

'Doubt' (pub. 24.05.14-18:32). 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-pragmatism-prag>.

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**Term:** Doubt

**Quote:** Every decent house dog has been taught beliefs that appear to have no application to the wild state of the dog; and yet your trained dog has not, I guess, been observed to have passed through a period of scepticism on the subject. There is every reason to suppose that belief came first, and the power of doubting long after. Doubt, usually, perhaps always, takes its rise from surprise, which supposes previous belief; and surprises come with novel environment. I will only add that though precise reasoning about precise experiential doubt could not entirely destroy doubt, any more than the action of finite conservative forces could leave a body in a continuous state of rest, yet vagueness, which is no more to be done away with in the world of logic than friction in mechanics, can have that effect.

**Source:** Peirce, C. S. (1905 [c.]). *Pragmatism, Prag [R]*. MS [R] 291.

**References:** CP 5.512

**Date of** 1905 [c.]

**Quote:**

**URL:** <http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-pragmatism-prag>