

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Listening, Hearing, Sensing: Three Modes of Being and the Phenomenology of Charles Sanders Peirce

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This article accepts Lipari's invitation to continue rethinking communication along the lines of artful listening as understood through the lens of phenomenology. However, we trace out the implications following a different phenomenological tradition than the one stemming from the German tradition of Heidegger and Husserl—specifically, the phenomenology of Charles Sanders Peirce, who allows us to see listening differently and perhaps more clearly. The primary contribution from Peirce's phenomenology is the logos he uses to extract 3 fundamental categories of thought and nature: Firstness (Quality), Secondness (Relation), and Thirdness (Mediation). As we shall show, listening is characterized by a plural consciousness sensitive to Mediation as it reveals itself through Relation and Quality.

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Listening is an acquired art, not an inherited capacity. Artful listening involves an ability to work through obstacles in relationships over time, to give of oneself to another consistently rather than unpredictably, and to consider that things could be other than what we had assumed them to be. As such, listening is difficult and contingent, rarely done to the satisfaction of all interlocutors. The artful quality of listening was emphasized in this journal by Lipari (2010) who set forth an invitation to “rethink communication through the lens of listening” (p. 348). For Lipari, listening brings us into a tuneful relationship with another person and thus liberates us from our biological self-centeredness. Whereas, for her, “the ideas of ‘gaining’ and ‘possessing’ found in *hearing* foreground a focus on the self's experience, the ideas of attention and obedience found in *listening* focus on the other” (p. 349). To listen is to do something qualitatively different than to hear. Hearing denotes a capacity to discriminate characteristics of one's environment through aural sense perception, but listening is a relationally oriented phenomenon; it “connects and bridges” (Lipari, 2012, p. 233).

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We agree that “to listen” and “to hear” are “inflected with different meanings that suggest different ways of being in the world” (p. 349); however, we use this essay to illustrate how Lipari’s discussion includes only two of the three primary ways of experiencing the world as a listener. In addition, Lipari’s description of *listening being* seems to suggest that this mode of being can be manifest in experience to the exclusion of other ways of being a listener, a claim that lacks verification. This article attempts to thus clarify Lipari’s perspective on listening and add to the discussion a different phenomenological tradition than the one stemming from the German tradition of Heidegger and Husserl (e.g., Hyde, 1994; Ihde, 2007).¹ Writing prior to Heidegger, Charles Sanders Peirce defines phenomenology as “the description of the *phaneron* ... [or] the collective total of all that is in any way or in any sense present to the mind, quite regardless of whether it corresponds to any real thing or not” (CP 1.284).² Although Peirce offers a similar definition of phenomenology, the particular modes of being he explicates offer a slightly different description of listening than that offered by Lipari, and which Peirce (1878) would say offers an ability to see listening more clearly. What Peirce offers is less an account of listening *per se* but rather an account of the categories of experience that provide the underpinnings of the practice of listening. Peirce’s categories effectively correspond to the traditional tripartite division of listening into affective, cognitive, and behavioral processes that we see in textbooks and more traditional models of listening scholarship for at least the last 20 years (for reviews see Bodie, Worthington, Imhof, & Cooper, 2008; Drollinger, Comer, & Worthington, 2006). A Peircean analysis adds a complexity to this traditional triad and affords finer distinctions as well as a more succinct and theoretically sophisticated answer to questions concerning the things we acquire from our experience while listening to others. Consequently, we are not interested in analyzing listening itself as a phenomenological object; rather, we are interested in understanding listening as an artful practice by which we attend in a particular way to others (see Ihde, 2007).

We begin our analysis with a brief overview of Peirce’s pragmatism to help understand his method of making ideas clear. The essay then moves to his trichotomic division, the core of Peirce’s philosophical tradition and the basis for his phenomenology (or, more accurately, his phaneroscopy). The primary contribution from Peirce’s phenomenology is the *logos* he uses to extract three essential elements from any and all experiences, specifically his three categories of Firstness (Quality), Secondness (Relation), and Thirdness (Mediation). As we shall show, listening is characterized by a plural consciousness sensitive to Mediation as it reveals itself through Relation and Quality. Listening, in short, is the capacity to discern the underlying habitual character and attitudes of people with whom we communicate, including ourselves, in such a way that, at its best, brings about a sense of shared experience and mutual understanding. The experience of listening is joined by two others: Hearing is a dual consciousness that tends to take Mediation for granted and focus primarily on instrumental Relations and concomitant Qualities, whereas sensing is a single consciousness within which the actual meanings of words or the practical import of our situation are overpowered by the sheer force of Qualities.

