REPARATIVE REASONING: FROM PEIRCE'S PRAGMATISM TO AUGUSTINE's SCRIPTURAL SEMIOTIC

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> [The pragmatic maxim] is only an application of the sole principle of logic which was recommended by Jesus; "Ye may know them by their fruits" and it is very intimately allied with the ideas of the gospel. (Charles Peirce)[1]

The crucible of postmodern criticism has, in the past two decades or more, scared many a theologian off of logical work—or of seeking more formal philosophic tests of the cogency of one's theological arguments. It is as if the postmodern critique of the mis-uses of modern logic implied that no other logics were available. Charles Peirce's pragmatic semiotic offers one of several alternative lessons: a formal guide to reasoning in a way that repairs, rather than re-instantiates, the foundationalist practices of modernity. In this essay, I trace a series of arguments that lead from Peirce's pragmatic critique of modernism (under the alias of "Cartesianism") to Augustine's scriptural semiotic. The essay is situated within a pragmatic community of inquiry and thus endorses the pragmatists' critique of foundationalist and intuitionist methods of inquiry (see Argument 2.2 below). While pragmatists have offered genealogical accounts of these methods, the accounts have not yet isolated prototypes of a community of habits that would generate foundationalist as well as pragmatic sub-communities of activity. This essay's primary goal is to isolate such a prototype and thereby account for the co-presence of potentially dangerous and reparative tendencies within the same *habitus*.[2] A full account should include studies of medieval, Patristic,

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rabbinic, Greco-Roman, and biblical communities. With limited space, this essay focuses its attention on a single, Patristic prototype.

The author of this essay is a Jewish philosopher. Readers may therefore wonder why he has appeared to toil on behalf of a gospel-based tradition of inquiry. His first response is that such toil is worthy. His second response is that this brief essay does not display the end of its genealogy. There is of course much to fill in about Augustine and about his medieval descendents. But there are also more antecedents to uncover, in particular the rabbinic sages and their predecessors, whose scriptural canon and hermeneutic may contribute to many of the reparative and mediatory tendencies that are displayed in Augustine's work.

The essay is outlined numerically, so that each stage and sub-stage of argument may be identified precisely. The cost is some rhetorical ugliness. One possible gain is that any errors in the argument could be isolated in a given sub-stage and corrected without necessarily raising doubts about other sub-stages. Another possible gain is to illustrate—and test—what it may mean to prosecute theological inquiry in more formal ways than the current generation of theologians is wont to pursue.

1. According to Charles Peirce, what is troubling in modernist thinking finds a prototype in the Cartesian effort to reduce reparative reasoning to the logic of propositional claims about the world.
2. One of Peirce's early *and* late criticisms of Descartes' own Cartesianism was that, while justifiably critical of inadequacies in scholastic science, Descartes appeared to argue as if he were abandoning this science rather than reforming it and as if, therefore, his own science were generated *de novo* out of features of human experience *per se*. This was a misleading appearance on at least two levels. On one level, it misrepresented the etiology and the character of Descartes' argumentation, many of whose unspoken premises belonged, in fact, to scholastic science. On a second level, it misrepresented the logic of philosophic inquiry more generally. If philosophic inquiry were generated only out of generic features of human experience, then its premises would be universal and, if its arguments were sound, its conclusions would be universal as well. If universal, then these conclusions would be falsified by the discovery of any exceptions and, in case they were falsified, would have to be replaced by competing universal claims. Perhaps you get the picture: in Peirce's view, such a Cartesian philosophy would tend to be dogmatic and would tend to generate conflicts among contrary, universal claims.
   1.1. Briefly stated for want of space, we may say that the force of most postmodern criticisms is captured in the critique of "foundationalism", or the effort to locate some truth claim(s), independent of inherited traditions of practice, on the basis of which to construct reliable systems of belief and practice. Most efforts of this kind come in the

form of "intuitionism", or the belief that such truth claims may come in the form of discrete, self-legitimating cognitions.[3] In his early, *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* papers of 1868–9, Charles Peirce identified Cartesianism with intuitionism, the assumption that there is a "cognition not determined by a previous cognition of the same object, and therefore so determined by something out of consciousness."[4] This is, in other words, a self-referring and self-legitimating cognition. Within the theory of perception, this would mean that among our perceptions are those that indicate to us, at once, that there is something *there and* that it is *this* (or has this quality). The brunt of Peirce's critique is that such cognitions would be immune from any criticism or re-evaluation (since any criticism would belong to a separate cognition), that if non-falsifiable they could not at the same time count as truth claims, and that the general belief that warrants them (*that* there are such cognitions) would have to presuppose them; that, since, self-referring cognitions could be warranted only by self-referring cognitions, the claims of intuitionism are circular and thus not truth-claims but mere assertions.

1.2. In his early papers, Peirce's alternative to intuitionism was a competing doctrine that he later rejected as comparably circular: all cognitions or perceptions are "determined logically" by previous cognitions or perceptions.

2. Peirce's pragmatism emerged as a corrective both to Cartesianism and to his own, flawed alternative. It turned on his discovering the irreducibly triadic and reparative character of non-conventional truth claims. Peirce tended to articulate this discovery most clearly through a theory of signs (although there are other useful manners of articulation as well). The result is what one may label a "pragmatic semiotic." Since the term "pragmatism" carries misleading connotations for some readers, and since we understand Peirce's pragmatism to yield a theory of reparative reasoning, we will label the result a "reparative semiotics."[5]

2.1. The *reparative* dimension of Peirce's pragmatism may be introduced in the following way.

2.1.1. Truth claims divide into two classes with at least one subdivision (these are my terms, not Peirce's, but they correspond to his theory): (a) *constative*[6] claims (of which there are (a[i]) "common sense or everyday" claims and (a[ii]) "specialized or scientific" claims); and b) *reparative* or *contested* claims.

2.1.2. *Constative claims* are *conventional* in that they state a matter of fact with respect to an implicit set of non-contested conventions or rules of meaning (what Peirce called "interpretants"). Thus, if I say at a dinner table in my own house, "The salt shaker is on the small cabinet," I assume that my listeners share a sufficiently overlapping set of semantic and perlocutionary[7] conventions

that they will hear the claim as clear and distinct or unambiguous. *Common-sense* or *everyday claims* are made with respect to sub-communities of natural language use. *Specialized* or *scientific claims* are offered to sub-communities of inquirers who share an argot constructed for the sake of furthering specific projects of inquiry that do not replace or substitute for everyday discourses. The truth or falsity of a constative claim is judged with respect to the *coherence* of the claim with a given set of semantic and perlocutionary conventions *and* the *correspondence* of the claim with what listeners would expect to perceive or cognize as the object or referent of the claim if it were true.

2.1.3. *Reparative* or *contested claims* are offered to change or repair specific conventions for formulating claims in either everyday or specialized communities. Such claims are of necessity partly clear-and-distinct and partly ambiguous, since they both affirm and contest certain assumptions within a given community of word use. They must be sufficiently clear-and-distinct to call the listener's attention to the range of conventional claims that are contested as well as to those that are not contested. The new claims they assert about the former must be ambiguous or indefinite in varying degrees since the listener is being asked to entertain some new conventions of meaning. The business of Peirce's pragmatism was two-fold: to introduce the category of "reparative claims" as distinct from the more recognizable category of constative claims and to urge a specific set of reparative claims about the modern logic of inquiry.

2.2. *Peirce's critique of Cartesianism is not a critique of any constative claim but a critique of the (Cartesian or modern) tendency to treat reparative claims as if they were constative claims and, therefore, to offer a set of inadequate reparative claims.* In his early work (1867–8), Peirce identified Cartesian "intuitionism" as an errant, constative claim about the nature of our perception. Peirce's pragmatism emerged a decade later (1877–8) as a way of repairing Cartesian-like tendencies in his own proffered alternative to Descartes: early on, he had mis-introduced his doctrine of signs as a constative claim about the way we perceive the world rather than as a method for repairing errant conventions of meaning. As pragmatist, he re-categorized Descartes' epistemological claims as reparative rather than constative and his own theory of signs as a useful tool for diagramming reparative claims and constative claims and the crucial differences between them. These crucial differences are clarified by way of the triadic character of Peirce's reparative semiotic.

