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THE DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL PRACTICE

How do societies change? Why do they stay so much the same? Within the social sciences, contrasting theoretical traditions have grown up around these enduring concerns. The problem of understanding novelty and persistence is surely not new, but it is one to which this book brings a fresh approach. It does so by developing a series of concepts with which to capture the dynamic aspects of *social practice*.

Our opening contention is that theories of practice have as yet untapped potential for understanding change. Realizing their potential depends on developing a means of systematically exploring processes of transformation and stability within social practices and between them. This is the task to which most of the following chapters are devoted. Whilst this is an important exercise in its own right, it is of more than academic concern.

In showing how practices change and stay the same we hope to realize another also latent promise, which is for social theory to make a difference. We do not offer instant solutions but we contend that our analysis

is of value in responding to complex challenges like those of climate change and obesity, and in addressing persistent patterns of inequality. Theories of practice have yet to make much impact on public policy but it seems obvious that if 'the source of changed behaviour lies in the development of practices' (Warde, 2005: 140), understanding their emergence, persistence and disappearance is of the essence. It also seems obvious that the reproduction and transformation of social practices has implications for patterns of consumption and for institutions and infrastructures associated with them. In the final chapter we argue that policy initiatives to promote more sustainable ways of life could and should be rooted in an understanding of the elements of which practices and systems of practice are formed, and of the connective tissue that holds them together.

The theoretical and practical significance of comprehending social change and stability is clear enough, but why do we need yet another book? What more is there to add to the many methods and perspectives already on offer? Detailed answers to these questions are woven through the chapters that follow, but the next few paragraphs give a sense of the position from which we begin, the resources on which we draw and the contribution we make to the project of understanding and analysing the dynamics of social practice.

For us, as for everyone else, methods of conceptualizing change reflect prior understandings of the relation between agency and structure. The idea that new social arrangements result from an accumulation of millions of individual decisions about how best to act is enormously influential in everyday discourse, in contemporary policy-making and in certain areas of social science. This idea, which carries with it multiple assumptions about human agency and choice, resonates with common sense theories as to why people do what they do. It also fits comfortably with the notion that behaviours are driven by beliefs and values and that lifestyles and tastes are expressions of personal choice. Although now so pervasive as to seem natural, interpretations of this kind belong within a specific tradition that is grounded in the utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill, and that runs consistently through to contemporary versions of rational choice theory. This is a tradition in which action is, in essence, explained by the pursuit of individual interests. While we recognize the

popularity of this position and its importance in legitimizing efforts to induce change, for example, by educating people about the consequences of their actions or by modifying economic costs and benefits through taxes or incentives, this is not a position we share. Nor do we go along with the view that change is an outcome of external forces, technological innovation or social structure, somehow bearing down on the detail of daily life. Instead, when it comes to matters of agency and structure, our response is to side with Giddens (1984).

Giddens' structuration theory revolves around the conclusion that human activity, and the social structures which shape it are recursively related. That is, activities are shaped and enabled by structures of rules and meanings, and these structures are, at the same time, reproduced in the flow of human action. This flow is neither the conscious, voluntary purpose of human actors, nor the determining force of given social structures. While people can discursively account for their actions, often framing them in terms of conscious purposes and intentions, Giddens emphasizes that the greater part of the processes at stake do not lie within the realm of discursive consciousness. The capability to 'go on' through the flow of largely routinized social life depends on forms of practical knowledge, guided by structural features – rules and resources – of the social systems which shape daily conduct. In Giddens' words, it is through practices that the 'constitution of agents and structures are not two independently given sets of phenomena, a dualism, but represent a duality' (1984: 25). He consequently claims that

> the basic domain of study of the social sciences, according to the theory of structuration, is neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any form of social totality, but social practices ordered across space and time.
>
> (Giddens, 1984: 2)

In 1984, Giddens provided what was then, and perhaps is still, the clearest account of how theories of practice might transcend the dualisms of structure and agency, determination and voluntarism. By implication

such theories should also provide a means of explaining processes of change without prioritizing human agency and choice, and of conceptualizing stability without treating it as an outcome of given structures. Sure enough, Giddens makes the point that 'the day to day activity of social actors draws upon and reproduces structural features of wider social systems' (1984: 24). Statements of this kind are entirely plausible, but in emphasizing societal *reproduction*, and in being framed at such a general level, they leave many questions hanging. Of these the most important have to do with exactly how practices emerge, evolve and disappear.

