

LIVING ACTS OF SEMIOSIS:
JOHN DEWEY'S MODEL OF ESTHETIC EXPERIENCE
AS KEY TO A TEMPORAL THEORY OF SIGNS

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EXPERIENCE AS KEY TO A TEMPORAL THEORY OF SIGNS

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To my mother, Sandra Lee (Lancaster) Carman, my longest-term supporter, who supported my decision to study sociology even while doubting the move would pay off financially.

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines and compares the semiotic theories of the American pragmatist philosophers Charles S. Peirce, George H. Mead, and John Dewey in order to arrive at a pragmatist theory of signs that can serve as an alternative in sociological research to structuralist, neo-structuralist, poststructuralist, and postmodern semiotics. John Dewey's model of esthetic experience as a temporal rhythm of alternating doings and undergoings is described and offered as the fullest, most complex, and most nuanced model for a theory of signs.

Anthropologist Victor Turner's theory of social drama is shown to be compatible with the pragmatists' assumptions about experience. Based on Turner's extensive anthropological fieldwork, social drama theory can supplement a pragmatist semiotic through its more explicit and empirically-grounded treatment of institutions and cultures.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to examine and compare the semiotic theories of the American pragmatist philosophers Charles S. Peirce, George H. Mead, and John Dewey in search of a pragmatist theory of signs that can serve as an alternative in sociological research to structuralist, neo-structuralist, poststructuralist, and postmodern semiotics. I will find that Peirce, Mead, and Dewey each made important contributions toward a temporal theory of signs. In discussing Mead, I will focus for the first time in the sociological literature concerning Mead's theory of temporality, the centrality of the distinction between the two modes of experiencing time: in the functional present and in the specious present.

More importantly, I will conclude that Dewey's model of esthetic experience, as elaborated in *Art as Experience* ([1934] 1989), provides the fullest, most complex, and most nuanced model of experience (or behavior) for a pragmatist semiotic useful for sociological research. In this model, an esthetic act is portrayed as a series of rhythmic cycles of undergoing and doing, often with an interval of pause between. I will also show that anthropologist Victor Turner's theory of social drama shares a close affinity with the pragmatist theories presented. Turner's theory, based on extensive fieldwork, presents, from a

pragmatist-friendly perspective, a more explicitly social and institutional theory than those presented by the pragmatist philosophers.

When semiotics is discussed in the sociological literature today, the term is used as almost synonymous with Saussure's theory of signs, called semiology. Within roughly the past twenty years, Charles Peirce's name is increasingly mentioned as a founder of semiotics, but then the discussion often steers back to structuralist, poststructuralist, or postmodernist approaches to semiotics.

The structuralist semioticians commit what Dewey called the "intellectualist fallacy," reducing experience to the conventional, symbolic, and intellectual. Semiology, structuralism, and post-structuralism present language and its signification as a self-enclosed or hermetic system, what has also been called the "prison house" of language. Within these theories, language is closed off from the material referents of nature as well as from human agents involved in a natural and cultural environment and interpreting it. In addition, structuralist semiotics is solely synchronic in its analysis. History and temporality are left out of its accounts (Shapiro 1983; Short 1981).

Cultural sociologist Eviatar Zerubavel (1987, 2004) has attempted to combine temporality and semiotic in a "socio-semiotics of time." A theory of signs that is both sociocultural and places temporality at the center of its concern sounds like an advance over structuralist semiotics. However, a reader of Zerubavel soon learns that he identifies himself as a structuralist. He also identifies himself as a formal sociologist in the tradition of Georg Simmel,

concerned with forms but not with contents. With the loss of the contents of cultural forms, the context in which their meaning is determined is also lost. Last but not least, Zerubavel's interest in developing a cognitive sociology leads at the very least to a rhetorical privileging of the intellect as if the purposiveness of human conduct serves the goals of the intellect in isolation from the whole organism. He speaks often of cognitive needs, such as the cognitive need to draw distinctions, rather than of the use of cognitive processes as tools for accomplishing the ends of the total organism. In the end, Zerubavel's research is important in its discussions and observations on the cultural forms of temporality however flawed is its privileging of the cognitive.

