

and the normative evaluation of those facts. When a ruling body uses force or deception, whatever the justifying reasons, the actions which it takes are open to moral evaluation. Most ethicists and political theorists argue that the state has a duty to both forcefully defend the nation and its citizens against aggression, and to punish those persons who wrongfully harm its citizens. Additionally, most political theorists grant the state the right to deceive its enemies when necessary to maintain the continued functioning of the polity.

This is not an unqualified grant of power to the state, however. When political institutions use force and deception against either citizens of foreign lands or their own citizens in pursuit of private purposes (e.g., in order to censor legitimate political disagreement with the rulers or their policies) then these actions can be judged wrong by standard ethical theories. Of course, rulers will portray such force and deception as necessary to the continued maintenance and stability of the state. But surely one can distinguish between cases when such claims are correct, and cases when such claims are made in the self-serving pursuit of personal gain or institutional power.

H. STERLING BURNETT

JOHN K. SHERIFF, *Charles Peirce's Guess at the Riddle: Grounds for Human Signification*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994. xxiii + [5] + 100 pp.

In this slim, but tightly argued volume, Sheriff takes on the task of defending Peirce's categorial framework from the standpoint of its relevance to the conduct of life. In a previous book, *The Fate of Meaning: Charles Peirce, Structuralism, and Literature* (1989), Sheriff mounted a spirited critique of the type of semiotics and literary theory emergent from the French structuralist tradition. He successfully used Peirce's semiotics to reinstate the referent and to show how hermeneutic and literary activity is rooted in an evolutionary and realistic context. That careful and rich analysis is moved forward in the current book, with its special emphasis on the role of quality in bringing the self toward its own encounter with the real.

The chapters deal with the foundations of cosmology (with the analysis of the three fundamental categories of firstness, secondness, and thirdness), the nature of mind and its difference from consciousness, the role of signs, the structure of belief, and the role of the aesthetic in bringing us toward a social and sentimental view of life. Sheriff is well aware that many of his contemporaries are mired in a kind of post modernism that is little more than a mask for narcissism and the flight from secondness (the dyadic "bite" of the real). Peirce, of course, was fiercely opposed to any form of nominalism that would make the personal and the idiosyncratic the measure of the real (thirdness). Sheriff is concerned with bringing out the fine texture of Peirce's argument in which the real shows itself through our perceptual judgments and our social connections in which the power of evolutionary habit, condensed in belief, has proven its value again and again.

Perhaps the hardest thing to defend in the current philosophical and literary horizon is Peirce's notion of the growth of concrete reasonableness in the infinite long run. Yet Sheriff makes a bold attempt to show how our very percepts, when tied to perceptual judgments, move toward thirdness in the linking horizontal pattern that makes the whole percipuum resonate with the generals that ripple

through nature. Were we to live in the purely irrational (in firstness), we would soon perish. And it follows, for Peirceans at least, that even our most sophisticated literary judgments must follow the trail of thirdness if they are to have any purchase in a universe that is exploding with incarnated reason.

Sheriff's analyses of many of Peirce's key structures are compelling and evocative in a way that suggests further exploration. I was impressed with his analysis of belief and his contrast of mind (within the doctrine of panpsychism) and consciousness, which is a rarefied species of mind. Yet much work remains to be done on Peirce's implied belief in something very much like Jung's collective unconsciousness, which may not fit into the panpsychist framework. There is also now one area of much debate within the Peirce community that pertains to the role and nature of God within an evolutionary cosmology. I am persuaded that Peirce hinted at a deeply irrational God tied to firstness, whereas Sheriff follows the line, developed by Orange and Raposa, that God is most fundamentally tied to thirdness. Put differently, for the irrational (Schellingian) reading of Peirce, there is far more *abot* in nature than the growth of reason. This manifestation would overturn many cherished notions within pragmatism, particularly those tied to the role of the ground relation in ordinary and extra ordinary forms of perception. Sheriff links the ground relation (tied to the sign/object/interpretant triad) to Wittgenstein's language games. Suppose the ground were more like a mobile Spirit that, contrary to most readings of Peirce, is tied to firstness and not thirdness (cf. p. 15). In that case, grounds would erupt over and around the very semiotic relations they help to establish. The true guess at the riddle would then involve both an encounter with thirdness and a sustained and ecstatic embrace with the ground qua Spirit.

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WINFRIED SIEMERLING, *Discoveries of the Other: Alterity in the Work of Leonard Cohen, Hubert Aquin, Michael Ondaatje, and Nicole Brossard*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994. viii + 259 pp.

It is an old trial and complaint of people who "do" reviews, whether art, film, music, or literary. If you are not a "traitor"—one who revels in demolishing someone else's effect, what do you do when you get hold of something that really fails to please you? Where is the line that restrains us from brutality while disallowing the pious fall into a kind of good-natured dishonesty with respect to our performance?

I find that I have untold things to say about Winfried Siemerling's *Discoveries of the Other*, an inquiry into the way otherness has figured in the works of the Canadian writers Leonard Cohen, Hubert Aquin, Michael Ondaatje and Nicole Brossard. Having admitted this much, let me quickly add that Professor Siemerling knows his stuff. There has been large competence demonstrated here—and substantial effort. Essentially, he works within the poles of a dichotomy which posits what he calls the "thetic," basically that force or structure that is consonant with identity, the Same, the dominant discourse and/or culture, against the "heterological," i.e., what disrupts this sameness with its difference, its otherness.

Obviously such a concern is well-intentioned, given the parameters of the