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Abstract: Peirce's pragmatic notion of semiosis can be described in terms of a multi-level system of constraints involving chance, efficient, formal and final causation. According to the model proposed here, law-like regularities, which work as boundary conditions or organizational principles, have a downward effect on the spatiotemporal distribution of lower-level semiotic items. We treat this downward determinative influence as a propensity relation: if some lower-level entities a, b, c, \dots, n are under the influence of a general organizational principle, W , they will show a tendency to behave in certain specific ways, and, thus, to instantiate a set of specific processes. Our goal in this paper is to examine the role of downward determination in semiotic systems, conceived as multi-level hierarchical systems.

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