In tackling these questions head on this book takes up the challenge of developing and articulating methods of understanding social order, stability and change in terms that are required and informed by theories of practice. Although this is a complicated task, it is one we approach with the help of a relatively simple conceptual framework assembled from ideas and strands of thought gathered from a range of disciplines and traditions. There is no shortage of writing about practice, and as such no need to start from scratch. In the remainder of this chapter we outline the theoretical foundations on which we build and introduce some of the materials we use.

INTRODUCING THEORIES OF PRACTICE

Theories of practice have roots stretching at least as far back as Wittgenstein and Heidegger. Whilst Wittgenstein does not write directly about 'practices', his work conveys many of the key features of theories of practice. For Schatzki (1996), Wittgenstein's location of intelligibility and understanding, not within discrete human minds but in the flow of praxis, and his articulation of how intelligibility and understanding structure of human action and the social realm provides a basis for a theorization of practices which recognizes that 'both social order and individuality … result from practices' (1996: 13). Heidegger, in *Being and Time* (1962), identifies praxis, as much as language, as a source of meaning. His account of *Dasein* and its relation to human activity and to equipment resonates with the ontological grounding of theories of

practice, again emphasizing that human action is always already in the world. There are points of connection between some of these ideas and earlier contributions from pragmatists like James and Dewey. These include the importance accorded to embodied skills and know-how and the contention that experience is best understood not as an outcome of events and intentional actions, but as an ongoing process or flow in which habits and routines are continually challenged and transformed. Despite differences of origin and emphasis, these philosophical precursors are alike in suggesting that practices are not simply points of passage between human subjects and social structure. Rather, practice is positioned centre stage.

From these early twentieth-century origins, somewhat more integrated accounts emerged in the 1970s and into the 1980s. Charles Taylor employed the idea of practice as a means to contest behaviourism, again locating practices as a primary unit of analysis,

> meanings and norms implicit in [...] practices are not just in the minds of the actors but are out there in the practices themselves, practices which cannot be conceived as a set of individual actions, but which are essentially modes of social relations, of mutual action.
>
> (Taylor, 1971: 27)

Meanwhile, in the social sciences, Bourdieu's work is more widely known. Despite titles like *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977) or *The Logic of Practice* (1990), Bourdieu did not develop a consistent theory of practice over his works. Within his writings, practices are more generally seen as a means of approaching his more central concern: that of theorizing *habitus* – a concept which in Bourdieu's hands embodies aspects of practical consciousness and of norms and rules of conduct, aspects that other theorists take to be part of practices themselves. Here it is habitus and practices which are in recursive relation, such that habitus is 'constituted in practice and is always oriented towards practical functions' (1990: 52). Nevertheless, Bourdieu was influential in bringing concepts of practice into the social theoretical debates of the 1980s,

doing so at a time when these ideas resonated with other work, including that of Foucault.

Through these routes, theories of practice entered the vocabulary of social scientific enquiry. Although notions of practice figure in different strands of social science through the 1980s and 1990s, they gained fresh theoretical impetus towards the close of the twentieth century, primarily through the work of philosopher Theodore Schatzki. His exposition of a Wittgensteinian theory of practice (Schatzki, 1996) helped bring practices back into the firmament of ideas as the influence of the linguistic turn in social theory began to fade. In retrospect, *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory* (Schatzki et al., 2001) did not define a neat manoeuvre in social theory, but it did mark the start of what has become a diffuse movement, the shape and extent of which remains to be seen.

The essays collected in *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory* demonstrated a continuing variety of theoretical positions gathering under the practice banner. In 2002, cultural sociologist Andreas Reckwitz sought to make sense of this diversity and in so doing provided a cogent summary of key features common to the most prominent approaches, using this as a platform from which to characterize an 'ideal type of practice theory' (Reckwitz, 2002: 244). Reckwitz positions practice theories in relation to other cultural theories, all of which 'highlight the significance of shared or collective symbolic structures of knowledge in order to grasp both action and social order' (246). He groups cultural theories into three types, each distinguished by where they locate the social. 'Culturalist mentalism' locates the social in the mind, in the heads of humans, this being where knowledge and meaning structures are taken to reside. For 'culturalist textualism' the social is situated not in the mind but 'in chains of signs, in symbols, discourse, communication ... or "texts"' (248). Finally, 'culturalist intersubjectivism ... locates the social in interactions' (249), most obviously through the intersubjectivity of ordinary speech acts. In contrast to these three alternatives, theories of practice are distinct in contending that the social is situated in practice.