Through Peirce's phenomenology, we make three principal arguments in this essay. First, we propose that adopting a triadic approach more clearly distinguishes the affective, behavioral, and cognitive aspects of experience from one another and avoids the tendency in the German tradition to collapse the affective and cognitive into one another. For instance, when Lipari argues that "*listening being* requires a willingness to suspend already familiar conceptions, beliefs, and understandings ... [and] a steady simultaneity of presence, awareness, and emptiness" (p. 354), she implies that *listening being* is a state in which we both *feel* and *understand* the being of another. For Peirce, however, this fails to distinguish between Firstness and Thirdness. Second, we suggest that the qualities of Firstness that Lipari identifies in *listening being* are more accurately associated with the act of sensing. Listening, we argue, is primarily a cognitive process that has to do with the recognition and preservation of complex relationships (perceived in Thirdness) in symbols. Lastly, however, we suggest that although *listening itself* is dominantly cognitive, a successful art of listening must integrate the behavioral aspects of hearing and the affective qualities of sensing within a total practice. For instance, hearing often is the provocation to listening, providing that behavioral context in which cognition occurs, while sensing often gives us the empathetic connection to what people feel so that we know what we are listening *for*. Sensing, hearing, and listening thus all are contributing parts to a coherent practice that we can develop through conscious training and habit.

The pragmatism of Charles Sanders Peirce

From a pragmatic perspective, the endeavor to make "*listening*" clear does not differ methodologically from the endeavor to make any of our ideas clear. A clear idea is simply "*one which is so apprehended that it will be recognized wherever it is met with, and so that no other will be mistaken for it*" (W 3:258). But what does it mean to "*meet with*" an idea? It certainly does not mean to encounter an abstraction of the mind. Rather, it means to encounter some configuration of appearances that initiates an inferential process by which we posit the existence of a quality, substance, or tendency. Peirce famously sums up this approach to meaning in his pragmatic maxim: "Consider what effects, which might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then, our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object" (W 3:266). For example, Peirce clarifies the meaning of the idea "*hard*" by defining it as that which "*will not be scratched by many other substances.*" For Peirce, then, our conception of what it means to call something "*hard*" means nothing more than we would not expect it to be scratched by many other substances. We encounter the "*idea*" of hard whenever something appears to us that resists scratching, and we make the immediate abductive inference: "That must be hard, because it did not get scratched." Similarly, "*listening*" becomes clear when it is evoked by a specific set of appearances that cannot be taken to represent any other idea and remains vague when it can be applied to too many appearances and easily confused with other ideas.

To “encounter” listening as an idea should, therefore, not be confused with encountering a listener. A listener, as a distinct object, is a related but nonetheless distinct idea from listening, which represents an active form of experience, possessing specific and predictable qualities, brought about through a transactional process of communication (see Bodie, St. Cyr, Pence, Rold, & Honeycutt, 2012). Whereas it is often difficult to truly determine whether another person is actually listening or simply putting on appearances, one should be able to identify those qualities that are indicative of the experience of listening to others. For example, in a recent effort to clarify listening, Meyer (2007) described it as an activity that “does not anticipate or expect, but waits for the revelation of new possibilities for understanding through listening” (p. 65). Here we have an effort to define listening from the perspective of the one who listens, but rather unclearly. Schneider’s (2007) response to Meyer exemplifies the pragmatic maxim at work: “What does this type of listening look like, and how do we know we have listened properly?” (p. 68). As inspiring as it is to define listening as “an opening and harkening attunement” (p. 65) as Meyer does by drawing from Heidegger (1971, p. 67), such definitions fail to narrow the specific effects (i.e., appearances) that distinguish listening from other activities, such as contemplation, empathy, meditation, fantasy, transcendence, or euphoria (see Greene & Herbers, 2011). What we wish to do in this essay is to help encourage those praiseworthy types of experiences described by Meyer and others by clarifying listening so that its practice can be readily identified, understood, and ultimately improved upon through experience and reflection.

Employing Peirce’s categories assists in this endeavor by providing a means to analyze experience with phenomena and identify specific components indicative of the state of listening. What distinguishes his phenomenology from his pragmatism is that phenomenology describes the three fundamental ways in which we encounter people, objects, or events, whereas pragmatism provides a method of discerning and constituting the meanings of those various encounters in relationship to future practices and expectations. In his words, the goal of phenomenological analysis is to study “the kinds of elements universally present in the phenomenon,” elements he defines in terms of Firstness (Quality), Secondness (Reaction), and Thirdness (Mediation) (EP 2:259) beyond which “there is nothing to be found in the phenomenon (CP 1.347). The reason Peirce refers to this science as “phenomenology,” then, is because its purpose is “the description of the *phaneron*” (CP 1.284). For Peirce, phenomenology (or what he later called phaneroscopy to distinguish his from others’ analyses) is the study of any and all appearances that come before the mind. As a result, “students of phenomenology, simply open our mental eyes and look well at the phenomenon and say what are the characteristics that are never wanting in it, whether that phenomenon be something that outward experience forces upon our attention, or whether it be the wildest of dreams, or whether it be the most abstract and general of the conclusions of science” (EP 2:148). Only after such opening of our mental eyes can we then pragmatically begin to constitute the meanings of ideas and show their relations to the world of practical experience, the world of scientific inquiry, or the world of dream.