2.3. *Peirce's theory of signs offers a set of conventions for diagramming any patterns or rules of reasoning.* Consider, for example, his conventions

for diagramming semantic reference or signification. The fundamental unit of reference is the sign: a *signifier* that displays its *object* (reference or meaning) only with respect to a particular *interpretant* (context of meaning, interpretive mind-set, or system of deep-seated rules). Among types of sign, an *index* (symptom or mark) refers to its *object* by virtue of some direct force exerted by the object on the sign. In other words, an indexical sign is indifferent to its interpretant, the way a weathervane points north because the wind blows it that way. An *icon* (image) does not refer to its object ostensively; instead, it appears to its *interpretant* to share certain characters with its object. The icon therefore displays its meaning metaphorically, through similarity, the way a statue may represent some historical figure. A *symbol*, finally, refers to its *object* by virtue of some implicit law that causes the symbol to be *interpreted* as referring to that object. In other words, a symbol displays its meaning only to a particular interpretant, but it is not fully subject to the interpreter's attributions. Instead, a symbol *influences* the way its interpretant attributes meaning to it. The symbol therefore engages its interpretant in some practice, or what we may call a tradition of meaning. Transferring agency to the interpreter, the symbol also grants the interpreter some freedom to transform the way in which that meaning will be retransmitted. *In this way, the symbol is the fundamental agent of pragmatic inquiry.* It is itself the interpretant of some tradition's deep-seated rules of practice, of which it serves as an agent. At the same time, the freedom it grants its own interpreter serves as a sign that these rules are also subject to and possibly in need of change. In sum, signification is the product of a three-part relation among *sign, object, and interpretant.*

2.4. *In these terms, constative claims are verbal symbols* that typically leave their interpretants unstated: as if these conditions for making meaning were self-evident. At times, however, a speaker may feel a need to articulate these interpretants, when speaking, for example, in a new social setting to a group of new acquaintances who may not take his or her words to mean what they meant back home. What, however, if some speakers feel they are virtually never able to communicate a certain set of judgments within a given sub-community of natural or scientific language-use? Or if the judgments they habitually make about a certain aspect of the world no longer seem to hold true and they feel taken aback, uncertain if the world changed or they changed? *These are conditions that may stimulate reparative claims, or efforts to repair or reframe the interpretants that would condition a given range of constative judgments.*

2.5. *A reparative claim* is *a complex series of symbols offered not to represent any object of meaning but to display a sign-object-interpretant relation that is itself the subject of the claim.* The purpose of the claim is to draw the

listener's attention to this three-part relation rather than to any object of meaning. If the symbol is designed correctly, the listener will be drawn to imitate the claim or take action in response to it, rather than to observe and interpret what it may represent. Peirce's defining thesis, in this context, is that our habits of action may adequately be represented as three-part relations according to which certain stimuli in the world function as signs whose objects are certain ends of action and whose interpretants are certain reflex arcs.[8] An associated thesis is that habits may be communicated and taught through such representations. Reparative claims may therefore be represented as actions (of signification or communication) whose objects are repairs (and thus changes) in certain interpretants (the interpretants of certain habits of action whose apparent failings have stimulated the reparative claims).

2.5.1. *Habit-change is the intended interpretant of a reparative claim.* If the claim is received as intended, then the receiver is a habit of action whose stimulating sign is the reparative claim, whose interpretant is the habit of action as it has been enacted in the past, and whose object is a change in that habit. Reparative claims function as merely indexical symbols when they are received only as symptoms of something in the world. They function as merely iconic symbols when they are received only as depictions of some possible way of acting in the world. Each of these is an incomplete way of receiving reparative claims, since they claim not only to be symptoms of a need for change and not only depictions of a possible way of undertaking that change, but also (fully symbolic and thus legislative) directives to enact those possibilities experimentally. These are not simply commands to act, but directives to act-out a proposed habit-change and to continue to act it out as long as it appears to be free of the failings that prompted the reparative claim.

Throughout the following sub-stages of argument, habit-change will be illustrated through a set of reports on how inter-Abrahamic study fellowships stimulate habit-changes in relations among members of the three Abrahamic traditions. Members of the Society for Scriptural Reasoning ("scriptural reasoners") report, for example, that sustained study fellowships have warmed their admiration for the other two traditions of scriptural commentary while, at the same time, deepening their sense of intimacy with their mother-traditions. One who was accustomed only to rabbinic practices (habits) of scriptural interpretation came to appreciate parallels in Muslim interpretive practices while, at the same time, deepening his or her sense of what is distinctive in rabbinic midrash.

2.5.2. *To teach a habit is, more generally, to teach a habit-change; to learn a habit is thus an activity of non-identically repeating an observed habit.* We have seen that only a habit of action (as a triadic symbol) serves as interpretant of a habit of action (as a triadic symbol). Habits are thus taught or communicated by example, which means by repetition. Such a repetition is, however, also a distinct act of interpretation, since it refers to the way that a symbol or series of symbols are received with respect to a particular habit or set of habits of action. This interpretive-repetition is distinct from both the communicating-habit and the receiving-habit. The repetition may be "similar to" the communicating habit, but only as judged according to a subsequent claim; since there is no self-evident identity, the repetition always comes with a difference. This means that the repetition is different as well from the receiving-habit; a habit is learned, in other words, through habit-change. One could therefore say that teaching is like making a reparative claim; the difference, if any, is a matter of how much change we choose to assign to one act or the other.

To return to our example of inter-Abrahamic fellowship: scriptural reasoners report that they can teach the methods of scriptural reasoning only through apprenticeship. In our terms, this is to teach habit-change through imitation and repetition: "you have to do it to understand it."

3. *Peirce's critique of Cartesianism is thus a reparative claim, an effort to recommend a habit-change in certain practices of modern philosophy.* Cartesian "intuitionism" belongs, prototypically, to a broader practice of foundationalist criticism, which may be re-characterized as the misrepresentation of a set of reparative claims as if they were a set of constative claims. The latter set includes both statements of doubt (of which a prototype is "Never to accept anything as true that I did not know evidently to be so")[9] and statements of certainty (of which prototypes are *cogito ergo sum*, and "it is impossible for God ever to deceive me").[10] According to Peirce's critique, these claims are offered without reference to any presumed interpretants, and for this reason there is no criterion available for judging them true or false. Rather than dismiss these claims, however, Peirce offers a means of repairing them: the claims acquire meaning (objective reference) if they are re-interpreted as implicitly reparative claims whose interpretants have been suppressed. These interpretants may be identified as the habits of actions that the claims are supposed to repair. To repair Cartesian claims is thus to re-locate these habits of action and then to suggest how they informed Cartesian practice, how they may have failed, and how the Cartesian claims may be restated as context-specific efforts to repair those failings. To restate Cartesianism this way is to re-read negative Cartesian

claims (the fruits of Cartesian skepticism) as unarticulated criticisms of specific failings in these habits of action and to re-read positive Cartesian claims (the fruits of Cartesian dogmatism) as unarticulated proposals for repairing those failings.

3.1. *Peirce's effort is to repair Cartesianism, not replace it.* To repair Cartesian claims, Peirce had to offer concrete hypotheses about the specific habits of action that may have troubled Descartes or other Cartesian thinkers: who practiced these habits, in what ways the habits may have failed, how Cartesian critics may have sought to replace rather than repair these habits, how and why the resultant "replacement philosophy" failed to achieve its ends, and how the Cartesian criticisms may themselves be repaired rather than replaced. The most general criticism is that replacement is the wrong way to achieve repair (see 1.1 above). Replacement philosophy proposes, against empirical evidence, that philosophers' powers of criticism have sources outside the habits of action they have inherited from the past and that these powers have universal form and function and may be appropriated independently of one's particular context of action (1.1). Replacement philosophy therefore entails foundationalism (1.2) and, in many cases, intuitionism, or the belief that one may access these powers by way of self-legitimating cognitions. Peirce learned that one cannot repair replacement philosophy through replacement! (To attempt this is to reinforce, in effect, the logic of replacement one has, in intention, sought to remove.) To repair Cartesianism is to recover the broader habits of action one shares with Cartesianism and, then, do a better job of repairing whatever errant tendencies the Cartesians may have identified in those habits.

