

Record in the Commens Bibliography. Retrieved from [http://www.commens.org/bibliography/journal\\_article/west-donna-e-2017-virtual-habit-episode-builder-inferencing-process](http://www.commens.org/bibliography/journal_article/west-donna-e-2017-virtual-habit-episode-builder-inferencing-process), 29.12.2025.

---

**Type:** Article in Journal

**Author:** West, Donna E.

**Title:** Virtual habit as episode-builder in the inferencing process

**Year:** 2017

**Journal:** Cognitive Semiotics

**Volume:** 10

**Issue:** 1

**Pages:** 55-75

**Keywords:** Habit

**Abstract:** C. S. Peirce's concept of virtual habit, especially articulated in his later manuscripts, renovates his earlier notion of how explanatory rationality operates to form sound inferences, reinforcing his commitment to a genuinely pragmatic world-view. Virtual habit represents Peirce's clearest directive of how to guess right. Pictures in the mind (unbidden/constructed) promote new modes of consciousness that, in turn, impel the kind of inferences which surface in recommendations for courses of action - Peirce's most influential kind of abduction (1909: MS 637). Virtual habits transcend subjective perspectives about which factors contribute to outcomes as well as incorporate which who, where, and when controls the ultimate consequence. Virtual habits serve as windows illustrating how imaged events preempt the adoption of new belief structures/action plans that afford the more plausible recourses to resolve anomalous consequences. Virtual habits propose imminent action plans (Stjernfelt 2016, *Dicisigns and habits: Implicit propositions and habit-taking in Peirce's pragmatism*. In D. West & M. Anderson (eds.), *Consensus on Peirce's concept of habit: Before and beyond consciousness*, 241-264. Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag; Bergman 2016, *Habit-change as ultimate interpretant*. In D. West & M. Anderson (eds.), *Consensus on Peirce's concept of habit: Before and beyond consciousness*, 171-197. Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag; West 2016c, *Reflections on complexions of habit*. In D. West & M. Anderson (eds.), *Consensus of Peirce's concept of habit: Before and beyond consciousness*, 421-432. Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag; under review, *The abductive character of Peirce's virtual habit*. In J. Pelkey & S. Walsh-Matthews (eds.), *Semiotics* 2016.). As such, they determine new courses of conduct for states of affairs requiring remediation. Their character as imminent habit compels enactment of improved behavior packages to resolve real-world consequences. As such, the

episodic and vivid nature of virtual habits (as closely-held event sequences)  
impel implementation of the image-plan itself.

**ISSN:** 16621425

**DOI:** 10.1515/cogsem-2017-0005

**Language:** English