As we shall show, we can derive a clearer pragmatic definition of listening by first analyzing it through Peirce's phenomenological classification. Through this approach, we believe that we can clearly define three related communicative experiences in which we aurally interpret the symbolic expressions of others: listening, hearing, and sensing. Listening is the practice of discerning the underlying habitual character and attitudes of people with whom we communicate in such a way that brings about a sense of understanding. In contradistinction, hearing represents the act of interpreting language instrumentally, as a means of acting and reacting to people, objects, and events, while sensing occurs for the sake of reproducing the emotional experience one perceives in another person. Of course, each of these activities is usually present to some degree in any communicative activity, with differences representing varying levels of amplification and diminution of certain tendencies. Pragmatically, then, these conceptual distinctions are not meant to indicate incommensurable objects but are rather intended as cognitive tools to help us identify what we are doing when we are doing it so that we can better anticipate the effects of our overall communication practices and, through reflection and experimentation, improve upon them.

Quality, Relation, and Mediation

The threefold division of conscious experience (or simply consciousness; see Houser, 1983) that is the focus of our essay is derivative of a more basic division, namely "the ideas of First, Second, and Third ... which have great significance for all" (W 6:169). Indeed, "the ideas of One, Two, Three, are forced upon us in logic, and really cannot be dispensed with" (W 6:182). As pure forms, Peirce describes "the kinds of objects that are first, second, and third ... in their own true characters" as follows:

If there be any such kinds, the first will be that whose being is simply in itself ... The second will be that which is what it is by force of something to which it is second. The third will be that which is what it is owing to things between which it mediates and which it brings into relation to each other. (W 6:170)

As they unfolded in his phenomenology, he argued that First, Second, and Third are "constant ingredients of our knowledge ... faculties of the soul, or modes of consciousness" (W 6: 182-183). His categories (Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness) should not, therefore, be considered as *a priori* substances that "make up" an object like ingredients to a recipe but rather *a posteriori* abstractions that we can distinguish and identify only after a filtering and separation process, much as white light is broken into a spectrum after passing through a prism. Peirce's phenomenology is a prism that takes a wholly integrated object of experience and separates it into discernible categories for the sake of clarifying experience—in this case the experience of listening.

To articulate the meaning of Peirce's categories, we utilize Lipari's example of the musician in a jazz performance that she introduces to capture the artistic quality of

listening called “listening being” (p. 355):

This form of listening is not unlike the listening of improvisational jazz where players begin with a shared context of a ‘tune’ — a familiar melodic and harmonic structure — and then, one by one, or perhaps in tandem, push beyond the boundaries of rhythmic, harmonic, and/or melodic structure. Truly gifted players/listeners can take the melody and bend it around the key or time signature, lifting it beyond what they already know. When they are *really* playing — really improvising — they ‘have’ nothing prepared to ‘say.’ Thus, in order to improvise, players have to ‘listen’ — they have to follow the familiar structure, that is be aware of it at all times, where we are in the song, where the others are, and they have to listen beyond, what might come newly, originally, to them.

In this case, what is being “listened to” are the other performers as they not only play music but also communicate with each other through gestures and the occasional word. But what is being “listened for” is the rhythm and flow of the song itself, the grasp of which is essential for an improvisational jazz musician to be able to experiment and play while at the same time maintaining and consuming the basic harmony. Applying the terminology of Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness allows us to analyze this encounter by separating out three distinct characteristics of the event and showing how they contribute to a whole. Any experience will always contain some element of each of the three modes, but in different ratios and containing different levels of breadth and complexity influenced in large part by the state of consciousness of the one who is experiencing. **Our claim is that one who possesses an art of listening is uniquely capable of perceiving multiple layers of Mediation (Thirdness) in such a way that improves his or her capability to react to others (Secondness) and thereby bring about desirable esthetic qualities in an event (Firstness).**

Firstness (Quality)

Of the three categories, Firstness, or what we will refer to as Quality, is perhaps hardest to grasp. Indeed, Peirce asserts that Firstness “cannot be articulately thought: assert it, and it has already lost its characteristic innocence ... Stop to think of it, and it has flown!” (CP 1.357). For Peirce, Quality is an eternal and timeless aspect of phenomena, comprising qualities “such as red, bitter, tedious, hard, heartrending, noble” (CP 1.418). **So, Firstness applied to experience is the sense of feeling, a single mode of consciousness, “perfectly simple and without parts” (CP 1.531).** The reason this definition of Quality is easily misunderstood is the temptation to simply equate it with sense perception (Ransdell, 1978), much as we think of the color “red” as being certain wavelengths of light perceived by the eye. **Peirce, however, understood Quality to be something independent of sense perception. Although related to our senses insofar as a functioning eye is necessary for the experience of redness, the Quality “redness” is independent of our senses or our ability to sense more generally.**³ For Peirce, redness would still exist as what he calls a “positive qualitative possibility” even if there were

no organic beings capable of apprehending it (CP 1.536). As Mayorga (2007, p. 117) explains it, Quality "is a kind of half-way between nothingness and existence." As a pure "abstract potentiality" it exists in a realm unto itself (CP 1.422), but through our interaction with things we nonetheless catch a glimpse of different Qualities, however fleeting their appearance.

