

'Scholastic Realism' (pub. 06.06.14-14:01). 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-harvard-lectures-pragmatism-lecture-iv-seven-systems-metaphysics-0>.

Term: Scholastic Realism

Quote: It is the same with the operations of nature. With overwhelming uniformity, in our past experience, direct and indirect, stones left free to fall have fallen. Thereupon two hypotheses only are open to us. Either

1. the uniformity with which those stones have fallen has been due to mere chance and affords no ground whatever, not the slightest for any expectation that the next stone that shall be let go will fall; or
2. the uniformity with which stones have fallen has been due to some *active general principle*, in which case it would be a strange coincidence that it should cease to act at the moment my prediction was based upon it.

That position, gentlemen, will sustain criticism. It is irrefragable.

Of course, every sane man will adopt the latter hypothesis. If he could doubt it in the case of the stone – which he can't – and I may as well drop the stone once for all – I told you so! – if anybody doubts this still, a thousand other such inductive predictions are getting verified every day, and he will have to suppose every one of them to be merely fortuitous in order reasonably to escape the conclusion that general principles are really operative in nature. That is the doctrine of scholastic realism.

Source: Peirce, C. S. (1903). *Harvard Lectures on Pragmatism: Lecture IV. The Seven Systems of Metaphysics*. MS [R] 309.

References: CP 5.100-101

Date of 1903

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