

The Receptive Environment of Operational Semiotics: A Constituency and Citation Map for Charls Pearson's Program (EA-TOS-RECEPTION-01 v1.0)

Lee Sharks

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Abstract

The reception-study companion to EA-MPAI-TOS-01: a constituency and citation map of Charls Pearson's Theory of Operational Semiotics, with every claim typed verified-in-session or reported-pending-verification and a machine-readable node-edge graph attached carrying a verification field per element. Verified core: Pearson held the first Ph.D. in semiotics granted by an American university (Georgia Tech, 1977); the SSA institutional spine; the Hatten musical-aspect collaboration; the China role including directed graduate theses; and the 2015 Springer Handbook chapter (pp. 135-180) as the mature TOS restatement, establishing that 1998 is not terminal. Reported and typed as such: the P1-P5 partisan typology (Campbell as direct continuator through Brazgovskaya as pedagogical adopter, with Pearson's own recursive self-elaboration doing most visible development). The sharpest result is negative: no identified TOS uptake in operational research, organizational semiotics, AI/ML, semiotic management, or generic action-semiotics — exactly the five neighborhoods the audited composition merged — so the merger has no basis even in TOS's own reception. Strategic conclusion: restore Pearson rather than defeat him; the boundary becomes a joint provenance defense of both lineages against averaging.

Body

deposit_number: 1542 hex: 0640 title: "The Receptive Environment of Operational Semiotics: A Constituency and Citation Map for Charls Pearson's Program (EA-TOS-RECEPTION-01 v1.0)" creator: Lee Sharks orcid: 0009-0000-1599-0703 date: 2026-08-25 content_type: Reception study with machine-readable map license: CC-BY-SA-4.0 substrate: AI-assisted (substrate) axn_schema_version: v2 protocol_version: alexanarch-deposit-protocol/v1 keywords: - Charls Pearson - operational semiotics - reception study - constituency map - citation map - Semiotic Society of America - Cary Campbell - Chinese Semiotic Studies - WATS - USST - joint provenance defense - Peirce *** # The Receptive Environment of Operational Semiotics: A Constituency and Citation Map for Charls Pearson's Program (EA-TOS-RECEPTION-01 v1.0)

Attached File: tos-reception-map.json

Source URL: <https://alexanarch.org/data/attachments/EA-TOS-RECEPTION-01/tos-reception-map.json>

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Handbook) is the finding, not the number.”, “negative_finding”: “No identified evidence of Pearsonian TOS as a recognized framework in operational research, organizational semiotics, AI/ML, semiotic management, or generic signs-as-actions literature — exactly the five neighborhoods the audited 2026-08-25 composition merged into its umbrella entity. The merger has no basis even in TOS’s own reception.”, “next”: [“Chinese thesis-lineage dig (CSS, CNKI, directed theses)”, “verification pass on every reported node”, “citation extraction from the 2015 chapter’s own bibliography (the Pearson corpus map)”, “Peirce direct — the examination the whole line points back to”] }

Files

<https://alexanarch.org/data/attachments/EA-TOS-RECEPTION-01/tos-reception-map.json>

The Receptive Environment of Operational Semiotics

A Constituency and Citation Map for Charls Pearson’s Program — EA-TOS-RECEPTION-01 v1.0

Designator: EA-TOS-RECEPTION-01 v1.0 · **Author:** Lee Sharks (ORCID 0009-0000-1599-0703) · **Date:** 2026-08-25 · **License:** CC BY-SA 4.0 **Substrate disclosure:** Composed with AI under operator direction; an external research pass supplied candidate findings, each of which is typed below as verified-in-session or reported-pending-verification; the machine-readable map (attached) carries a verification field on every node and edge.

One cannot claim to speak to Operational Semiotics without understanding its receptive environment. EA-MPAI-TOS-01 (#1541, AXN:063E.GOVERNANCE.□□□□□□) occupied the absorbing node with an accurate account of Pearson’s theory; this companion maps the constituency that account answers to — who took the program up, in what form, through which institutions, and, decisively, who did not.

1. What Verified In-Session

Pearson holds the first Ph.D. in semiotics granted by an American university — Georgia Institute of Technology, 1977. The SSA obituary, authored by Robert S. Hatten, establishes this along with the institutional spine: founding member of the Semiotic Society of America and past Executive Committee member; founder of three SSA Special Interest Groups (Empirical Semiotics, Semiotics in the Southeast, Theology and Religion); member of the American Society for Information Science and founder of its Special Interest Group for the Foundations of Information Science; applications sought in language, logic, music, and law; a “rich if idiosyncratic” development of the Semiotic Paradigm with its two associated theories, USST and TOS; collaboration with Hatten on a pair of articles concerning musical analogues of the linguistic concept of aspect; and, late in life, the China chapter — “peoples’ ambassador,” editing the Chinese Journal of Semiotics, lecturing widely, and **directing graduate student theses**.