The key to understanding Peirce's theory of quality is that he makes no distinction between what we normally think of as "objective" qualities like "red" or "hard" and "subjective" qualities like "noble" or "heartrending." In his phenomenology, any quality that we associate with a particular object, event, or person at a particular time has the same ontological status as a "monad," meaning a phenomenon that exists "without reference to its parts or components and without reference to anything else" (Peirce, 1955, p. 87). For example, "red, sour, toothache are each *sui generis* and indescribable. In themselves, that is all there is to be said about them" (p. 86). In other words, Peirce rejects the nominalistic interpretation of phenomena that understands any particular feeling (e.g., pain) as an ultimately unique and uncategorizable existence; for him, "pain" is a real general quality that is disclosed the same general way despite the different vehicles through which it makes its appearance. How Peirce understands even the most physical properties like "hardness" is thus more akin to how most people think of emotional qualities like "love" or esthetic qualities like "beauty"—as hovering in a realm unto itself and only occasionally being glimpsed through rare moments that are the same for everyone.

Returning to the example of the jazz performance, its various Qualities neither exist purely in the mind of the performer nor in the objective performance itself; they exist within the interaction between the two. Some Qualities will be the same for almost anyone and is the reason we typically call them "objective." For instance, even as the virtuoso musician first steps on stage in the midst of an ongoing performance, she apprehends many of the same Qualities as the most inexperienced audience member. She notices the tempo of the music (fast or slow), the age of the performers (old or young), the atmosphere of the room (quiet or raucous), and the look of the instruments (shiny or scuffed). Each of these Qualities, or feelings, appears without any effort and immediately, such that we have simply a "passive consciousness of quality, without recognition or analysis" (CP 1.377). This does not mean, however, that prior experience is irrelevant. Whereas the novice audience member has only a limited vocabulary of qualities to identify, an experienced jazz musician will be able to immediately perceive complex emotions within particular riffs (euphoric or biting) as well as the overall tenor of the song that is associated with certain qualities of place (New Orleans or New York). Similar to the blind man who is unable to "see" red, the novice may not be able to "hear" joy even though the experienced musician has created the song for just that purpose.

Secondness (Relation)

Paradoxically, the experience of Quality (Firstness) cannot come about without first having the experience of Relation (Secondness). Temporally, then, Secondness

precedes Firstness, and Firstness therefore requires our interaction with things in the world to be made apparent. Relation is thus what brings us in contact with reality and calls forth the energetic expression of will. By “relation” Peirce does not mean any type of “relationship,” like that of a mathematical equation, but a specific type of encounter between two opposing forces. He writes that Relation “is in the fact of otherness, relation, force (not in the abstract, but as it feels when one gets hit), effect, dependence, occurrence, reality, upshot” (W 5:295). It is the combination of “an action and reaction, between our soul and the stimulus” (Peirce, 1931, p. 127). The realm of Relation is therefore the realm of events and things moving with and against each other; it is the “*experience of effort* without regard for any purpose” (Houser, 1983, p. 339). This is why Peirce characterizes the realm of Relation as that of compulsion, resistance, shock, and struggle; it describes the feeling of desiring to move in a straight line yet continually being buffeted by things outside oneself and that requires the exertion of will to overcome. Since “effort only is effort by virtue of its being opposed; and no third element enters,” Peirce (8.300, 1904, *Letter to Welby*) refers to Secondness as a dyadic element of experience. So, Relation is the experience of more than just a sense of reaction in the present, but an effortful struggle over eventful time in the face of resistance.

The jazz musician immediately experiences the jarring and motivational effects of Relation as soon as she steps on stage. Perhaps more than any other musical performance, the jazz concert is an excellent example of experience as Relation given its improvisational character and the skill required to do it well. Indeed, as the jazz artist is attempting to maintain awareness of “where the others are” she is fully cognizant of something other than her own self, and this awareness is felt as a resistance to her will to, for instance, play slower/faster, in a different key, or on/off the beat. In Peirce’s words, the jazz artist is “conscious of hitting or of getting hit, of meeting with a fact” (CP 1.376). As the musicians “bend [the melody] around the key or time signature” (Lipari, 2010, p. 355), they are acting and experiencing a reaction from others; they are, in essence, struggling to fit themselves into the experience of another who also is an active participant in the experience. Within this dramatic element of the experience of the concert, we have Relation — there is both playing and feedback, give and take.

Thirdness (Mediation)

Yet what makes the individual Relations on stage coalesce into a coherent performance is Mediation (Thirdness) that synthetically unites two or more things together by establishing their relationship, usually in the form of habit, contract, or expectation. According to Peirce, “every kind of sign, representative, or deputy, everything which for any purpose stands instead of something else, whatever is helpful, or mediates between a man [sic] and his wish, is a Third” (W 5:301). He gives as examples “comparisons, gifts, compacts, things exchanged,” as well as the nature of a “proposition” that “attaches a predicate to a subject” (W 5:301). Mediation therefore opens up the realm of meaning, the realm by which we categorize an event as a *type* of thing that behaves in a particular way and that makes it possible for us to mold our future

thoughts and actions in accordance with our expectations. In the realm of pure Relation, we might experience the shock of someone taking something we desire from our hands; Mediation alters our attitudes with the proposition: "But that toy belongs to your sister." By attaching the predicate "belongs to your sister" to the subject "that toy," the parent transforms the child's initial shock and disappointment into an agreement and understanding that promises to regulate behavior in the future and stabilize the environment.