3.2. *Replacement philosophies offer reparative claims as if they were constative; reparative claims re-read these constative claims as undisclosed efforts of repair.* Peirce's pragmatism emerged as a way of transforming his previous, constative claims about Cartesianism into reparative claims. Intuitionism, he now claimed, marked an errant effort to repair certain errant habits of action, and semiotics helps uncover the three-part relation that can be traced among intuitionist claims, previous habits of action whose undisclosed errors are the proper subject-matter of those claims, and ways of repairing these habits so as to remove their errors.

3.3. *To reread Cartesian claims as reparative claims is to engage in genealogical inquiry.* Peirce's critique of Descartes was in fact the concluding stage of his genealogical critique of what he considered the dogmatic empiricism of such contemporaries as J. S. Mill. Why did they offer dogmatic generalizations about the outside world? To answer his question, Peirce undertook a genealogical inquiry that included the following steps:

3.3.1. *He reasoned regressively (from effect to possible cause or transcendental condition[11]) by proposing, per hypothesis, what habits of inquiry would most likely generate the empiricists' dogmatic claims.*

3.3.2. *He then searched for evidence of comparable habits of inquiry among the philosophic practices that the empiricists inherited.*

3.3.3. *He then selected one early prototype that most clearly displayed these habits and that also added otherwise unavailable evidence about their possible provenance.* As reported in Arguments 1–3, Peirce suggested that the empiricists displayed foundationalist and intuitionist habits of inquiry that were articulated most clearly in Descartes' *Discourse on Method*. Descartes' account of doubt, moreover, directly stimulated Peirce's hypothesis that these habits were shaped by Descartes' efforts to repair his own philosophic inheritance.

3.4. But what part of that inheritance persisted as a source of Descartes' own capacity to criticize it? Peirce argued that, if Cartesian criticism is directed at all its inherited habits of action and inquiry, then the object of Cartesian criticism must also include the source of its capacity to criticize. But how can a set of habits serve as both the source and object of criticism? To explain how, Peirce proposed the following thought experiment: Let us conceive of any habit of inquiry as two-tiered. We will imagine that one tier generates immediately useful, visible habits of action and belief that are subject to error and at times in need of reform; Peirce called them "*B-reasonings.*" The second tier generates habits of acting that are generally non-visible, infallible and of little apparent use as long as the other rules are operative; Peirce labeled them "A-reasonings." The function of A-reasonings is only to repair B-reasonings. In these terms, Peirce suggested that Cartesians are criticizing only what is visible to them on a first tier of action, and that, when searching for error-free criteria for repairing such habits, Cartesians are searching only for A-reasonings that can be drawn from the second tier to guide their repair.

3.4.1. *A-reasonings—or the habits that guide reparative inquiry—may be characterized neither as "universal" nor as "non-universal," but only as free from doubt so as long as they continue to ground the critic's capacities to doubt and to propose alternatives in response to doubt.* For Peirce, Cartesian desire for the "universal" marks a desire to separate reparative claims from their concrete interpretants and, thereby, to warrant context-free, constative claims about the world. What is sought in the universal is freedom from doubt. While arguing that the search for universality is in vain, Peirce attends with great care to the underlying search for indubitability, since this is a symptom

of the critic's warranted desire to locate the acritical grounds of reparative reasoning.

    3.4.2. Because he seeks to repair rather than replace Cartesian inquiry, Peirce re-reads each of the otherwise troubling features of Cartesian skepticism and dogmatism as symptoms of a reparative project that has yet to recognize itself as such. Peirce's corrective could almost be stated in the terms of Deuteronomy 11: the ground you seek "is not in heaven that you would say who will go up to heaven to find it . . . , but it is near by you, in your heart", that is, in the second-tier of acritical habits that you have inherited along with your first-tier of fallible ones. To locate these deeper habits is to pursue genealogical inquiry. This means to search in literary histories for evidences of habits of inquiry that could conceivably have engendered yours, then to search back for what could have engendered those. It means, at the same time, to engage in the kind of regressive reasoning[12] that enables you, at each stage of the inquiry, to diagram a given habit of inquiry as a formal set of rules for acting in a given way within a given context of action.

4. From where did Descartes inherit his capacity to criticize his philosophic heritage and propose alternatives? To ask this question by way of Peirce's critique of Cartesianism is also to search for prototypes of Peirce's pragmatism, for, in the end, he seeks to repair Mill's or Descartes' Cartesianism only by way of repairing his own. If reparative reasoning is an effort to recommend habit-change, then it is also an effort to recommend habit-change in others by way of recommending habit-change in oneself. It is, therefore, also a way of recommending habit-change in the communities of practice one shares with others. In semiotic terms, one may say that habit-change is the interpretant of a habit-change. If so, any community that undergoes habit-change does so as the interpretant of habit-change in another community. Change in one community is thus a symbol of change in another, and one can conceive of a semiotic chain linking one community undergoing change to another and another—and these communities may form a series in time (a chain of transmission) or in space (a chain of influence or learning). In these terms, Peirce's pragmatism may also be characterized as an effort at communal repair, enlisting second-tier communal habits as resources for repairing first-tier communal habits (see 3.4) and as part of a "reparative chain" of communities.[13] To return to a previous example (see above on "scriptural reasoning," 2.5.1, 2.5.2): entering into theological dialogue, Muslim, Jewish, and Christian scriptural reasoners discovered that they thereby changed some of their habits of relation to one another. They discovered that, by teaching their practice of dialogue, they thereby taught modest forms of habit-change in the way each of their religious communities could conceivably relate to the others. One of these

changes was to recognize some ways in which habit-changes in one community might influence habit-changes in the other communities.

4.1. In these terms, *genealogical inquiry may be characterized as an effort to situate a reparative inquiry within a communal chain of transmission.* "Community" refers here to an overlapping set of habits or a set of habits shared (non-identically) by several entities (activities or persons).[14] The term "Cartesianism" refers to a community of habits of inquiry, and Peirce's genealogical study of Cartesianism is an effort to see if the Cartesians may represent a sub-grouping within a larger community, in particular one that reaches back in time. Adding Peirce as pragmatist to the community of Cartesians means adding both to a larger community that inherits the larger set of habits that collectively ground, warrant, and repair Cartesian criticisms. For the remainder of this essay, "the Cartesian community" will refer to this larger set of habits.

5. *Genealogical examination of the roots of Cartesian inquiry imitates the stages of Peirce's genealogical examination of the roots of empiricism. Reasoning regressively from the practices of Cartesian criticism to their possible conditions, the first stage generates a typology of the elemental habits of Cartesian inquiry. The second stage culls evidence of comparable habits of inquiry among antecedent communities of inquiry. In the third stage, one early prototype is selected that most clearly displays these habits and that adds otherwise unavailable evidence about their possible provenance.*

   5.1. *In the first stage of study, three sets of conditions merit attention: what enables Cartesians to seek to repair their inherited habits, what tempts them to replace repair with dogmatic assertion, and what enables them to overcome the temptation and repair its consequences.*

      5.1.1. *What enables Cartesians to seek to repair their inherited habits?* Arguments 2–3 yield three elemental characteristics of Cartesian inquiry in the broader sense: a) *A primary interest in knowing the world scientifically: beholding, examining, analyzing, in each case reasoning from observation to explanation.* The logical model here is constative and propositional (Argument 3); b) *Acute attentiveness to signs of distress—problems, errors, irreparable disagreement.* In the case of Cartesians in the narrow sense, the signs are strictly epistemic (doubt and uncertainty), and the logical model remains constative and propositional. The pragmatists claim that the former signs are displaced indices of practical disruption: dis-ease on an individual or societal level. For them, the logical model is thus reparative and triadic, displayed in the interpretive relations among a minimal of three semiotic elements; c) *A dialectic of constative and reparative claims about the world.* The (broad) community of Cartesians is characterized by competing methods of response

to distress: constative claims on the one side (both critical and affirmative claims) and reparative claims on the other (involving critique, affirmation, and habit-change). The former method may be summarized this way: *observe what is there; uncover self-evident grounds for evaluating the truth or falsity of what is observed; judge as false what cannot be derived or verified through ultimately self-evident judgments or intuitions; judge as true what can.* The latter method may be summarized this way: *observe what is there; attend especially to what is marked by suffering or dividedness; assume as a regulative ideal that, behind these signs of distress, there is a complex of habits of which some require habit-change and some are sources of instruction in how to conduct this habit-change; seek to become an agent of the latter.* These two methods are accompanied by different accounts of what enables Cartesians to repair inherited habits. According to the first method, this capacity can be traced to innate ideas or the light of nature, so that the source of repair lies in the inquirer—the one who observes signs of distress and responds to them. Reparative inquiry may include self-inquiry, for anyone in distress is also a potential agent of repair. The capacity to repair need not, however, be intrinsic to any community of inherited habits: the light of nature is native only to the individual person as agent of reasoning. According to the second method, this capacity can be traced, per hypothesis, to each community of inherited habits. These two methods therefore compete within the broader Cartesian community, but the ways they compete are also different.[15] One recommends arguing on behalf of what is true; the other recommends seeking antecedent grounds for dialogue.

