

'Abduction' (pub. 02.01.13-18:30). 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-minute-logic-chapter-i-intended-characters-treatise-0>.

Term: Abduction

Quote: Argument is of three kinds: *Deduction*, *Induction*, and *Abduction* (usually called adopting a hypothesis). [—] An originary Argument, or *Abduction*, is an argument which presents facts in its Premiss which present a similarity to the fact stated in the Conclusion, but which could perfectly well be true without the latter being so, much more without its being recognized; so that we are not led to assert the Conclusion positively but are only inclined toward admitting it as representing a fact of which the facts of the Premiss constitute an *Icon*. For example, at a certain stage of Kepler's eternal exemplar of scientific reasoning, he found that the observed longitudes of Mars, which he had long tried in vain to get fitted with an orbit, were (within the possible limits of error of the observations) such as they would be if Mars moved in an ellipse. The facts were thus, in so far, a *likeness* of those of motion in an elliptic orbit. Kepler did not conclude from this that the orbit really was an ellipse; but it did incline him to that idea so much as to decide him to undertake to ascertain whether virtual predictions about the latitudes and parallaxes based on this hypothesis would be verified or not. This probational adoption of the hypothesis was an Abduction. An Abduction is Originary in respect to being the only kind of argument which starts a new idea.

Source: Peirce, C. S. (1902). *Minute Logic: Chapter I. Intended Characters of this Treatise*. MS [R] 425.

References: CP 2.96

Date of 1902

Quote:

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