



Record of the Devil's Punchbowl Workshop
21-23 March 2012

Final event of Elizabeth Shove's Transitions in Practice ESRC fellowship

Exploring transitions in practice

Little presentations based on short (2,000 word) papers/notes were given in ‘episodes’ listed below. The contributions were not for publication, but if you want to know more then get in touch with the authors directly – most people can be found on the internet. The initial agenda is reproduced at the end of this document.

Episode 1: Gordon Walker, Lancaster
**Inequalities and sustainable social practices:
locating justice in capabilities**

Episode 2. Bas van Vliet, Wageningen
Thoughts on the carriers of social practices

Episode 3. Kate Burningham, Surrey
Exploring lifestyle change in transition

Episode 4. Martin Green, Lancaster
Transitions in Trading: notes from a small island

Episode 5. David Uzzell, Surrey
Forget consumption, let's change production

Episode 6. Greg Wallenborn, ULB Brussels
Smart Grids and their future users

Episode 7. Jacopo Torriti, Reading
Timing is almost everything

Episode 8. Frank Trentmann, Birkbeck/Manchester
Practical suggestions for the study of practices in the past

Episode 9. Nicola Spurling, Manchester
The journey of seatbelts through the UK parliament

Episode 10. Elizabeth Shove, Lancaster
Adapting, disappearing, accumulating

Episode 11. Paul Gebelein, Darmstadt
How do practices ‘log in’ to infrastructural arrangements?

Episode 12. Stan Webster, Lancaster
Embodying Practice

Episode 13. Owen Dowsett, Lancaster
Fixing Practice

Episode 14. Julien McHardy, Lancaster
Making the Electric Cyclist

Episode 15. Russell Hitchings, UCL
Some thoughts to put in your punchbowl

Episode 16. Matt Watson, Sheffield
Governing transitions in practice demands transition in the practices of governing





































Circulating innovations in practice

Use a credit card (or plastic ruler) to scrape scrambled egg from the bottom of a pan.

There really are different qualities of porridge oats.

Russell Hitchings makes excellent marmalade.

David Uzzell now owns a copy of bananagram.

Contact Kate Burningham for the full rules of 'Stable Stable' – but the main aim is to produce the tallest possible stack of farm animals, including the turkey.



Stable stable in action



Stan: **'Ultimate Power Pasta'**(!) .

Frozen edamame (soy) beans – (or substitute for peas!)

Olive oil.

500g whole-wheat pasta shells or penne or whatever.

1 x head of broccoli.

1 x butternut squash

2 x courgettes

200g feta cheese

Grated parmesan cheese (optional).

Nic: **secret salad**

Bulghar wheat (half a bag)

Half a butternut squash

1 red onion

dried cranberries

dried apricots

pumpkin seeds

coriander

Secret salad dressing (secretly available from Tesco).

Elizabeth. **Onion pie**. Onions, flour, marge, olive oil, olives. Anchovies

Onion pie showing route of the old A3

Greg – **risotto**

- special rice for risotto (1kg)...no. that 's too much!

- vegetarian stock

- onions

- oil

- zucchini and tomato are a good combination. But other, more seasonal, combinations are : leek & mushroom; or a variety of mushrooms.

Optionnal : white wine, parmiggiano



Kate - **Easy tomato tart** – For 6:

ready roll puff pastry,

tomatoes (750g)

thyme (will bring)

150g soft goats cheese

Garlic

O. oil

PS. make sure the cook doesn't forget to put the cheese on top to melt.

Julien's **Crumble**

wholemeal flour if you want to be healthy

Butter if you disapprove of margarine

1200g Tart cooking apples (the big weird looking ones)

Vanilla if you want to be posh

Caster sugar

Oats if you are Scottish





What to buy if you want to feed 15 people for 2 x breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Bread: 6 large loaves – just enough.
Porridge oats – Taste the difference!
Marge x 2
Butter x 2
Jam x 2
Eggs x 24
Tea EG x 50 bags – we got 100 but didn't need them all
Coffee 2 bags
Caster sugar
Milk 4 litres – not enough. Needed 6.
Cornflakes – more than enough.
Olive oil 1 bottle
Bananas x 15
Cream x 2
Small bag frozen peas
Broccoli x 1 head
Butternut squash, x 2
Courgettes x 4
Onions – large bag
Red onion x 2
Large pack of mushrooms
3 leeks
750g toms and more
Dried cranberries
Dried apricots
Pumpkin seeds
Fresh coriander
1 tin anchovies
Olives
veg stock cubes
vinegar
crackers (remember to take them on the walk next time)

cheese – for lunch (not for breakfast!)
humous
1.5kg cooking apples
2 lemons
Bulgar wheat,
risotto rice,
wholewheat pasta,
wholemeal flour,
ready roll puff pastry
feta,
parmesan,
150g soft goats cheese
Kitchen Foil
15 bottles of wine - 4 white.
5 x litres of orange juice

