

# Values for the sake of science: the “mode of life” of Charles Sanders Peirce

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**Abstract:** This paper intends to discuss the scientific *ethos* sustained by Peirce and compare it with the current values nourished by the contemporary academic community. In order to fulfill this task, first we need to determine what is meant by *ethos of science* — a concept developed by the founder of American sociology of science, Robert Merton — which includes the normative values of communalism, universalism, disinterestedness and organized skepticism, usually referred by the acronym CUDOS. In sequence, I will interpret Peirce as a sort of *exemplar* of the mertonian *ethos* because his *mode of life* in large extent exemplifies his adherence to similar normative rules. Nevertheless, most sociologists of science consider that mertonian *ethos* is definitely outdated and that it has been superseded by other set of values, whose acronym is PLACE (cf. Ziman, 2000): proprietary, local, authoritarian, commissioned and expert. Thus, one wonders whether Peirce’s lessons about science and scientific life are only historical pieces from the “age of the innocence” of the search for truth. But, on the other hand, would be possible to cultivate some kind of peircean *mode of life* in an atmosphere so saturated by the economical and political concerns of the “big science” (Price, 1963)?

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