Peirce, Kant, and Apel on Transcendental Semiotics: The Unity of Apperception and the Deduction of the Categories of Signs

SOCRATES: ... Now by ‘thinking’ do you mean the same as I do?
THEAETETUS: What do you mean by it?
SOCRATES: A talk which the soul has with itself about objects under consideration. ... It seems to me that the soul when it thinks is simply carrying on a discussion in which it asks itself questions and answers them itself, affirms or denies. And when it arrives at something definite, either by a gradual process or a sudden leap, when it affirms one thing consistently and without divided counsel, we call this its judgement. So in my view, to judge is to make a statement, and judgement is a statement which is not addressed to another person or spoken aloud, but silently addressed to oneself.
— Plato, Theaetetus, 189e-190a

Introduction

According to the German pragmatist Karl-Otto Apel, Charles S. Peirce is the “Kant of America” (Apel 1980, p. 80), because he developed a thoroughgoing transcendental philosophy of signs and language. Apel follows Peirce in this project, and calls it “transcendental semiotics.” Within transcendental semiotics a key problem — articulated in Apel’s book, Towards a Transformation of Philosophy — is the groundwork of the unity of apperception and the deduction of the categories of signs. Apel conceives apperception as Peirce’s “long run” state of inquiry. This account is, however, not entirely without its problems. So, as an alternative, I will suggest that semiotic apperception be conceived as the immediate triadic sign, which flows into the future (as Peirce himself originally conceived it). This account has the distinct advantage of being logically prior to Apel’s long run account; and it avoids the problem of the circular dependence of the groundwork on a goal (as the goal presupposes the groundwork). Ultimately, too, this semiotic unity of apperception (as the very unity and form of meaning) is also the form of the “triadic logical relative” (which Peirce, following Augustus De Morgan, helped pioneer). From this perspective of the unity of meaning and

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relative logic, we may then proceed to the transcendental deduction of Peirce’s Kantian categories of Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness, which determine all possible experience, and are unified through apperception.

**Part I. The Transcendental Unity of Apperception in Semiotics**

**A. Terminology: Transcendental Semiotics**

Kant defines transcendental logic in the *Critique of Pure Reason* as follows: “I entitle *transcendental* all knowledge which is occupied not so much with objects as with the mode of our knowledge of objects in so far as this mode of knowledge is to be possible *a priori*. A system of such concepts might be entitled transcendental philosophy” (A12/B26). The first essential step in constructing a transcendental system of philosophy is the “laying of the groundwork.” This means (in the Kantian sense) establishing the highest principles of thought, which are a priori — meaning that they must be established before any possible further construction of thought (e.g., “scientific,” as in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, or “moral,” as in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*). Kant makes this point in the *Critique* when he writes as follows: “Only insofar as we build upon this foundation do we have a reliable touchstone for estimating the philosophical value of old and new works in this field. Otherwise the unqualified historian or critic is passing judgments upon the groundless assertions of others by means of his own, which are equally groundless.” Central among these a priori ideas is the unity of apperception — and, for Kant, this is the partial sentence, “I think,” which accompanies and unifies every thought and experience the “I” can ever have.

It is precisely here (on the “I think”) that the transition to “transcendental semiotics” takes place. In Peirce’s hands (and Apel’s), Kant’s transcendental epistemology becomes a transcendental *semiotics* in the very moment we substitute out the Kantian subjective groundwork of the “I,” and substitute in the new intersubjective Peircean groundwork of semiosis. Apel makes exactly this point as follows:

The term ‘transcendental semiotic’ may be taken as connoting the Peircean program of a transformation of Kant’s ‘transcendental logic,’ a program that, as it were, replaces the Kantian concept of the transcendental subject of knowledge with that of the indefinite community of sign interpretation. (see Apel 1972/1974/1980; and 1981, part I) (Apel 1995, p. 376)

Peirce would certainly agree, although, ultimately his own view of apperception is *not* how Apel conceives it.
B. Peirce's Re-Definition of Apperception

Peirce tells us that he “almost knew by heart” (CP 1.560) the entirety of Kant's first *Critique*. Reflecting back upon his early immersion in this work, Peirce explains his devotion: “In the early sixties I was a passionate devotee of Kant, at least, of that part of his philosophy which appears in the Transcendental Analytic of the Critic of the Pure Reason. I believed more implicitly in the two tables of the Functions of Judgment and the Categories than if they had been brought down from Sinai” (RLT 124). This early immersion culminated in Peirce’s famous 1867 essay, “A New List of Categories.” The “New List” provides both a formal transcendental deduction of the categories, and an account of apperception. His “categories” are “new” (as in the “New List”) because they are fewer in number (compared to Kant’s four groups of three, or Aristotle’s ten); and because they are unified through “linguistic consistency” (Peirce’s apperception).

That is, it is precisely here (on the point about consistency) that Peirce replaces Kant’s “I” with the “unity of consistency” in the stream of signs. On this, Peirce writes as follows: “We find that every judgement is subject to a condition of consistency: its elements must be capable of being brought to a unity.”\(^5\) While this account remains slightly underdeveloped in the “New List,” Peirce does, a year later in his 1868 paper “Some Consequences of Four Incapacities,” begin to fill it out (and, indeed, directly contrasts it with Kant’s own account). As Peirce puts it clearly, “… consciousness is sometimes used to signify the *I think*, or unity in thought; but this unity is nothing but consistency, or the recognition of it. Consistency belongs to every sign, so far as it is a sign; and therefore every sign since it signifies primarily that it is sign, signifies its own consistency” (W2:240-1).\(^6\) So, in place of the man as an “I,” Peirce puts the “man-sign” (W2:240 and 241); because, according to Peirce, “… my language is the sum total of myself” (CP 5.314; see also W2:241); and “… the word or sign which man uses is the man himself. … man is a sign” (W2:241); he is, Peirce writes, “a train of thought” (W2:241).

C. Apel's Revision of Peirce's Apperception as the Long Run

Apel’s revision of Peirce’s original account of apperception takes place in two stages. The first stage is the recognition of apperception as the immediate sign’s consistency (precisely as Peirce himself identifies it). Apel agrees with Peirce on this point. But the second stage of the transition is the extension of that consistency potentially infinitely into the future. Here is the first stage in Apel:

The phrase ‘unity of consistency,’ used by Peirce in his criticism, shows the direction in which Peirce himself is searching for the ‘highest point’ of his ‘transcendental deduction.’ His concern, it is true, is not with the objective unity of ideas in a *self-consciousness* but rather
with the semantical consistency of an intersubjectively valid *representation* of the objects by signs, which consistency, according to Peirce, can only be decided about in the dimension of sign-*interpretation* ... (Apel, 1980, p. 83)°

So, clearly, Apel takes up Peirce’s early project’s definition of apperception, but he does not seem to go all the way with it — which, I think, is evident in his wording. For example, Apel writes that Peirce “is searching for the ‘highest point’” (the implication being that he has not found it yet). Or consider Apel’s following point: “This early utterance shows that the ‘unity of consistency’ Peirce was looking for lies beyond the personal unity of self-consciousness, which is Kant’s ‘highest point’” (Apel, 1980, p. 83). Obviously, Apel is unsatisfied with the early account, and thinks Peirce is too.

And he aims to make some adjustments. The reasoning is not so bad: Apel is quite aware that the “New List” underwent significant revision as Peirce went along, particularly in light of the fact that his categories fell (almost) completely apart with the logic of relatives (discussed shortly in Part II of this essay, “The Transcendental Deduction of the Categories of Signs”). Peirce saw that the “New List” would have to be revised to extend beyond the “subject/predicate model of the proposition. And it is precisely at this point (as Murray Murphey has pointed out so clearly) that Peirce’s project of the “New List” is, indeed, open to considerable re-interpretation (from within Peirce’s own writings). So, given significant problems with the “New List,” and the transcendental project, in general, a little logical wiggle room was not unreasonable — and Apel, seeing this wiggle room, sought to revise the view of apperception.

This brings us to the second part of the Apel’s transition, i.e. the extension of the unity of consistency to the long run. And as a note here, if there is one strong advantage to Apel’s account (in light of the logic of relatives), it is this: Apel’s long run apperception view, with its long run deduction of the categories, if it works, certainly does not founder on the logic of relatives. (I’ll return to this point shortly.)

In developing his new account, Apel provides several clear statements of his view. For example, Apel writes that (beginning, as Peirce does, with the unity of semiotic consistency), “From here Peirce comes immediately to the decisive conclusion which leads to the ‘highest point’ in the sense of a semiotical unity of consistent interpretation: He says: ‘the existence of thought now depends on what is to be hereafter; so that it has only a potential existence, dependent on the future thought of the community’” ([CP]5.313-16) (Apel, 1980, p. 84).° Notice Apel sees Peirce as moving “immediately” to the long run (as though the long run were a priori “contained” in consistency itself). Along the same lines, Apel also writes that Peirce “... has to replace Kant’s ultimate presupposition and ‘highest point,’ namely, the transcendental synthesis of apperception, by the
postulate of an ‘ultimate opinion’...” (Apel 1980, p. 104; see also Apel 1980, pp. 87-88). Notice here that the long run is a “presupposition” of semiosis. And again, Apel writes:

At this point Peirce’s semiotical transformation of the ‘highest point’ of the transcendental logic reaches its highest point in what later has been called Peirce’s ‘Logical Socialism’: A man who wishes to proceed logically in the sense of Peirce’s synthetic logic of inquiry has to surrender all the private interests of his finite life, also the private interest in his private salvation (which is existential in Kierkegaard’s sense) to the interest of the indefinite community since only the community has a chance to reach the ultimate truth: ‘He who would not sacrifice his own soul to save the whole world, is illogical in all his inferences, collectively. So the social principle is rooted intrinsically in logic.’ ([CP]5.354 ff., [CP]2.654 f.)

Clearly, the two accounts — Apel’s and Peirce’s — are different: indeed, Apel notes this point fairly regularly. Does this account work. In order to answer that question, we must first understand what is at stake in Apel’s account of the long run, and what exactly the long run is.

D. Inquiry and the Long Run

The “long run” is Peirce’s idea of the ultimate endpoint of inquiry, conceived as a “mathematical” (as in the Calculus) and “evolutionary” process. Peirce extends Darwin’s ideas of phylogeny, selection, struggle, and adaptation, to inquiry. “... the mind of man is strongly adapted to the comprehension of the world” (W3:318; see also CP 2.754). This adaptation proceeds by way of an evolutionary struggle of trial and error, variation and selection of traits. And at the level of human thought, this process of adaptation takes the distinct form of an interplay of “doubt” and “belief,” which one may call the belief-doubt-belief structure of inquiry. Beliefs are “habits” (evolving structures) which adapt to the external environment. As a habit, a belief is a “settled opinion” about the world from which action flows naturally. As something which is settled, a belief is like a biological organism at equilibrium. The organism of reason is in a calm state; and action flows without deliberation. A belief “... puts us into such a condition that we shall behave in a certain way, when the occasion arises” (W3:263). In other words, beliefs are modes of action that propel future behavior. As these modes are reinforced through repetition and selection, they settle down into our physiology and psychology; and ultimately become enduring habits (i.e., they become “fixed”).
In the here and now, our belief structures are hardly perfectly adapted, and contain all kinds of errors (CP 8.12). So, these errors have to be removed, as they stand in the way of "fixation." When an error is detected, then inquiry is "alerted" (through doubt), which feels like "the irritation of the nerve" (W3:246). In response, the belief actually "... ceases to be a belief" (W3:253). In other words, beliefs are "naturally selected out" through doubt. In this way, Peirce effectively relocates the Darwinian idea of struggle from biology to mind: "The irritation of doubt causes a struggle to attain a state of belief. I shall term this struggle inquiry" (W3:247). Doubt causes the struggle of inquiry: it "... stimulates the mind to an activity which may be slight or energetic, calm or turbulent. Images pass rapidly through consciousness, one incessantly melting into another" (W3:262). Inquiry continues in this way until opinion is settled; and a new belief replaces the old belief: when this happens, "... thought relaxes, and comes to rest for a moment when belief is reached" (W3:263).

Although, certainly, our new belief may also come to be doubted out; and inquiry will begin again, as we seek for yet a new belief, now a "belief." And again, the goal is the same, i.e., escape doubt in order to act: "... the whole function of thought is to produce habits of action" (W3:265). And action is only possible when our opinions are settled. So, essentially, "... the sole object of inquiry is the settlement of opinion" (W3:248).

1. Four Methods of Fixing Belief

In "Fixation" Peirce lists four different methods for settling opinion, (1) tenacity, (2) authority, (3) a priorism, and (4) science. Tenacity is forceful assertion of an ungrounded personal belief (W3:249). A pluralistic society, however, will show the tenacious individual that others have alternative beliefs, equally tenaciously held — and this will "shake his confidence in his belief" (W3:250). As an alternative, the method of authority enforces belief fixation (typically through a state) and forbids critical inquiry (W3:251-252). But again, seeing other cultures will shake the confidence in the method of authority — and new options will be sought out. Among those is the method of a priorism, which, according to Peirce, proceeds from what is "...'agreeable to reason," i.e., from whatever "we find ourselves inclined to believe" (W3:252). But a priorism fails because it generates coherent and consistent, but incommensurable, accounts (e.g., Plato vs. Kepler). The next (and fourth) method is science, which uses the strategy of hypothesis formulation, and (as a method) also rests on a distinct hypothesis, i.e., that there is a knowable real world. This reality transcends the psychologically-based inclinations, e.g., individualistic inclinations (as in tenacity), or social inclinations (as in authority and a priorism).

Peirce (with Hegel, and against Kant) conceives reality as wholly knowable (to human minds); which means that metaphysical "incognizables" are self-
referentially incoherent. Peirce makes this point when he writes, "Over against any cognition, there is an unknown but knowable reality; but over against all possible cognition, there is only the self-contradictory. In short, *cognizability* (in its widest sense) and *being* are not merely metaphysically the same, but are synonymous terms" (W2:208). That is, "... the absolutely incognizable does not exist" (W2:240). Indeed, as Peirce puts it, "... since the meaning of a word is the conception it conveys, the absolutely incognizable has no meaning because no conception attaches to it. It is, therefore, a meaningless word." And "... whatever is meant by any term as 'the real' is cognizable in some degree ... in the objective sense of that term" (W2:253).

So, while Peirce uses Kant's terminology of the "noumena," he uses it differently. For Peirce, the noumena are unknowable now, but fully knowable in the distant future (the long run). This is how we should take Peirce when he writes in *Photometric Researches* that "[l]ight considered purely as something in the external world may be called *noumenal* light. Light considered as an appearance ... may be termed *phenomenal* light" (W3:383). The noumena exist "... entirely independent of our opinions," and they "... affect our senses according to regular laws" (W3:253). As such they function by regulating the pretensions of the sensibility, in the Kantian sense. In Peircean-evolutionary terms, this is the same as "natural selection within the evolution of inquiry." And this selection ultimately results in positive knowledge of the noumena (contra Kant).

