

# Suggestion

1893 [c.] | Grand Logic: Book I. Of Reasoning in General. Introduction. The Association of Ideas | CP 7.388

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What is, far more than unyielding uniformity, characteristic of the phenomenon of *suggestion*, as the calling up of an idea through association is called, is its *gentleness*.

1896 [c.] | Forms of Consciousness [R] | CP 7.548-51

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I have spoken of the first kind of *medisense*, abstraction, which breaks one idea away from another. There is an opposite influence by which when one idea has its vividness increased it gives an upward impulse to a number of other ideas with which it is connected so that it forms one set with them. The law of this is often called the law of the association of ideas. That is well enough. But it is inaccurate to call this phenomenon *association*, as Germans especially often do. Association is a different thing. More accurate German writers call the action of which we are now speaking *reproduction*. But even that is not free from objection. For the idea which receives an upward impulse, making it grow more vivid, was not necessarily ever so near the surface of consciousness before; or if it was, that circumstance has nothing to do with it. It is a great mistake to suppose that ideas only become associated into sets in the upper layer of consciousness, although such action is more lively there. Most English and American psychologists of today use the term *Reproduction*; but I prefer the older English word *Suggestion*, to which some of the very best writers still adhere. The only objection to it is that the word is used in another sense in reference to the phenomena of hypnotism.

What takes place in suggestion is that an idea when it rises gives an upward motion to all other ideas belonging to the same set. [—]

*Medisense* has three modes, *Abstraction*, *Suggestion*, *Association*.

1898 | Cambridge Lectures on Reasoning and the Logic of Things: Habit | RLT 232-3; CP 7.495

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According to those rules I am bound to use scientific terms in the senses in which they first became terms of science. Accordingly, the English associationalists having first made *association* a term of science, and they having been careful never to extend it to the operation or event whereby one idea calls up another into the mind, but to restrict it primarily to a *habit* or *disposition* of mind in consequence of which an idea of one description is likely to bring into comparative vividness of consciousness an idea of another description, or, when they applied the term association to any operation or event, to designate by it only that process of habituation by which such a habit or disposition of mind acquires strength, they having been punctilious in this matter, my code of rules obliges me logically and morally, to follow them. As for that mental event which corresponds, as we suppose, to the nervous discharge of one part of the cortex upon another, – or the action of one idea to render another idea which is associated with it vivid, – for that they employed the term *suggestion*.

This word is now applied mostly to motor phenomena or to such manifestations of mind as can be observed from without; and therefore, although the two meanings doubtless are in real facts connected together, the meanings themselves are different. But here a compromise is possible; for I shall violate no rule of terminology by speaking of the “suggestion” of the associationalists as *associational suggestion* and that of the hypnotists as *nervous suggestion*. The adjectives may be dropped, – especially the former, – in cases where there is no possibility of the meaning being mistaken.

1907 | Pragmatism | EP 2:552 n. 12

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The great founders of associationalism and of scientific psychology (after Aristotle), the Rev. Mr. Gay and Dr. David Hartley, usefully limited the term “association” to the process whereby one idea acquires the power to attract another from the depths of memory to the surface of consciousness, and to the habit resulting from this process. An association having once been established, that act by which, in accordance with it, one idea calls up another, they called *suggestion*.

1911 [c.] | A Sketch of Logical Critics | EP 2:454 n.

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I follow the usage of the early associationalists, Gay, Hartley, etc., in confining the term “association” to the storing away, in our spiritual or physical organisms, [of] ideas that, when so stored away, are in the potential mode of being, and in terming the agency of ideas in calling forth others from such potential, into actual being, *suggestion*, – a word of which the hypnotists ought not to be allowed the monopoly.