What, then, is practice? For Reckwitz, it is 'a routinized type of behavior' (2002: 249). Taken in isolation, this phrase is potentially misleading in that it risks equating practices with the habits of individuals.

Such an interpretation would miss the point in that it would overlook the recursive character of practice. This becomes obvious as Reckwitz goes on to explain that a practice exists as a 'block' or 'a pattern which can be filled out by a multitude of single and often unique actions' (2002: 250). In this sense, a practice endures between and across specific moments of enactment (Shove et al., 2007). As Schatzki puts it, a practice is 'a temporally and spatially dispersed nexus of doings and sayings' (1996: 89).

Reckwitz takes these ideas one step further in suggesting that a practice, as a block or pattern, consists of interdependencies between diverse elements including 'forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, "things" and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge' (2002: 249). To give a practical illustration, skateboarding consists of a complex amalgam of skateboards and street spaces along with the bodily competencies required to ride the board and to use the affordances of the street to turn tricks; the rules and norms that define the practice of skateboarding; its meanings to practitioners and to outsiders including its partially oppositional character, and so on. As such skateboarding exists as a recognizable conjunction of *elements*, consequently figuring as an *entity* which can be spoken about and more importantly drawn upon as a set of resources when doing skateboarding.

At the same time, practices exist as *performances*. It is through performance, through the immediacy of doing, that the 'pattern' provided by the practice-as-an-entity is filled out and reproduced. It is only through successive moments of performance that the interdependencies between elements which constitute the practice as entity are sustained over time. Accordingly, skateboarding only exists and endures because of countless recurrent enactments, each reproducing the interdependencies of which the practice is comprised.

In this analysis, individuals feature as the *carriers* or hosts of a practice. This is a radical departure from more conventional approaches in which understandings, know-how, meanings and purposes are taken to be personal attributes. Reckwitz argues that it makes better sense to treat these not as the qualities of an individual but as 'elements and qualities of a practice in which the single individual participates' (2002:

250). By implication, the significance, purpose and skill of skateboarding are not simply contained within the heads or bodies of skateboarders; rather these features constitute the practice of skateboarding, of which the rider is merely a carrier.

Much of the literature referred to above takes practices to be enduring entities reproduced through recurrent performance. There is nothing inherently wrong with this interpretation, but something more is required if we are to develop a convincing account of change and order with practice at its heart. To give a simple example, skateboarding has a short but turbulent history during which it has undergone multiple transformations – starting when surfers added wheels to boards, moving through skate parks and now on to more contemporary forms of street skateboarding (Borden, 2001). With each transition, elements, including the shape of the board, the details of know-how, the meanings and purposes of the practice and its characteristics – as entity and as performance – have been reconfigured. At a minimum, we need to find ways of describing and analysing processes like these while also accounting for more faithful, more consistent forms of reproduction.

In showing how practice theories might be developed to better account for change we make extensive use of many of the ideas sketched above. For example, the proposition that practices are composed of elements and the suggestion that people are usefully understood as the carriers of practice figure prominently in our account. The analytic distinction between practice-as-performance and practice-as-entity also proves useful, allowing us to show how novel combinations of competence, material and meaning are enacted and reproduced. Like the practitioners and everyday innovators about whom we write, we appropriate ideas from here and there, making new connections between existing arguments as required. In the next section we highlight some of the other literatures from which we borrow.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Reckwitz classifies theories of practice as cultural theories. While they differ from other cultural theories in where they situate the social, they

are alike in how the realm of the social is defined and in what it includes. For the most part, theories of practice have focused on the significance of shared understandings, norms, meanings, practical consciousness and purposes, all of which count as classically 'social' phenomena.

