

'Abduction' (pub. 03.01.13-18:56). 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-v-0>.

Term: Abduction

Quote: ... three radically different kinds of arguments which I signalized in 1867 and which had been recognized by the logicians of the eighteenth century, although [those] logicians quite pardonably failed to recognize the inferential character of one of them. Indeed, I suppose that the three were given by Aristotle in the *Prior Analytics*, although the unfortunate illegibility of a single word in his MS. and its replacement by a wrong word by his first editor, the stupid [Apellicon], has completely altered the sense of the chapter on Abduction. At any rate, even if my conjecture is wrong, and the text must stand as it is, still Aristotle, in that chapter on Abduction, was even in that case evidently groping for that mode of inference which I call by the otherwise quite useless name of Abduction - a word which is only employed in logic to translate the [apagoge] of that chapter.

These three kinds of reasoning are Abduction, Induction, and Deduction. [—] All the ideas of science come to it by the way of Abduction. Abduction consists in studying facts and devising a theory to explain them. Its only justification is that if we are ever to understand things at all, it must be in that way.

Source: Peirce, C. S. (1903). *Harvard Lectures on Pragmatism: Lecture V*. MS [R] 312.

References: CP 5.144-145

Date of 1903

Quote:

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