5.1.2. *What tempts Cartesians to replace repair with dogmatic assertion?* To ask this question is to situate this essay within the pragmatic sub-community and thus to endorse the pragmatists' critique of foundationalist and intuitionist methods of inquiry (Argument 2.2). As noted in the introduction, one goal of this essay is to identify a prototypical community of habits that would, at once, generate potentially foundationalist as well as pragmatic sub-communities of activity.

5.1.3. *What enables Cartesians to overcome the temptations of foundationalism and intuitionism and repair their consequences?* The other goal of this essay is to isolate prototypes of the capacity to repair such temptations as errant practices of repair.

5.2. *The second stage of genealogical inquiry culls evidence of comparable habits of inquiry among antecedent communities of inquiry.* Work on this stage should include studies of *medieval, Patristic, rabbinic, Greco-Roman, and*

biblical communities. With limited space, this essay focuses its attention on a single, Patristic prototype.

    5.2.1. *Peirce attended to the scholastic and earlier medieval contexts of Cartesian inquiry and criticism. While his studies display prototypes for various elements of Cartesian and pragmatic inquiry, they do not uncover prototypes for the entire community of Cartesian inquiry, to account, in other words, for contexts that might give rise to such a community of inquiry, including its intra-communal dialectic.*[16]

  5.3. *In the third stage, one early prototype is selected that most clearly displays these habits and that adds otherwise unavailable evidence about their possible provenance.*

6. ***Augustine: the single most suggestive prototype.*** Augustine's scriptural and Trinitarian semiotic displays the single most suggestive prototype for the entire set of Cartesian habits of inquiry, including the dialectic of reparative and foundationalist/intuitionist modes of inquiry. This is not a triumphalist claim on behalf of Augustine, since such a prototype would engender some discord as well as repair. It is, nonetheless, an affirmative claim, for it suggests that the dialectic that accompanies this prototype is civilization-wide, that Augustine is one of those figures in whom "the diverse rays of a entire civilization are captured,"[17] and that, whatever Augustine's imperfections, his scriptural and Trinitarian semiotic can prove redemptive for those who glean from it habits of reparative reasoning. This is the civilization whose elemental sources are not less than two: the Hellenistic/Mediterranean civilization into which stream flowed the habits, at least, of both Hellenic and Scriptural reasoning and action.[18] On this view, this Western civilization (as it may also be labeled) tends irremediably to inner dialectic because its two major sources do not blend or marry peacefully unless they are joined not just by some third but the one third that alone joins them. For this essay, the primary name of this one is "the Word of God." For various sub-communities in the West, it is otherwise named *logos*, *verbum, dibbur* (Hebrew for God's "spoken-word"), Torah, or Wisdom (*chokhmah*, *Sophia*). On this view, Augustine's semiotic proves fruitful because it offers a means of enabling this Word to be received as a mediating third by those guided at once by Scriptural and Hellenic habits of inquiry and action. On this view, furthermore, there is no substitute for this unique third: the genealogical evidence is that substitutes tend either to have no effect or, eventually, to exacerbate conflicts among the various habits that evolve from out of Hellenic and Scriptural sources—for example by encouraging efforts to assimilate any one set of habits into another or in other ways reducing one to the demands of the other. Within the limits of this essay, there is space only to illustrate how the various elements of the broader Cartesian habitus appear in Augustine's semiotic and how his enactment of them displays otherwise imperceptible sources of the pragmatists' reparative reasoning.[19]

6.1 *Augustine's scriptural and Trinitarian semiotic displays three overall epistemological tendencies*:[20]

  6.1.1 *Objectivism: a tendency to read certain material or external signs as indices (or direct indications of the existence) of the real.*

    6.1.1.1 a) *Biblical objectivism*: a tendency to categorize the Bible as a direct description of the life of God on earth. This tendency appears in dialectical opposition to another one:

    6.1.1.2 b) *Logical objectivism*: a tendency to categorize formal systems of logic as direct descriptions of the elemental characteristics of being itself as the real.

  6.1.2 *Internalism: a tendency to receive certain modes of consciousness as icons (or images) of being (as the real).* Internalism appears, overall, in dialectical opposition to Objectivism.

    6.1.2.1 a) *Biblical internalism*: a tendency to identify one's reception of the Bible with an icon of the divine presence. This is a foundationalist tendency that appears in dialectical opposition to another one:

    6.1.2.2 b) *Logical internalism*: a tendency to identify the cogito with the internalized character of the real, or being itself. This is an intuitionist tendency.

  6.1.3 *Mediatory or reparative rationality: a tendency to participate in certain semiotic processes as means of redeeming sin and (non-identically) imitating the actions of God in this world.*

    6.1.3.1 a) *Confessional Rationality:* A capacity, in the face of Scripture's witness, to recognize and acknowledge marks of sinfulness in one's own *habitus*. This is a capacity to recognize in one's objectivism a capacity to mistake representations of the real for the real itself and to recognize in one's internalism a capacity to mistake oneself for an unclouded image of the divine (or worse). This does not imply that objectivism and internalism are unwarranted *per se*. They alone initiate the process of reparative reasoning and then function as the irreplaceable objects of confession and redemption.

    6.1.3.2 b) *Transformative Rationality*: A capacity for radical habit-change. This is a capacity, by way of Scripture's witness, to recognize and internalize rules of *askesis* and, thereby, to transform objectivism and internalism into tendencies for confessional and transformative rationality.

    6.1.3.3 c) *Trinitarian Rationality*: A capacity to engage intimately with the divine life and, through this engage-

ment, to participate in God's love of and repair of the world. God alone is mediator and redeemer, and no representation or agent substitutes for God in this work.

6.2 *Augustine's writings provide explicit and implicit evidence for all three tendencies: of particular note are* The Confessions, De *doctrina christiana*, *and* De trinitate.

As portrayed in the *Confessions*, Augustine's restless search may be read as his search for a logical discourse that both demonstrates the Bible's reasonableness and articulates its *ratio*.[21] In these terms, *De doctrina christiana* may be read as introducing his place of rest: a scriptural semiotic that serves the norms of both Hellenic and Scriptural inquiries by showing how the Bible's conventional signs can communicate the redemptive movement of God's Word in this world. From *Conf. to De doct. to De trin.*, the movement of Augustine's semiotic writing may be read as tracing the reparative work of that Word as it receives the fruit of Hellenic logical inquiry and transforms it into a vehicle for Scriptural and Trinitarian semiotics. On this reading, Stoic logic offered Augustine the most mature expression of Hellenic logical inquiry; *De. doct.* shows Augustine at work transforming Stoic logic into the triadic semiotic that, alone, can diagram the mediatory movement of intra-Scriptural rationality; and *De trin.*—rather than *De doct.*—displays Augustine's semiotic in its most mature expression. There is no space in this essay to unpack this thesis about *De trin.* The following pages will be employed, instead, to identify and illustrate the three interpretive tendencies whose inter-relations trace the process of Augustine's transformative work—or, in other words, whose inter-relations serve as elemental marks of the Word as a reparative movement within the world of conventional signs. While the third, mediatory tendency, is the most mature expression of Augustine's transformative work, this tendency cannot stand alone; it guides worldly behavior only through its intimate relations with the first two tendencies (to objectivism and internalism). When and if divorced from the third tendency, these two work as competing forces; they and their inter-relations become vehicles of sin and error. When guided by the third tendency, these two relate to one another dialogically and serve as elemental vehicles of what may be called Augustine's reparative *habitus*. The movement of Augustine's writings displays not only the work of this *habitus* but also its emergence and development; the *habitus* is therefore more weakly displayed in the first books of *De doct.* than in *De. trin.* Since all the tendencies are at work dynamically but differently in all of Augustine's writings, each of the following citations displays the influence of each tendency, to varying degrees. Each citation is therefore offered not to proof text

a given tendency, but only to illustrate where one tendency may tend to dominate the other two.