“Experience” beyond the cognitive

The alternative theory I seek goes beyond the cognitive to include experience in its joint affective, conative, and cognitive aspects. Reflection is important in such a view, but serves the total living, embodied organism in attaining its ends. In semiotic terms, I seek to go beyond symbolic exchanges to include also the experiences represented by iconic and indexical signs. In this view, qualitative immediacy, the pervasive sense or feel of a situation, is experience *had* rather than *known* (in Dewey's terms).

The term “experience” itself has been often misunderstood. John Dewey, near the end of his life, wrote a new introduction to go with a new printing of his *Experience and Nature* ([1925] 1988). Dewey wrote that if he were doing a

serious revision for the book, he would title it *Culture and Nature*. He had come to the conclusion that it was not worth the fight any longer to try to reconstruct the term. Whereas Dewey took “experience” to mean the transaction of an organism with objects of its environment, in which the objects were as much a part of the experience as the organism, critics of Dewey took him to mean by the term subjective, introspective experience.

Victor Turner echoed Dewey’s use of the term “experience,” calling his anthropology an anthropology of experience. Turner was following Wilhelm Dilthey in his usage of the term, and, by following Dilthey, Turner’s conception of experience comes very close to that of the pragmatists.

A view of experience as embodied and fuller than cognitive and symbolic experience has also gained empirical and theoretical support from recent work on “the mind in the body” in neuroscience and psycholinguistics, such as the research of Antonio Damasio (1999) and Stephen Cowley (e.g., 2006, 1998, 1994).

Charles Peirce’s triadic semeiotic

Charles Peirce’s crowning achievement was his semeiotic or general theory of signs, which would come to subsume all other areas of his philosophy and which can only be understood in conjunction with his categories. Peirce sought to replace Kant’s metaphysical categories with an irreducible number of basic ones, having both formal (or relational) and material (empirical or

phenomenological) aspects. The formal categories are derived from the number of members in a relation, with monadic relations called Firsts, dyadic relations called Seconds, and Triadic relations called Thirds. Peirce considered all relations with larger numbers of members to be reducible to these three (Flower and Murphey 1978).

The material or phenomenological aspect of the categories, which correspond with the three formal categories, are basic modes of being and experience. Firstness is an immediate, qualitative state of feeling, which is a feeling of possibility. Secondness is the experiencing of an event of brute opposition, usually in terms of effort or resistance. Thirdness is the experiencing of thought, mediation, representation, continuity, synthesis, and law. Firstness pertains to potentiality, Secondness to actuality, and Thirdness to habit or general law, which makes conduct and the world more regular and predictable (Flower and Murphey 1978; Shapiro 1983).

The fundamental place of triadic relations and their component aspects in Peirce's thought is illustrated in his definition of a sign. In contrast to the merely dyadic relation of a sign and what it signifies as found in Saussure's semiology (therein called the signifier and signified) and as inherited by the structuralists and post-structuralists, signification for Peirce is always a triadic relation between a sign, its object(s), and its interpretant. A sign is triadic because it signifies what it could be interpreted as signifying. In other words, the relation between a sign and what it signifies (its object) is capable of being interpreted (in the form of an

interpretant, which is also related to the same object) whether or not it ever is actually interpreted (Short 1981; Sheriff 1989).