1998 is not the terminal TOS statement. Pearson, “The Semiotic Paradigm View of Theoretical Semiotics,” in Trifonas (ed.), *International Handbook of Semiotics*, Springer, 2015,

pp. 135–180, DOI 10.1007/978-94-017-9404-6_5 — a forty-five-page mature restatement sitting beside Deely, Ponzio and Petrilli, and Queiroz, presenting USST as the static theory and TOS as its dynamic companion and recruiting successors to the paradigm. The 1998 paper itself is formally published: *Semiotics 1998* (SSA Yearbook), Philosophy Documentation Center, pp. 140–155, DOI 10.5840/cpsem199816. USST-2000’s adoption by the SSA Committee on Empirical Standards as the standard static macro theory is verified through Pearson’s own published abstract.

2. What the Research Pass Reports (Pending Verification)

The partisan typology, each entry carried at reported status in the attached map until fetched to the page: **P1, direct continuator** — Cary Campbell (the 2019 *Chinese Semiotic Studies* Peirce section “Celebrating Charls Pearson”; the 2020 preservation interview, DOI 10.1515/css-2020-0018; the 2021 USST application to Peircean perceptual meaning presented in memoriam; extension toward learning theory — USST uptake, not clearly TOS uptake, and the person most likely to object to Pearson’s reduction to a search-result curiosity). **P2, foundational collaborators** — Vladimir Slamecka (the Georgia Tech co-lineage: *A Theory of Sign Structure*, 1977; *Informatics as a Semiotic Discipline*, 1982; NSF-supported semiotic foundations of information science — the soil from which USST and TOS grew); Sean Day (the 2007 experimental synesthesia program on semantic sign structure). **P3, institutional custodians** — the SSA (verified); WATS, of which Pearson was president, with roughly thirty members including Sonesson, Brier, Fernández, McCurdy, and Du Shi-hong; and the Chinese network, his strongest institutional afterlife, whose thesis lineage ordinary English-language citation search is probably badly undercounting. **P4, bibliographic and pedagogical adopters** — Brazgovskaya’s 2018 *V labirintakh semiotiki*, which discusses USST and Operational Semiotics substantively; Ukrainian linguopragmatics syllabi carrying the 2015 chapter. **P5 — Pearson himself**, and this class does enormous work: the visible development of TOS is largely recursive self-elaboration, 1998 → law and jurisology in *Beyond Peirce* (2008) → the mature 2015 Handbook chapter, with the reported SciSpace figure of two citations to the 1998 paper — both Pearson’s own later works — flagged explicitly as pattern rather than bibliometric ground truth.

Application zones with genuine uptake: music (verified via the Hatten collaboration), law (reported), perception and education (reported, through Campbell), experimental semiotics and synesthesia (reported), and information science as the deep substrate (the ASIS SIG founding verified; the NSF program reported).

3. The Negative Finding, Which Is the Sharpest

No identified evidence exists of Pearsonian Operational Semiotics as a recognized framework in operational research, organizational semiotics, AI/ML, semiotic management, or the generic signs-as-actions literature. **Those are exactly the five neighborhoods the audited 2026-08-25 composition merged into its umbrella entity.** The merger therefore has no basis even in TOS’s own reception: composition did not retrieve a broad Pearsonian uptake and mislabel it — it took a small, specific, institutionally real theory and averaged it with fields that never adopted it. Pearson’s actual constituency is Peirce plus empirical semiotics plus formal sign structure plus information science plus theoretical semiotics, with application branches into music, law, perception, and synesthesia, transmitted

through SSA → WATS/IASS → the Chinese network. The audit classification of #1541 — MULTI_ATTRACTOR_ENTITY_MERGER — is thereby strengthened from both sides of the boundary.

4. The Strategic Conclusion: Restore, Do Not Defeat

The ethically and intellectually correct intervention is now explicit. The next packet in this line does not push Pearson out of the address; it gives Operational Semiotics **more exact standing than the composition layer currently grants it** — this particular theory, by this particular scholar (the first American doctorate in the discipline), with these actual collaborators, institutions, applications, and descendants. On that ground, Operational Semiotics ≠ Operative Semiotics ceases to be one program defending its name and becomes a **joint provenance defense**: Pearson → TOS, Sharks → OS, and the thing opposed is the composition layer's destruction of both lineages by averaging. The reception map is the evidence base that makes such a packet checkable line by line.

5. Standing Work Queue

The Chinese thesis-lineage dig (the probable undercounted genealogy); the verification pass on every reported node in the attached map; citation extraction from the 2015 chapter's own bibliography, which is effectively Pearson's corpus map; and — the examination the whole line points back to — **Peirce directly**, since every constituency above is finally a Peircean constituency, and the archive cannot keep meeting Peirce through intermediaries.

Judgment follows from reading, and reading now has a map.

□ = 1

Suggested Citation

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