6.2.1 *Objectivism*:

While isolable as separate tendencies, Augustine's objectivism and internalism work in dialectical opposition one to the other. This opposition may correspond in one sense to the "restlessness" that Augustine dramatizes in *Conf*. Its influence is less apparent as one approaches *De trin*. and the greater influence therein of Augustine's mediatory reasoning. The instability of these first two tendencies means that each displays an inner dialectic as well, typically between Hellenic/philosophic and Scriptural poles of inquiry. This may be considered the prototype of Augustine's inner dialectic *per se*: a civilizational dialectic that is resolved only in the company of the God who is redeemer, which means not by way of any finite cultural construct. Augustine's objectivist tendency propels him to look in the world for signs of direct encounter with what may named "being itself" or "God." His internalist tendency draws him, instead, to look within for intimate acquaintance with the characteristics of this God or this being. The dialectic between the two generates four foci of inquiry, each of which fails to fulfill the desire that propels it, but all of which work together to advance the development of Augustine's *habitus*.

6.2.1.1. a) *Biblical objectivism*:

If, following Augustine's allegorical reading of Genesis, " 'Adam's sin led to the very institution of signs as a means of communication between God and human beings'[22] [and if,] after the Fall, after Babel, knowledge is always mediated, [then] 'how . . . will one be able to read Scripture in a way which makes its signs an antidote, rather than a catalyst, for sin?'[23]"[24] Augustine's answer is the dominant theme of *De. doctr*: "God has given us the signs of sacred scripture to reveal his will, and in so doing his providence" (2.5.6). Despite the finitude of conventional signs, the signs of scripture reveal God's will and, thereby, the capacity to "treat so many diseases of the human will, starting out from language."[25] This capacity is the objective power of Scripture: an entire "semiotic universe [is] paradigmatically encoded in holy writ," because scripture is but a "textual replication"[26] of the Word made flesh. These claims are not strictly objectivist—much else is blended in—but they illustrate the objectivist

leaning, which in this case is to trust that the book in which Ambrose educated Augustine's mother displays God's will to us here. The next question is of course the internalist one, "but how do we know this?" But soon the objectivist one returns "and how do we check the truth of our knowledge?"[27]

6.2.1.2. b) *Logical objectivism*:

As dramatized in *Conf.*, Augustine searches—from Manichees to Platonists to Stoic logic—not only for a logical discourse that can articulate the Bible's *ratio*, but also for a Greco-Roman discourse that can successfully account for the reality of discourse as well as of what we know by way of it. While it therefore serves his tendency to logical rather than Biblical objectivism, Augustine's study of Greco-Roman logic introduces an unexpectedly logical reason for his returning to the Bible. The reason is uncovered in his study of Stoic logic.

Setting out the elements of a formal semiotic, *De doctr.* makes only a few improvements on Aristotle's theory of signs. Augustine offers two definitions of sign (*signum*): "signs . . . are things used to signify something" (1.2) and "a sign is a thing (*res*) which causes us to think of something beyond the impression the thing itself makes upon the senses" (2.1). Following the second definition, a sign thus entails some thing (*res*), some sensation caused (made) by the thing, and some thinking caused in us by the thing. Augustine distinguishes two types of sign: *signa naturalia* are natural signs which "without any intention or desire of signifying, make us aware of something beyond themselves, as smoke signifies fire" (2.2); *signa data* are given signs, or "those which living creatures show to one another for the purpose of conveying, in so far as they are able, the motions of their spirits or something which they have sensed or understood. Nor is there any other reason for signifying, that is, for giving signs (*significandi*, *id est signi dandi*), except for bringing forth and transferring to another mind (*animum*) what is conceived in the mind of the person who gives the sign" (2.2). Only the latter are of interest to Augustine.

So far, Augustine is close to Aristotle.[28] Then, however, Augustine adds something. As Robert

Markus reads him, Augustine attempts, in so many words, to say what Peirce will later say: that a sign is a thing that "stands *for* something *to* somebody."[29] Of signs, natural signs are what Markus calls "symptoms," or "anything which 'goes together with' that of which it is taken to be the sign."[30] This would seem to imply that "natural *signa data*" are to be classed with natural signs (that have their meaning *physei*), and the class of *signa data* would be reserved for merely intentional and conventional signs, that have their meaning *thesei*, or what Markus calls "symbols."[31] Markus makes a judgment here about Augustine's interpretive *tendency* toward *interiorizing* the activity of genuine semiosis. The tendency comes out more fully in *De trin.* XIII, where Augustine claims that a word is a word only if it means something. Words do not, therefore, stand for things, but only for their intended meanings (*De trin*. XV), while signs in general will have meaning *to* the interpreter for whom there is a meaning convention. Of symbols, then, we may distinguish the signifier (*signatum*); the intended meaning or object (*significatum*); and "the subject to whom the sign stands for the object signified."[32]

Augustine's notion of *significatum* is the key addition, since it indicates his distinguishing between a sign's intentional object (or what Peirce called its "immediate" object) and its "dynamical object," the *res*. Augustine could not consistently draw such a distinction without providing for the sign's interpretant, what he calls "the subject for whom the sign stands. . . ." This is a triadic, pragmatic distinction. And Augustine appears to have picked it up from the Stoics. According to Sextus, the Stoics, after Aristotle, defined a sign as "an antecedent judgment in a valid hypothetical syllogism, which serves to reveal the consequent."[33] They linked three things together:

"the signification" (*semainomenon*), "the signifier" (*semeinon*) and "the name-bearer" (*tugkainon*). The signifier is an utterance (*phonen*), for instance, "Dion"; the signification is the

actual state of affairs (*pragma*) revealed by an utterance, and which we apprehend as it subsists in accordance with our thought, whereas it is not understood by those whose language is different . . . ; the "name-bearer" is the external object, for instance Dion himself. Of these, two are bodies—the utterance and the name-bearer; but one is incorporeal—the state of affairs signified (*semainomenon pragma*) and sayable (*lekton*), which is true or false.[34] . . . They say that a "sayable" is what subsists in accordance with a rational impression, and a rational impression is one in which the content of the impression can be exhibited in language.[35]

It appears, then, that the Stoa, against Aristotle, interposed *lekta* between thoughts and the things they signify.[36] The *lekton* would then appear to be the stimulus for Augustine's *significatum.*

But how would this lesson from the Stoa lead him back to the Bible? It does for the simple reason that a sign's "intentional object" does not belong to the observable world, even the observable human world. If the "objective" character of signs includes such an object, then it is an object whose character could be discerned only "within" the signifier. But if all things in the world are potential signs, where is their "within?" It would not be surprising if Augustine brought this question back to the Biblical book of Genesis, for there indeed is a narrative that cares about the intended objects not only of we who speak and write but of all the creatures who were spoken into existence by God the Creator. If intended objects belong to logic, then the Bible may not lie outside the bounds of logic, for it is all about intentions. If a Stoic-inspired semiotic includes *significata*, then such a semiotic may be applied to—or even extended by—the reading of Scripture.

6.2.2 *Internalism*:

As noted in 6.2.1, Augustine's internalist tendency drew him to look within for intimate acquaintance with the characteristics or personality of God or being. It thereby drew him, ironically, also toward the possible sin of self-love.

6.2.2.1 a) *Biblical internalism*:

If the Bible offers instruction in the *significata* of God's created world, and if to learn that instruction is to discern the *significata* of God's revealed word, then how does the written word reveal its *significata* to me?

> Verily within me, within the chamber of my thought, Truth, neither Hebrew, nor Greek, nor Latin, nor barbarian without the organs of voice and tongue, without the sound of syllables, would say 'He speaks the truth,' and I, forthwith assured of it, confidently would say unto that man of Thine, 'Thou speakest the truth'" (*Conf.*, 12.3.5).