For Kant, we can never have "positive" knowledge of the noumena. This is not because the noumena (in Kant's system) are in-principle "unknowable" — indeed, for Kant, they are positively knowable ... they are just not positively knowable for us (i.e., us humans). The reason is that our faculty of sensation is ontologically cut off from our faculty of judgment. For Kant, the sensation is intuitive (in immediate contact with reality). But the faculty of judgment (i.e., the understanding) is distinctly non-intuitive — and is the ultimate source of our knowledge. Only a being endowed with an "intellectual intuition" (e.g., God) can know the noumena directly, rather than indirectly. Peirce, by contrast, holds that there simply is no judgment/sensation schism, only a semiotic and syllogistic logic of abduction (which is extended even through the senses). So, ultimately, for Peirce, there can be "no incognizables" for humans. And while we may never be able purely to intuit reality, given time, we can know it better and better.

Of course, in the short run of science, "... our sensations are as different as our relations to the objects" (W3:253). And error is and will be pervasive, while our scientific opinions will change a great deal and often. On this, Peirce writes as follows: "Who can be sure of what we shall not know in a few hundred years? Who can guess what would be the result of continuing the pursuit of science for ten thousand years, with the activity of the last hundred?" (W3:274-275). Peirce's answer (to his own question) is that science is "... expected to show
considerable fluctuations” (W3:280-281); but, eventually, “... these fluctuations become less and less; and if we continue long enough, [inferences] ... will approximate toward a fixed limit” (W3:280-281). Different scientists of light (e.g., Peirce mentions Fizeau, Foucault, and Lissajous) “... may at first obtain different results, but, as each perfects his method and his processes, the results will move steadily together toward a destined center” (W3:273). This “destined center” is the final “... opinion which is fated to be ultimately agreed to by all who investigate is what we mean by the truth, and the object represented in this opinion is the real. That is the way I would explain reality” (W3:273). If inquiry were to go on to infinity, what we would agree to is the final truth.\(^{22}\)

This is precisely Apel’s groundwork.

2. Apel on Long Run Truth and Architectonic

Apel certainly recognizes the advance over Kant. Indeed, Peirce avoids incognizability, but with a deep sensitivity to error.\(^{23}\) Apel writes, “The problem of unknowable things-in-themselves by this turn is transformed into the problem of infinite approximation, which, indeed, is a paradoxical problem too” (Apel, 1980, p. 89). Peirce thus substitutes “temporary fallibilism” for “eternal banishment from the noumena.” In fact, we will meet up with the noumena (contrary to Kant), and this will be the “final truth.” Apel, too, appropriates this view of truth directly from Peirce (and contrasts it regularly with Tarski’s own semantical view of truth). In Apel’s essay, “Pragmatism as Sense-Critical Realism Based on a Regulative Idea of Truth: In Defense of a Peircean Theory of Reality and Truth,” he writes,

Truth (with regard to reality in general) would be represented by that discursive consensus that would ultimately be reached in an unlimited community of research, if the process of research, under ideal communicative and epistemic conditions, could be continued in a way critically surpassing any factual consensus — i.e., going on potentially infinitely. This explication of truth is definitely counterfactual, nevertheless, the process of approximating the truth is conceived as a real possibility. To be sure, its point — in the sense of maintaining the internal relation between the truth-claim and the claim to justification — depends on the inclusion of the concept of potential (not actual) infinity. Only in this way can we give an answer to the question for a legitimation of the claim to universal validity of truth: an answer that is not compelled to explicate the intrinsic relation of truth to reality by an externalist-metaphysical conception, i.e., either by a pre-
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Kantian ontology of *correspondence through adequation*, or by the Kantian supposition of unknowable *things-in-themselves*. (*Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society, 2001; see also, Apel, “C.S. Peirce and the Post-Tarskian Problem of an Adequate Explication of the Meaning of Truth: Towards a Transcendental-Pragmatic Theory of Truth, Part II,” also in the Transactions, 1982.*)

It is clear in these remarks that Apel does not make the mistake of conceiving the long run as strongly concrete — he recognizes that it is a regulative idea (a point to which we return shortly). But he also maintains that it functions as truth.

A point should be made here, however, in order to demarcate Apel’s long run view of truth from his arguments about apperception. For indeed in Apel’s account, the long run is at once *both* the unity of apperception, and that from which we deduce the categories, as well as Truth. I do not want to take up here the issue of whether this account of truth is correct. Certainly there is a good deal of merit in it. But it should be pointed out that the issues of long run truth and long run apperception are separable. That is, one could, as Peirce at times argued, have both a short run groundwork of apperception (as in the “New List”), *and* a long run view of truth. Leaving truth aside for the moment, however, our focus is on the work Apel wants the long run to do *for apperception* (and later for the deduction of the categories).

As a further preliminary line of demarcation, we should also note that Apel sees the long run also as the “architectonic” structure of inquiry (in the Kantian sense). For Kant, the architectonic of a transcendental system is the outlined unity of the sciences. As Kant writes, “Transcendental philosophy is only the idea of a science, for which the critique of pure reason has to lay down the complete architectonic plan.” At the end of the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant makes it clear that our everyday scientists are really just technicians: each one goes about his business in a cloistered discipline, e.g., physics or chemistry or biology (but not all three, and certainly not all sciences together). But *this* is precisely the job of the philosopher: he is the grounder and architectonic unifier of all of the sciences together. And his virtually divine view is a view of all sciences in one (very much like what Plato means by dialectic in books VI and VII of the *Republic*).

Peirce, too, following Kant, attempts in the “New List” to establish the groundwork of the a priori categories, upon which he may later erect the architectonic in the *Monist* series (1891-1893). In his 1891 *Monist* paper, “The Architecture of Theories” Peirce has this project clearly in mind (at the forefront of a series of five essays): “That systems ought to be constructed architectonically has been preached since Kant, but I do not think the full import of the maxim has by any means been apprehended” (EP1:286). With his own house-building (at Arisbe) in mind (as a model of ground-up construction), Peirce outlines a
thoroughgoing relational and evolutionary view of reality, based in (what will become his) three (rather than the early five) categories. All of the sciences are thus conceived as sciences of evolution, semiosis, and complexity, unified through a groundwork which is also complex, evolutionary, and semiotic.

Apel too is also looking to lay the transcendental groundwork and to develop a rich approach to the architectonics of science. The motivation for this project stems — just as it does for Kant and Peirce — from a new explosion of scientific discovery. For Kant, it was the blossoming of Newtonian mechanics (and for which he sought to lay the ground). Peirce, by contrast, held up the new evolutionary science of Darwin — and sought to make all sciences, effectively, “sciences of evolution.” Apel too uses the evolutionary science (and the mathematics) of Peirce’s long run as an architectonic form. But he is less concerned with biological evolution, and more concerned with human linguistic evolution. And the inspiration for this comes prominently from the relatively new “social sciences.”

Moreover, seeing a strongly normative (ethical and political) content to these sciences, Apel seeks to lay their groundwork in transcendental semiotics — particularly in the transcendental and categorial continuum of human semiosis. On this view, the social sciences, emerging out of modernity, are conceived as the “the sciences of communicative understanding” (Apel, 1981, p. 194). So, again, Apel is fulfilling the duty of the Kantian architectonic philosopher, by providing a unified outline (or architectonic) of the (social) sciences. And it is from this project that Apel, and Jürgen Habermas (following Apel), have attempted to maintain the modern project’s goals of liberation and egalitarianism — against the tides of “postmodernism” — by constructing a revised Kantian ethics based in what they call Communicative Rationality. The new ethics is commonly called “Discourse Ethics” (or “Communicative Ethics”).

3. Concerns with the Long Run

Certainly Apel’s writings constitute one of the most valuable contributions to contemporary Peirce scholarship. And here I follow his view in many (if not most) respects. But there is one serious concern, and that is the groundwork of the long run. I do not doubt that it is an interesting, and even valuable, attempt to ground modernity (once again). And certainly, with its “logical socialism,” as Peirce calls it, there is a strong valuable ethical project to be gleaned from its establishment. But before agreeing to the long run account of the groundwork, two types of problems with the long run must be mentioned. One type regards the endpoint of the long run (which is handled very well by Hausman), and the other regards the circular relation of the groundwork of the long run on the endgame of the long run (when it should, I think, be the other way around). We’ll handle these two separately.
a. Contemporary Criticisms and Hausman's Response

With regard to the first (although, not the most important), there have been many criticisms of Peirce's account of the long run (and not all of which can be discussed here). But a general concern regards the concreteness of the final limit. Quine gives two. (1) "There is a faulty use of numerical analogy in speaking of a limit of theories, since the notion of limit depends on that of 'nearer than,' which is defined for numbers and not for theories." (2) We probably won't get one perfect view in all its "... uniqueness ('the ideal result')." Rather, according to Quine, "[i]t seems likelier, if only on account of symmetries or dualities, that countless alternative theories would be tied for first place."27

Alternatively, Michael Williams claims "... we have no idea of what it would be for a theory to be ideally complete and comprehensive in the way required by such accounts of truth, or of what it would be for inquiry to have an end." But even if we did, it's unnecessary anyway: "We understand progress retrospectively by seeing how a later view improves over its predecessors."28 (Williams relies on Thomas Kuhn for this retrospective account.) Richard Rorty follows Williams, and similarly gives up the long run — calling it "fishy"29 — and "[t]o make it less fishy Peirce would have to answer the question 'How would we know that we were at the end of inquiry, as opposed to merely having gotten tired or unimaginative?"30 Paul Weiss,31 Nicholas Rescher,32 and others have given further criticisms.33

Carl Hausman in Charles S. Peirce’s Evolutionary Philosophy (and elsewhere)34 has responded to these sorts of criticisms (to defend the long run). According to Hausman, "Quine's objection that the analogy is faulty assumes that the notion of an ideal limit presumably is confined to mathematical notions." Peirce simply did not reduce limits to numbers. "The idea of limit in mathematics, or at least one such idea, refers to something that cannot be reached. Therefore, it should be unnecessary to qualify the term with the notion of its being ideal."35 And similarly on the Williams-Rorty critique, Hausman points out that the state is ideal, not an actual "terminus." Given Peirce's tychism (ontological chance), the long run is always "open to spontaneity and change." As a consequence, the "... path ... is not fixed. Nor is the possible final network of judgments ..." The real generals are thus "... composed of would-be's, or open possibilities. Only an ideal thought for an ideal, infinite thinker could select and actualize these in a final state ..." Hausman further writes that "... no actual mind can reach this state — it can only approach it asymptotically."36 So, the final state is "... an actuality that inevitably recedes into the future."37

As a regulative ideal, this appears quite Kantian. And furthermore, in Kant too, there are no "in-principle" incognizables; and only an ideal mind can know the noumena completely (never to be fully accessed by humans). Although, still, Peirce has no faculty schism, and he allows for progressive approximation (contra Kant). Of course, too, Apel holds the long run as a regulative ideal, and not as Quine makes it out to be. So, this problem should not be conceived as affecting
Apel’s own account. The problem with Apel’s account is as follows.

b. The Problem of Long Run Groundwork in Semiotics

Indeed, the problem is not so much the endgame of the long run, but its beginning (more fundamental because the end presupposes the beginning). So, there is a question of circularity. The idea of groundwork in Kant is meant to respond precisely to this sort of methodological problem, i.e., at the very beginning of the system. This is precisely why Peirce develops the transcendental groundwork in the “New List”\(^{38}\) as “meaning” in the here and now. Otherwise, he must ground his phenomenology in his Kantian semiotic categories (firstness, secondness, and thirdness), and then ground these (circularly) in his phenomenology. And, of course, later on (at times anyway), he does just that (becoming unsatisfied with his early transcendental semiotics). Out of this logical circularity, he then runs the rest of his system, culminating in the long run.

So, by grounding the system in the long run, Apel seems to assume the conditions for the long run — and this runs the risk of circularity. In other words: we want to be careful not to substitute an “achievement” (i.e., a globalized community achievement, such as the long run is) for the “very condition of that achievement” (such as apperception in Kant is meant to be). Certainly that is our goal (and may even be conceived as truth, as Apel views it) — but it is not yet the groundwork. Apel certainly sees this view in Peirce. And in truth some passages do, in fact, lend themselves to this interpretation. For example, in “Questions Concerning Certain Faculties Claimed for Man” (1868), Peirce writes: “Ignorance and error are all that distinguish our private selves from the absolute ego of pure apperception” (CP 5.235). This could make apperception appear to be an achievement, as though at some point in the future we would be finally free of “ignorance or error” (a state Peirce calls the “long run”) — that is, we would have “achieved” apperception.

Nevertheless, Peirce did not hold the view that the long run is apperception. Rather, he made the immediate sign the groundwork. And with regard to the long run, this he maintained, as Murphey and Hausman\(^{39}\) point out, as a regulative ideal. Of course, as noted, Apel quite agrees that the long run is a “regulative idea” (see \textit{Transactions}, Fall 2001, p. 461); but in making the long run “regulative,” which also functions as “transcendental groundwork,” Apel is giving a stronger account than Peirce gave. For, as it stands, the concern still needs handling how the groundwork of the long run, can simultaneously function as the groundwork for the long run. That is, what grounds the long run?

As I see it, Peirce maintained the long run as a regulative idea, stemming from the groundwork of apperception and the categories (but not necessarily as the groundwork of apperception). And this he did very likely because of the problem of circularity. But even if the regulative ideal were a priori extended from meaning, still there is a problem in making it “prior to” the categories, or
prior to the unity of meaning. It must come after these structures, as groundwork, are already in place. (In response to this view, Apel might hold that I have simply sterilized and minimized the groundwork down to almost “nothing,” such that it is simply too flimsy to support the project of transcendental semiotics — that is, too flimsy for an adequate deduction of the categories. Obviously, this a genuine concern, and I will return to it shortly in Part II.)

E. Alternative Approaches to Semiotic Apperception:
Heidegger, Davidson, Wittgenstein, Hegel

Still, it is not entirely clear that Peirce’s original definition is so very problematic in the first place. Before returning to his original view, however, it will be helpful to develop the discussion on apperception (outside the Peirce literature), and as not relying on the long run. This analysis will provide a kind of “working template” for re-visiting Peirce’s original account. Indeed, other philosophers similarly struggled with establishing something like apperception, even after rejecting the primacy of the “I think” in Kant — and came up with accounts sounding very much like the early Peirce’s view. These include Martin Heidegger, Donald Davidson, Hegel, and Wittgenstein (i.e., the literature on Wittgenstein).