In terms of his relational categories, signs are Firsts, objects are Seconds, and interpretants are Thirds. In terms of the material categories, three types of signs are Qualisigns (signs of Firstness), Sinsigns (signs of Secondness), and Legisigns (signs of Thirdness). A sign relates to its object as an icon (signifying an object by resemblance), as an index (signifying an object by indicating it by direction or as its effect), or as a symbol (signifying an object by a lawlike pattern). Peirce also makes important distinctions between types of interpretants and other distinctions between types of signs and of objects (e.g., see Shapiro 1983; Sheriff 1989). No other theorist of signs has drawn as many distinctions between types of signs or developed as extensive terminology of signs as has Peirce. His work can serve at the very least as conceptual points of reference and comparison for other theories of signs.

For most prominent scholars of Peirce's semeiotic, the temporal nature of semiosis may be implied but is seldom if ever emphasized or even made explicit. However, Peirce scholars Roberta Kevelson (1987) and Sandra Rosenthal (1969, 2000) stand out as having stressed and discussed at length Peircean semeiotic as inherently temporal. The key interpretants to a temporal view of semiotics is Peirce's immediate/dynamic//final interpretant triad. Table 1 below presents definitions of these three interpretants along with the aspects of Mead's theory of the act with which the interpretants correspond.

An immediate interpretant is the interpretability of a sign in itself, such as in the case of words as universal meanings. The dynamic interpretant is how the sign is actually interpreted by an interpreter. To the immediate interpretant, the dynamic interpretant adds collateral observation or additional knowledge. The final (or ideal) interpretant is the eventual limit at which the community reaches a consensus that is aligned with truth in the natural world.

As shown in Table 1 below, I argue that an immediate interpretant is similar to the qualitative immediacy of the commencement of an act. I argue that the dynamic interpretant corresponds most closely with the manipulatory phase of the act in a problematic situation and with the perceptual phase of the act in an ongoing, unproblematic situation. Finally, I align the final interpretant with Mead's consummatory phase of the act. Just as there is no guarantee (and it is in fact unlikely) that the limit of the ideal or final interpretant will ever be reached, the consummation of a situation will likely be only occasional at best.

I discussed above Peirce's semiotic and the metaphysic categories underlying in order to introduce a set of conceptual tools to help describe the semiotic theories of George Herbert Mead and of John Dewey. For these two Chicago pragmatists, a behavioral (but not behavioristic) theory of action set within a situation (or context) is central. I argue that Mead's and Dewey's respective but mostly similar theories of "the act" offer the best framework for a sign theory that is naturalistic, behavioral and thoroughly temporal.

Table 1. Peirce's immediate/dynamic/final interpretant triad in correspondence with Mead's theory of the act

Peircean interpretant	definition of Peircean interpretant	correspondent in Mead's theory of the act
immediate interpretant	interpretability of the sign itself (the usual sense of meaning as universal)	sense or feeling of a situation— qualitative immediacy
dynamic interpretant	actual interpretation of a sign by an interpreter [interpreter adds collateral observation or background (common) knowledge ("the world that is there") to meaning indicated by the immediate interpretant]	(analysis of problematic situation-- contact/manipulatory phase) [or unproblematic perceptual interpretation (or sense) of the familiar/habitual]
final (or ideal) interpretant	limit at which consensus interpretation aligns with independent reality (Peirce's ultimate logical interpretant is a habit of action)	consummation of the situation; (may be a problem solved reflectively) qualitative whole reestablished; esthetically complete experience (or situation)

Justus Buchler, in his 1939 book *Charles Peirce's Empiricism*, cites Peirce as noting the intimate connection between semiosis and perception. This intimate connection is made central in the works of Dewey and Mead. I argue that these three thinkers are correct on this point, and I will follow them in viewing perception as central to semiotic.