In this illustration, the "inner man" displays a prelinguistic capacity that may refer to a capacity either to house second-tier habits ("A reasonings," see Argument 4.1), or to know those habits in ways that anticipate Descartes' innate ideas and light of nature: that is, in foundational ways that reduce second-tier habits to the form of first-tier propositions. The ambiguity stimulates competing lines of Augustinian philosophic theology. Are there habits of biblical reading to acquire that would enable me to discern the intentions of the Bible's words? If so, where is such wisdom found, what practice of inquiry leads me there? Or is the habit already immanent in who I am as reader, and it remains for me now only to open myself to it? If so, when and how does this inner light come and by what authority would I judge when it has come and what it discloses?

6.2.2.2 b) *Logical internalism*:

Augustine's biblical internalism both leads to and competes with his logical internalism. His turning to an "inner man" as inner reader leads naturally to his proofs of the *cogito*, but it also separates him from these proofs since it potentially sets the I am of the creature against the I am of the indwelling God. At issue is the rule of faith according to which one can discern God's intention in the scriptural word.

> These [Biblical] books served to remind me to return to my own self. Under your guidance I

entered into the depths of my soul, and this I was able to do because your aid befriended me (Ps. 29). I entered, and with the eye of my soul, such as I was, I saw the Light that never changes casting its rays over the same eye of my soul, over my mind (*Conf.,* 7.10).

And who is the "I" who saw? The rule of faith could comment on itself as an indwelling light, as in the full passage from Romans that Augustine cites in *Conf.* 8.12: "let us pass our time honorably, as by the light of day" (*Romans* 13:13–14). Or, as C. C. Pecknold suggests, it may be received as something like "the internal logic of the scriptures," what the texts of Scripture may encode in the reader.[37] These options belong to the objectivist-internalist dialectic.

6.2.3 *Mediatory or reparative rationality:*

Augustine's third tendency does not simply grow out of the other two. As dramatized in the conversion narrative of *Conf.*, this tendency displays the mark of a radical habit-change that Augustine identifies with his direct encounter with God. As a consequence of the change, the dialectic of objectivism/ internalism is transformed into a triadic process of reparative reasoning, as displayed in its most developed form in *De trin*. but also as anticipated in the texts of *Conf*. and *De. doct*. While *De doct*. is considered the locus classicus of Augustine's theory of signs, this text tends to display the triadic character of his mature semiotic in only objectivist and internalist ways: on the one hand through objectivist accounts of the relations among signs (whose three parts are merely indexical signs of a triadic *process per se*), on the other hand through internalist accounts of how individual signs bear meanings. In this sense, *De trin*. ought to be privileged as the primary demonstration of Augustine's semiotic. Although it lacks a formal theory of signs, its account of the Triune life is Augustine's most compelling logic of the triadic *process* of semiosis. To inscribe marks like 1, 2, 3 (or sign, object, interpreter) is only to point demonstratively to the elements of such a process. To diagram the process itself, one must narrate the dialogic movement of signification from sign to object of reference to object/interpretant/meaning to interpretant/sign/performance and so on and also from one such triad to another and from one dimension of signification to another. To do this, one must, furthermore, not only narrate but also perform, or in other words, inscribe the narrative as one

performs it. *Conf.* introduces this kind of performance; *De trin.* extends it deeply; *De doct.* tends only to name it, naming it in helpful ways but also losing the performance in the act of naming it. In the terms of Arguments 2–4, semiosis is a drama of habit-change and, more than that, of the transmission of habit-changes from community to community. *De trin.* itself does not provide a fully embodied accounting in those terms; it still displays traces of objectivism/internalism, and these restrain its Trinitarian performance. Nonetheless, within the limits of its literary medium, *De trin.* merits a noteworthy place in the company of other major performances of Scriptural semiosis, from Poinsot to Kierkegaard to Peirce. In sum, *De trin.* provides the triadicity that is lacking in *De doct.*, and Peirce provides the formal sign theory that is lacking in *De. trin.* For a full-length study, the rest of Argument 6 would best be displayed through a Peircean reading of *De. trin.* For this brief essay, however, there is not sufficient room to articulate the sign theory that is merely implicit in *De. trin.* The following illustrations are there-fore limited to texts from the *Conf.* and *De doct.*, at least antici-pating the subtleties that are yet to follow in *De. trin.*

6.2.3.1 a) *Confessional Rationality*:

As noted in 6.2.1.1, *De doct.* muses on the ironic gift of language, which serves as both a vehicle of God's redeeming Word and a potential source of error and sin. Argument 6 portrays Augustine's objectivist and internalist tendencies in a similar light: as potential vehicles of both sin and redemption. The two potentials are separated by the absence or pres-ence of a third, mediatory tendency, the first condi-tion for which is a capacity for confessional rationality. "There is no one but you to whom I can say, 'If I have sinned unwittingly, do you absolve me. Keep me ever your own servant, far from pride' (Ps. 19: 13–14)" (*Conf.*, 1.5). "But, dust and ashes though I am let me appeal to your pity, since it is to you in your mercy that I speak, not to a man, who would simply laugh at me" (*Conf.*, 1.6). *Conf.* begins in this spirit and retains it to the end: "I am poor and needy and I am better only when in sorrow of heat I detest myself and seek your mercy, until what is faulty in me is repaired and made whole and finally I come to that state of peace which the eye of the proud cannot see" (*Conf.*, 10.38). In these terms, Augustine's reparative tendency may be said to begin with

doubt: not, in Descartes' sense, doubt of the world, but doubt of oneself, and not, in Descartes' sense, doubt according to the criteria of the cogito, but doubt and self-criticism in light of God's countenance. This doubt is, then, confession to God alone, the first moment of reparative reasoning.

6.2.3.2 b) *Transformative Rationality:*

The central activity of reparative reasoning is habit-change: to turn, through intimate relation to the one to whom one confesses, from sin and error to a reformed way of living. Scripture calls the sinner to turn and gives instruction in the way of turning:

> My soul resisted your healing hand, for it was you who prepared and dispensed the medicine of faith and made it so potent a remedy for the diseases of the world (*Conf.*, 6.4). . . . Since we were too weak to discover the truth by pure reasoning and therefore needed the authority of the sacred writings, I now began to believe that you would never have conferred such preeminent authority on the scripture, now disused through all the lands, unless you had willed that it would be a means of seeking to know you (*Conf.*, 6.5).

The Word delivered through scripture thus surpasses what one could hear through one's own reasoning. This is not to abandon reason, but to receive it afresh:

> Come says the Lord, let us reason together, so that light may be made in the firmament of heaven [the Bible as firmament] and live over the earth (*Conf.*, 13.19, citing Isaiah 1.16–18).[38]

Objectivism remains in this reasoning, but transformed now into attentiveness to neighbor and to God; internalism remains as well, now transformed into pursuit of askesis in service to neighbor and to God:

> O Lord my God, listen to my prayer. In your mercy grant what I desire, for it is not for myself alone that I so ardently desire it: I wish also that it may serve the love I bear to others.

> . . . Circumcise the lips of my mind and my mouth (*Conf.*, 11.2.).

6.2.3.3 c) *Trinitarian Rationality:*

> Turn to us again, O Lord God of Hosts, cause Thy face to shine; and we shall be saved (Ps. 80:8). For wherever the soul of man turns itself, unless towards Thee, it is affixed to sorrows. . . . And even thus is our speech accomplished by signs emitting a sound; but this, again, is not perfected unless one word pass away when it has sounded its part, in order that another may succeed it . . . (*Conf.*, 4.10)

In the light of his conversion, Augustine perceived the emptiness of his previous use of words as merely natural things that lacked, one might say, the interpretant with respect to which they symbolized some one reality rather than a myriad of ephemeral possibilities. Looking back at the foundationalist tendencies in his early critique of Descartes, Peirce wrote in comparable ways about the interpretant that was lacking in his work: what he often named the "key" to unlocking the mysteries of the universe. For Augustine, Incarnation represented this key:

> And I sought a way of acquiring strength sufficient to enjoy Thee; but I found it not until I embraced that Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. . . . For the Word was made flesh, that Thy wisdom, by which Thou createdst all things, might provide milk for our infancy (*Conf.*, 7.18; 10.43; *De doct.*, 1.34). And it seemed good to me, as before Thee, not tumultuously to snatch away, but gently to withdraw the service of my tongue from the talker's trade (*Conf.*, 9.2) . . . Let my heart and tongue praise Thee (*Conf.*, 9.1).