1. Heidegger’s “Kantbook”

Heidegger, in Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics (what he called his “Kantbook”), argues that Kant was (contrary to popular belief) actually laying the ground for metaphysics in an equation of “meaning and time” (rather than merely setting the conditions for science). In discussing “the meaning of the term ‘laying of the ground’ . . .,” Heidegger says this is “... best illustrated if we consider the building trade.” And further on: “Ground-laying is ... the projecting of the building plan itself so that it agrees with the direction concerning on what and how the building will be grounded.” Heidegger writes, precisely in the structure of time: “The laying of the ground for metaphysics grows upon the ground of time.” (I should note here that Heidegger claims that this thesis is also the thesis of Being and Time. His next immediate sentence is this: “The question concerning Being, the grounding question for a laying of the ground for metaphysics, is the problem of Being and Time.”)

Again, Heidegger’s view here is certainly not the “popular view” of Kant (although Heidegger thinks it is the logical consequence of Kant’s arguments for apperception and the categories). The popular view is given often, and can be found, for example, in Stephan Körner’s book, Kant, where he writes as follows: “The self of pure apperception, the I think which must be capable of accompanying all of my presentations, is not located in time.” This is the “dualistic” (or Cartesian) account of Kant (which Heidegger is trying to oppose).
But, again, there is good reason to doubt this popular view. For, indeed, "time," as Kant conceives it, is the condition of all appearances, inner and outer, and thus must necessarily run through even the basic groundwork of Kant's unity of apperception (i.e., the "I" being the "inner" par excellence). Taking this notion as his point of departure (at least in the "Kantbook"), Heidegger suggests that, for Kant, the "I think" simply is "Time." This is evident when Heidegger writes as follows: "Time and the 'I think' [Kant's transcendental unity of apperception] no longer stand incompatibly and incomparably at odds; they are the same." And again: "With his laying of the ground for metaphysics, and through the radicalism with which, for the first time, he transcendently interpreted both time, always for itself, and the 'I think,' always for itself, Kant brought both of them together in their original sameness — without, to be sure, expressly seeing this as such for himself." And in Being and Time, with regard to "being," the same point is made: "Its primary meaning is the future."

2. Davidson on Triangulation

Similarly, Davidson, in his own Kantian transcendental project, clearly lays the groundwork in the triadic structure of meaning (in the here and now). Furthermore, Davidson even uses the exact same terminology as Peirce does, i.e., the "second person" (discussed shortly in Peirce), and means the same thing as well — although Davidson does not use Peirce to this effect. Rather, in his essay "The Second Person," Davidson begins with a quote from Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations, §457: "... meaning is like going up to someone." For Davidson (as for Peirce) "... to have thoughts, and so to mean anything in speaking, it is necessary to understand, and be understood by, a second person." Or, otherwise put, thought, according to Davidson, "... depends on the mutual and simultaneous responses of two or more creatures to common distal stimuli and to one another's responses. This three-way relation among two speakers and a common world I call 'triangulation.'" Indeed, for Davidson (as for Peirce) "triangulation" is integral to all thought. One must be able to point at the world, and, at the same time, speak with another person (even if that other is inside my own mind). As Davidson puts it, "... the idea is as simple as that of ostensive learning ..."

Moreover, and sounding like Heidegger, according to Davidson, this triadic structure of meaning necessarily flows into the future, i.e., toward the second person, who is our "listener" (and potential speaker), located in the ontological-temporal space of the "future." We must necessarily presuppose that someone in the future can understand us, and because we presuppose this, we also presuppose (again, necessarily) that that second person can understand what we mean by the words we use. So, we are (just as Peirce says in the early works) necessarily presupposing a certain consistency of the meaning of our words, and which is projected forward into the future. This is exactly what Davidson means with his idea of "knowing how to 'go on.'" On this Davidson writes that "...
linguistic communication requires a speaker go on in the same way as others do — that to mean something in speaking, one must mean the same thing by the same words as others do." Clarifying this notion, Davidson entertains the alternative: "If you (the interpreter) do not know how the speaker is going to go on, you do not know what language she speaks, no matter how much she has said up until now.... [T]he question does not concern the past but the future" (emphasis added). (Again, just as in Heidegger, we see here that "meaning" is all about time, in general, and more importantly, in particular, "the future").

3. Hegel's Alternative

Of course, even before Davidson and Heidegger, a thoroughgoing analysis of Kant's view of apperception is developed in Hegel. This point emerges in his Phenomenology of Spirit, in the section on "Lordship and Bondage":

A self-consciousness, in being an object, is just as much 'I' as 'object.' With this, we already have before us the Notion of Spirit. What still lies ahead for consciousness is the experience of what Spirit is — this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses, which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: 'I' that is 'We' and 'We' that is 'I'.

Throughout the Logic and the Phenomenology, Hegel makes this point repeatedly, namely, about moving beyond Kant's view of the "I" (i.e., the equation of "I = I"). Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Phenomenology (in the Master-Slave Dialectic) where the "I" becomes the "We." Actually, this really means that the "I" becomes aware of itself as intrinsically a "We." And in so doing, we come to recognize ourselves explicitly as a "we." That is, "we" come to see ourselves (correctly) as beings-in-language. There is also the recognition here, in Hegel, that consciousness is intrinsically a triadic conversation about objects (in many respects like Plato's view). Mind emerges in language (at the beginning of the Phenomenology), and ultimately comes to see the perspective of the "I" as limited in its unification of thought. The triadic form of the "we" (with the world of objects) is essential. (I will return to this point in Part II, in the Deduction of the Categories.)

An analogous view is found today in John Searle, in Mind, Language, and Society. On Searle's view, we should simply "... take the collective intentionality in my head as a primitive. It is of the form 'we intend' even though it is in my individual head." This "we" is a primitive form, and essentially "the foundation of all social activities." Searle also recognizes his proximity to Hegel, but rejects the idea of any "... overarching Hegelian World Spirit, some 'we' that floats
around mysteriously above us individuals and of which we as individuals are just expressions.\[63\] This is probably a little unfair to Hegel. Certainly there are problems in Hegel, but this does not appear to be one of them. Indeed, Searle caricatures Hegel’s “we” as somehow “above us,” ethereal, even spooky. This clearly misses the point: for, the “we,” as Hegel sees it, is more “within us” (not “above us”), and necessarily unifying of our thought. (As an aside, Apel rejects Searle’s view, as it is not sufficiently transcendentalized,\[62\] and uses a transcendental version of the “we” himself.)

4. Lear and Gardner on Wittgenstein

An additional view is advanced by Jonathan Lear, who (contrary to Searle) holds that the we-perspective is, in fact, quite transcendental. So, in a sense, he agrees with Apel, except that he does not locate it in the long run. In “The Disappearing ‘We’”\[63\] Lear develops what he calls a “... stable middle position between Kantian transcendental philosophy and some form of Hegelianism.”\[64\] (That is, he wants a transcendental Kantian view, grounded in an Hegelian linguistic “we.”) And, in doing this, Lear relies on Wittgenstein. In his later works, Wittgenstein regularly describes the shared experience of “forms of life,” which take place in “language games,” and which are (interestingly) discussed from the “we-perspective.” Of course, Lear is quite aware that Wittgenstein “... displays no interest in necessary structures”;\[65\] but, nevertheless, proposes to Kantianize this view, and make the unity of apperception into an Hegelian account of the “We are so minded.” The “we” comes from Wittgenstein’s view of “language,” which according to Lear, “… is that in the concept of which the (open-ended) manifold of our representations is united.”\[66\]

Similarly, Sebastian Gardner, in Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason, writes as follows: “Wittgenstein’s ‘we’ — that in which Wittgenstein’s forms of life and language games inhere — functions as the collective analogue of Kant’s transcendental subject.”\[67\] And, analogously, Peter Winch also argues for a Wittgensteinian primacy of “the social,” in his book The Idea of a Social Science and its Relation to Philosophy.\[68\] Apel also draws on this account in Winch,\[69\] and conceives Wittgenstein as laying the ground for a transcendental linguistics, with the conception of the “social” as transcendently central. In developing this account (fusing Winch, Wittgenstein, and Peirce), Apel quotes from the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus to the following effect: “5.631: There is no such thing as the subject that thinks ...” (Apel, 1980, p. 99).\[70\] This is part of Wittgenstein’s well-known argument against “private languages” (i.e., all thought is social in nature). Taking this subjectlessness as a point of departure, Apel then proceeds to interpret Wittgenstein’s “social dimension” as transcendental, using passages (perhaps incorrectly) like the following: “6.13: Logic is transcendental.”\[71\]
F. Peirce’s Idea of Semiotic Apperception Revisited

With these philosophical views in the background, we may also proceed to interpret Peirce as developing a kind of transcendental perspective of the “we,” very much like Lear’s “We are so minded:.”

1. Peirce on the “We”

Within Peirce’s semiotics, the “we” can serve in two different ways (as the long run, and as immediate). Apel uses something like the first (paraphrasing): “We would know in the long run that ‘x.’” Peirce has something like the second in mind. In developing this account, he acknowledges “... the constant use of the word ‘we’” (EP1:81). And certainly, he equates “us-ness” (or “we-ness”) with apperception (as sign consistency) as follows: “This consistent unity since it belongs to all our judgments may be said to belong to us. Or rather since it belongs to the judgments of all mankind, we may be said to belong to it” (emphasis added). Taking his view to a logical extreme, Peirce suggests that language (far from being just one of our particular “tools”) is that in which we reside. As Peirce puts it, “… just as we say that a body is in motion, and not that motion is in a body, we ought to say that we are in thought and not that thoughts are in us” (W2:227, fn. 4). (Apel also recognizes this footnote in Peirce on the “we” as integral to his own view (Apel 1980, 91).) So, according to Peirce, “we” belong to the unity of consistency in semiosis — or, as one may also put it: we are consistent semiosis. And our transcendental perspective of the “we” unifies meaning “for us.” Again Peirce makes the same point: “When we think, to what thought does that thought-sign which is ourselves address itself?” (EP1:38-9, emphasis added).

Furthermore, within this “we” there is also “You understand.” This may be put in the interrogative form: “Do you understand how we are “going on”?” But the “we” is the groundwork because (when I am speaking to you) I must transcendentally presuppose that “you” are “with us” (at least at the level of meaning). The we-perspective unifies experience “for us.” We must necessarily presuppose that you and I are somehow on the same side, at a “logical level.” And further, we presuppose that this “same-sidedness” is logically prior to any disagreement. The unity of apperception may thus be put as follows: “We interpret ‘x.’” Or, perhaps it may be better put: “We consistently interpret object ‘x.’” (And this is hardly very far away from Lear’s account.) (As a further note here, on the “we,” I think this view is fairly well in keeping with Hausman’s overall view. Hausman, in discussing the relationship between Peirce and Kant, writes that the Peircean view “... affirms the need to turn away from a spectator view, but without abandoning something valuable in that view: the acknowledgment of constraints on our communal and individual habits, constraints that ‘we’ do not make.”)
2. The "Sop to Cerberus": A Revision of Fisch's Account

In order to give a better "picture" of this "we," as Peirce conceives it, I would like to examine a famous (and very artistic) passage in Peirce, which has been noted for its difficulty, especially by Max Fisch. In a letter to the semiotician Lady Welby, Peirce writes,

I define a Sign as anything which is so determined by something else, called its Object, and so determines an effect upon a person, which effect I call its Interpretant, that the latter is thereby mediately determined by the former. My insertion of 'upon a person' is a sop to Cerberus, because I despair of making my own broader conception understood. I recognize three Universes, which are distinguished by three Modalities of Being. (EP2:478, 1908)

Fisch in his book, *Peirce, Semeiotic, and Pragmatism*, devotes a section to this remark: "On the 'Sop to Cerberus.'" Fisch writes, "What, then, was the sop to Cerberus? If we recall that the original motive of subsuming logic under semeiotic in 1865 was to avoid basing it on psychology, we can give a tentative answer. The sop to Cerberus was lapsing from sign-talk into psych-talk — from semeiotic into psychology." This passage, however, is not necessarily about "psychology vs. logic." Rather, it seems to me to regard the triadic structure of apperception — especially considering the reference to the myth of Cerberus. In Ancient Mythology, Cerberus is the three-headed dog, which guards the gates of Hades. He allows new souls to enter the Underworld, but forbids them to leave. Only a few have been able to escape, and to do so, first they had to "appease" Cerberus (or, otherwise put, they had to provide a "sop"). Orpheus, for example, sopped Cerberus with a song, and escaped.

So, if this is the case, how exactly would presenting Cerberus with the "sign" provide a "sop"? It's not exactly a meal; and it hardly looks like a poison or a lullaby. The answer, I think, lies in the identity of the structure of the sign, and the three-headedness of Cerberus's body: both have three parts, as it were. On this view, then, Peirce is effectively holding up a mirror image to Cerberus, as if to say, "Here look at this mirror image of yourself?" (and indeed, likely Cerberus has never had this experience). As Peirce writes, "... it is necessary that there should be two, if not three quasi-minds* for semiosis. That is, consciousness, according to Peirce, is always a "triple consciousness* (just as it is for Cerberus).

Still, though, even if this is so, how would a mirror image provide an adequate sop? Two possibilities present themselves. The first way is less reasonable: the mirror image is intended to stun Cerberus, as though he were a Triadic-Canine-Narcissus, sopped by his own vanity. The second option seems more likely: the semiotic mirror image of Cerberus is intended to *confuse* him.
Indeed, the very idea of having “three-minds-in-one” is incredibly confusing even to us humans. And this is precisely why Peirce says he “despairs” of ever making the idea clear to others. Certainly, confusion (with its deep focus and inquiry) would provide an adequate sop, at least one long enough in duration for Peirce to escape from the Hades of Cartesianism.

3. Triadic Semiotics

The three heads of Cerberus, according to Peirce, are the “sign” (or “representamen”), the “object” (which the representamen represents), and the “interpretant” idea (created in the mind in the future). For example, a driver sees a blue windsock, suspended on a pole, on top of a building; and the windsock has been inflated. In this case, the “sign” is the windsock. The “object” is the wind, which affects (determines) the windsock to inflate. The relationship between the object and the sign (which represents the object of wind) creates an “interpretant.” The interpretant is the idea created inside the driver’s mind: “It is windy out.”

This particular example is actually called an “index” (in Peirce’s theory of signs), and is one of a distinct triad, essential for understanding his overall project of semiotics. For, depending on how exactly the object affects the sign, we will have different kinds of ideas. There are, in fact, three forms of sign-object relation: icons, indexes, and symbols. (1) An “index” is a sign which signifies what it signifies because it is affected by (or directly spatially linked to) its object. Examples include the blue windsock (above), sunburns signifying the sun, or a footprint signifying a foot. (2) An “icon” signifies its object because it resembles that object: it “looks like” its object, but is not necessarily “physically caused” by its object (as in the index), e.g., portrait paintings, maps, globes, and diagrams. It is tempting to say mirrors are icons, too; but there is some debate on this. Umberto Eco, in *Kant and the Platypus*, argues that mirrors are not icons, but “prosthetics” (like eyeglasses). We “see through” the mirror as through a pane of glass (or, we may “hear through” a prosthetic “hearing aid”).78 (3) Symbols (in contrast to indexes and icons) signify their objects by convention alone. For example, a yellow light at a traffic intersection does not look like “slowness” — we all simply agree that it means “slow to a stop.”79 These kinds of signs are simply “created” (by us) to “stand in” for their objects.

