



## Re-reading Saussure: The Dynamics of Signs in Social Life

By Paul J. Thibault

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Through a detailed re-reading of Saussure's work in the light of contemporary developments in the human, life and physical sciences, Paul Thibault provides us with the means to redefine and refocus our theories of social meaning-making. Saussure's theory of language is generally considered to be a formal theory of abstract sign-types and sign-systems, separate from our individual and social practices of making meaning. In this challenging book, Thibault presents a different view of Saussure. Paying close attention to the original texts, including the Cours de Linguistic Generale he demonstrates that Saussure was centrally concerned with trying to formulate a theory of how meanings are made. Re-reading Saussure does more than simply engage with Saussure's theory in a new and up-to-date way, however. In addition to demonstrating the continuing viability of Saussure's thinking through a range of examples, it makes an important intervention in contemporary linguistic and semiotic debate.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

Far and away the best book on Saussure's *Cours* that I know of...meticulously detailed, scrupulous, well-informed...a fundamentally challenging text.

–**Gunther Kress, University of London**

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