plurals and Events (Current Studies in Linguistics) By Barry Schein Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #2340706 in Books
- Published on: 1994-05-10
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.90" h x 1.20" w x 6.10" l, 1.64 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 400 pages

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Barry Schein is Assistant Professor of Linguistics at the University of Southern California.

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