More recently, other less obvious elements have entered the frame. Schatzki argues that 'understanding specific practices *always involves apprehending material configurations*' (Schatzki et al., 2001: 3). Reckwitz is even more explicit. Using a very ordinary example he makes the point that: 'in order to play football we need a ball and goals as indispensable "resources"' (2002: 252). A ball alone does not make the game – an idea of playing, people to play with and a measure of competence are also necessary, and questions remain about how material and other elements combine. A key feature of our own approach is the emphasis we place on the constitutive role of things and materials in everyday life. In short, we take seriously Latour's statement that artefacts 'are not "reflecting" [society], as if the "reflected" society existed somewhere else and was made of some other stuff. They are in large part the stuff out of which socialness is made' (2000: 113). In this we redress a partial but significant gap, adding a material dimension to what are otherwise conventionally 'social' theories.

In the process, we make selective use of ideas developed within science and technology studies (STS), a field which has a number of intellectual traditions in common with practice theory, but in which the role of things and technologies is a major theme. There are several clear points of connection, including *The Mangle of Practice* (Pickering, 1995), in which Pickering contends that practices are constituted through the actions of material entities as well as of people. Preda develops similar arguments, suggesting that artefacts are 'processes and … knots of socially sanctioned knowledge' (1999: 362) that 'bind human actors and participate in developing specific forms of social order – because they allow for common practices to develop, stabilize and structure time' (355). Bruno Latour, perhaps the most influential theorist within STS, also features in Reckwitz' list of key figures involved in developing theories of practice, but for many Latour's claim that artefacts have the capacity 'to construct, literally and not metaphorically, social order' (2000: 113) is a step too far. Schatzki

(2002: 71) directly contests this 'extension of the categories of actor and action to entities of all sorts' and is critical of proponents of actor network theory who 'contend that practices comprise the actions of various entities and not those of people alone' (71). In Schatzki's scheme, artefacts, materials and technologies are not literally part of practices but instead form 'arrangements' that are co-produced with practices but which are nonetheless distinct. This leads him to argue that although actor network theory attends to the 'arrangement' aspect of this equation, it fails to recognize that 'the practices that are tied to arrangements ... help constitute social phenomena' (Schatzki, 2010a: 135). This discussion and others like it are symptomatic of more profound differences in how practices, materials and actors are conceptualized and in what this means for the relation between them.

In picking our way through these debates we are broadly sympathetic to the view that agencies and competencies are distributed between things and people, and that social relations are 'congealed' in the hardware of daily life. However, we do not go along with the idea (common in STS) that materials constitute the sticky anchor weights of social action or that they should be treated as immutable and relatively incorruptible transporters of power and influence (Law, 1991). While actor network theory has been useful in challenging overly neutral interpretations of the part (or non-part) things play in structuring social action, it has also led to a potentially leaden view of stuff. More abstractly, actor network theory has inspired politically and philosophically intriguing debates about the relation between humans and the non-humans with whom they share their lives, but has ironically done so in ways that divert attention away from more ordinary questions about what these cyborg/hybrid entities are actually *doing*. In response, we suggest that aspects of human and non-human relations can be *better* understood when located in terms of a more encompassing, but suitably materialized, theory of practice. Other authors reach much the same conclusion, defining technologies as 'configurations that work' (Rip and Kemp, 1998) and observing that 'individual technologies add value only to the extent that they are assembled together into effective configurations' (Suchman et al., 1999: 399).

In developing these ideas we also take such effective configurations to be the primary objects of study. However, we do not concentrate exclusively on the context-specific processes involved in producing localized configurations of knowledge, meaning, materiality and action. Our approach consequently differs, in terms of theory and method, from those who undertake detailed ethnographies of situated practice (Suchman, 1984; Hutchins, 1993; Orlikowski, 2002). Since we are interested in the trajectories of practices-as-entities, as well as in the performances of which these are formed, we are interested in how the spatial and temporal reach of 'working configurations' is constituted and how it changes. For this we need to look beyond specific moments of integration.

It is on these terms that we engage with theories of innovation. In recent years, authors who write about consumption, design, organization and innovation have begun to explore the parts 'end-users' play as collaborators, experimenters and co-producers of innovation in product or systems design. This literature challenges representations of professional designers and inventors as the primary source of novelty and complicates simple distinctions between producers on the one hand, and consumers on the other. Having identified multiple forms of collaboration and sharing between end-users, Franke and Shah (2003) conclude that using is itself a creative and innovative process. In the cases they describe, practices of mountain biking and snowboarding have been challenged, extended and developed through and as a result of the energy and enthusiasm of devoted practitioners, in association with an array of producers. In understanding how these processes work out, we need to find ways of integrating concepts from innovation studies with theories of practice.