George Herbert Mead's semiotic and theory of time

In the theories of both Dewey and Mead, meaning as significance belongs to the situation or the act as a whole. Mead explains the process by which meaning is generated in a social act as a triadic relationship between a gesture by one organism, an adjustive response by another organism, and the resultant (end) of the social act. Although we have no evidence that Mead had any knowledge of Peirce's theory of signs, the similarity between Mead's triadic definition of meaning with Peirce's triadic definition of a sign has been pointed out by several authors (Rosenthal 1968; Kilpenen 2002; Wiley 1994; Lewis 1972). The gesture of the first organism is similar to Peirce's sign, the resultant, social object, or end of the act is similar to Peirce's object of a sign, and the adjustive response of the second organism is similar to Peirce's interpretant. Mead says that the social object is what is customarily called denotation, and the

response is connotation. If the gesture and its response are significant, they are symbolic or conceptual.

In his theory of time (within the act), Mead distinguishes between a functional present and a specious present. The functional present obtains in the unproblematic phase of ongoing conduct. Time plays itself out moment to moment in the course of the act. The objects in this functional present Mead calls perceptual objects (and sometimes distance objects) (Mead, 1938). As Mead puts it:

So long as we act without question upon the stimulus of the distance stimulus, this reality accrues to them, and no abstraction is made of the present experience. They constitute the perceptual object. They are there, they are not known (Mead 1938:217).

The specious present, on the other hand, takes place with the reflection triggered by questioning, a problem, or a conflict in the ongoing conduct of a situation. In Mead's term, reflection occurs when conduct or action is inhibited. Reflection as well as the self originates when a person, in communicating to facilitate cooperative activity with another person (or persons), becomes able to call out in himself the same response he calls out in others with his (therefore significant) gesture (or symbol). The ability to use significant symbols is at the same time the ability to think abstractly in order to solve problems of inhibited conduct (Mead 1938).

The specious present is the present extended in memory (during problematic periods of reflection) (Mead 1938). During the specious present, the

contact field of the manipulatory phase of the act is projected imaginatively (with the aid of memory) into the distance field of the perceptual phase of the act. As Mead puts it,

It [the specious present] involves at least a momentary pause in ongoing action and the relation of different objects in the landscape with reference to continued action. The goal of that action is in the future, while over against this the immediate landscape is in the present. Before definite action takes place, any object may be the goal, or all objects lie in the specious present. The specious present is the immediate field conditioning possible action. Its presence lies in the persistent relations which render possible a group of possible responses. In this sense they are all copresent with the individual, but when action resumes the goal lies in the future (Mead 1938:227-28).

Mead calls an object in the specious present a physical object, because even if it is at a distance, the physicality of contact experience is projected to it (Mead 1938).

Table 2 below summarizes the kind of sign, object, or interpretant (to use Peirce's terms) that goes with the functional vs. the specious present. The functional present occurs in the ongoing duration of the cultural and natural lifeworld, which Mead calls "the world that is there" and Dewey calls the background of primary experience or the universe of experience. On the other hand, the specious present occurs during reflective pauses.

Continuing with Table 2, a sign in the functional present is the next step in the sequence of steps in ongoing action. The object is the perceptual (or distant) object lying in the future, an aspect of the qualitative whole and an object of

eventual action. The interpretant within the functional present is the sense of the qualitative whole of the situation.

The first sign appearing in the specious present is the sign of blocked or inhibited ongoing action. An object in the specious present Mead calls a physical object because all objects are considered possible objects of manipulation in this reflective, abstractive pause of the specious present. Finally, the interpretant is the symbolic interpretation in thought of the situation.

Table 2. Peirce's parts of a triadic sign relation in correspondence with Mead's two modes of experiencing time

	functional present	specious present
	(ongoing duration of cultural/natural lifeworld) (Mead's "world that is there")	(abstractions of a reflective pause)
sign	sign of next step in ongoing action	sign of blocked or inhibited ongoing action
object	perceptual (distant) object (aspect of qualitative whole and object of eventual action)	physical object (even distant objects viewed as possible objects of manipulation)
interpretant	qualitatively immediate sense of situation	symbolic

