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- Type:** Article in Journal
- Author:** West, Donna E.
- Title:** Peirce's Matrix of Individuation: The Work of Pronouns in Attentional Phenomena
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- Journal:** The American Journal of Semiotics
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- Keywords:** Individual, Singular, Pronoun
- Abstract:** Peirce's distinction between individuals and singulars is examined in light of developmental advances in pronoun use. While singulars individuate tokens of types/kinds, individuals assert their utter uniqueness. Components of individuals include: qualification as generals, determinateness, and instantaneous imposition into the context; those defining singulars entail: continuity of existence, self-contradiction, and boundaries of cognition. Early appearance in ontogeny, attention-securing status, and amplified application suggest the primacy of individuals over singulars. Its primacy is grounded in the Object's influence over the sign and the Interpretant, requiring attentional devices in Secondness, or turning to symbolic representations in Thirdness. Findings indicate that pronouns first materialize as individuals—"that" referring to any Object of focus (Dynamical Objects); later comparisons among Objects control pronoun use (Immediate Objects). In short, increased use of pronouns to refer to Immediate Objects facilitates Origo and orientational shifts, critical to symbolic reasoning.
- Language:** English