

# Ethics

1898 | Cambridge Lectures on Reasoning and the Logic of Things: Philosophy and the Conduct of Life | EP 2:36

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Philosophy seems to consist of two parts, Logic and Metaphysics. I exclude Ethics, for two reasons. In the first place, as the science of the end and aim of life, [ethics] seems to be exclusively psychical, and therefore to be confined to a special department of experience, while philosophy studies experience in its universal characteristics. In the second place, in seeking to define the proper aim of life, ethics seems to me to rank with the arts, or rather with the theories of the arts, which of all theoretical sciences I regard as the most concrete, while what I mean by philosophy is the most abstract of all the real sciences.

1903 | A Syllabus of Certain Topics of Logic | CP 1.191

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Normative science has three widely separated divisions: i. Esthetics; ii. Ethics; iii. Logic.

... Ethics, or the science of right and wrong, must appeal to Esthetics for aid in determining the *summum bonum*. It is the theory of self-controlled, or deliberate, conduct.

1903 | Harvard Lectures on Pragmatism: Lecture I | CP 5.36

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...it is generally said that the three normative sciences are logic, ethics, and esthetics, being the three doctrines that distinguish good and bad; *Logic* in regard to representations of truth, *Ethics* in regard to efforts of will, and *Esthetics* in objects considered simply in their presentation.

1903 | Harvard Lectures on Pragmatism: Lecture V | CP 5.129

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Supposing, however, that normative science divides into esthetics, ethics, and logic, then it is easily perceived, from my standpoint, that this division is governed by the three categories. For Normative Science in general being the science of the laws of conformity of things to ends, esthetics considers those things whose ends are to embody qualities of feeling, ethics those things whose ends lie in action, and logic those things whose end is to represent something.

1904 | A Brief Intellectual Autobiography by Charles Sanders Peirce | Peirce, 1983, p. 71; MS [R] L107:20

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Ethics studies in the controllable phenomenon the act and process of controlling it. This study is the very heart of normative science, and emphasizes more strongly than the others that dichotomy which is the constitutive characteristic of normative science. For it is the study of the controlled and the uncontrolled as they appear in effort and resistance. This abstract ethics which can derive no principle from metaphysics or from psychology can plainly have little in common with ordinary ethics.

This quote has been taken from Kenneth Laine Ketner's 1983 reconstruction of Peirce's 'Autobiography'

1904 | Reason's Conscience: A Practical Treatise on the Theory of Discovery; Wherein logic is conceived as Semeiotic | NEM 4:192; HP 2:826

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*Ethics* is that normative science which studies the conditions of that excellence which may or may not belong to voluntary action in its relation to its purpose.

1905 | Materials for Monist Article: The Consequences of Pragmaticism. Vols. I and II [R] | MS [R] 288:25

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...What quality of anything is it that is fine in itself without any ulterior reason? Then the problem of ethics being the study of the general conditions for making the fine existent, it is quite plausible in advance that this may depend upon what the fine is. But it is a part of the solution of that problem that the chief agency for the actualization of the fine must be the action of self-control. As soon, therefore, as we come to see Reasoning, the primary, and indeed the principal, subject of logic, is precisely self-controlled thought, the applicability to it of ethical theory becomes credible, to say the least.

nd | A Suggested Classification of the Sciences | MS [R] 1339:12

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Reasoning is self-controlled thought; and thus Logic is directly dependent upon Ethics, or the science of self-control, in general.