A second relevant observation, also made by Franke and Shah, is that innovation in practice is an ongoing and not a one-off process. Within innovation studies it is normal to distinguish between conditions and relationships involved in first making something new and those that characterize subsequent stages of development and diffusion. Practice theories of the type we develop make it possible to bridge this gap and analyse invention, innovation and innofusion in similar terms, and in terms that acknowledge the active and dynamic relation between

producers *and* consumers in making new arrangements *and* in developing and sustaining them over time.

When used in this way, practice theory provides a means of uniting studies of innovation and consumption and of conceptualizing dynamic processes inherent both in business and in other realms of everyday life. Such an approach has a number of further implications. One is to suggest that product innovations do not constitute solutions to existing needs. In so far as desires, competencies and materials change as practices evolve, there are no technical innovations without innovations in practice. In other words, if new strategies and solutions in product or service development are to take hold, they have to become embedded in the details of daily life and through that the ordering of society (Shove et al., 2007).

Others have recognized the close coupling of technical innovation and the organization of the social, and in developing this theme we selectively exploit the work of those who have written about trajectories of sociotechnical change, and the co-evolution of sociotechnical regimes and landscapes (Kemp et al., 2001; Geels, 2004). What has become known as the 'multi-level' model of innovation suggests that new 'sociotechnical' arrangements develop in protected niches; that developments at this 'micro' level are shaped by and have consequences for the formation of 'meso' level regimes and that these in turn structure and are structured by 'macro' level landscapes (Rip and Kemp, 1998: 338). By implication, the move from niche to landscape is one in which linkages become progressively denser and paths ever more dependent. As a result, landscapes are harder to change, and change more slowly than either regimes or niches. These ideas have proven useful and influential and have engendered interest in the possibility that strategic intervention at the 'lower' level might set in train a cumulative sequence of events, resulting in a wholesale shift, for example, towards a more sustainable path of sociotechnical development (Elzen et al., 2004).

There are obvious parallels between this approach and the view that practices are more and less faithfully reproduced by those involved in actively making links, and that it is through the successive enactment of practices that social orders are sustained, stabilized and disturbed. While we agree that forms of path-dependence matter and that sociotechnical

systems and complexes of practice are shaped by multiple dynamic processes, our analysis of the development and demise of 'configurations that work' differs in two key respects. First, the simultaneity of *doing* is important for an understanding how practices are formed and how they change. While there are always points of connection between one performance of a practice and the next, and while forms of path dependence are vital, we are interested in synchronic as well as diachronic relations. Moments of doing, when the elements of a practice come together, are moments when such elements are potentially reconfigured (or reconfigure each other) in ways that subtly, but sometimes significantly change all subsequent formulations. Second, we argue that stability is the emergent and always provisional outcome of successively faithful reproductions of practice. When compared with day-to-day processes of social reproduction, the 'multi-level' model of social change and stability seems too ordered and too layered. In the account we develop, stabilization is not an inevitable result of an increasing density of interdependent arrangements, rather, practices are provisionally stabilized when constitutive elements are consistently and persistently integrated through repeatedly similar performances.

These introductory remarks provide some justification for the project on which we are about to embark, and make some sense of the intellectual resources enlisted along the way. Throughout the book we use empirical examples to articulate and exemplify the steps and stages of the position we develop. It is important to be clear about the status of these cases. Not all have immediate import for the big problems facing society: many, like skateboarding, are chosen because they help illustrate the points we want to make. These points nonetheless combine in a manner that allows us to demonstrate the relevance of practice theory for understanding and analysing the multiple dynamics of everyday life, and hence for addressing the major policy challenges of our time.

SEQUENCE AND STRUCTURE

The next five chapters introduce and explain the core features of our approach one step at a time. In simple terms, they move from a

discussion of elements and practices through to more complex questions about how practices relate to one another. At the same time, each chapter works with a slightly different unit of analysis. In combination these strategies allow us to address the problem of how practices change and how they stay the same from different angles. In the process we explore five related questions:

1 How do practices emerge, exist and die?
2 What are the elements of which practices are made?
3 How do practices recruit practitioners?
4 How do bundles and complexes of practice form, persist and disappear?
5 How are elements, practices and links between them generated, renewed and reproduced?