Marcia Colish writes, "The doctrine of the Incarnation and the manner in which Augustine understands his conversion to it are . . . essential to his conception of the redemption of language, which, he holds, makes theology possible."[39] "The redemption of language" is perhaps the best way to cha-

racterize a capacity to repair not only distressed practices in everyday life, but also distressed practices of repair. Augustine's text attributes this capacity to the Word alone.

7. Even if abbreviated, these illustrations should strengthen the genealogical claim that Augustine's scriptural and Trinitarian semiotic displays the effects of a three-part *habitus* and that this *habitus* serves as prototype for the tradition of Cartesian inquiry (in the broad sense). Cartesianism (in the narrow sense) may, indeed, inherit a dialectic of objectivism and internalism as exhibited in Augustine's work, and this dialectic may, indeed, exhibit intra-civilizational competition between Hellenic and Scriptural modes of inquiry. Pragmatism may, indeed, inherit a reparative *habitus* comparable to Augustine's and this *habitus* may, indeed, be guided by habits of scriptural and Trinitarian reasoning. If so, there is reason to take seriously Peirce's own claim about pragmatism: that it is very intimately allied with the ideas of the Gospel and that an effective, post-Newtonian logic of science may therefore, indeed, name Scripture as its interpretant.

NOTES

1 "How to Make Our Ideas Clear" (1878), in Charles Harteshorne and Paul Weiss (eds), *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1934, 5): Vol. 5, Par. 402n2. Future references are to vol. and par.: e.g., 5.402n2.

2 There is no space in this essay to survey previous pragmatic genealogies. Peirce traced sources of reparative reasoning and of the contrary temptations (foundationalism/ intuitionism) to competing methods of "fixing belief" in Western history. He did not attempt to account for Cartesian tendencies to choose one over the other. John Dewey offered ambitious genealogical accounts. In *The Quest for Certainty*, for example, he traced the temptations to an inveterate Western, originally Hellenic, tendency to favor optics over hearing, the quest for individual cognitive certainty over ambiguity. In *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Richard Rorty extended Dewey's approach, suggesting how the optical model of knowledge has led most Western thinkers to identify truth with what mirrors the real. But neither Dewey nor Rorty seeks to account for why, on a given occasion, one epistemological option will be chosen over the other. Both tend to grant their readers freedom to consider the alternative consequences and choose. In *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics, and Praxis*, Richard Bernstein added a psycho-social kind of account to this genealogy, labeling the condition for these temptations "Cartesian Anxiety," the dread of madness and chaos that propels thinkers to seek either objectivism or relativism as sources of relief. Once again, he does not attempt any more deterministic account of the environing conditions that may encourage this Anxiety. In sum, all these pragmatic accounts isolate foundationalism/ intuitionism as a problematic tendency without seeking to account for how that tendency might accompany beneficial tendencies, such as the tendency to reparative reasoning.

3 In his early, *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* papers of 1868–9, Charles Peirce identified Cartesianism with intuitionism, the assumption that there is a "cognition not determined by a previous cognition of the same object, and therefore so determined by something out of consciousness" (5.213).

4 5.213.

5 I owe these uses of the term "reparative" to Nicholas Adams who heard my studies of pragmatism as most interesting if applied to a more general activity of "reparative reasoning." Suggestion accepted, with thanks! Adams formalizes this suggestion in Nicholas

Adams, "Reparative Reasoning," *Modern Theology*, 24/3 (July 2008), pp. 447–457. He develops the notion, as well, in Nicholas Adams, "Making Deep Reasonings Public," in *Modern Theology*, 22/3 (July 2006), pp. 385–401. In, and alongside, dialogue with Adams, I have also used the term, for example, in Peter Ochs, "September 11 and The Children of Abraham," in Stanley Hauerwas and Frank Lenntricchia (eds.), *Dissent from the Homeland*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), pp. 137–148, and in Peter Ochs, "Coda," in "Spreading Rumours of Wisdom: Essays in honour of David Ford," *The Journal of Scriptural Reasoning*, 7/1 (January 2008).

6   "Constative" claims are declarative utterances, asserted as either true or false. These are distinguished from claims made through some performance (rather than direct utterance) and from utterances that do not assert any matter of truth-or-falsity.

7   The philosopher of language J. L. Austin coined the term "perlocutionary act" to refer to the way an utterance may both bring about and intend an indirect effect that is not articulated or evident in the utterance itself. One may, for example, utter an apparent praise, such as "What a lovely tie you are wearing!" with the intended, indirect effect of making the wearer embarrassed that he is wearing any tie. Here, "perlocutionary conventions" refer to our capacities to understand indirect speech or *double entendres*.

8   As employed in William James' *Principles of Psychology*, the term "reflex arc" refers to the body's capacity to develop neural habits that associate certain "stimuli," or sensed events, with certain "responses," or muscular activity: the way, for example, our hands will tend to pull back when we sense fire, or the way Pavlov's dogs salivate when they hear a bell.

9   Rene Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, Part Two and *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Meditation Two, Donald Cress (trans.) (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett, 1993), pp. 7, 63.

10 *Discourse* Part Four, p. 19; *Meditations* Two, p. 66, Three, pp. 74, 76, 82.

11 In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Immanuel Kant argued that we humans know the world through certain pre-set categories or conditions of knowing. For example, we receive our perceptions of the world as taking place in space and time because "space" and "time" are the categories or conditions through which we humans automatically order our perceptions. The work of Kant's *Critique* was to suggest how philosophers might identify humanity's shared transcendental conditions of knowledge by treating our everyday judgments about the world as if they were *effects* of the way the stuff of our experiences were *formed into discernible unities* by our transcendental categories of knowing. This is to reason, hypothetically, from what we say about the world to the capacities that lead us to say this. (See Note 12.)

12 "Regressive reasoning" means reasoning from effect to cause. As indicated in Note 11, Kant arrived at his "transcendental categories of knowledge" by reasoning regressively from the way we know the world to what—according to his hypotheses—we must have assumed in order to know it that way.

13 In terms of 2.5.2, each activity of habit-change may be diagrammed as an irreducibly triadic process of sign interpretation, the interpretant of which also serves as the symbol of another such activity. In these terms, each activity is a non-identical repetition of another such activity, and self-repair is also an interpretant of another's self-repair and symbol of another's, and so on. Throughout this discussion, "self" refers to the identity of some habit, rather than some individual human being; the chain is a chain of habits not individuals; the notion of self-repair does not, therefore, displace any account of relations among individuals.

14 It does not necessarily refer to a society of individual human beings and its attendant histories and rules of relationship and encounter. Peirce's genealogical study of Cartesianism is not, therefore, an effort to situate Descartes or other Cartesians within an explicit society and then ask how that society as a whole may inherit and transmit certain habits of action. A genealogical inquiry could, on a given occasion, be conducted by way of a social history, but it need not, and the present argument brackets societal perspectives.

15 Proponents of the first method compete by arguing for the truth of one method and the falsity of the other: the second method will be judged false whenever its proponents adduce habits of repair that cannot be verified by self-evident judgments of the light of nature. Proponents of the second method compete by appealing to some community of habits that the two sub-groups share. They propose ways of engaging in the reparative dimensions of this community so that their competition is transformed into a constructive dialogue

between two different practices of reparative inquiry that may be drawn out of their overlapping habits. They argue that such dialogue can be conducted as a comparison of constative claims, but only when the interpretants of such claims can be shared as common grounds for debate: shared grounds such as the Bible or explicit logical norms or shared political or economic goals. They argue that dialogue can be conducted more readily as a comparison of reparative claims: a way of sharing accounts about the relative strengths of various reparative activities. Such dialogue can also be undertaken argumentatively, if different reparative activities are to be evaluated with respect to shared interpretants, as noted above. *The remaining issue here is exactly which interpretants contribute to this kind of dialogue within the broader Cartesian community.*

