

'Percept' (pub. 20.07.15-19:02). Quote in M. Bergman & S. Paavola (Eds.), *The Commens Dictionary: Peirce's Terms in His Own Words. New Edition*. Retrieved from <http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-telepathy-11>.

Term: Percept

Quote: Let us say that, as I sit here writing, I see on the other side of my table, a yellow chair with a green cushion. That will be what psychologists term a "percept" (*res percepta*). They also frequently call it an "image." With this term I shall pick no quarrel. Only one must be on one's guard against a false impression that it might insinuate. Namely, an "image" usually means something intended to represent, – virtually professing to represent, – something else, real or ideal. So understood, the word "image" would be a misnomer for a percept. The chair I appear to see makes no professions of any kind, essentially embodies no intentions of any kind, does not stand for anything. It obtrudes itself upon my gaze; but not as a deputy for anything else, not "as" anything. It simply knocks at the portal of my soul and stands there in the doorway.

It is very insistent, for all its silence. It would be useless for me to attempt to pooh-pooh it, and say, "Oh come, I don't believe in the chair." I am forced to confess that it appears. Not only does it appear, but it disturbs me, more or less. I cannot think the appearance is not there, nor dismiss it as I would a fancy. I can only get rid of it by an exertion of physical force.

It is a forceful thing. Yet it offers no reason, defence, nor excuse for its presence. It does not pretend to any right to be there. It silently forces itself upon me.

Source: Peirce, C. S. (1903). *Telepathy*. MS [R] 881.

References: CP 7.619-21

Date of 1903

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