In this study, Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic conception of communication is examined, both on its own terms and in relation to a number of theoretical issues in media and communication studies. The main goal of the study is to outline a Peircean approach to communication inquiry, and to show that it can be of contemporary relevance in media studies. The study is mostly reconstructive, and attempts to give a balanced picture of Peirce's semiotic thought. The goal is pursued through an interpretation of Peirce's theory of signs that focuses on its communicative, normative, and social aspects. In addition, the Peircean approach is elaborated by contrasting it to certain constructionistic perspectives.

The study is divided into two parts, of which the first is concerned with Peirce's conception of communication, and the second with the appropriation of semeiotic, Peirce's theory of signs, in media and communication studies.

The study examines Peirce's view of inquiry, paying special attention to the role of semeiotic. It is established that Peirce adheres to a social and co-operative theory of research and science. Further, the study shows that semeiotic is based on Peirce's critical common-sensism and phenomenology, and that it is closely associated with logic. In combination, these elements give Peirce's theory of signs its characteristic teleological and normative nature. In the closer examination of semeiotic that follows, the relational and experiential aspects of the theory are emphasised. Special attention is given to Peirce's account of the interpretant, as that forms an important part of his approach to communicative processes.

The main components of the Peircean conception of communication are a sharing-model of mediation, a pragmatic account of meaning, a dialogic view of communality, an experimental approach to contextualisation, and an affirmation of self-control. The dialogic approach to communicative rationality, which permeates Peirce's entire philosophy, unites subjectivity and intersubjectivity. In the semeiotic theory of meaning, this connection is made with the help of the concept of habit.

In spite of the richness and promise of semeiotic, it has rarely been used as a framework for media and communication studies. This study contributes to a reevaluation of the Peircean alternative by showing that Peirce gives us the basic elements needed for a theory of communication, and that the semeiotic point of view is in certain ways more adequate for the study of communicative processes than some recently popular types of constructionism - without denying that mutual complementation is both possible and desirable.

Avainsanat-Nyckelord-Keywords
Peirce, Charles Sanders
semiotics - communication

Säilytyspaikka-Förvaringsställe-Where deposited

Muita tietoja-Övriga uppgifter-Additional information