
**Term:** Maxim of Pragmatism

**Quote:** ...the principle he called *pragmatism*, that is, that every concept (in contrast to qualities of feeling, images, experiences, etc.) is definable in terms of a possible purpose of conduct under hypothetical general conditions, and that from this can be deduced the best rule for rendering ideas clear, namely, “Consider what effects that *might conceivably* have practical bearings we conceive the object of our conception to have: then, our concept of those effects is the whole concept in question.” But since P not only admits the difference between a commensurable and an incommensurable length, but has specially insisted upon abnumerable (abzählbar) multitudes [...] it is evident that he understands “conceivably practical bearings” in a peculiarly wide sense.


**References:** Peirce, 1983, pp. 66-67; MS [R] L107:7-8

**Date of Quote:** 1904

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

**URL:** http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-brief-intellectual-autobiography-charles-sanders-peirce-2