4. Peirce on “Tuisim” and Time in Meaning

The fusion of the object and sign in the interpretant takes place in the individual’s mind as though the one person were speaking with another (and, of course, this is where the “we” emerges). This movement of dialogue, by which the sign is conveyed forward to the interpretant, also involves a time dimension. Peirce calls this movement (alternatively) “tuism,” “the interpretant,” a (future) “quasi-mind,” and, sounding very much like a precursor to Davidson, “the second person.” Within our internal dialogue, the second person is our constant
cognitive companion. As Peirce puts it, "... all thought is addressed to a second person, or to one's future self as to a second person." (And because the second person is not reducible to the first person, the "we" is not reducible to the "I").

Of course, the idea is not exactly new. As noted, Hegel saw the same thing in his Phenomenology of Spirit. And long before Hegel, Plato argued this as well. Recall that we began with Plato's original definition of thought in the Theaetetus: "A talk which the soul has with itself about objects under consideration." On Peirce's view (somewhat following Plato) the second person is the "other half" of a conversation between two "quasi-minds." Only, Peirce conceives the dialogue as semiotic, and conceives the dialogue as between two "quasi-minds." So, in any thought, there is always a fundamental division, between the "quasi-speaker" and the "quasi-listener." Peirce explains: "The problematical 'listener' may be within the same person as 'the speaker'; ... in that case the listener becomes identical with the speaker" (CP 2.334). That is, "speaker" and "listener" exist (of necessity) even within the one individual. Peirce also writes,

... signs require at least two Quasi-minds; a Quasi-utterer and a Quasi-interpreter, and although these two are at one (i.e., are one mind) in the sign itself, they must nevertheless be distinct. In the Sign they are, so to say, welded. Accordingly, it is not merely a fact of human Psychology, but a necessity of Logic, that every logical evolution of thought should be dialogic. (CP 4.551, 1906)

Essentially, Peirce is following through on Hegel's revision of Kant. In the Phenomenology, thought finds, as it examines itself, that it is always breaking apart into opposites. Peirce makes the same point when he writes as follows:

When we think, to what thought does that thought-sign which is ourself address itself? ... [I]t is always interpreted by a subsequent thought of our own.... [T]here is no intuition or cognition not determined by previous cognitions, [and] it follows that the striking in of a new experience is never an instantaneous affair, but is an event occupying time, and coming to pass by a continuous process. ... There is no exception, therefore, to the law that every thought-sign is translated or interpreted in a subsequent one ... (EP1:38-9)

And this idea is the very core of Peirce's pragmatism, or, better, his "pragmaticism" (in some contrast to the "pragmatisms" of William James and John Dewey). As Peirce puts it, "... according to Pragmaticism, the conclusion
of a Reasoning Proper must refer to the Future" (EP2:358-9). (While there is not space here to do justice to the Peirce-James relation on phenomenology and time, an excellent analysis is found in Mathias Girel, "The Metaphysics and Logic of Psychology: Peirce’s Reading of James’s Principles," in the Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society, 2003.)

5. Consistency in Interpretation

From here, a further part of the definition of apperception is in order, namely, that of "consistency.” By consistency” is meant this: each sign must, in effect, maintain its integrity over time. That is, each sign must retain its "referent” through time. This is fundamentally the same point that Davidson would later make: we must know how exactly the other will “go on.” And conversely, in order to be meaningful we must intend for our signs to maintain their “stable” referents, such that we allow for the other to know how we will “go on.” We cannot go changing our signs whenever we wish, and expect for meaning to go on as it had. We must intend to mean what we intend to mean, and provided we are communicating at all, our interpreter knows (more or less) how exactly we are to “go on.”

Of course, if he does not know, then the natural response, which everyone necessarily presupposes as reasonable, is to raise the question, “What do you mean by that?” Although, what is actually being said is this. “While we presuppose that we consistently interpret the object, I am at a loss for what that sign you are using means, and would like for you to explain it.” We understand the ability to raise a question in this way as a transcendental presupposition of discourse — just as we presuppose the consistency of signs. Not incidentally, an extensive literature on these ideas has, over the years, grown up specifically around Apel’s (and Habermas’s) Peirce-Kant synthesis, and the project of Discourse Ethics. And these have been put together in the volume, The Communicative Ethics Controversy, edited by Seyla Benhabib and Fred Dallmayr, which begins with Apel’s own piece, “Is the Ethics of the Ideal Communication Community a Utopia? On the Relationship between Ethics, Utopia, and the Critique of Utopia.” Within this volume, an excellent set of the necessarily presupposed rules of rational semiosis is put together by Robert Alexy in his essay, “A Theory of Practical Discourse.” Among Alexy’s (many) rules (4.1 Basic Rules) are the following:

(1.1) No speaker may contradict him or herself. …

(1.3) Each speaker who applies a predicate F to an object a, must also be prepared to apply F to any other object which is similar to a in all relevant respects.
(1.4) Different speakers may not use the same expression with different meanings.

Alexy elaborates on (1.4): "(1.4) requires the communality of linguistic usage." (And there are many other rules as well.)

6. Summary of Peirce's Revisited Definition of Apperception

Taking this view of consistency, we may now summarize the revisited Peircean view of the unity of apperception in transcendental semiotics. This is the perspective of the "We," which necessarily accompanies every single one of our thoughts. This is a good deal like the Kant-Hegel synthesis we find in Lear's view. Only here, rather than the "We are so minded:", it is probably better to conceive Peirce's unity of apperception as the "We consistently interpret object X." Although in truth, the two are, for all practical purposes, very similar (provided we understand that the "we consistently interpret" regards the distinctive structure of the sign-object-interpretant form of meaning). This structure is intrinsically dialogic, and triadically semiotic. It is also necessarily pointed into the future, i.e., always toward a future interpretant (as a second person). And perhaps the best "picture" of what this new version of the Kantian "I think" looks like (in Peirce), is the three-headed dog Cerberus, who always and everywhere presupposes the structure, "We consistently interpret object x."

Part II. The Transcendental Deduction of the Categories of Signs

The problem of the transcendental deduction is one the most difficult in Kant scholarship. Kant himself found it exceedingly difficult and reworked the chapter on the deduction in the Critique of Pure Reason (i.e., the "A" edition and the "B"). And still today there is much discussion on this difficult topic. (See Eckart Förster, Kant's Transcendental Deductions, and Paul Guyer, "The Transcendental Deduction of the Categories." Our purpose here, however, is only Peirce's deduction (and Apel's interpretation, in particular).

A. Terminology of "Deduction"

In order to articulate this deduction, first we must know what we mean by "deduction." For, indeed, the present meaning of the term "deduction" is not "one of the forms of the syllogism" (e.g., abduction, induction, and deduction). It is, rather, meant in the "legal" sense (used by the jurists of Kant's own time). In the first Critique Kant writes: "Jurists, when speaking of rights and claims, distinguish in a legal action the question of right (quid juris) from the question of fact (quid facti); and they demand that both be proved. Proof of the former, which has to state the right or the legal claim, they entitle the deduction." A "deduction" then, for Kant, is supposed to show the necessity of the categories "in all possible thought" — and their intrinsic link to apperception (both are essential for the unity of experience).
This method of establishing categories differs considerably from Aristotle's own approach in the *Categories*, and his methodology of establishing the secondary substances at *Posterior Analytics* 2.19, as Kant himself points out:

This division is developed systematically (which is the same as the faculty of thought). It has not arisen rhapsodically, as the result of a haphazard search after pure concepts, the complete enumeration of which, as based on induction only, could never be guaranteed. Nor could we ... discover why just these concepts, and no others, have their seat in the pure understanding. It was an enterprise worthy of an acute thinker like Aristotle to make search for these fundamental concepts. But as he did so on no principle, he merely picked them up as they came his way, and at first procured ten of them, which he called *categories* (predicaments). Afterwards he believed that he had discovered five others, which he added under the name of post-predicaments. But his table still remained defective.88

Aristotle proceeds through intuitive induction (*Posterior Analytics* 2.19 99b15-100b89), which is not only indeterminate, but (worse yet) non-existent: for Kant, we simply have no "intellectual intuition," only a "sensory intuition" (and recall this faculty is divided by a metaphysical gulf from the understanding). While, for Peirce, it is worse still: for we have *neither* sensory *nor* intellectual intuition (and, of course, on this, he follows Hegel fairly directly). In place of these we have "abduction" (the original formulation — Peirce is quite aware — comes from Aristotle, *Prior Analytics* 2.25 69a20-3590).

So, Peirce, recognizing Kant’s critique of Aristotle, proceeds as Kant does with a transcendental deduction. Peirce and Kant “deduce” the categories as necessary for any interpretation.

**B. Peirce’s Early Deduction of Signs**

According to Apel (and I agree), Peirce’s transcendental deduction of the categories (in the “New List”) is the key to his early transcendental semiotics: “... the real basis of this transformation of transcendental logic is provided by the fact that Peirce in 1867 performed a ‘transcendental deduction’ of the *three types of signs*” (Apel, 1980, pp. 84-85).91

Peirce’s deduction in the “New List” proceeds from meaning, evident in the first lines of the essay, which read as follows: “This paper is based upon the theory already established [namely, Kant’s], that the function of conceptions is to reduce the manifold of sensuous impressions to unity, and the validity of a conception consists in the impossibility of reducing the content of consciousness
to unity without the introduction of it" (EP1:1). Then, further on, Peirce clarifies what exactly he means by "unity of the manifold." He means that we must say what we are experiencing, and put it into a unified proposition (i.e., a meaningful statement). Peirce makes this point when he writes as follows: "The unity to which the understanding reduces impressions is the unity of a proposition. This unity consists in the connection of the predicate with the subject; and, therefore, that which is implied in the copula, or the conception of being, is that which completes the work of conceptions of reducing the manifold to unity" (EP1:2).

The unity of a proposition is only achievable once we have three very important things: these are the subject, the predicate, and the copula. And put together, they are the unity of the manifold (in the early Peirce, at least). Take, for example, my seeing a "tree" (in the park). I only have a meaningful experience of the tree once I say something about it. So perhaps I say, "The tree is green." Now, let's take this sentence apart. "The tree" (ontologically a substance, and propositionally a subject) "is" (the copula, signifying "Being") "green" (the quality/predicate in the semiotic form of firstness). I unify the quality to the thing, by necessarily presupposing the category of Being. And this, in turn, is the only way I can know the thing, namely, through its qualities, and the qualities and the thing brought together as having Being. All thought/experience, for the early Peirce, ends up being of this basic form: whether I say something so simple as "The rock is gray," or something so [seemingly] complex as "Milton's Paradise Lost is the disturbingly beautiful Epic of Satan" — it is always and everywhere the same, provided we are meaningful, that a subject and a predicate (s) are fused through the basic category of Being-in-General.

Now, beginning with our experience of meaning, Peirce can then proceed to a formal deduction of his categories. He derives five of them, and lists them as follows:

**BEING**
- Quality (reference to a ground)
- Relation (reference to a correlate)
- Representation (reference to an interpretant)

**SUBSTANCE**

(EP1:6; CP 1.555)

We may think of Being and Substance as super-categories (although "super" is not Peirce's terminology). And, using the "substance/accident" terminology of Aristotle's categories, Peirce tells us, "The three intermediate conceptions may be termed accidents" (CP 1.555). We are "nearest to sense" (in Peirce's terminology) with Substance — it is present and immediate. But we cannot know it without ascribing a quality to it (i.e., without giving it traits, or "accidents"), e.g., "greenness." Again, we synthesize (as in "synthetic unity of the manifold")
"greenness" to "tree" through the category of "being." These qualities give us the "firstness" of a substance. And this is where the deduction of the middle three categories begins, namely, in firstness — and secondness and thirdness are derived afterwards.

That is, from the idea of quality, we can then deduce a relate (or secondness). The reason is this: a quality is a quality partly because it is a different (or similar quality). As Peirce puts it, "... we can know a quality only by means of its contrast with or similarity to another. By contrast and agreement a thing is referred to its correlate ... The occasion of the introduction of reference to a ground (i.e. to a quality or property) is the reference to a correlate, and this is, therefore, the next conception in order" (CP 1.552). Thus, of necessity, a second category emerges from the first. The second is "relation" (or, as Peirce puts it later on, "reaction"). And the third category follows in a similar way, i.e., from the relation between the "ground" and the "relation." Thirds are representations capable of synthesizing (i.e., unifying rather than differentiating) a relate and a ground in one complex form, e.g., one triangle unites other triangles, or a dog represents dogs in general.

Certainly, this is a strongly Kantian analysis (in the early works). But already, even in the "New List," Peirce's future Hegelianism is quite apparent. The middle three categories (which will soon stand alone, without Substance and Being as additional forms) will come to resemble Hegel's three categories. And even the method already looks similar to that of Hegel's Logic: begin as the mind may try with a bare category, say, a quality of Being, it is soon and a priori led to its own negation (or Non-Being) in secondness (i.e., the Relate, Otherness — in a word, its "antithesis"). Yet, this dyadic "self-same vs. other" dichotomy (newly achieved as the necessary negation of firstness), neither will it stand still with a void in its middle. The mediating category of the Third (or Becoming, for Hegel, and for Peirce as well) is necessary for the synthesis of the two forms (being that which unifies them as two opposing poles of the same metaphysical magnet).

C. A Problem with the "New List": The Logic of Relatives

Admirable for its semiotizing and simplification of the Kantian project, the "New List," however, encountered a serious problem (indeed, a problem which equally upsets Kant's project, and Aristotle's too, for that matter). For, upon reading Augustus De Morgan (1806-1871) on the "logic of relations," Peirce realized a thought may have more than one subject (i.e., two or three) — and, at once, he reworked his logic to include these further logical propositional forms. Of course, not unexpectedly (the ever-triadically-minded) Peirce came up with three basic forms: monads, dyads, and triadic relatives. Monadic relatives take the form of "A is B" (and look like the regular predicate form ... not a whole lot new there). But this form is not sufficient alone for all logical relatives: dyadic logical relatives take the form of "A is whiter than B" (or "A hit B," or "A kills B").
And triadic relatives have the form of “A gives B to C” (or “A interprets B as C,” or “A is better at B than C”).