And if you don't want to cook
then use:

Village Kitchen Caterers
1 & 2 The Square
Grayshott Village
Surrey, GU26 6LQ
Landline: 01428 606023
www.villagekitchencaterers.co.uk





The initial agenda - possible Punchbowl themes

During the fellowship I (and others) spent some time trying to extend the range of social theory that feeds into climate change policy – moving beyond attitude, behaviour and choice and concentrating instead on concepts of transition and practice as a means of understanding how more sustainable ways of life might come about. In taking this approach, and in writing about the dynamics of social practice in rather general terms, I/we followed some paths and the expense of others, and swept a lot of issues under the carpet. I don't want to restrict the agenda to the concerns we set aside - you are free to write about what you want so long as it roughly relates to issues of transition, practice, climate change and everyday life and promises to provoke debate – but here are some possible starting points for the punchbowl discussion.

Variation and diversity. Documenting long term trends, e.g. in bathing habits and water use helps situate “individual” actions but obscures the variety that exists at any one moment. Going beyond averages and better understanding the many ways in which practices are reproduced opens up new lines of enquiry. How might we describe the piecemeal or partial transformation of multiple versions of “the same” practice? When and how to take account of the fact that many practices – some resource intensive, some not - are only reproduced by small sections of the population; by different age groups; by people whose access to requisite resources varies enormously and so on. Somehow more is needed to catch the ways in which transitions in and innovations practice – e.g. convergence in indoor climates, diet, travel or internet use - occur within and through a highly differentiated landscape. This is not to smuggle individual behaviour or lifestyle segmentation back into the frame, but it does call for paying more attention to the trajectories and careers of those who are the carriers of any one practice, and to the range of other practices that these people also carry.

Circulation and convergence. This is the flip side of the previous concern. Quite a few areas of everyday life that matter for resource consumption/sustainability appear to be subject to forms of transnational if not global standardisation – aspects of diet, expectations of cleaning, clothing, heating and cooling, etc. are such cases. This made me wonder about where things like a meat/wheat diet have been exported from and imported to, and about colonialism, appropriation and the environmental costs of reproducing European/American versions of normality all around the world. How do notions of well being get established and how do they travel?

Material elements. It is all very well to say that practices include material elements but just how do infrastructures and systems of provision connect to the details of daily life? Energy and water utilities, bathroom designers, IT manufacturers, and in a sense retailers and intermediaries are all involved in making the material elements of practice, but not in the same way. If we take a step back, we might also include regulators, international standards organisations, financial backers, planners etc. One question, then, is how the hardware of daily life is shaped through these many channels. There are other issues here about the relation between components, products, resources like electricity, or materials themselves (plastics, metals), changes in which feed through to the world of material culture broadly defined, and to the social arrangements in and of which these elements become an integral part. Here I am interested in shifts like that from using timber/logs for heating to coal – how many other practices did that transform? Simply referring to material elements cuts a lot short, including how such elements come to be as they are, and how they relate to each other. I'm not after a technologically determinist position, but I am searching for a more integrated, more systemic way of thinking about things.

Adaptation of existing infrastructure/materiality is another intriguing topic. Much of the built environment, along with roads, rails etc. that we have now will be with us for some years to come. How much scope is there for adaptation, reconfiguration, or living differently with the same material elements? How do 'new' systems of provision emerge and lay themselves down over, around and on top of those that are already in place? I've thought a bit about how regimes e.g. of cycling to work disappear but there is surely more to say about partial disappearance, co-existence, dormancy, flexibility and so forth. Are there dramatically low impact ways of using bits of infrastructure that currently support/sustain resource intensive ways of life? How do issues of breakdown and repair figure in processes of change and transition?

Last but not least, **power**. Towards the end of *The Dynamics of Social Practice* (coming out in May 2012: Sage), Matt Watson and I skirted around this topic. Theories of transition, and our own work on practices, tends towards a Foucauldian interpretation of power as distributed, emergent, operating through forms of self-governance and the like. This is fine, up to a point, but I'm uneasy about simply sidestepping classic topics like those of vested interests; the pursuit of profit; the accumulation of resources and the capacity to define ways of life to which others aspire.

Thanks to the ESRC and to everyone who took part in the fellowship.