The importance of the contribution of the foregoing discussion of the functional and specious presents can be seen by reviewing the literature on Mead's theory of time. The only other author I have found in my reasonably

exhaustive research on Mead's theory of time who refers by name to the functional present and discusses it is Rosenthal (2000). I have here extended Rosenthal's analysis by comparing the functional and specious presents in terms of semiotic relations (in Table 2). The following paragraph gives the thrust of her two page discussion of the subject, which complements mine:

Whatever the span of the functional present, it is always wider than the specious present, for the functional present is constituted in terms of the ongoing act, while the specious present emerges for awareness when the act is disrupted in some way. Mead states of the specious present that "while it is an actual duration and not a knife-edged present, its duration is not that of the completion of the act within which the object is there but rather represents the disruption of ongoing activity. This claim concerning the relation between the functional and specious present is reflected in his following characterization. In a certain sense one's present takes in an entire undertaking through the use of symbolic imagery, and "since the undertaking is a whole that stretches beyond the immediate specious presents, these slip into each other without any edges." But, for example, a loud noise behind an individual may mark out a specious present. "Its lack of relevance to what is going on leaves it nothing but the moment in which the sound vibrated within my ears." The specious present marks the "limits of immediate change" within experience. "The limits of this span are uncertain because it so connects with the coming experience that there is no break in the temporal continuity, and because the passing experience goes over into memory imagery so imperceptibly that with difficulty he draws the line between them" (Rosenthal 2000:127).

I submit that this distinction between the functional and specious presents is the most important one in Mead's theory of time because the act is the all-important unit of meaning and praxis for Mead (as well as for Dewey). However, this distinction is not to be found in the considerable sociological literature on Mead's theory of time. Strauss's (1991) surprisingly disappointing paper on the

subject makes no mention of the functional present. Neither do Flaherty and Fine (2001). Maines, Sugrue, and Katovich (1983), reedited as a chapter in Maines (2001), is distinguished in the literature for teasing out for the first time analytical distinctions between 1) the symbolically reconstructed past, 2) the social structural past, 3) the implied objective past, and 4) the mythical past. Whatever the value of these distinctions, the functional/specious present distinction is more central. However, Maines et al. (1983), like many articles on the subject, reads as if the specious present (in a context of continuity and discontinuity), *is* the present.

Mead recognizes along with Dewey the existence of qualitative immediacy and lived bodily experience and the importance of sympathy, and so forth. However, Mead emphasizes (at least rhetorically if not theoretically) symbols, reflection, and self-consciousness.

I think that Mead's "phases of the act" (with its central distinction between distance perception and manipulation) is more useful as a genetic explanation than as a useful functional explanation of the act. Dewey, in his *Art as Experience* ([1934] 1989), presents a more detailed, nuanced, dynamic theory of perception than that found in Mead's work. Dewey emphasizes that esthetic experience, experience in its fullest, engages the total organism. In looking at a painting, for instance, the entire organism sees rather than the eyes alone. Maurice Merleau-Ponty independently arrived at conclusions about human experience similar to Dewey's and to Mead's. While Mead is largely in theoretical

agreement with Dewey, and while Mead insightfully explains the social generation of meaning, Dewey in his *Logic* ([1938] 1991) draws analytical distinctions that make useful additions to Mead's analysis.

Dewey's basic analytic distinctions (logical and semiotic)

According to Dewey, an indeterminate situation occasions uncertainty and confusion about how to proceed. For a reflective intelligence an indeterminate situation creates doubt about the significance of the situation and thus becomes a problematic situation in which inquiry takes place in an effort to restore the unified meaning of the situation.

The extra analytical distinctions I mentioned are the four relations Dewey identifies as underlying inquiry. *Involvement* refers to the relations actually existing in the situation, the conditions in the world that make productive thought possible. Inquirers perceive the existential relations through *inference*. Inference is the process through which the existential relations of involvement are identified as sign-signified relations.

Implication is the name for the relations that symbols have to one another in a constellation [system] of related meanings abstracted from concrete involvements. In implication, the meaning of any particular symbol depends upon its position within a constellation of related meanings. The purest form of implication is found in mathematics.

