Term: Universe of Discourse

Quote: De Morgan, in the remarkable memoir with which he opened his discussion of the syllogism (1846, p. 380) has pointed out that we often carry on reasoning under an implied restriction as to what we shall consider as possible, which restriction, applying to the whole of what is said, need not be expressed. The total of all that we consider possible is called the universe of discourse, and may be very limited. One mode of limiting our universe is by considering only what actually occurs, so that everything which does not occur is regarded as impossible.


References: CP 3.174

Date of Quote: 1880

URL: http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-algebra-logic