16 Peirce focused on scholasticism, within which he tended to draw contrasts between the "nominalist" chain of transmission that passed through Peter of Abelard and Ockham to Descartes, Locke, Kant and Mill; and the "realist" chain that passed from Plato through Scotus and eventually to Peirce. Like other pragmatic genealogists, he did not peer behind each chain to suggest how both may arise for different reasons out of some single chain. His genealogy therefore falls short of the goals of this essay. Nonetheless, several of his observations help uncover earlier prototypes of the Cartesian *habitus*. First in importance is his claim that pragmatism is nothing but a logical corollary of Jesus' injunction "Ye may know them by their fruit" (5.402n). This claim is verified by a study of Augustine. Second is his observation of medieval prototypes for Descartes' intuitionism: "the word *intuitus* first occurs as a technical term in St. Anselm's *Monologium* [LXVI]. He wished to distinguish between our knowledge of God and our knowledge of finite things . . . and thinking of the saying of St. Paul, *Videmus nunc per speculum in oenigmate: tunc autem facie ad faciem* [LXX], he called the former *speculation* and the latter *intuition*. . . . In the middle ages, the term 'intuitive cognition' had two principal senses; 1st, as opposed to abstractive cognition, it meant the knowledge of the present as present, and this is its meaning in Anselm; but 2nd, as no intuitive cognition was allowed to be determined by a previous cognition, it came to be used as the opposite of discursive cognition" (as in Scotus, *In sentient,* lib 2 dist 3, qu. 9)." Third in importance is Peirce's early effort to draw stark contrasts between Cartesianism and scholastic realism. He claimed that Cartesianism made four major claims in direct opposition to scholastic practice. (1) "It teaches that philosophy must begin with universal doubt; whereas scholasticism had never questioned fundamentals; (2) It teaches that the ultimate test of certainty is to be found in the individual consciousness, whereas scholasticism had rested on the testimony of sages and of the Catholic Church; (3) The multiform argumentation of the middle ages is replaced by a single thread of inferences depending often upon inconspicuous premises; (4) Scholasticism had its mysteries of faith, but undertook to explain all created things. But there are many facts which Cartesianism not only does not explain but renders absolutely inexplicable" ("Some Consequences of Four Incapacities" (1868): 5.264ff.)

Of Descartes' method of universal doubt, Peirce wrote that it was offered as a direct challenge to "the most striking characteristic of medieval reasoning, in general, [which] is the perpetual resort to authority" (5.215n1).

17 In the words of Ernst Cassirer, *The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy*, Mario Domandi (trans.) (Philadelphia, PA: University of Penn Press, 1963).

18 The name "Hellenic" is employed here since "Philosophic" may carry inappropriately limiting connotations for modern readers. "Hellenic" is intended to connote a broad set of habits of inquiry and action that emerge out of Platonic, Aristotelian, and neo-Platonic practices for interpreting Homeric and subsequent literatures as sources of moral, religious, and ontological norms.

19 This genealogy draws on a paper I presented to the Center of Theological Inquiry, Princeton, in 1990: "Hellenistic (Patristic/Rabbinic) Prototypes of Peirce's Pragmatic Semeiotic." Among the primary resources for that essay were R. A. Markus, "St. Augustine on Signs", in R. A. Markus, *Augustine* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1972), pp. 61–91 and B. Darrell Jackson, "The Theory of Signs in *De Doctrina Christiana*", in *Ibid.*, pp. 92–148. The present essay is also enriched and extended by C. C. Pecknold, *Transforming Postliberal Theology: George Lindbeck, Pragmatism, and Scripture* (London: T&T Clark, 2005); and Brian Stock, *Augustine the Reader: Meditation, Self-Knowledge, and the Ethics of Interpretation* (Cambridge, MS: Harvard University Press 1996).

20 To be sure, these are inter-related with ontological and behavioral tendencies, but the epistemological sub-tendencies are isolated here as sources of the Cartesian chain of transmission.

21 My thanks to Thomas Higgins (PhD University of Virginia 2005) for this insight into the *Confessions*.

22 John David Dawson, "Sign Theory, Allegorical Reading, and the Motions of the Soul in *De doctrina Christiana*", in Arnold and Bright (eds.), *De doctrina christiana: A Classic of Western Culture* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), p. 330.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 331.

24 Pecknold, *Transforming Postliberal Theology*, p. 44.

25 *De doctr. chr.* 2.5.6, cited in Pecknold, p. 44.

26 Dawson, "Sign Theory, Allegorical Reading, and the Motions of the Soul in *De doctrina Christiana*", p. 135, cited in Pecknold, p. 44.

27 A more subtle mark of Augustine's objectivism is the binary logic that still influences his Biblical hermeneutic in *Conf.*

> But which of us, amid so many truths which occur to inquirers in these words, understood as they are in different ways, shall so discover that one interpretation as to confidently say "that Moses thought this . . . ?" as confidently as he says . . . "that this is true . . ." Although, whether it were one of these, or some other meaning which has not been mentioned by me, that this great man saw in his mind when he used these words, I make no doubt but that he saw it truly, and expressed it suitably . . ." (*Conf.*, 10.14).

Throughout his reading of Genesis, Augustine displays both a longing to discern the single intention of the Bible's author and a more matter-of-fact acknowledgement of the actual plurality of available readings. Within the terms of Peirce's logic, these two options belong to a contrast pair. The ideal of monovalence is also an ideal of determinate meaning; while the alternative of polysemy is also an alternative of infinite indeterminacy. Outside *De trin.*, Augustine does not appear to articulate a third option. Peirce calls this "indefinite meaning" or vagueness: the kind of singular meaning that is released and displayed only in the intimate relation of the text to its intended reader at a given time and place. This option serves the longing for intention: but it is the reader who must be intended. This option also serves the empirical claim of polysemy, but there is no contrast pair here, since the many meanings are displayed in many different space-times rather than competing over one.

28 For Aristotle, a sign (*semeion*) is "a demonstrative proposition necessarily or generally approved: for anything such that when it is another thing is, or when it has come into being the other has come into being before or after, is a sign of the other thing's being or having come into being" (*Prior Analytics* II.27). Written words (*grammata*) are signs of spoken words (*phonai*), which are signs of experiences of the soul (*en te thyke*), which are signs of the objects (*pragmata*) of those experiences. "As all men have not the same writing, so all men have not the same speech sounds, but the mental experiences, which these directly symbolize, are the same for all, as also are those things of which our experiences are the images." (I.1; 16; cited above in Jackson, "The Theory of Signs in *De Doctrina Christiana*.") Linguistic terms signify by convention, but they also have performative force (they grab attention) and truth (if ordered and performed correctly, they may refer accurately to real objects). Propositions are signs that may be true or false. Among them, some may be indefinite, that is, like the sea-fight that is tomorrow, they may refer independently of the principle of contradiction -(a and -a).

29 Markus, "St. Augustine on Signs", p. 74. The next two paragraphs paraphrase Markus' study of Augustine on pp. 61–91, including occasional references to Peirce.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 75.

31 *Ibid.*, pp. 76ff.

32 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

33 Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* II.xi.

34 Augustine, *Against the Prof.*, 8.11–12.

35 Augustine, *Against the Prof.*, 8.70.

36 In these terms, Peirce's logic of relative predicates would include a logic of *lekta*. Unlike the Stoa, however, Peirce would assert that such predicates refer to realia: and not only *lekta*, but

incomplete lekta to boot! For Peirce, "Someone writes" is a prototypically *vague symbol,* and such symbols are protypical signs of realia. The Stoic trichotomy of sign, object and sayable does not exactly correspond to Peirce's trichotomy of sign, object and interpretant, but it is close. The "sayable" displays elements of what Peirce calls the "immediate object," or the object as it is intended, as well as of the "immediate interpretant." From what we have to read, the Stoa did not develop the pragmatic character of this sayable, that is, its rule (or tendency)-bound relation to possible action as well as to the specific contexts of action. It appears that they tended to reduce pragmatic to semantic meaning. Nonetheless, their semantics remains richly suggestive for a pragmatic semiotic.

37 Pecknold, *Transforming Postliberal Theology*, p. 49, where Pecknold takes up a third, mediatory option: "where 'to stand in that rule' means a lived correspondence between a text and its effect upon real flesh and blood, the incarnational 'rule' of God's Word in the world." These words anticipate a turn to the third, reparative tendency.
38 Pecknold, *Transforming Postliberal Theology*, p. 46: providing the reference to Bible as firmament.
39 Marcia Colish, *The Mirror of Language* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 22.