Finally, *reference* takes place when a system of implicated symbol meanings corresponds with the inferred sign-signified relations, which represent real causal relations of existential involvement. Confirmed scientific theories are the prime examples of reference in Dewey's sense ([1938] 1991).

We can see in these distinctions of Dewey's an engagement with the environment in the sign-signified relations of involvements in which causal relations of the world contribute to meaning construction. Dewey also covers ground covered by structuralist theories of meaning with his concept of implication insofar as the relations symbols have to one another determine their meanings.

Dewey distinguishes between primary, qualitative, or common sense experience (the universe of experience) and secondary, reflective, or scientific experience (the universe of discourse). The universe of experience corresponds closely with Mead's "world that is there" of the functional present, and the universe of discourse corresponds closely with Mead's reflective phase of the specious present ([1938] 1991).

For Dewey, the universe of experience runs much thicker and much deeper in its meaningfulness than does the universe of discourse. The former is the background context for the latter. The qualitative phase of common sense experience is experience as felt and enjoyed. It's what some thinkers call the lifeworld. This is experience *had* rather than *known*. The reflective or scientific and practical phase is more instrumental (in the broad sense). In this phase signs

are recognized (in Dewey's term) as a means for a practical scientific objective rather than lingered over and enjoyed esthetically (Dewey [1938] 1991). In normative terms, reflection occurs within and in order to serve esthetic experience within the model of the act.

Dewey's model of esthetic experience

The theory of the act in which reflection functions to make problematic situations whole again, as presented above in both Mead's and in Dewey's work, presents what sounds like a somewhat oversimplified model of action. This theory is elaborated and made more nuanced and complex in Dewey's theory of esthetic experience ([1934] 1989), which presents perception and conception (or the realms of the functional present and the specious present in Mead's terms, respectively) as closely interwoven. In everyday experience, thought takes place often, and most often it takes place in very brief intervals in order to repair breaks in perception and ongoing action.

William James ([1890] 1998) compared the rhythms of conscious experience to the alternate flights and perchings of a bird. This led to Dewey's conception of experience as alternating doings and undergoings. According to Dewey, experience is a rhythm of intakings and outgivings like breathing. He also speaks in terms of incoming and outgoing energy. Undergoing is the phase of experience in which the environment predominantly or on balance is acting on

the organism, and doing is the phase when the organism predominantly or on balance is acting on the environment.

What Dewey calls the formal or general conditions of esthetic form together show esthetic experience as a rhythmic series of doings and undergoings that can serve as the most complete model of semiosis as lived that has been formulated to date. The formal conditions of esthetic form named by Dewey include tension, cumulation, conservation, anticipation, fulfillment, and continuity.

The undergoing phase of experience is predominantly receptive of input from the environment, and Dewey at least once refers to undergoing as the phase of perception. In undergoing, resistance and tension lead to the accumulation of energy, meaning, and values and the conservation of what has gone before. This accumulation of energy is necessary in order for the esthetic experience to move forward in the direction of consummation when the energy is released in the doing phase. Cumulation in a continuous series of rhythmic doings and undergoings builds steadily the meaning of what went before and builds anticipation. This doing phase is the organism's chance to perform the activities that are anticipated to lead toward the act's desired end in consummation.

Before the undergoing phase has moved into the doing phase, whenever there is a balance between doing and undergoing, which is also a rhythmic organization of energies, the organism pauses, rests, sums up what has been

experienced before, and anticipates a consummatory experience. The pause and rest phase may be a partial consummation which helps in anticipating the final consummation of the act. The interval of pause and rest can lead to adjustments in the end desired. Such a rest and pause phase is defining of what was done and undergone before and what needs doing.