Mediation makes learning, and therefore, listening possible. Whereas Quality stimulates Feeling and Relation prods our Will, Mediation is contingent upon the actions of Cognition, by which Peirce means "the faculty of learning, acquisition, memory and inference, synthesis" (CP 1.376). Other associations include "generality, infinity, continuity, diffusion, growth, and intelligence" (CP 1.340), all terms that address how specific experiences also have general qualities that can be cognitively processed and communicated to others. It is for this reason that the paradigmatic case of Mediation is the action of a sign (CP 1.339).⁴

Returning to the example of a jazz concert, it is Mediation that makes the jazz performance possible as a coordinated event that satisfies the expectations of both the performers and the audience. The way Peirce (1878) describes Mediation actually speaks directly to the musical example, for he speaks of cognition in musical terms, saying that "thought is a thread of melody running through the succession of our sensations" (p. 290). When we "think" we therefore think about Mediation, or Thirdness, and in doing so put ourselves in a certain conscious state. Within the jazz concert example, we see a paradigmatic example of this sort of consciousness in the "shared context of a 'tune' — a familiar melodic and harmonic structure" with which the musicians begin (Lipari, 2010, p. 355). When the musicians "follow the familiar structure" being sure to remain "aware of it at all times" they are provided with an expectation about how to behave and what to expect. This holds true not only within a single concert but also across concerts — as musicians interact over longer and longer durations, they learn and grow, evolve together, learn how to better provide a certain set of qualities in order to act and react more smoothly, they synthesize.

Hearing, listening, and sensing

We can best interpret hearing, listening, and sensing as three forms of consciousness. Although Peirce never offered a comprehensive definition, Houser (1983) suggests a fitting metaphor: that we understand Peirce's notion of conscious to be a "wave through the sea of mind" (p. 342). In other words, Peirce tended to think of "mind" as the total sum of our cognitions and meanings acquired over time and stored in memory, whereas "consciousness" denoted a temporal state of awareness of one's environment that was undergoing transition (CP 1.377).

These three forms of consciousness represent what in other works he referred to as single, dual, and plural consciousness. Like the modes of phenomena, these three forms are never distinct but are simply three components of a whole. As Houser (1983)

states, "We must take experience as we can *conceive* of it, an entanglement of all three modes of consciousness, and abstract (or as Peirce says, *prescind*) from it the unique aspects, the unanalyzable parts" (p. 338; emphases in original). **We have, therefore, only one "consciousness," but it is one that can be separated and analyzed into three separate components for the sake of clarity and understanding.** Regardless whether one wakes up from a dream or wakes up with their clothes on fire, the sequence by which we become "fully conscious" of our situation remains the same. A fully conscious state is produced by our interaction with objects that resist us and impose themselves upon us, the qualities or feelings produced by these interactions, and our reflective capacity to understand the relationships among each of these parts of our experience.

Our conceptual distinctions between hearing, listening, and sensing are therefore derived from the three modes of consciousness. **For although each mode of consciousness is almost always present in our conscious life, where the emphasis falls differs widely depending on the situation and the motives of the individual.** For instance, single consciousness becomes dominant in situations of aesthetic spectacle or emotional richness; dual consciousness comes forward in the midst of practical activity or competition; and plural consciousness arises within complex and problematic situations that demand reflection, interpretation, and judgment. Already, the basis for distinguishing between hearing and listening on the basis of their respective modes of consciousness is anticipated in Lipari's etymological analysis of hearing and listening; however, Peirce's triadic approach to consciousness (or "being in the world") encourages not just a distinction between hearing and listening, but between hearing, listening and sensing, corresponding to dual, plural, and single consciousness respectively.

Hearing

We begin with hearing, as a Second, because it corresponds to the mode of consciousness most prevalent in our practical, everyday life. As one function of dual consciousness, **hearing occurs in situations in which individuals react to some verbal stimulus with purposeful intent, whether that intent is to rid oneself of an irritation or two accomplish something.** This mode of consciousness is suggested by Lipari's use of the Oxford English Dictionary definition of hearing as "To perceive, or have the sensation of, sound" (p. 349). **In hearing, the words we perceive are not simply abstract meanings or symbols to be cognized; they are also actual physical stimuli that strike the ear and cause a physical reaction.**⁵ Peirce writes that "dual consciousness is a **sense of another, not present, a sense of hitting and of getting hit, of action and reciprocal reaction, of energy.**" This is the most wide-awake kind of consciousness; it strenuously sets object over against subject" (W 6:214). In the case of hearing, we are usually **"hit" by the impact of words stated to us in the context of an ongoing practical event that call upon us to act and react.** For instance, imperatives like "Wait up!," interrogatives like "How are you doing?," salutations like "Welcome back!," or requests like "Can I have that?" are all forms of stimuli that create a relation

between two individuals who have become conscious of each other as an "other" through language.