In a word, the major problem with the “New List” is that it is non-comprehensive, being grounded in the monadic predicate propositional form: one substance and one predicate “synthesized” through the copula. Indeed, this was far too simple to handle the complexity of relative logic. (And non-comprehensiveness is quite a problem for any Kantian project, one of whose main aims is precisely to be “comprehensive”.) As a consequence, a good deal of the project of the “New List” was significantly undermined. As Murphey points out, the change was extensive: “... the discovery of the logic of relations introduces propositions which are not reducible to the subject-predicate form, and accordingly it becomes an open question whether a set of categories derived from that form will also apply to relative propositions.”

Once Peirce was thoroughly in command of the new logic, it cannot have taken him long to see what the answer to the question had to be. The argument of the ‘New List’ depends upon the definition of the categories as the concepts of connection which unite Being to Substance: it is upon this definition that the method of finding the categories and the completeness of the list depend. But the concepts of Substance and Being are clearly derived from those of Subject and Predicate. With the admission of propositions not of the subject-predicate form, Substance and Being lose their universality, and therefore the proof of the universality of the categories also fails. Nor is there any way of generalizing the notion of propositional form so as to include relative propositions which will leave the ‘New List’ intact.... Thus the ‘New List’ collapses entirely once the new logic is admitted.

So, without the transcendental deduction of the “New List,” Peirce (at times anyway) simply posits his three categories in much the same way Kant claims Aristotle does (and should not). Of course, if this is the case, then we are right back to where we started. For while the “New List” founders on relative logic (and it certainly does), such an Aristotelian derivation founders on circularity (or groundlessness, as Kant clearly points out).

D. The New Deduction of Signs

Nevertheless, things are not really so bad as Murphey sometimes makes them out to be. For it is not entirely clear that Peirce must or even did abandon the transcendental project, after the logic of relatives. Certainly, at times, he used the
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Aristotelian derivation (and here we will simply put that aside as misguided). But, in truth, there is really nothing in the logic of relatives that forces him to do so. That is, even if the new logic does force a revaluation of the deduction of the categories (and, indeed, it does), Peirce need not abandon his view of apperception as the unity of semiotic consistency (which is perfectly commensurable with the logic of relatives).

On the other hand, it should be mentioned here that commentators clearly disagree on whether Peirce really did seek to rework the transcendental project, indeed, whether he could, and to what extent he may have succeeded. We have already noted that Apel thinks of Peirce as carrying through rather well on the transcendental project, using a long run deduction. And in this, as noted, the logic of relatives does not affect him in the same way as it does Peirce's early project. Why? Well, on Apel's view, we will all simply have agreed in the long run that logic operates in plural-subject relative logical forms — no problem at all. The problem, for Apel, as noted, is the long run. And once that account is called into question, we are back to "square one" with a transcendental deduction as taking place in the immediate sign, or the short run. And once we're here, it makes all the difference how exactly we begin, whether with relative or non-relative logic. Indeed, this is precisely why Murphey thinks the project of the "New List" crashes so hard.

Is Murphey right? I don't think so — at least not entirely. Obviously he has a point to make, one which is relevant. And certainly he makes clear how the relatives "upsets the apple cart." But I think he sometimes misses the creative way in which Peirce may have sought to subtly re-lay the groundwork anew. And, on this count, while I don't agree with Fisch's analysis of the "Sop to Cerberus," his sympathetic view of Peirce's early project seems more on target. In fact, Fisch actually sees Peirce's work on the logic of relatives as "backing up the "New List." Fisch makes this point in his essay, "Hegel and Peirce": "The deduction of the three categories in the 'New List' of 1867 was backed up (if not superseded) in 1870 by a much simpler deduction in his 'Logic of Relatives' ([CP] 3.63, 144)." Now, I noted that I agree with this; but, first (before unpacking its value), a preliminary remark should be made. In point of fact, Fisch is wrong: the logic of relatives does not (indeed, cannot) "back up" the "New List" — it is simply the case that too much has been lost (and on this I think Murphey is clearly correct ... no doubt about it). But Fisch is, in fact, quite right that the transcendental-semiotic project of the "New List" has not been abandoned entirely (contra Murphey). And he is right that it is still workable (at least in refurbished guise), using the initial three categories.

In his late work, Peirce provides an essential text, precisely to this effect: "It can further be said in advance, not, indeed, purely a priori but with the degree of apriority that is proper to logic, namely, as a necessary deduction from the fact that there are signs, that there must be an elementary triad." For "... the relation of every sign to its object and interpretant is plainly a triad" (CP 1.292, c. 1908).
Here it is entirely clear that Peirce intends quite explicitly for the transcendental project to proceed as a deduction of three semiotic categories, not from the Subject/Predicate/Copula Model, but from the semiotic triadic form of thirdness itself. We find the same point articulated three years earlier, when Peirce writes as follows: “We find then a priori that there are three categories of undecomposable elements to be expected in the phaneron ...” (CP 1.299, c. 1905). Similar concerns about transcendental philosophy are also evident in Peirce’s 1870 paper, “Description of a Notation for the Logic of Relatives, Resulting From an Amplification of the Conceptions of Boole’s Calculus of Logic” (CP 3.45). (See also CP 3.143, fn. 1; the containment of secondness in thirdness at CP 3.144; and on the conditions and limits of thought, see also Cambridge Conferences Lectures of 1898, Lecture 3: “The Logic of Relatives” [RLT 147-164]; and RLT 106, CP 4.3, 1898.)

It is clear that, while Peirce wavered at times, and indeed occasionally used the wrongheaded Aristotelian approach, he also came back full circle to his early transcendental deduction, only now well-equipped with a stronger set of transcendental (and somewhat Hegelian) tools. The categories are thus deduced from the triadic structure of the sign, and are transcendental because they are necessary even for meaning to begin. They are also irreducible because triadic relations cannot be reduced to dyadic relations; and dyads cannot be reduced to monads. Indeed, these categories are the “condition” and the “limits” (in the very Kantian sense) of all possible thought. Or to put the point another way, the categories are exhaustive of all thought because there are no categories between any two of the three, and none beyond them (i.e., there is no Category of 2½, and there is no Category of the Fourth, or Fifth, etc.). Peirce makes this point when he writes as follows: “Fourth, fifths, etc. are not essentially different from thirds. They simply mediate between a larger number of terms. The singular, dual, and plural are all the essentially different forms of number” (W5:301). Peirce also writes, “No fourth class of terms exists involving the conception of fourth, because when that of third is introduced, since it involves the conception of bringing objects into relation, all higher numbers are given at once, inasmuch as the conception of bringing objects into relation is independent of the number of members of the relationship” (CP 3.63).

1. Thirdness

Now we proceed to the formal deduction, which begins not with the form of “S is P,” but the relative logical form of “Object O determines Sign S to Interpretant I.” This sign-triadic form is also formally equivalent to the structure of meaning. And once firmly established, we may (from thirds) proceed to deduce secondness and firstness (without any problem). So, we proceed with Thirdness, as it is manifest in the sign itself. In order to do this, a recapitulation of the definition of the sign is in order: “A sign,” writes Peirce, “is a First which stands in such a genuine triadic relation to a Second, called its Object, as to be
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capable of determining a Third, called its Interpretant, to assume the same triadic relation to its Object in which its stands itself to the same Object" (CP 2.274). The sign (in itself) is a “first”: “Firstness.” It is monadic quality. The object is a “second”: “Secondness.” This is dyadic difference (or reaction). And the interpretant is a “third”: “Thirdness.” This is the interpretant.

As a note of difference with the “New List,” the present deduction is its opposite methodologically: the “New List” deduces firsts first, and then moves to thirds. The new deduction, however, deduces thirds first, and then moves to seconds and firsts. Someone may suggest alternatively that we cannot proceed in this way because already even in the third, we have presupposed that it contains a first. Indeed, it is true that thirdness contains secondness and firstness. And in a sense this might make it appear that firsts should come first (as they do in the “New List”). But here a distinction must be made. Firstness is primary ontologically, but is secondary epistemologically. Ontologically, firstness “comes before” seconds and thirds. But in this (alternative) deduction, the third is methodologically primary (even while it is secondary ontologically to secondness, which is secondary to the first). So, we proceed from meaning, in its semiotic form. And meaning is essentially in the triadic logical relative form.

a. The Triadic Logical Relative Form

The formal structure of meaning is the logical relative of thirdness. Peirce regularly gives the following sort of example: “A gives B to C.”96 We may compare this to Peirce’s regular definition of the structure of meaning (note: they are the same): “Now a sign is something, A, which denotes some fact or object, B, to some interpretant thought, C.”97 Or, as we may put it, “A denotes B to C.” As Christopher Hookway puts it, on Peirce’s view, “... the significational relation is an irreducibly triadic relation; its most straightforward employment is in the sentences of the form

X interprets Y as a sign of Z,

or

Y is a sign of Z to X.”98

We may also put this proposition in the following form: “Y (the sign) is determined by Z (the object) to X (the interpretant),” in order to reflect Peirce’s definition of the sign (cited earlier): “... a Sign ... is so determined by ... its Object, and so determines ... its Interpretant” (EP2:478). We may also put the sign-relative in “linear time-form”: “Z (the object; in the past) determines Y (the sign; in the present) to X (the interpretant; in the future).” And all thought is essentially of this form.

Of course, if (by chance) we happen to be thinking of thirdness, then (in that case) both the “form” of thought, and the “content” of the particular thought, are in the formal structure of “the relational logic of thirdness.” That is, the
triadic formal relation of meaning is a priori necessary in order even to construct the very "terms" contained in the three species of monadic, dyadic, and triadic relational forms. So, for example, "She hits him" is a dyadic logical relation. But, because it is "meaningful," it is also in the triadic relative form. In other words, the explicit sentence appears in dyadic form, and as such is a sign. But as a sign, it also has an object (a second), and an interpretant (a third), which, taken together, and then added to the sign, make the (underlying) meaning of the dyadic sentence equally into a triadic logical relative. Or, to put it even more simply (and as Peirce was fond of saying): you can never fully escape thinking or talking in triads. (And again, that is why we must begin with the triad, rather than the monad.)

But once thirdness is in place, the further deduction proceeds by unpacking secondness and firstness as relatives. Take the form "A determines B to C," as the sign in thirdness. This contains the dyad, "A determines B." And within this form, we also have contained the monadic relative. In relative logic, a first appears as "B is ____" (whatever B happens to be as a qualitative sign). It may also be put in virtually the same way that the propositional form appears in the "New List." There the proposition is "S is P." Here (somewhat) similarly we may think of the monadic relative form as "B is ____." It has only "one tail" and is "non-reactive" (meaning that it is "pre-secondness"). These forms are further diagrammatized (semiotically formalized) in Peirce's "Existential Graphs": "In existential graphs, a spot with one tail —X represents a quality, a spot with two tails —R— a dyadic relation. But you can never by such joining make a graph with three tails" (CP 1:346). You can, however, as Peirce is quite aware, begin with three-tailed logic, and construct relative dyads and monads without difficulty. Kelly Parker makes this point clearly when he writes, "Once three-termed relations are admitted into the system, however, we discover that they are the primitive relatives. From triads one can construct monads and dyads, although the reverse is not the case."99

b. Thirdness as Complexity

As a further point on thirdness, within meaning, this category functions both as a logical form, and as materially dynamic. In fact, in addition to being the very form of the triadic relative logical form, thirdness is also the formal structure of "complexity" (and specifically as Peirce conceives that concept). Peirce recognizes the complexity of categories when he writes as follows: "I examine the phaneron and I endeavor to sort out its elements according to the complexity of their structure. I thus reach my three categories" (CP 8.213). Here, by "complexity," Peirce has in mind the structure of thirdness — particularly with regard to its containment of the other two categories, secondness and firstness. For while firstness is monadic, and secondness is dyadic, neither is really "complex" — in other words: neither firstness nor secondness can ever be defined as "organized diversity" (or unified plurality).
Of course, it is true that the dyad is *diversity in itself*; but the dyad is only “ordered” through mediation as thirdness. Alone, it is simply unmediated, unsynthesized, unorganized. It takes thirdness to “close up” the diversity of secondness in an ordered form. And this is precisely the job of thirdness. Although, immediately we should point out that in performing this job, thirdness in no way *erases* the dyad (even as it mediates it). Rather, thirdness *preserves* (and goes beyond) the dyadic relation (in exactly the same way Hegel conceives that idea). So, only with thirdness do we have organized diversity, or “complexity.” And once defined in these terms, it is not difficult to see how this runs through Peirce’s entire system of philosophy. As Nicholas Rescher in his book *Complexity* writes, “C.S. Peirce never tired of emphasizing nature’s inherent tendency to complexity.” Nature is always in the process of generating diversity, but equally in the process of mediating it with order. The process of diversification, which is also the motor of time, is the force of secondness — but the form of time is the logical relative (and complex form) of the third.

Indeed, this groundwork in complexity (as noted) is precisely what undergirds Peirce’s later Kantian architectonic. In “The Doctrine of Necessity Examined,” Peirce proceeds to build this architectonic on the ground of semiotic complexity: “Everywhere the main fact is growth and increasing complexity” (EP1:308). Peirce defines this complexity as a mixture of law and spontaneity (EP1:308), relying on Aristotle’s *Physics* II.4-6 (EP1:299). (They key problem with Chapter II of Aristotle’s *Physics* — from a scientific point of view anyway — is the criticism of Empedocles’s theory of evolution by chance variation [*Physics* II.8]; Plato to his credit incorporates Empedocles’s views on evolution quite explicitly in his process metaphysics *Timaeus*). Although, certainly, as it is Aristotelian, this view is equally Hegelian as well, as Peirce himself notes: “... Hegel discovered that the universe is everywhere permeated with continuous growth (for that, and nothing else, is the ‘Secret of Hegel’) ...” (CP 1.40).

### 2. Secondness

#### a. The Outward Clash: Peirce, Hegel, and Derrida

Of course, while Peirce prized Hegel’s *Phenomenology* (especially for its analyses of complexity and thirdness), at times he is less sympathetic to Hegel’s view — and this is nowhere more apparent than in his analysis of secondness (or “reactive” force). The classic critical statement is this one: “The capital error of Hegel which permeates his whole system in every part of it is that he almost altogether ignores the Outward Clash. ... this direct consciousness of hitting and of getting hit enters into all cognition and serves to make it mean something real” (W5:255; EP1:233). In other words, Hegel misses the “clash” of secondness, and favors a system based almost exclusively in thirds (thirds which apparently erase secondness). Peirce’s perspective is not entirely difficult to understand — and likely stems from Hegel’s analysis of Absolute Mind, which is
not a regulative ideal long run (in Kant's more moderate sense), but the gradual and absolute sublation of all difference to absolute unity.

