

'Thirdness' (pub. 09.03.13-13:30). 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-harvard-lectures-pragmatism-lecture-iii-3>.

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**Term:** Thirdness

**Quote:** Category the Third exhibits two different ways of Degeneracy, where the irreducible idea of Plurality, as distinguished from Duality, is present indeed but in maimed conditions. The First degree of Degeneracy is found in an Irrational Plurality which, as it exists, in contradistinction [to] the form of its representation, is a mere complication of duality. We have just had an example of this in the idea of Subdivision. In pure Secondness, the reacting correlates are *Singulars*, and as such are *Individuals*, not capable of further division. Consequently, the conception of Subdivision, say by repeated dichotomy, certainly involves a sort of Thirdness, but it is a thirdness that is conceived to consist in a second secondness.

The most degenerate Thirdness is where we conceive a mere Quality of Feeling, or Firstness, to represent itself to itself as Representation. Such, for example, would be Pure Self-Consciousness, which might be roughly described as a mere feeling that has a dark instinct of being a germ of thought. This sounds nonsensical, I grant. Yet something can be done toward rendering it comprehensible.

**Source:** Peirce, C. S. (1903). *Harvard Lectures on Pragmatism: Lecture III*. MS [R] 308.

**References:** CP 5.70-71

**Date of** 1903

**Quote:**

**URL:** <http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-harvard-lectures-pragmatism-lecture-iii-3>