

Preface

The 29 contributors featured in this volume make their home in no fewer than 12 countries in Europe and North and South America, and represent at least a dozen disciplines, including:

- philosophy,
- linguistics,
- psychology,
- cognitive science,
- biology,
- anthropology,
- sociology,
- communication studies,
- literature,
- pedagogy.

The co-editors themselves straddle expertise in semiotics with linguistics, psychology, and anthropology. We have long allowed ourselves the habit of being fascinated with Peircean habit, having also organized a number of symposia on the subject at national and international congresses.

One reason for habit commanding such a presence in all these fields of scholarship concerns its relevance to all conduct, beyond human and living realms. Three overarching themes are addressed: the etiology of habit, its characterization as continua, and the mental perpetuation of habit as a self-modifying system, incorporating unconscious and conscious patterns of behavior/reasoning.

Given the recent celebration of the centennial of Charles Sanders Peirce's death, it is especially fitting to present an integrated account of his concept of habit, since (above any other ontological, phenomenological, or semiotic issue) it demonstrates how Peirce ultimately consolidates individual physical and mental worlds into his continuum. In response to the recent outcry against psychologism among some Peircean philosophers, the present consensus provides a fresh perspective. Without violating Peirce's metaphysical or semiotic model, the present volume highlights the primary call beckoning Peirce (consonant with his commitment to forums of

realism and pragmatism)—that all organisms (despite the particularities of their distinct physical and cognitive niches) realize individual features, while, at the same time, constitute expressions of Peirce’s continua.

This anthology fills a substantial gap in the literature; it addresses, in a single volume, the breadth and influence of a topic heretofore left fallow. It offers a cross-disciplinary account of the continuity among fields of study which, on their face, appear disparate. The chapters in this volume illustrate how Peirce unifies the physical with the phenomenological, and the social with the psychological. It likewise showcases how (over the course of forty plus years) Peirce, via his construct of habit, integrates highly distinct sources of action and cognition—pre-determined systems of knowledge and action (inclusive of a priori endowments) together with learning paradigms of implicit/explicit instrumentation. It is this latter application of habit which demonstrates that no perception or cognition originates from nothing. Earlier images, propositions, theorems, or models of belief constitute remnants for potential habit.

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<http://www.springer.com/978-3-319-45918-9>

Consensus on Peirce's Concept of Habit
Before and Beyond Consciousness

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2016, XXV, 434 p. 9 illus., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-45918-9