

# Real Object

1905 | Adirondack Summer School Lectures | MS [R] 1334:53

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...there are two aspects of the object:

1. The object as acting on the sign. That is called the *real object*
2. The object as represented in the sign, or the *immediate object*.

This passage comes from a portion of the Adirondack lectures that has been misplaced in the microfilm edition of Peirce's manuscripts

1906 [c.] | On Signs [R] | MS [R] 793:14

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...one must distinguish the Object as it is represented, which is called the Immediate Object, from the Object as it is in itself. The latter is purely active in the representation. That is, it remains in all respects exactly as it was before it was represented. It is true that the purpose of representing an Object is usually, if not always, to modify it in some respect. But by the Object Itself, or the Real Object, we mean the Object insofar as it is not modified by being represented.

1907 | Pragmatism | EP 2:407

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... the *requaesitum* which we have been seeking is simply that which the sign "stands for," or the idea of that which it is calculated to awaken. [—]

This *requaesitum* I term the *Object* of the sign; - the *immediate* object, if it be the idea which the sign is built upon, the *real* object, if it be that real thing or circumstance upon which that idea is founded, as on bedrock.

1907 | Pragmatism | MS [R] 318:24-6

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The immediate object is the object as the sign represents it: the real object is that same object as it is, in its own mode of being, independent of the sign or any other representation. [—] The real object corresponds to the existential meaning very obviously.

1907 | Pragmatism | MS [R] 318:16-7

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...philosophists are in the habit of distinguishing two objects of many signs, the immediate and the real. The former is an image, or notion, which the interpreter is supposed to have already formed in his mind before the sign is uttered. Thus, if a person, with a view to combatting an exaggerated admiration of ability, remarks that Richard III appears to have been an able ruler, it is a hundred to one that he never read any first hand testimony concerning Richard, and does not suppose that his interlocutor knows any more about the real Richard. He refers merely to the current notional Richard. The real object is, - so, at least, the conditional idealist will say, - is that figure of Richard which we should ultimately have in our minds as the result of sufficient information and reflexion.

1907 | Pragmatism | MS [R] 318:15

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...all logicians have distinguished two objects of a sign: the Immediate object or object as the sign represents it, (and without this one, a sign would not be a sign); the other [the] Real object, or object as it is independent of any particular idea representing it. Of course, many signs have no real objects.

1909 | Letters to William James | EP 2:498

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We must distinguish between the Immediate Object, - i.e., the Object as represented in the sign, - and the Real (no, because perhaps the Object is altogether fictive, I must choose a different term; therefore:), say rather the Dynamical Object, which, from the nature of things, the Sign *cannot* express, which it can only *indicate* and leave the interpreter to find out by *collateral experience*.