Similarly, Derrida (who follows Peirce on many points in his own semiotics) also shares this critique. That is, Derrida recognizes the value of Hegel, but the issue of difference (or secondness) is of particular concern. As Derrida puts his point, "I have attempted to distinguish \textit{différence} ... from Hegelian difference ... Hegel, in the greater \textit{Logic}, determines difference as contradiction only in order to resolve it, to interiorize it, to lift it up ... into the self-presence of an onto-theological or onto-teleological synthesis." And in the same vein, Derrida writes that "... this conflictuality of \textit{différence} — which can be called contradiction only if one demarcates it by means of a long work on Hegel's concept of contradiction — can never be totally resolved." Here it is evident that the idea of absolute mind, which might close up all the fissures in reason, is simply an excess of the imagination. Indeed, it was the \textit{zeitgeist} of the times: the nineteenth century saw absolute world historical progress in almost everything they saw (Nietzsche being one of the noble exceptions). Contrary to this sort of thinking, according to Derrida, the meaning of each thought is always "deferred," or "put off" and off and off, \textit{ad infinitum}. As Derrida puts it, "... différence refers to ... deferring by means of delay, delegation, reprieve, referral, detour, postponement, reserving." And on this count, Derrida sees Peirce as solving the problem of the excesses of Kant and Hegel. This is evident in Derrida's remarks that Peirce "... goes very far in the direction that I have called the de-construction of the transcendental signified, which, at one time or another, would place a reassuring end to the reference from sign to sign."

On the other hand, while Derrida rejects \textit{part} of the Hegelian dimension of semiotics, he does hold that thought is precisely that mechanism by which the self negates itself into the future, and talks to itself-as-another. And on this, Derrida quite self-consciously aligns his "position" with Hegel: "(The position-of-the-other, in Hegelian dialectics, is always, finally, to pose oneself by oneself as the other of the Idea, as other — than — oneself in one's finite determination with the aim of repatriating and reappropriating oneself, of returning close to oneself in the infinite richness of one's determination, etc.)." And clearly, Peirce, too, follows Hegel on this count. Moreover, Peirce would appear to follow Hegel rather clearly \textit{even} on that point at which intersubjectivity arises from the world — i.e., in that very moment where meaning co-emerges in triangular relation to the world, in the "this."

\textbf{b. Secondness and "This-ness"}

To be sure, the critique of the outward clash tells only \textit{a small part} of the story of the Peirce/Hegel relationship (a point which clearly emerges in Fisch's excellent essay, "Hegel and Peirce"). In fact, secondness, given a "second look," looks quite Hegelian. Allow me to elaborate. The key idea here in Hegel — and perhaps the most important anti-Cartesian idea in Hegel, Peirce, and Derrida —
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is that thought is *not unified*. By its very nature, it is *divided*: it is helplessly continually breaking down into differences, i.e., every time the mind goes looking for the pure and singular Kantian unity of apperception. The “I” which goes looking for the “I” finds the “Not-I” (i.e., it finds the second person). And this is the very gateway into dialectical phenomenology, of which Peirce is simply the semiotic example *par excellence*. Otherwise put, and contrary to Peirce’s hasty remarks about the “outward clash,” Hegel’s phenomenology begins (not *in spite of*, but) *only because of* “secondness” as necessarily intrinsic to all thought.

Perhaps nowhere in the *Phenomenology* is this reactive force (of difference) more apparent than in the “Master-Slave Dialectic” (the same “Lordship and Bondage” section, mentioned earlier — which is also intrinsically connected to the “we”). Peirce neglects the richness of this clash in his analysis of the absence of the outward clash. But, while the master/slave dialectic may be the most obvious example, the most important example is the very beginning of the *Phenomenology*, where triangulated linguistic meaning comes onto the scene in that very moment when the animal-being man says “This” to an object, while he is pointing directly at it. And he points directly at it for no other reason than that it is reactive to him (i.e., it has the quality of secondness, or difference). This is why Hegel entitles the very first part of the *Phenomenology*, Part A. Consciousness, Subsection I. “Certainty at the Level of Sense-Experience — The ‘This,’ and ‘Meaning.’” Once the “this” emerges, then immediately thought begins to unfold and move forward in time, out of its circular, animal, unreflective state of “consciousness” (*consciousness* here being meant very loosely). Charles Taylor in his book, *Hegel*, makes this point when he writes, “Now Hegel’s way of entering the dialectical movement here is to ask the subject of sensible certainty to say what it experiences.”

This is very similar to what we find in Peirce, who *also* conceives secondness in terms of “thisness,” or “hecceitas.” Moreover, he also emphasized “thisness” (or phenomenological secondness) as the very *entryway* into meaning (in exactly the same way Hegel does). The mind must first point at something, and say “this.” Or to put the point another way, the mind must first recognize the distinct form of the sign Peirce calls “indexes.” As Umberto Eco points out in his essay, “Horns, Hooves, and Insteps,” indexes are our most “primitive” signs (the oldest and most basic ... “imprints” being the oldest among the indexes). And among indexes, the pointing finger holds a certain pride of place, for Peirce — even to the extent of defining the very semiotic category of indexicality. As Peirce writes, “I call such a sign an *index*, a pointing finger being the type of the class” (W5:162-3, 1885). So, again, just as in Hegel, for Peirce, thought becomes triadic and meaningful precisely with the “This,” with pointing, i.e., with the mind’s experience of secondness. (As a brief point, we should recall that Davidson’s idea of triangulation is intrinsically bound up with pointing as well, or what he calls ostension.)

Of course, to be fair, Peirce himself recognized points of connection to
Hegel, such as these, and, over the years, eventually came to see his view as aligning more and more with Hegel's own. Indeed, he makes this point explicitly when he tells us that his early Kantian categories, Kantian as they may have been at first intended, over the years came increasingly to resemble those of Hegel. Peirce writes, "My three categories ... resulted from two years incessant study in the direction of trying to do what Hegel tried to do. It became apparent that there were such categories as his." Peirce also writes that Hegel's Phenomenology is "a work ... perhaps the most profound ever written." And again: "The ceno-pythagorean categories are doubtless another attempt to characterize what Hegel sought to characterize as his three stages of thought..." (CP 8.329, 1904; Letter to Lady Welby). Indeed, even the supposed architectonic system Peirce outlines in the Monist series, is, in the end, a system of "objective idealism," clearly in line with Hegel.

It is clear then that Peirce's primary evolution of thought is from Kantianism to Hegelianism. Coupled with his intersubjective apperception, his attack on incognizables, and an already strongly Hegelian (albeit still transcendental) deduction of the categories, Peirce has emerged from the Ancient Cave of monadic propositions and the immutable categories of Substance and Being, and into the clear light of a thoroughgoing evolutionary Hegelianism. Although, again, the long run endgame remains decidedly anti-Hegelian, i.e., as a Kantian regulative ideal.

3. Firstness

a. Monadic Quality

Firstness in its material dimension is the most difficult of the three to define, the one, perhaps, most open to interpretation. Certainly, it appears as "feeling," in Peirce, which sounds like "impressions," as Hume and Kant conceive them. Although, in fact, a first is not a Humean or a Kantian atomic (self-contained) empirical intuition. An intuition, as Peirce understands it, is "... a cognition not determined by a previous cognition of the same object, and therefore so determined by something out of the consciousness" (W2:193-4). In effect, then, the stream of signs masks the experience of firsts in thirds. They are within and behind (as it were) the triadic structure of thirdness. Peirce sees this as a natural consequence of the absence of intuition: "... if there is no such thing as an absolute instant, there is nothing absolutely present either temporally or in the sense of confrontation. In fact, we are thus brought close to the doctrine of the synechism, which is that elements of Thirdness cannot entirely be escaped" (CP 7.653). Peirce also writes that "... the third is of its own nature relative, and this is what we are always thinking, even when we aim at the first or second" (CP 1.362; see also W5:305). And further, "At no one instant in my state of mind is there cognition or representation, but in the relation of my states of mind at different instants, there is" (W2:227).

What then is the activity of the first, if its activity lies in the active relations
within the thirds and seconds? That is, if firsts (within the activity of the sign, not in terms of monadic relatives) are so difficult to conceive, is there something further we can say about their natures ... something which paints them in their dynamic aspect? Peirce does give an account of firstness as spontaneity, and this I think is the right way to take the action of firstness. But even beyond that, there is the still richer account of the pure play of musement, developed in the late work of 1908, “A Neglected Argument for the Reality of God.” The link between play and spontaneity is fairly obvious, but Peirce does not exactly draw out the equation explicitly, i.e., firstness in semiosis equals precisely this category of pure play. Still, I think there is good reason for thinking this to be the case (and Thomas Sebeok seems to draw this point out as well). But in order to develop it, again, it is helpful to note how others make this point.

b. A Note on Heidegger, Derrida, and Gadamer

In Heidegger, for example, we find an intrinsic link between the importance of *Dasein* as the being which “points into Being,” and a definition of this pointer as pure play. That Heidegger conceives human beings as fundamentally “pointers” (and in a quite Hegelian sense, as well) is evident in the following account (and here notice, too, Heidegger’s use of the “we” pronoun). In “What is Called Thinking,” Heidegger writes, “When man is drawing into what withdraws, he points into what draws. As we are drawing that way we are a sign, a pointer. But we are pointing then at something which has not, not yet, been transposed into the language that we speak. It remains uncomprehended. We are an uninterpreted sign.” We semiotically *point into Being, and we do this only* through a field of pure play (a notion Gadamer would later place at the center of his own semiotics). The point is evident in Heidegger’s “Kantbook,” where he makes the explicit link between transcendental time and play. Heidegger says to the “… play-space … is formed through pure determinations of the inner sense. The pure inner sense is pure self-affection, i.e., original time.” Indeed, here just as Heidegger defines pure apperception as time and meaning, so too does he define it terms of “original play.”

We find the same notion in Derrida, who (quite self-consciously) fuses the semiotics of Heidegger, Hegel, and Peirce — and in analyzing Peircean difference, discovers a strong notion of play. As Derrida writes, “One could call *play* the absence of the transcendental signified as limitlessness of play, that is to say as the destruction of onto-theology and the metaphysics of presence.” And further: “… the signified concept is never present in and of itself, in a sufficient presence that would refer only to itself. Essentially and lawfully, every concept is inscribed in a chain or in a system within which it refers to the other, to other concepts, by means of a systematic play of differences. Such a play, *differance*, is thus no longer simply a concept, but rather the possibility of conceptuality, of a conceptual process and system in general.” Clearly here, Derrida is making a very Peircean point about secondness (or difference in relation to the
interpretant), and argues that "play" is what "undergirds" (so to speak) this movement of difference into the future. (As a further note here, Derrida, like Hegel, Peirce, and Wittgenstein, also uses the perspective of the "we" in his account of secondness and difference: "... I am starting, strategically, from the place and the time in which 'we' are, even though in the last analysis my opening is not justifiable since it is only on the basis of difference and its 'history' that we can allegedly know who and where 'we' are, and what the limits of an 'era' might be."

And similarly, Hans-Georg Gadamer, in *Truth and Method*, whose work stems directly from Heidegger on this point about questioning into being through play, suggests that a certain logic of question and answer evolves in a field of pure play. Indeed, just as Peirce conceived his logic of abduction as emerging out of the creative play of musement, Gadamer also conceives of play as being the horizon out of which all fundamental questions emerge.

**c. Peirce on Play and Musement**

Now proceeding back to Peirce and musement, he does describe firstness as "spontaneity" (CP 6.265; see also CP 3.422, 1892). This is the same Aristotelian principle of spontaneity he develops in the *Monist* series (and which, mixed with order, generates thirds). It is at once the spontaneity of variation in evolution, and the objective chance (or tychism) of the "open future" (cf. Aristotle’s "Sea-Fight Tomorrow," in *De Interpretatione* Ch. 9, 18a30-19b, especially 19a30-35, 46-48). Through the natural process of evolution, this tychism generates higher-order levels of play and creativity — and, ultimately, complexity. As a note on contemporary science, Brian Goodwin, in *How the Leopard Changed Its Spots: The Evolution of Complexity* similarly argues that play generates complexity.

This tychistic play is never fully exhausted along the evolutionary continuum, but as order increases the relation between spontaneity and organization becomes ever more complex and subtle. What was once more chaotic, is now, at the level of humans, more defined in terms of highly creative and playful minds. One of the definitive statements of this view is given by Friedrich Schiller in *On the Aesthetic Education of Man: In a Series of Letters*. Schiller (like Peirce) has Kant in mind, and seeks to synthesize reason and sensation in play — play as synthetic activity. This idea was one of the first that Peirce encountered as a young philosopher, and its force clearly stayed with him throughout his life, germinating in his middle-to-later years as "tychism," and finally flowering to a full bloom in his very late conception of musement.

In a letter to Lady Welby, December 23, 1908, Peirce explains, "As to the word 'play,' the first book of philosophy I ever read ... was Schiller's *Aesthetische Briefe*, where he has so much to say about the Spiel-Trieb; and it made so much impression upon me as to have thoroughly soaked my notion of 'play' to this day." The significance of this Schillerian dimension to Peirce's semiotics is explored at length by Sebeok, in his book, *The Play of Musement* (the title of
which would appear to signal the importance Sebeok ascribes to this idea in Peirce). Sebeok begins his book as follows:

The key to the title of this book is to be found in Peirce's profound study, in 1855-56, of Friedrich Schiller's concept of *Spieltrieb*. In his *Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen* (1974-95), Schiller presented an analysis of human nature as comprising three “impulses”: *Stofftrieb*, the drive for diversity, forever striving for change, contrasted with *Formtrieb*, the demand for ‘form’ in the abstract, alien to time, hence oppugnant to change (this pair corresponding to Kant's well-known dualism), plus a third component he himself dubbed *Spieltrieb*, or play (*ein ernstes Spiel*) — the aesthetic tendency, mediating and harmoniously reconciling the two-fold way of sense and reason on the level of the individual’s faculties ... 

Play is the region where secondness as reaction within sensation and the thirdness of meaning are intertwined. Indeed, play as spontaneity undergirds the entire process of semiosis. Sebeok (somewhat humorously) makes precisely this point when he writes, “... Foreplay is the natural and legitimate prelude to semiotic (no less than somatic) ...” experience.