Hearing therefore emphasizes Secondness, or Relation, because it stresses the sphere of action in which two or more "wills" strive with or against each other within a recalcitrant environment. When we "hear" somebody, we acknowledge both their presence and the intent behind their words (or other actions; see footnote 5) so that we can direct our own responses accordingly, such as when we are standing in line for coffee and are finally asked for our order. In its purest form, then, hearing is what we do in communicative settings that have clear and immediate practical aims. This does not mean that other modes of consciousness are not present, of course. Our ears are always attuned to the Quality of Firstness in what we hear, and the Mediation of Thirdness is essential for a string of sounds to be understood as meaningful symbolic expression. Because, however, hearing focuses our consciousness on the manner of our reaction to things and events, Qualities are not dwelled upon while the more complex Mediations form a taken-for-granted background. Hearing therefore relies on already established attitudes, meanings, and habits in order to accomplish specific ends, including not only material tasks like buying coffee but also interpersonal tasks like making small talk with friends or colleagues and organizational tasks like managing an office.

Listening

The dual consciousness of hearing becomes the plural consciousness of listening when the development of new meanings, attitudes, and habits itself becomes the goal of our communication. Hearing is thus a necessary precondition of listening insofar as we require hearing to make us aware of the "other," but it is an insufficient condition as long as our ends can be accomplished through largely habitual actions and reactions. Put differently, whereas my ears are always primed to hear, I do not always go out intending or ready to listen. I must encounter someone or something that stimulates my interest and need to listen. As Lipari (2010) observes, listening often follows after things external to ourselves manage to "disrupt our everyday understandings and habits of thought" (p. 350). For Peirce (1877), the immediate effect of this disruption is the production of "doubt," which represents "an uneasy and dissatisfied state from which we struggle to free ourselves and pass into the state of belief" (p. 10). From this perspective, listening represents that form of consciousness that we bring to the process of inquiry, the goal of which is to eradicate doubt and bring about a state of secure confidence that represents belief. In contexts that stimulate listening, then, one consciously attempts to discover the relationships amongst multiple events, people, emotions, thoughts, actions, and words and then to formulate the equivalent to a "rule" or "law" to explain them.

When listening we exist in the here and now (Secondness) but the aim is to understand beyond the immediate situation, to go beyond the taken for granted and move toward the recognition or establishment of more generalized ways of being. When listening we attempt to understand outside of the immediate here and now, to go beyond

our own personal interpretations, **to resolve inconsistencies or incoherence**. To refer to our previous examples, we might be stimulated to start listening when we approach our favorite coffee shop and discover all the windows have been smashed and a crowd has gathered on the street in front of it, when a normally subdued coworker excitedly announces she has won the lottery and wants to know what to do with the rest of her life, or when the atmosphere of a business has become so rancorous that a meeting is called to determine the causes and to develop comprehensive solutions. Like the jazz artist who has evolved an ability to perceive multiple structures and expectations and uses these elements in an effort to expertly react to the other musicians and with multiple audience members, the one who **"listens" in such situations strives to bring about a sense of shared experience and mutual understanding through the cocreation of rules based on sharing of meaningful and conscientious dialogue**.

The plural consciousness of listening is therefore not concerned with tangible things in the practical manner of dual consciousness; it approaches them in an attitude of inquiry in order to discern the intangible laws that order their behavior and establish their relationships to each other. So whether something is "there" or "not there" is not the question for plural consciousness. Peirce writes that "plural or synthetic consciousness is not the mere feeling of what is immediately present, nor yet the mere sense of something without, it is the being aware of the bridge that unites the present and the absent, of a Process as such" (W 6:214). In each of the cases presented, the situation does not present a clear and immediate practical task that responds to a specific stimulus; it rather represents a situation that demands patient inquiry into the complex relationships among phenomena that present themselves in a disruptive, chaotic, spectacular, or uncertain manner. **Listening is that which seeks to form bridges between disparate parts by generating a rule that binds them together into a unity**—it is that which "connects and bridges" (Lipari, 2012, p. 233). To exist as a listening being, therefore, means to perceive multiple layers of Mediation (Thirdness) in such a way that improves the capability to react to others (Secondness) and thereby bring about desirable aesthetic qualities in an event (Firstness). As such, listening **"is a profoundly difficult way of being in the world because it by necessity disrupts the sameness and familiarity of the always already known"** (Lipari, 2009, p. 45).

Sensing

Of course, **one might critique the demarcation of hearing and listening we have just proposed, insofar as both hearing and listening (so defined) each seems to have an instrumental goal of sorts, whether that goal be the accomplishment of an immediate exigency or the understanding of another's perspective or viewpoint**. What about a mode of being (of listening, perhaps) that "constitutes my being as an ontological experience" (Lipari, 2010, p. 359)? Have we effectively ignored Lipari's ethical call to "really listen," not just hear or interpret? To this, we answer that Peirce's phenomenology leaves room for such a mode of consciousness; and to that mode we propose the label Sensing. **When in a state of Sensing, the individual does not so much exist in "the**

present moment," since the here and now implicates Secondness. The state of being of Sensing is, as it were, "timeless." Likewise, there is no consideration of an "other" since the presence of a "non-ego [invokes] a feeling that somehow intrudes itself upon us by some kind of contrast or action upon the original state of feeling" (Houser, 1983, p. 338). Finally, Sensing does not invoke habit or expectation, since "all that is thought about, in being cognized, is in the mode of thirdness" (Houser, 1983, p. 338). We see this mode of consciousness (Sensing) within Lipari's listening being described as a "dwelling place" from which we are removed when engaged in thinking about our experience.

