

## Gatherings in biosemiotics 2015 Copenhagen

### Cybersemiotics as a bridge between the informational, the experiential and embodied enacted social meaning

#### Abstract.

C.S. Peirce, who was the father of an American pragmatism, based his view on a logic based on semiotic relations. Only irreducibly triadic relation uniting three distinct terms (representamen, object, interpretant) constitutes a “sign” formally in Peirce’s semiotic paradigm. Peirce’s basic semiotic triads: qualisign-sinsign-legisign; icon-index-symbol, and rheme-dicisign-argument are meant to refer to aspects of empirical signs, and most empirical signs include several of those aspects, because to Peirce the main phenomenon of semiotics is *reasoning*. Thus the whole of the semiotic machinery is developed to understand the essence of reasoning processes as chains of sign-arguments in perception, thinking and communication integrated with an aesthetical as well as an ethic perspective. The Sign, that 'irreducible triad' is a syllogism. The major premise is the Representamen relation; the minor premise is the Object relation; Conclusion is the Interpretant. This is a dynamic process, a transformative process. It's not just a conveyor belt; the information is acted upon and 'thought about' (interpreted) from input sensation to result. C.S. Peirce’s pragmatist, triadic semiotic theory is the only paradigm that can match – and therefore integrate with - system science in transdisciplinary scope as well as process dynamics. Semiotics (unlike mathematics) is a positive science dealing with real relations. As Stjernfelt points out in *Natural Propositions* one of the most important lessons to take from Peirce’s semiotics is the vast reorientation of the whole domain of sensation, perception, logic, reasoning, thought, language, images etc. towards the chain of reasoning as its primitive phenomenon. The point of this pragmatism is that it may be formally described, independently of the materials in which it may be implemented. This implies that propositions are not entities of language, nor do they presuppose any conscious "propositional stance". Consciousness and language should rather be seen as being selected for scaffolding, serving and increasing reasoning during evolution. This is where biosemiotics is relevant. Thus, language, images, perception etc. should be re-conceptualized for the roles they may play in the chain of propositions of the reasoning process. The consequence is of course that the reasoning processes exist across the boundaries of nature, biology, mind, culture and social processes. Thus it delivers a transdisciplinary paradigm that encompasses a theory of meaning integrated with logical as well as an empirical fallibilist foundation and this ties it in with the new interactive theory of mind: Embedded,

embodied, enacted, extended. It is a process-based vision of the mind as a complex semiotic set of activities distributed across brain, body, language, culture and world. As such it complements systems theories of self-organization. This changes our ontology and epistemology to a semiotic and system process view integrated with a phenomenological and fallibilist view of knowing.

### Some recent writings on the subject

Brier, S. (2013a): Cybersemiotics: A New Foundation for Transdisciplinary Theory of Information, Cognition, Meaningful Communication and the Interaction Between Nature and Culture, *INTEGRAL REVIEW*, June 2013, Vol. 9, No. 2 <http://integralreview.org/documents/Brier,%20Cybersemiotics,%20Vol.%209,%20No.%202.pdf>

Brier, Søren and Joslyn, Cliff (2013b). "What Does It Take to Produce Interpretation? Informational, Peircean, and Code-Semiotic Views on Biosemiotics". *Biosemiotics*, Vol. 6, Nr. 1, 04.2013, s. 143-159.

Brier, Søren (2013b). Cybersemiotics: a new foundation for transdisciplinary theory of consciousness, cognition, meaning and communication, in Liz Swan (Ed.)(2012): *Origins of Mind*, Springer book series in Biosemiotics, Berlin, New York: Springer.

Brier, S. (2013c). Transdisciplinary view of Information theory seen from a Cybersemiotics point of view, in Ibekwe-San Juan, F. and Dousa, T. (2013): *Fundamental notions of information, communication and knowledge: Its effects on scientific research and inter-disciplinarity*, New York and Berlin: Springer.

Brier, S. (2014a). Pure Zero, pp 207 in Editors: Thellefsen, T. and Sørensen, B.(eds) (2014). *Charles Sanders Peirce in His Own Words: 100 Years of Semiotics, Communication and Cognition*. Series: *Semiotics, Communication and Cognition [SCC]* 14. De Gruyter Mouton.

Brier, S (2014b). The Riddle of the Sphinx Answered: On how C. S. Peirce's Transdisciplinary Semiotic Philosophy of Knowing Links Science, Spirituality and Knowing, chapter two in Tandy, C (ed.)(2014). *Death And Anti-Death, Volume 12: One Hundred Years After Charles S. Peirce (1839-1914)*, Ann Arbor MI: Ria University Press.

[https://www.academia.edu/10298876/The\\_riddle\\_of\\_the\\_Sphinx\\_answered\\_On\\_how\\_C.\\_S.\\_Peirce\\_s\\_transdisciplinary\\_semiotic\\_philosophy\\_of\\_knowing\\_links\\_science\\_and\\_spirituality](https://www.academia.edu/10298876/The_riddle_of_the_Sphinx_answered_On_how_C._S._Peirce_s_transdisciplinary_semiotic_philosophy_of_knowing_links_science_and_spirituality)