



# Introduction to Peircean Visual Semiotics (Bloomsbury Advances in Semiotics)

By Tony Jappy

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Contemporary culture is as much visual as literary. This book explores an approach to the communicative power of the pictorial and multimodal documents that make up this visual culture, using Peircean semiotics. It develops the enormous theoretical potential of Peirce's theory of signs of signs (semiotics) and the persuasive strategies in which they are employed (visual rhetoric) in a variety of documents.

Unlike presentations of semiotics that take the written word as the reference value, this book examines this particular rhetoric using pictorial signs as its prime examples. The visual is not treated as the 'poor relation' to the (written) word. It is therefore possible to isolate more clearly the specific constituent properties of word and image, taking these as the basic material of a wide range of cultural artefacts. It looks at comic strips, conventional photographs, photographic allegory, pictorial metaphor, advertising campaigns and the huge semiotic range exhibited by the category of the 'poster'. This is essential reading for all students of semiotics, introductory and advanced.

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**Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #2332766 in Books
- Published on: 2013-03-14
- Released on: 2013-03-14
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.25" h x .60" w x 6.27" l, .90 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 240 pages

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### **Editorial Review**

#### **Review**

Books that apply Peircean semiotics to visual images are relatively rare, and rarer still are books which, like that of Tony Jappy, review a large number of concepts developed by Charles Sanders Peirce in order to provide tools for the analysis of visual signs. (*Revue Cygne noir (Bloomsbury translation)*)

Peirce's scholarly life was one dedicated to understanding the nature and rhetorical function of both verbal and pictorial representation. Jappy's book clearly demonstrates how the powerful - and often poorly understood - framework of Charles S. Peirce's semiotics may be applied successfully to the analysis of pictorial documents. This book is a milestone in the centennial of Peirce's death that we are commemorating in 2014. (Jaime Nubiola, University of Navarra, Spain 2012-10-30)

Tony Jappy's new book is a masterful application of Charles Sanders Peirce's theory of signs to the visual world, a thoroughly-grounded exploration of the proposition that seeing is knowing in all its multifaceted details. The author's extensive pedagogical experience and the wealth of illustrative material make Introduction to Peircean Visual Semiotics an indispensable guide to the subject. (Michael Shapiro, Brown University, USA 2012-10-30)

#### **About the Author**

Tony Jappy is Emeritus Professor of English Linguistics and Semiotics at the University of Perpignan-Via Domitia, France.

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