Dewey's sums up well his model of esthetic experience below:

There must [in occurrences of rhythm] be energies resisting each other. Each gains intensity for a certain period, but thereby compresses some opposed energy until the latter can overcome the other which has been relaxing itself as it extends. Then the operation is reversed, not necessarily in equal periods of time but in some ratio that is felt as orderly. Resistance accumulates energy; it institutes conservation until release and expansion ensue. There is, at the moment of reversal, an interval, a pause, a rest, by which the interaction of opposed energies is defined and rendered perceptible. The pause is a balance or symmetry of antagonistic forces. Such is the generic schema of rhythmic change save that the statement fails to take account of minor coincident changes of expansion and contraction that are going on in every phase and aspect of an organized whole, and of the fact that the successive waves and pulses are themselves cumulative with respect to final consummation (Dewey, [1934] 1989:159-60)

In applying Peirce's relations of a sign as I did with Mead's theory, the undergoing phase of experience, in which energy is accumulated and conserved, corresponds to the sign. The interval of pause, rest, and balance between undergoing and doing corresponds to the responding interpretant to the sign, and the phase of doing and the release of energy corresponds to the effort toward the object or desired end of the act (as summed up in Table 3 below). Any

adjustment of the final end occurs in this interval, and the enjoyment of relative, recurring partial consummations propels the act forward.

Mead also referred to intervals of reflection as pauses in ongoing conduct, but his model gives us the simple alternation of reflection as opposed to non-reflection. In contrast, Dewey does not say that the intervals of pause and rest are or must be reflective. I would expect to find a wide variety of proportions of qualitative to reflective experience in these intervals of rest. Therefore, I conclude that Dewey's model of esthetic experience as a rhythmic series of doings and undergoings punctuated with intervals of pause and rest better explains the temporality, the potential experiential fullness, the drama, and the natural narrative thrust of semiosis as lived, bodily, and collective experience.

Victor Turner on the liminal and the liminoid: Dewey's interval of pause on a more explicitly social level

Anthropologist Victor Turner thought in ways remarkably similar to and compatible with the way Peirce, Mead, and Dewey thought. The vicarious intellectual bridge between them turned out to be Wilhelm Dilthey, a nineteenth-century German philosopher who seems to attract almost no serious attention anymore from American sociologists. Nevertheless, Turner (1986) reports that he turned to Dilthey's work when he needed to escape the intellectual confines of positivist and British structural functionalist thought.

Dilthey's theory of experience as presented by Turner bears a strong family resemblance to the pragmatist theory of experience, a resemblance Turner discusses in what must have been one of his last essays on "Dewey, Dilthey, and Drama" (1986). Like Dewey, Dilthey distinguished between experience (in its everyday, mundane forms) and *an* experience (a vivid and esthetic experience of the total person. An experience has a beginning and an ending which is "an initiation and a consummation" of an esthetic act in Dewey's terms (quoted in Turner 1986:35).

I won't go into greater detail about Dilthey's theory of experience. The point in this context is that Turner borrowed from Dilthey's theory in developing his anthropology of experience and his model of the social drama. Turner (1982) maintained that he had observed social dramas in his extensive fieldwork in Africa, in his personal experience with societies of the West, and his readings of history, and I will begin to explore how Turner's model suggests possible areas of sociological application for the Deweyan model of semiosis advanced in this paper.

Table 3. Peirce's parts of a triadic sign relation in correspondence with Dewey's phases of experience

Peirce's parts of a triadic sign relation	sign	interpretant	object (end)
Dewey's phases of experience	undergoing	pause between	doing

Turner's conception of *communitas*, like Durkheim's collective effervescence, provides an example of pragmatist consummation on a collective scale. Dewey's conception of the shared experience made possible by communication bears a close resemblance to Turner's *communitas*. Turner says that spontaneous *communitas* is "a direct, immediate and total confrontation of human identities," a deep rather than an intense style of interaction; a flash of lucid mutual understanding on the existential level; become totally absorbed into a single synchronized, fluid event" (Turner 1982:47-48). Again, with spontaneous *communitas* we have an example of the qualitatively immediate of the pragmatists in a collective, social setting.