Sensing therefore represents a state of single consciousness marked by pure feeling, by what Peirce calls "positive qualitative possibility" (CP 1.536). It is a form of single consciousness in which we are aware only of a total, pure, singular "unbounded manifoldness" (W 6:214). Peirce describes single consciousness this way:

In this kind of consciousness subject and object are nowise discriminated, in fact there is no discrimination, no parts, no analysis, there is no considering a thing for anything else, no relation, no representation, but just a pure indescribable quale⁶ which is gone in the twinkling of an eye in which bears no resemblance to any memory of it. It is just the quality of the immediate present, which is continually pouring through us, always here but never stopping to be examined. (W 6:214)

As the nature of Peirce's language indicates, Sensing represents a type of experience often associated with religious and artistic modes of being, in which we feel "taken beyond ourselves" into a realm marked by a single powerful motion or feeling. In Sensing, we proverbially "close our eyes" so that we can lose ourselves in the qualitative possibilities disclosed through the sound of another's voice. A newborn child who cannot see is nonetheless attuned to the quality of the mother's voice. So too are we attuned to qualities of grief in people that we love or the quality of rage in the voice of an enemy. Sensing, therefore, is when the actual meanings of words or the practical import of our situation are overpowered by the sheer force of the quality that washes over us, for good or ill. We are, as it were, paralyzed into motionlessness as our consciousness becomes equivalent to a single sustained note.

As we have already emphasized, of course, these three modes of consciousness all exist in any given experience; it is just that situations highlight certain modes of consciousness over others. Secondness is paramount in hearing, listening focuses on Thirdness, and sensing is where Firstness reigns. Moreover, these three modes of consciousness will likely oscillate within any given experience such that the relative weight placed on any one will change with shifting circumstances. Take for instance a typical greeting ritual whereby an individual (Brooks) notices another (Laurence) and says "Hi!" That experience begins in Secondness as Brooks notices Laurence and produces a common statement of acknowledgement that produces

in Laurence various qualities (e.g., positive emotions in Laurence for being noticed and remembered). Thirdness is also invoked because a general rule for greeting is used by each to facilitate the conversation. If the interaction were to end there, we would have primary focus on Secondness and, thus, an interaction most adequately described as each Hearing but neither in a fully conscious state of Listening nor Sensing. Imagine, however, that the two interlocutors stop and have a conversation about Laurence's father who is coming into town and who is a recovering alcoholic. Supportive conversations like this certainly qualify as an experience calling for mutual understanding through the cocreation of rules based on sharing of meaningful and conscientious dialogue (i.e., one that calls for listening). Or imagine that Brooks and Laurence are ex-lovers. Thus, when Brooks utters the greeting "Hi" Laurence becomes awash in qualities because she is primarily attuned to the sound of Brooks's voice. In this case, Laurence may primarily experience a single consciousness and report later feelings of comfort and relaxation. Regardless of the specifics, the point is that Peirce's modes of consciousness should be thought of as being more or less present rather than as bivalent "there" or "not there" categories. Perhaps more importantly is the fact that examples such as this highlight the complexity afforded by Peirce's phenomenology toward understanding essential aspects of human listening and communication.

Conclusion

As stated at the beginning of our essay, we share a primary concern with Lipari to explicate the artful practice of listening and to offer the field of Communication Studies different perspectives that usefully challenge existing ways of conceptualizing human communication. The phenomenology of Charles Sanders Peirce in particular provides three categories of being/consciousness, as explicated above, which affords unique insights into the experience of listening. Although our view agrees with Lipari that there exists a distinction between hearing and listening, we argue that listening does not "begin ... from the emptiness of awareness" (p. 348) but from hearing, which is intimately tied to Secondness through the bringing forth of resistance. **Put differently, listening is not unstimulated action, but is brought about by action, effort, and resistance that produce an awareness of an "other" who is not ourselves.** Whereas "speaking" does not invoke this notion of otherness, "listening" in its very nature assumes a response to an external stimulus, be it an expression, a word, or a gesture, thus suggesting listening is a more foundational term for a field concerned with communication.

Thus, we share a fundamental concern with other listening scholars to lift listening from its slumber in Western scholastic thinking and in the Communication Studies discipline more specifically (Beard & Bodie, 2014). Our essay contributes to this larger discussion by separating multiple facets of listening. As Fiumara (1995) stated, "It is an attempt to retrieve the functions of listening which may allow for truer forms of dialogue rather than for dialectical dismantlings which tend to repropose

what has been demolished" (p. 13). Consequently, our project helps bring added clarity to the term listening, opening the door for others to continue the compelling case for the importance of building listening theory and training its practice (Bodie, 2010).