Towards the end of the book we draw the pieces of our analysis together and discuss the implications of our account for theories of practice, and for related issues of space, time and power. This discussion informs the final chapter in which we review the practical relevance and the policy implications of focusing on the dynamics of social practice, rather than 'behaviour change' narrowly defined.

In detail, the chapters are organized as follows. Chapter 2, 'Making and breaking links', suggests that in doing things like driving, walking or cooking, people (as practitioners) actively combine the elements of which these practices are made. By elements we mean:

- *materials* – including things, technologies, tangible physical entities, and the stuff of which objects are made;
- *competences* – which encompasses skill, know-how and technique; and
- *meanings* – in which we include symbolic meanings, ideas and aspirations.

We go on to argue that practices emerge, persist, shift and disappear when *connections* between elements of these three types are made,

sustained or broken. In putting forward such a reductive scheme we may well have fallen 'prey to the scientific urge to build simplifying, diagrammatic models of social life' (Schatzki, 2002: xii). In defence, we contend that this simple formulation is useful in that it provides us with a means of conceptualizing stability and change, and does so in a way that allows us to recognize the recursive relation between practice-as-performance and practice-as-entity.

We introduce these ideas by re-examining moments in the history of automobility, taking the practice of *driving* rather than the car itself as the central topic. This exercise demonstrates the value of treating innovation in practice as a process of linking new and existing elements. As well as revealing critical moments when 'proto-practices' emerge and become real, such a method keeps aspects of continuity and change constantly in view. In addition, it provides an important reminder of the fact that the history of car-driving is a history in which previously established technologies, competences and meanings disintegrate and crumble, and in which practices that were once normal disappear. In responding to our first question – How do practices emerge, exist and die? – Chapter 2, 'Making and breaking links', introduces further lines of enquiry – what are the elements involved, where do they come from, how do they travel and how do they change?

In Chapter 3, 'The life of elements', we seek answers to these questions. In order to do so we proceed as if elements can be separated out and somehow detached from the practices of which they are a part. This methodological strategy allows us to explore the properties and characteristics of the three types of elements about which we write. In showing how materials, meanings and competences endure and travel, we provide a means of understanding how practices are sustained between moments and sites of enactment. We consider the role of transportation in shaping the geographical range of technologies (such as cast-iron stoves) and of practices associated with them. We then discuss forms of codification, abstraction and reversal, all of which are important for how competences travel and for how knowledge is transmitted from one cohort of practitioners to another. Meanings do not diffuse in quite the same way. In thinking about the processes involved we show how concepts of 'freshness' have been successively attached to the air, to the

laundry and to sensations of bodily cleanliness. By implication, meanings move and spread between practices by means of association and classification.

Towards the end of this chapter we reflect on the emergence, persistence and disappearance of these three types of elements and on the potential for accumulating and storing materials, meanings and forms of competence. In addressing these themes, Chapter 3 explores the lives of elements to which practitioners must have access if practices are to be performed.

Chapter 4, 'Recruitment, defection and reproduction', addresses our third question: How do practices recruit practitioners? It is more common to ask how people become committed to what they do, but in turning this question around we consider the consequences of broader patterns of recruitment and defection for the reproduction of practices across space and time. Again we explore the topic from different angles. Studies of social networks and communities of practice underline the importance of social ties between people for recruitment to new practices. Where practices are more established, and where they are inscribed in existing infrastructures, routes of recruitment differ. In theory, patterns of recruitment and defection are intimately related: as some practices expand, so others contract. Yet the processes involved are not exactly the same. We consider the brief but hectic life of fads such as hula-hooping, using this and other examples to identify different narratives of abandonment and decline. How did hula-hooping capture and then lose huge numbers of recruits over a relatively short time? Was it because the practice was of little symbolic significance, was it because it failed to provide much by way of intrinsic reward or because it never became enmeshed in any more extensive practice complex? Somewhat different arguments are needed to explain the longer, slower decline of commuter cycling, this being a deeply embedded practice dislodged and displaced by an emerging system of automobility. In the end, the purpose of this chapter is to show how patterns of recruitment and defection play out over time and to show what this means for the reproduction of some but not other practices, and hence for the character and structure of daily life.

