

'Fallibilism' (pub. 08.01.13-17:28). 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-fallibilism-continuity-and-evolution-r-1>.

Term: Fallibilism

Quote: Thus, the universe is *not* a mere mechanical result of the operation of blind law. The most obvious of all its characters cannot be so explained. It is the multitudinous facts of all experience that show us this; but that which has opened our eyes to these facts is the principle of fallibilism. Those who fail to appreciate the importance of fallibilism reason: we see these laws of mechanics; we see how extremely closely they have been verified in some cases. We suppose that what we haven't examined is like what we have examined, and that these laws are absolute, and the whole universe is a boundless machine working by the blind laws of mechanics. This is a philosophy which leaves no room for a God! No, indeed! It leaves even human consciousness, which cannot well be denied to exist, as a perfectly idle and functionless *flâneur* in the world, with no possible influence upon anything – not even upon itself. Now will you tell me that this fallibilism amounts to nothing?

Source: Peirce, C. S. (1893 [c.]). *Fallibilism, Continuity, and Evolution [R]*. MS [R] 955.

References: CP 1.162-163

Date of 1893 [c.]

Quote:

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