According to Turner (1982, 1986), a social drama generally proceeds through the following stages. 1) Someone or some subgroup, either intentionally or unintentionally, breaks a group rule in public. This rule-breaking constitutes a social *breach*; 2) The breach brings forth otherwise inhibited conflicts between individuals or subgroups. 3) The conflict brought about by the breach reaches the level of a crisis endangering the group's unity or survival. 4) Redressive action is taken to address the crisis, often led by a group of elders or officials. The two main redressive institutions are the legal/judicial and the religious, which may perform ritual processes designed to solve the crisis. 5) The outcome of the crisis

and redressive measures is generally either a return to social unity or a recognized schism.

Table 4 below places Turner's phases of a social drama alongside Peirce's aspects of a sign, where the sign stimulus comes from the social breach, the interpretant response is the redressive acts, and the social object (or end) is social reintegration (or else social schism).

Turner (1982) borrowed the concept of liminality from the second stage of van Gennep's three-stage model of traditional rites of passage. The liminal phase of a rite of passage is "a no-man's land betwixt and between" a past momentarily suspended and a future not yet begun in which the rational, common-sense world is suspended. Turner refers to the liminal interval as existing in the subjunctive mood of maybes and pure possibilities, as opposed to the indicative mood of everyday normative life. Turner sees the liminal intervals, which in his general social drama model fall into the redressive stage, as the space of novelty and creativity. The similarity of liminal moments and spaces with the interval of pause in Dewey's as well as in Mead's model, the point in between doing and undergoing in Dewey's phases of experience and the time and space for novel emergence in Mead's model, is striking. Even for Peirce, something like the liminal spaces were important. Peirce talked of experiences of pure play and musement as the most creative of times. In fact, his concept of abduction is closely related to play and musement (Kevelson 1988).

Table 4. Peirce's parts of a triadic sign relation in correspondence with Turner's phases of a social drama

Peirce's parts of a triadic sign relation	sign	interpretant	social object (end)
Phases of Turner's social drama	breach/crisis	redress	reintegration (or schism)

According to Turner, industrialization and division of labor in more advanced societies lead to many ritualistic times and spaces for liminality to be replaced by new liminoid phenomena. Liminoid spaces are closely associated with the leisure that comes with an advanced economy, as well as with institutions of cultural production such as higher educational institutions, scientific laboratories, and the entertainment industry. Turner's theory suggests some of the fields in which to apply the Deweyan semiotic model today, such as the interrelations of labor and leisure, of work and home, of institutions of cultural production for liminoid spaces and religious gatherings and social movements for modern versions of the liminal.

Conclusion and future work/next steps

A more realistic view of reflective moments vs. nonreflective moments (the specious vs. the functional present) in the models of the act of both Mead and Dewey allows us to see reflection as recurring often for brief moments in everyday situations to repair tears in the fabric of ongoing experience as opposed to the simplistic conception of the problematic situation as an on/off circuit of reflective vs. ongoing conduct with only occasional switches back and forth.

Much more importantly, Dewey's model of esthetic experience as a series of organized, rhythmic energies in the alternation of doings and undergoings, of various lengths and qualities, with pauses to reconstruct the past and adjust the end (object), offers a much more subtle and complex model for a pragmatist semiotic that captures the life and energy of social events.

Still to be done is to explore more closely as well as more widely the interrelations of social organizational rhythms and esthetic (human/social) rhythms. Turner's work suggests this direction, and Allen Bluedorn's (2002) review of the literature on organizational rhythms, including such concepts as the entrainment (in phase and tempo patterns) of one rhythm by another, suggests a promising area for application of the Deweyan semiotic model. In this connection, Zerubavel's insights on social rhythms (e.g., 1979, 1981) are important in spite of his structuralist language.

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