In terms of theory building, one particularly salient contribution of this analysis is to move away from the unnecessary dichotomy between "humanities-based communication scholarship on listening" and the "social science and cognitive science literature" (Lipari, 2010, p. 351). It appears commonplace to categorize listening research into "camps" (Purdy, 2000, p. 49), invoking notions of agonism and tension rather than harmony and synergy, or "perspectives" (Beard, 2009, p. 8), thus invoking notions of incommensurability rather than collaboration. And while it is true that "In [the] list of disciplines and fields that have contributed to listening studies, we find noticeably absent philosophy, ethics, and politics" (Gehrke, 2009, p. 2), it is also true that by attempting to separate rather than integrate, we may be missing an important piece of the larger theoretical listening puzzle. Much like cognitive models strip the study of listening from its experiential foundation, excluding research bearing on the cognitive elements of the listening experience ultimately misses what actually happens as we experience being a listener. In experience, the mode of being described as "not an actual state or principle" (Lipari, 2010, p. 359) cannot be adequately branded as listening any more than models that move from sensing to hearing to interpreting and evaluating (Wolvin, 1989). By situating listening as primarily a Thirdness, we agree with Lipari that it is a "process of understanding" that ultimately leads to a "coproduced dialogic process undertaken by speakers and listeners together" (p. 351). Thus, rather than situating listening solely within the confines of individual cognitive processing, it should form the basis of a larger practice of dialogic communication (Floyd, 2010; Hyde, 1994; Kimball & Garrison, 1996; Stewart, 1983). How this works, the intricate details of what such "dialogic listening" (Floyd, 2010) looks like, is an important contribution open for debate, but more importantly, for empirical scrutiny (in both the scientific and phenomenological senses). We hope our analysis provides added clarity toward this larger goal.

In terms of training, Peirce's phenomenology associates listening with the conscious effort to understand with others, through communication, the complex mediating relationships between the things, events, feelings, cognitions, and actions in which we are enmeshed. This pragmatic naturalism (Peirce would say "realism") may be the primary contribution that can be made for the practice of listening. To move our analysis of listening outside of the actual occurrence of listening as we experience it in everyday life seems counterproductive to efforts aimed at improving this skill (and not just the "effective" but also the "ethical" realm; see Gehrke, 2009). This critique is equally applicable to those who wish to place listening as primarily a Quality or who conflate two or more modes of consciousness (e.g., Firstness and Thirdness) as it is to those who develop pure cognitive models of listening. Going back to the inherently dialogic nature of listening, it is not a "filling in the gaps" as implied by

mere cognitive models nor is it a fully “emptying of oneself” as implied by mere existentialist accounts, but an engagement in a process of inquiry, an attempt to embrace everything but to focus on a few things or even one thing. And since listening primarily implicates Thirdness (or Mediation), it brings things into relation. Indeed, when engaged in “good” (or “ethical”) listening, we see the possibilities that are inherent in things, going beyond limits of what is known in the here-and-now. Thus, listening is not a dwelling place but a conjoint process of inquiry whose results prove true only when it makes it possible to dwell under a common habit. We think this is true not only for the individual's conscious experience as a listener but also for scholars interested in its study as an object of inquiry and those interested in assisting others to improve on this important life skill.

Notes

- 1 Phenomenological inquiry is generally concerned with describing ways of being in the world and takes as its *modus operandi* individual conscious experience—the meanings of things as they are experienced by a particular individual within a particular life-world. As Heidegger (1996) has defined it, “phenomenology means ... to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself” (p. 30). This definition is built upon the two components of phenomenology, namely phenomenon (“what shows itself, the self-showing, the manifest”; p. 25) and logos (“to make manifest ‘what is being talked about’ in speech”; p. 28). Therefore, to study something phenomenologically is to attend to the multiple ways in which that thing discloses itself to particular individuals or groups as well as the language used to talk about and remember those disclosures. For more detail on the historical account of Peirce's phenomenology the reader is referred to Rosensohn (1974). For those interested in particular differences between Peirce and other phenomenologists, please consult Stjernfelt (2007; especially Chapter 6), Vernis (2008), and Spiegelberg (1956). For a thorough phenomenological analysis of listening according to methods more closely aligned to Husserl and Heidegger, see Ihde (2007).
- 2 Abbreviations for all Peirce citations follow these conventions: W = *Writings of Charles S. Peirce: A Chronological Edition* (Moore et al., 1982), volume#:page#; CP = *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce* (Peirce, 1974), volume#.paragraph#; EP = *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings* (Houser et al., 1992/1998), volume#:page#.
- 3 For a more thorough account of Peirce's realism, see Roberts (1970), Michael (1988), and Forster (2011).
- 4 We realize that by invoking the notion of sign and of Peircian semiotics more generally, that we open up a rather complex can of worms that we do not subsequently deal with adequately. If our Peircean account of listening thus far is accurate, then the ultimate product of listening as the phenomenological encounter with another person in a semiotic exchange is the conscious production and communication of logical inferences based on how we interpret the signs of that person, both verbal and nonverbal. And since such an explication is vastly important, we leave it to further work and decide not to deal with it only in a piecemeal fashion here.
- 5 The way we use the term “hearing” may seem to exclude the deaf or hearing impaired from being able to “listen.” Although we use the term hearing in our framework and in

this section focus on the reception of aurally presented information, it also is true that what we react against is not only audible but also visual, olfactory, tactile, and perhaps even gustatory in some cases.

- 6 "A quale is to be regarded as the incarnation of the ground of its quality. Moreover it necessarily is represented by something, for all impressions require logically to be represented and they are the matter of fact — so that an absolutely and at all times unrepresented thing is nothing. A quale, therefore, has a direct reference both to the ground and the interpretant of the *term* which represents it" (W 1:478).

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