While there is not space here to unpack all the nuances of semiotic play within the Peircean system, we may point out that there are at least four dimensions of musement: (1) Musement is a “technique,” useful for formulating abductions. We see the same technique at work in the American Gothic “detective stories” of Edgar Allan Poe. And Peirce himself makes this connection explicitly when he explains that difficult questions, when put to the test in musement, often find — “... as Edgar Poe remarked in his ‘The Murders in the Rue Morgue,’ — their smoothly-fitting keys. This particularly adapts them to the Play of Musement” (EP2:437). (On this literature, see Umberto Eco and Thomas Sebeok, *The Sign of Three: Dupin, Holmes, Peirce*.) (2) Musement is also a “form of play,” in the Schillerian sense of the synthetic activity of semiosis. It is the field between chaos and order, precisely where the structure of complexification into the future takes place. (3) Peirce also conceives musement as pure contemplative dialogic activity: indeed, according to Peirce, it “... begins passively enough with drinking in the impression of some nook in one of the three Universes. But impression soon passes into attentive observation, observation into musing, musing into a lively give-and-take of communion between self and self” (EP2:436); it is an “open conversation with yourself; for such is all meditation” (EP2:437). (4) Musement also provides, according to Peirce, a synoptic view of all three categories: “From speculations on the
homogeneities of each Universe, the Muser will naturally pass to the consideration of homogeneities and connection between two different Universes, or all three. Especially, in them all we find one type of occurrence, that of growth ..." (EP2:437).

E. Performative Contradiction

With regard to a final demonstration of both apperception and the categories, this takes place (as it does in Kant) by its “necessity,” i.e., its unavoidability — such that its negation is self-contradictory. The idea of a transcendental self-contradiction was originally formulated by Kant (following Descartes) as a contradiction between $P$ and $\neg P$, where $\neg P$ is asserted by the skeptic, and $P$ is the a priori existential-pragmatic condition for the very claim, $\neg P$. For example, Descartes enlists the skeptic to claim that he does not exist ($\neg P$), but $P$ is the condition for that assertion. “I exist” (here and now) is entailed as propositional content of the existential linguistic assumption.\(^{126}\) Apel and Habermas have formulated a more linguistic version of the self-contradiction called a “transcendental performative contradiction.” As Habermas puts it, “Apel and I employ this method to discover universal pragmatic presuppositions of argumentation and to analyze their normative content.”\(^{127}\) So, for example, we might say: (A) We are not speaking. But the very performance of that speech act presupposes the underlying speech act: (B) We are speaking. (B) is the formal condition of the act (A); and (A) and (B) thus stand in a contradictory relation. So, the individual who asserts (A), or a like-claim, is said to be engaged in a “performative contradiction.” Apel’s own account relies more upon the long run as groundwork for testing performative contradictions. Here, by contrast, a “short run” (immediate triadic sign)-based “performative contradiction” is sufficient. Although, our meanings, I think, are very close.

With regard to the “we,” a performative contradiction attaches to the negation of the “we.” One cannot be a self, or even utter the word “I” (in any meaningful way) until after being ushered into language. The individual must be part of the “us” before he can be an “I.” For Apel, as for Peirce, “… even solitary thinking must be conceived of as an internalized mode … of the genuine communication between real members of the community …” (Apel 1995, p. 381). As Apel puts it, the skeptic may assert the negation of the primacy of the “we” and the “us.” Someone may claim that he is “not one of us.” Leaving aside for the moment, politics and religion (i.e., all the classic social dividers), he must, at once, assert (C) his division, and (D) his unity with “us.” And again there is a performative contradiction between C and D, to the effect that C is fundamentally equivalent to $\neg D$. He is “always already” (as Apel would put it) logically “on our side.” He necessarily presupposes that he is part of the “we,” i.e., he is a priori in our logical space of meaning. The individual is necessarily extended from the social fabric, and not prior to it.

The same goes for the structure of time. The sign necessarily proceeds
forward in time. Someone may negate this point — may even negate time altogether. Yet, if the doubt is given propositional form and performed linguistically in everyday speech, he or she simultaneously contradicts that claim. A performative contradiction occurs between the actual speech act and the "existential-linguistic" content. I must assume someone can hear me from the future, and speak back to me about the world. And effectively, the same argument is used to defend the necessity of the unity of the triadic relative logical form. The meaningful act of denial of the universality of the triadic relative results in a performative contradiction, because meaning necessarily takes place in the form of the triadic logical relative. One must assert a priori the necessity of the triadic logical relative form (implicitly), in exactly the same moment he proposes the negation of that necessity.

F. Conclusion

In sum, Peirce attempted a transcendental deduction of categories, and apperception, in the "New List of Categories." This fell apart with the logic of relatives. Apel, however, follows through on the early project, and attempts to conceive the long run as apperception, and (from there) deduce the categories. Yet, without groundwork at the start, the charge of circularity remains a concern. So, alternatively, the long run may be left only as a regulative ideal, while apperception and the categories are derived from the immediate sign. Apperception is then (as Peirce originally argued) the "unity of semiotic consistency," and is transcendentally directed into the future (even if potentially infinitely extended). Moreover, all thoughts are also in the intersubjective form of the triadic relative of thirdness. This triadic form is the fundamental starting point for the deduction of the categories (in contrast to the "New List"). Meaning entails a triadic movement of the sign-object-interpretant relation, each part of which is a first, a second, or a third. And, finally, the defense of the categories and apperception takes the form of a transcendental performative contradiction, derived from Apel, in the immediate sign.

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NOTES


6. Murphey, p. 298. See also p. 305.


8. Apel also writes here: “In other words, the ‘highest point’ of Peirce’s transformation of Kant’s transcendental logic is the ‘ultimate opinion’ of the ‘indefinite community of investigators’” (Apel, 1980, pp. 87-88). And once more, Apel writes: “The quasi-transcendental subject of this unity is the indefinite community of experimentation which is identical with the indefinite community of interpretation” (Apel, 1980, pp. 87-88).

9. Apel also writes, “…in the ‘New List of Categories’ of 1868, [Peirce] had the transcendental deduction of the categories just as much before his eyes as the metaphysical deduction” (Apel, 1980, p. 83).

10. On this point, see especially Peter Skagestad, *The Road of Inquiry: Charles Peirce’s Pragmatic Realism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), p. 30-31. And with regard to the mathematics of the long run, the parallel is to the Calculus, which uses a limit, toward which numbers can approximate. Peirce wants ideas to approximate toward a limit (which he thinks of as truth), in the same way numbers do in the Calculus.

11. Darwin’s *Origin* was published in 1859 when Peirce was twenty years old and just finishing his degree at Harvard. In the next two decades Darwin’s theory of evolution dominated the intellectual stage at Harvard. Peirce writes, “I grew up in Cambridge and was about twenty-one when *The Origin of Species* appeared.” (In Peirce, *Pragmatism as a Principle of Method and Right Thinking*, Patricia Ann Turrisi (ed.), (New York: SUNY, 1997), p. 164.)

12. As a note, in the *Descent of Man* Darwin writes, “It is, therefore, highly probable that with mankind the intellectual faculties have been gradually perfected through natural selection” (Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, collected in *Darwin on Evolution: The Development of the Theory of Natural Selection*, edited by Thomas F. Glick and David Kohn, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1997), p. 243). Darwin also wrote of the prospects for developing an evolutionary epistemology: “Undoubtedly it would be interesting to have traced the development of each separate faculty from the state in which it exists in the lower animals to that in which it exists in man; but neither my ability nor knowledge permit the attempt.” This text is taken from a selection from Darwin’s *The Descent of Man*, collected in *Darwin on Evolution: The
13. Peirce does not refer to the structure of inquiry in this way, but by doing so we will do more justice to his account by making it clearer.

14. Skagestad has pointed out that Alexander Bain played a key role in Peirce's synthesis of knowledge and Darwinian biology: "It was precisely Bain's definition of belief which enabled Peirce to treat beliefs in a Darwinian manner: it is only when beliefs are regarded as dispositions to action that they can be seen as interacting with the environment, thereby becoming subject to natural selection" (1981, p. 32).

15. Peirce was generous in his debt to Bain. On this see Max H. Fisch's book, Peirce, Semeiotic, and Pragmatism: Essays by Max H. Fisch, edited by Kenneth Laine Ketner and Christian J. Kloesel, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986). See especially Chapter 5, "Alexander Bain and the Genealogy of Pragmatism." In his Appendix to Third Edition of Mental and Moral Science, Bain writes that "I consider ... that belief is a primitive disposition to follow out my sequence that has been experienced, and to expect the result" (Mental and Moral Science [Longmans, Green, and Co., 1872], Part 1, Appendix, p. 100; cited in Fisch 1986, p. 85).

16. Peirce derives this conception of the interplay between irritation and equilibrium from Lamarck. In Zoological Philosophy Lamarck writes, "Irritability in all or some of their parts is the most general of characteristic of animals; it is more general than the faculty of voluntary movements and of feeling, more even than that of digestion" (Lamarck, Zoological Philosophy, translated by Hugh Elliot, [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984], p. 51). Peirce also adopts Lamarck's view of animals taking on habits, as part of his theory of inquiry.


18. A note here on the Kant-Peirce relationship is in order: the "New List" of 1867 engages explicitly in the a priori method, but does not reject it as "taste"-based, but ten years later, in dismissing the "a priori method" there is clearly a change of tone toward Kant.

19. Skagestad makes this point when he writes, "... Peirce's concept of the final opinion of inquiry as noumenal is empirically equivalent to Kant's negative concept of the noumenon; only, unlike Kant, Peirce denies that beyond the limit there is something of which we know nothing" (Skagestad 1981, p. 75). This point was made earlier by Bruce Altshuler in his Ph.D. dissertation, The Pragmatic Maxim of C. S. Peirce: A Study of its Origin and Development (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1977), pp. 75-77; (also cited in Skagestad 1981, p. 75).

20. As W.H. Walsh puts it, "An intuitive understanding, such as God is supposed to have, would apprehend particulars and conceptualize them in a single act; it would not need to go through the double process of first, as it were, getting in touch with its object and then making it out" (W.H. Walsh, Kant's Critique of Metaphysics [Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 1975], p. 12); see Critique, B29/A15.

21. Given Kant's distinction between the negative and positive concepts of the noumena (of which Kant accepts only the negative), Peirce accepts both the negative and the positive (especially with the long run).
22. In his *Origin* Darwin writes, "... natural selection will always succeed in the long run in reducing and saving every part of the organization ... without by any means causing some other part to be largely developed in a corresponding degree" (*The Origin of Species* [New York: Penguin Books, 1985], p. 187) (emphasis added on "long run"). And Darwin writes, "... in the long run the dominant forms will generally succeed in spreading" (*ibid.*, p. 328).

23. Apel writes of "... Peirce's positive transformation of the famous Kantian distinction, which takes into account Kant's legitimate motives without getting in entangled in nonsensicalities. Instead of laying down the difference between unknowable and knowable objects Peirce distinguishes between the real as the knowable in the long run and whatever may be the result of an actual cognition basically underlying to the reservation of fallibility" ([CP]5.257, p. 310).


25. I am grateful to Patrick Murray for discussion on Kant's notion of architectonic, specifically as being "divine" in nature.

26. In providing this new groundwork, Apel is, of course, not entirely a "fallibilist." Transcendental philosophy is "infallible," insofar as it is "necessary" (in the same way Kant conceives it).


31. Paul Weiss in his book *Being and Other Realities* also rejects the long run. "Good theories are guides, pointing to what is to be investigated; they are not necessarily pointed toward a final answer. The members of the scientific community know this, while often for long periods they remain content to work within the frame of some theory that, at the time, is accepted by most" (Paul Weiss, *Being and Other Realities* [Chicago: Open Court Press, 1995], pp. 178-9).

32. Nicholas Rescher in *Complexity: A Philosophical Overview* writes that Peirce's long run is possible, "[b]ut we can never know — be it in practice or in principle — that it is actually realized.... Reality has hidden reserves; it is 'deeper' than our knowledge of it ever is — or can be — at any particular juncture" (Nicholas Rescher, *Complexity: A Philosophical Overview* [New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1998], p. 40).

33. Rollin Workman in his essay "Pragmatism and Realism" writes, "Even Peirce's final investigator who stands at the end of experience would not have time to make up a list of all possible phenomenal manifestations of Newton's laws, for instance" (Rollin Workman, "Pragmatism and Realism," *Studies in the Philosophy of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Edward C. Moore and Richard Robin, [Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1964], p. 251).

37. Ibid., p. 200.
38. As Kelly Parker puts it in The Continuity of Peirce’s Thought, “This circularity problem arises if we try to demonstrate the correctness of the three categories, because the demonstration obviously would have to utilize some form of inference. Peirce could not satisfy those who demand a demonstrative justification, or transcendental deduction of the categories.” See Parker, The Continuity of Peirce’s Thought (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1998), p. 18.
40. Heidegger, Kant, p. 1,
41. Heidegger, Kant, p. 2. Here Heidegger argues that Kant was fundamentally laying the ground for metaphysics in the transcendental structure of time. For Peirce and Heidegger (and even Kant, at times), groundwork means the necessary flow of meaning and time into the future. So, we are, at the level of inquiry, still walking on a Peircean “bog.” And the groundwork too may be conceived as a “bog,” but a bog of temporal necessity. See Abrams, 2002, “Philosophy After the Mirror of Nature: Rorty, Dewey, and Peirce on Pragmatism and Metaphor,” in Metaphor and Symbol.
42. Heidegger, Kant, p. 141.
44. Space and time, for Kant, are pure intuitions, and make up the “transcendental aesthetic” — both are necessary for cognizing any object. Time is the condition for all inner and outer appearances, while space is essential for outer appearances. At A32/B50 Kant discusses determinate time; and one may also see A32/B48 for an account of the one single time that underlies all determinate times. And the primary external intuition is space (A24/B39). Time thus runs the gamut of all things thinkable.
45. Heidegger, Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics, Fifth Edition, Enlarged, translated by Richard Taft, [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997 (German Edition: 1973)], p. 134. Heidegger also writes: “For if the Transcendental Schematism determines ontological knowledge on the basis of its essence, then the systematic working-out of ontological knowledge in the presentation of the system of synthetic principles must necessarily come across the character of the schematism a priori and must set forth the corresponding transcendental determinations of time. Now this also occurs [with Kant’s CPR], although only within certain limits” [CPR A158ff., B 197ff.] (Heidegger, Kant, p. 75). Heidegger argues that Kant is, in fact, laying the ground for metaphysics, in the transcendental structure of time: “In this way, the schemata of the pure concepts of the understanding ‘determine’ time. [now Heidegger quoting Kant:] ‘The schemata are thus nothing but a priori determinations of time’ [CPR A138, B177]” (Heidegger, Kant, p. 74). The categories are different existential modes of the experience of time, of being in time. As noted in the text above, Heidegger writes, “The question concerning Being, the grounding for metaphysics, is the problem of Being and Time” (Heidegger, Kant, p. 141). We see his point in Being and Time where he writes as follows: “Anticipation makes Da-sein authentically futural in such a way that anticipation itself is possible only in that Da-sein, as existing, always already comes toward itself, that is, is futural in its being in general” (Heidegger, Being and Time (A Translation of Sein und Zeit), translated by Joan Stambaugh, [New York: State University of New York Press,
1996; originally published 1953], p. 299).

47. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 301.
48. On whether he is a pragmatist, Davidson says: “No. I don’t disbelieve in it, but I don’t particularly understand what Rorty means by that ...” (Davidson, “Post-Analytic Visions: Donald Davidson,” an Interview with Giovanna Borra dorati, collected in The American Philosopher: Conversations with Quine, Davidson, Putnam, Nosi ck, Danto, Rorty, Cavell, MacIntyre, and Kuhn, [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994], p. 44). Davidson also says: “As far as I know, I certainly didn’t get this idea from Mead because, although I had read a little bit of Mead while I was in graduate school, I did not retain it” (p. 48).

49. Davidson also opens with a qualification: “In this essay I shall be concentrating on the role — the role in principle — of the second person. My subject is not, I should perhaps add, the grammatical second person, the ‘you’ or ‘thou,’ the ‘tú’ or ‘vosotros;’ I shall be writing about real second people, not the words used to address them” (Davidson, Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001], p. 107). This essay, “The Second Person,” is also published in Midwest Studies in Philosophy, Vol. XVII, edited by P. French et al, (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1992).


52. Davidson (2001), p. 121. And it “... is certainly a necessary condition for successful communication” (Davidson 2001, p. 115). In an interview with Giovanna Borra dorati, while discussing Habermas, Borra dorati notes: “My impression is that you take into consideration a more transcendental level of discourse.” Davidson responds: “That’s right” (Davidson 1994, p. 53).

54. Davidson (2001), p. 114. Davidson also writes that “… speaking a language … does not depend on two or more speakers speaking in the same way; it merely requires that the speaker intentionally make himself interpretable to a hearer (the speaker must ‘go on’ more or less as the interpreter expects, or at least as the interpreter is equipped to interpret)” (Davidson (2001), p. 115).

57. Here one may also see Robert Pippin on the “we” in Geist, in “You Can’t Get There from Here: Transition Problems in Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit,” in The Cambridge Companion to Hegel, edited by Frederick C. Beiser, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

58. I am grateful to Randall Dipert for raising this issue of the importance of the “We” in transcendental semiotics.

60. Searle, 1998, p. 120.
62. Apel, “Is Intentionality More Basic than Linguistic Meaning?” in


64. Lear (1999), p. 298. Lear’s view is Wittgensteinian and Hegelian (i.e., linguistic), Kantian (i.e., logically transcendental), and Freudian (i.e., psychologically curative). Lear writes: “I suggest we go back to Kant’s definition and loosen it, so that a nonempirical inquiry into rule-following may count as a transcendental investigation” (p. 290).


68. Peter Winch, The Idea of a Social Science and its Relation to Philosophy (New York: Humanities Press, 1958). Winch criticizes naturalistic social science and seeks to ground it in intersubjectivity. Natural science, or what is commonly called “hard science”, focuses exclusively on physical causality; and this focus is too narrow for purposes of explaining the more complex phenomena of human social interaction. All meaningful behavior as analyzed by social science is to be derived from this concept of the social. See also Winch, “Understanding a Primitive Society,” American Philosophical Quarterly, 1 (1964): 207-24. See also J. Bohman, New Philosophy of Social Science (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), pp. 59-65, for a partial critique of Winch’s view.

69. Apel, From a Transcendental Point of View, p. 47.


71. Wittgenstein, Tractatus, p. 133. Wittgenstein later in the Tractatus, writes at 6.421: “It is clear that ethics cannot be put into words.” And then also at 6.421: “Ethics is transcendental” (p. 421). This sounds like the earlier sentence: “Logic is transcendental.” Although, both give the impression that ethics (or logic) is transcendental, and not transcendental.

72. Cited from Murphey, p. 89. Apel also recognizes this point as central to his own transcendental semiotics (1980, 91).

73. Apel’s footnote 7: “Quoted from Murphey, op. cit., p. 89. Cf Peirce.”


77. Peirce, “Pragmatism Made Easy” (MS 325); in Fisch, p. 102 (emphasis added).

78. Umberto Eco, Kant and the Platypus: Essays on Language and
Cognition, translated from the Italian by Alastair McEwan, (New York: Harcourt, Inc., 1999 [original Italian: 1997]), pp. 366-71. Eco writes: “And so we trust mirrors, just as we trust, under normal conditions, our own organs of perceptions. We trust mirrors just as we trust spectacles and telescopes, because, like spectacles and telescopes, mirrors are prostheses.” Eco continues: “There is no doubt that mirrors are extensive and intrusive prosthetics par excellence, for example, in that they allow us to look where the eye cannot reach: they allow us to look at our face and eyes, they allow us to see what is happening behind our back.” Eco also writes that “… there is no longer any interpretation, apart from the perceptual interpretation that also comes into play when I look at someone in front of me” (pp. 366-7).

79. Peirce writes, “As to the Object, that may mean the Object as cognized in the sign and therefore an Idea, or it may be the Object as it is regardless of any particular aspect of it, the Object in such relations as unlimited and final study would show it to be. The former I call the Immediate Object, the latter the Dynamical Object.... Take, for example, the Sentence ‘the Sun is blue.’ Its Objects are ‘the Sun’ and ‘blueness.’ If by ‘blueness’ be meant the Immediate Object, which is the quality of the sensation, it can only be known by Feeling. But if it means that ‘Real,’ existential condition, which causes the emitted light to have short mean wavelength, Langley has already proved that the proposition is true. So the ‘Sun’ may mean the occasion of sundry sensation, and so is [the] Immediate Object, or it may mean our usual interpretation of such sensations in terms of place, of mass, etc., when it is the Dynamical Object” (EP2:495). The dynamical object is the noumenon, and the immediate the phenomena. The former constrain, direct, and are the endgame of inquiry. On this one may see Vincent Colapietro, Peirce’s Approach to the Self: A Semiotic Perspective on Human Subjectivity (New York: SUNY Press, 1989), p. 14-15. Here Colapietro points out that the sign is passive in being determined by the object. It is active in determining the interpretant.


82. As a brief point on these remarks, Peirce also conceived of this structure of “quasi-minds” as extending beyond the realm of human thought. In fact, Peirce was so thoroughgoing in his evolutionary semiotics that he thought of signs as operative within the world of “… bees, of crystals, and throughout the purely physical world” (CP 4.551). For further analysis on this discussion, the reader is referred to the literature on “zoosemiotics,” pioneered by the Peircean semiotician Thomas Sebeok, The Play of Musement (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981).


88. Kant, Critique, p. 114, A81/B107-A82/B108. The faculty of understanding is the faculty of judgment. Kant writes, "Now we can reduce all acts of the understanding to judgments, and the understanding may therefore be represented as a faculty of judgment" (A69/B94), p. 106.


91. On this discussion, I am grateful to members of the Midwest Pragmatism meeting, at Loyola University Chicago, 2002, for a discussion of the categories.


94. Fisch, p. 264.

95. Peirce writes: "A relative term cannot possibly be reduced to any combination of absolute terms, nor can a conjugative term he reduced to any combination of simple relatives; but a conjugative having more than two correlates can always be reduced to a combination of conjugatives of two correlates" (CP 3.144).


97. Peirce, Philosophical Writings of Peirce, p. 93.


100. Nicholas Rescher, Complexity: A Philosophical Overview (New Brunswick: Transactions Publishers, 1998), p. 27. Rescher also writes: "An inherent impetus towards greater complexity pervades the entire realm of human creative effort. We find it in art; we find it in technology; and we certainly find it in the cognitive domain as well" (p. 58).

101. Derrida, Positions, p. 44.

102. Derrida, Positions, p. 44.


104. Derrida, Of Grammatology, translated by G.C. Spivak, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), p. 49. As Derrida sees it, what is left of the traditional notion of meaning is not much. Derrida has taken Peirce's idea of the unlimitedness of sign deferral, and finds language flooded with difference: potentially any sign can represent any object as any interpretant. Derrida's view derives from passages in Peirce like the following: "... no present actual thought (which is a mere feeling) has any meaning, any intellectual value; for this lies not in what is actually thought, but in what this thought may be connected with in representation by subsequent thoughts, so that the meaning of a thought is altogether something virtual. It may be objected, that if no thought has any

105. Derrida, Positions, p. 44.
meaning, all thought is without meaning. ... At no one instant in my state of mind is there
cognition or representation, but in the relation of my states of mind at different instants,
there is” (W2:227). Derrida then concludes that any idea can only ever have its meaning 
“as a tease” — insofar as its meaning must necessarily lie in what will happen next (and
next, and so on). And in place of final meanings, there are only “traces” of would be
phenomena: “The trace is not a presence but is rather the simulacrum of a presence that
dislocates, displaces, and refers beyond itself” (See Derrida, Speech and Phenomena, And
Other Essays on Husserl’s Theory of Signs, translated by David B. Allison, [Evanston:
Northwestern University Press, 1973], p. 156). For further discussion on Derrida’s views,
one may see Jonathan Culler, On Deconstruction (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982).
Christopher Norris critiques Rorty’s in “Philosophy as not just a ‘Kind of Writing’:
Derrida and the Claim of Reason,” in Redrawing the Lines, edited by R.W. Dassenbrock,
(Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989). See also Rodolphe Gasché, The Tain
of the Mirror: Derrida and the Philosophy of Reflection (Cambridge: Harvard University
Press, 1986). Rorty’s narrativistic view of Derrida’s theory of language is developed in:
“Deconstruction and Circumvention,” “Two Meanings of ‘Logocentrism:’ A Reply to
Norris,” “Is Derrida a Transcendental Philosopher?,” in Essays on Heidegger and Others:
Philosophical Papers, Volume 2, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); and
Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995); and

105. Derrida, Positions, translated by Alan Bass, (Chicago: University of

106. Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, p. 58.

107. Charles Taylor, Hegel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

108. Umberto Eco, “Horns, Hooves, and Insteps,” The Sign of Three:
Dupin, Holmes, Peirce, edited by Umberto Eco and Thomas Sebeok, (Bloomington:
Indiana University Press, 1983), p. 210: “Imprints represent the most elementary case of
sign-production ....”

109. Peirce, 1905 Draft of Letter to Lady Welby (MS L 463); in Fisch
(1986), p. 265. Other texts in Peirce on this point are CP 8.267; 6.32; 4.3; 1.530; 5.43;
5.38.


111. On this see Richard Bernstein, “McDowell’s Domesticated

112. While there is only space here to mention it, perhaps a further
discussion of the relation of Peircean differentiation or change (as “secondness”) to
Hegelian differentiation (as “negation”) in order. Both thinkers hold that the concept of
difference is intrinsic to the movement of novelty and the movement of time. And on this,
certainly both Hegel and Peirce align their views with Aristotle on causality and relation.
In Aristotle’s Physics and Generation and Corruption, nature both generates and destroys
forms (primary, not secondary, substances). That is, the secondary substance (i.e., what
Plato was after with his view of forms) does not undergo change. Hence, there is no before
and after, and thus no time, as time, for Aristotle, measures the “before” and “after” of
the present with regard to becoming. This becoming of the primary substances, in all of
their accidental traits, takes place as the shaping of the “material cause” (inert matter), by
the “efficient cause” (motion, change), according to a “formal cause” (the design of the
thing). The achievement of the approach toward the ideal formal cause is the teleological
or final cause (so, for example, the finished oak tree is the final cause, because it is the
formal cause already internal to the acorn, but “blown up” with matter by way of
efficiency). Corruption of the individual in decay and death is a natural process as well.
But at a very basic metaphysical level, corruption (or negation, differentiation) occurs all
the time, everywhere in nature. Even in generation, we find differentiation always and
everywhere, according to the qualities of matter, and the nature of change. So, an oak tree
has lumps and twists and turns even in its final stages, according to spontaneity (within
matter). The final form always bears the marks of the material substrate. Or as Peirce
would put it, the thirds always contain and bear the marks of secondness. Similarly, Hegel
conceives of synthesis as containing intact the negation which gives rise to that synthesis.
This reactive force is part of nature in the Physics — indeed, so intrinsic is spontaneity to
the metaphysics, that Aristotle, at times anyway, thought of spontaneity as an additional
“cause.” Or to be more specific, spontaneity operates as “natural” diversification, and
“chance” occurs at the level of social interaction.

113. I am grateful to Patrick Murray and Jeanne Schuler for discussion on
this point.

114. On this point, Murphey writes (p. 69): “Peirce denies the existence of
cognitions not determined by a previous cognition — in this sense there are no intuitions;
but he does not deny the existence of any non-conceptual stimuli to mental action. What
he means by ‘the manifold sensuous impressions’ is actually something very close to the
set of all nerve excitations at a given time. His retention of the term ‘impression’ in this
restricted sense is confusing but understandable; the Kantian terms were convenient and
he had no others readily available.”

115. Heidegger, “What is Called Thinking?” in Basic Writings, edited by

follows: “Kant wants to say: the encountering of the being itself occurs for a finite creature
in a representating whose pure representations of objectivity as such have played up to one
another [aufeinander eingespielt]. This Being-played-up [Eingespieltein] is tantamount to
the end, i.e., it is determined in advance in such a way that in general it can be played out
in a play-space [in einem Spiel-Raum abspielen kann]. This [play-space] is formed through
pure determinations of the inner sense. The pure inner sense is pure self-affection, i.e.,
original time. The pure schemata as transcendental determinations of time are what form
the horizon of transcendence” (Heidegger, Kant, p. 138). A similar account emerges in
Derrida, who fuses Heidegger and Peirce, in deriving his own semiotics based in play and
difference. On this Derrida refers to “[d]ifferéance as temporization, différance as
spacing” (Derrida, Margins of Philosophy, translated, with Additional Notes, by Alan Bass,
Minuit], p. 9). Derrida also writes “… the play of difference, which, as [Ferdinand de]
Saussure reminded us, is the condition for the possibility and functioning of every sign, is
in itself a silent play” (Derrida, Margins, p. 7).

117. Derrida, Of Grammatology, p. 50.

118. Derrida, Margins, p. 11.

119. A fuller account of these remarks in Derrida reads as follows: “I would
say, first off, that différence, which is neither a word nor a concept, strategically seemed to
me the most proper one to think, if not to master — thought, here being that which is
maintained in a certain necessary relationship with the structural limits of mastery — what
is most irreducible about our ‘era.’ Therefore, I am starting, strategically, from the place and the time in which ‘we’ are, even though in the last analysis my opening is not justifiable since it is only on the basis of differance and its ‘history’ that we can allegedly know who and where ‘we’ are, and what the limits of an ‘era’ might be” (Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, p. 7).

120. Here we are on the very edge of meaning, barely teleological thrust forward, it is a play back and forth, in the very way Hans Georg Gadamer discusses the to and fro of the play of language in *Truth and Method*, 2nd Revised Edition, Translation revised by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, (New York: Continuum, 1993), pp. 103-5. It is precisely a play of the self, with the self, in the mind. I am grateful to Liz Sperry for discussion on this point about Gadamer.


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