



Peter J. Schulz

Biography

Peter J. Schulz is a professor for semiotics and health communication at the Faculty for Communication Sciences and the Director of the Institute of Communication and Health at the Università della Svizzera italiana (www.ich.com.unisi.ch). His research focuses on the field of doctor-patient communication. Schulz received various research grants from the Swiss National Foundation and other institutions financing research in the area of health communication (such as the King's Fund in the United Kingdom, CancerBackup, and Gesundheitsförderung Schweiz). He is the author and editor of numerous books and articles in scholarly journals. Since 2003, Peter Schulz has been a guest professor at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, USA.

Peter Schulz received his Ph.D. from the Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt in 1993 for a dissertation in the field of the philosophy of consciousness. His interest in social relationships and their forms then led him to antique philosophy, where he completed his habilitation in 1998. Under the influence of Charles Sanders Peirce's theory of signs, Schulz's particular interest in semiotics intensified. He had, because of his background in philosophy, a special way of access to the semantic branch of semiotics.

Versed in semiotics, Peter Schulz was appointed professor at the Faculty of Communication Sciences of the Università della Svizzera italiana in Lugano in 1998. Motivated by the manifold ways to do empirical research in the field, he shifted his focus increasingly to the field of health communication. Since 2004, he has been the Director (and founder) of the Institute of Communication and Health (ICH, formerly Health Care Communication Laboratory). His major work focuses on doctor-patient-communication, with the process of knowledge acquisition and risk communication holding most of his attention.

In 2008, Schulz realized the foundation of the first doctoral school in the field of health communication. The Doctoral School on Communication & Health (www.comhealth.ch), funded by the Swiss National Foundation, enables the targeted and systematic support of students interested in practical research, while they are working on their dissertations. In collaboration with the Universities of Neuchâtel, Zurich and Virginia Tech, USA, the Doctoral School contributed to the building of a network, unique in Europe, in the field of health communication.

Two major editions, directed by Schulz, are presently in preparation: a *Handbook of Communication Sciences* intended to cover all of communication sciences in 28 volumes for the English-speaking world, and a four-volume collection of *Theories in Communication Science*. Besides, Schulz functions as author and editor of several books, journals and other scholarly publications.