Our discussion of recruitment and defection touches on broader questions about how practices relate to each other, and how such relations

matter for stability and change. This sets the scene for Chapter 5, 'Connections between practices', in which we address our fourth question: How do bundles and complexes of practice form, persist and disappear? As elements link to form practices, so practices connect to form regular patterns, some only loosely associated, others more tightly bound. For example, driving can be understood as a single practice or as a seamless integration of steering, checking the mirror, navigating and so on. By comparison, connections between the diverse practices that constitute what people take to be a particular 'lifestyle' are more open and more diffuse. In describing these differences we distinguish between *bundles* of practices, loose-knit patterns based on co-location and co-existence, and *complexes*, representing stickier and more integrated arrangements including co-dependent forms of sequence and synchronization. We go on to explore the bases of such connections and in so doing consider the manner in which practices compete and collaborate with each other. We argue that the emergent character of relations between practices has consequences for the individual practices of which bundles and complexes are formed, for the elements which comprise those practices and for shared temporal rhythms.

In Chapter 6, 'Circuits of reproduction', we tackle our fifth question: How are elements, practices and links between them generated, renewed and reproduced? Having underlined the point that practices emerge and are sustained through successive performances, we consider the 'circuits of reproduction' through which one performance relates to the next and identify forms of cross-referencing through which practices shape each other. We examine different forms of feedback related to the reproduction of practices-as-performances and to the unfolding careers of practices-as-entities. In discussing the relation between one enactment of a practice and the next, we write about how heart rate monitors shape future performances of fitness practices like running or cycling. Somewhat different types of 'monitoring' are involved in representing and reproducing the careers of practices-as-entities. In explaining how this works we discuss the emergence and development of snowboarding, this being a practice that has a short but rather well documented career.

We know that co-existing practices shape each other, but how does this actually happen? Clocks, watches and more recent technologies of

mobile communication make a difference to the ways in which practices connect in the organization of daily life. Cross-referencing, by which we mean synchronous feedback between practices, is important for the coordination and scheduling of events. It is also important for the formation of more extensive bundles and complexes of practice and for how such conjunctions are reproduced. In figuring out how practices converge and how they connect as entities, we consider the emergence of obesity and its definition as a social problem that brings different aspects of daily life (eating, exercise) together by means of calculation, quantification and moral concern. In bringing this chapter to a close we reflect on the possibility that the forms of feedback we have discussed together constitute a more complex circuitry, the details of which are important for understanding how the fabric of society is sustained and how it changes.

Chapter 7, 'Representing the dynamics of social practice', reviews the key features of the argument built through Chapters 1 to 6 and summarizes the contribution we have made to the project of understanding how social practices change and how they stay the same. We go on to discuss the implications of our approach for conceptualizations of time and space. The proposition that time and space emerge from the flow of practices brings questions of distribution and equity to the fore. In touching on these themes we introduce some of the practical, political questions addressed in Chapter 8.

Chapter 8, 'Promoting transitions in practice', confronts the most challenging question we are likely to face: Is our analysis of the dynamics of social practice of any practical use? What difference does it makes if we take *practices* rather than individuals to be the unit of analysis and the target of policy intervention? In addressing this question we begin by articulating the social-theoretical foundation of strategies designed to promote behaviour change in relation to policy challenges like those of climate change and health. It does not take long to establish that most such programmes depend on viewing behaviour as a matter of individual choice, typically based upon personal attitudes but sometimes influenced by 'driving' factors, including social norms, habit and more rational considerations of price. This conceptualization of action overlooks the extent to which the details of daily life are anchored in and constitutive of the changing contours of social practice.

In keeping with the position developed in the rest of the book we argue that policy makers need to intervene in the dynamics of practice if they are to have any chance of promoting healthier, more sustainable ways of life. Patterns of stability and change are not controlled by any one actor alone, but policy makers often have a hand in influencing the range of elements in circulation, the ways in which practices relate to each other and the careers and trajectories of practices and those who carry them. The prospect of developing an explicitly practice-oriented approach to public policy is decidedly exciting, but we are the first to recognize that this depends on provoking and engendering a transition in dominant paradigms and in equally dominant ways of conceptualizing social change. Our ultimate aim is to shove debate in this direction.