

'Thirdness' (pub. 09.03.13-13:34). 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-csps-lowell-lectures-1903-2nd-part-3rd-draught-lecture-iii-3>.

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**Term:** Thirdness

**Quote:** Let us proceed in the same way with Thirdness. We have here a first, a second, and a third. The first is a positive qualitative possibility, in itself nothing more. The second is an existent thing without any mode of being less than existence, but determined by that first. A third has a mode of being which consists in the Secondnesses that it determines, the mode of being of a law, or concept. Do not confound this with the ideal being of a quality in itself. A quality is something capable of being completely embodied. A law never can be embodied in its character as a law except by determining a habit. A quality is how something may or might have been. A law is how an endless future must continue to be.

Now in genuine Thirdness, the first, the second, and the third are all three of the nature of thirds, or thought, while in respect to one another they are first, second, and third. [—] The third is thought in its role as governing Secondness. It brings the information into the mind, or determines the idea and gives it body. It is informing thought, or *cognition*. But take away the psychological or accidental human element, and in this genuine Thirdness we see the operation of a sign.

**Source:** Peirce, C. S. (1903). *CSP's Lowell Lectures of 1903. 2nd Part of 3rd Draught of Lecture III*. MS [R] 465.

**References:** CP 1.536-537

**Date of** 1903

**Quote:**

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