

A Social Practice Perspective on Travel



DISRUPTION

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bettertogether



Disruption

unlocking low carbon travel

- Remit = To challenge current thinking about everyday high-carbon practices associated with travel
- Current paradigm of individual behaviour change
- **Social Practice** – offers retroductive approach to the topic, searching for underlying causes

Social Practice – Elizabeth Shove¹²

- **Co-evolution** – how habits and routines have grown and developed in different locations and how these have converged over time;
- **Ratchet** – a ratchet is a device that ensures motion in one direction only;
- **System of Systems** – a routine or practice influenced by outside pressures ‘whirlpools’ and cogs which is similar to a ratchet except it can move in both directions;
- **Pinwheel** – routines and habits loosely held in place by a combination of theories and justificatory concepts. When these theories and concepts change, so does the routine or habit.

Co-evolution

“Norwegian people prefer softer light to create a cosy effect, where as in Japan a brighter light to enable people to see each other’s expressions” (Shove, 2003).

Norway³



Japan⁴



Co-evolution

How can this be applied to Transport and Travel?

UK 1980s⁵



China 1980s⁶



Co-evolution to Convergence

China has converged with the 'western' western mode of travel leading to a reduction in cycling and an increase in trips by private car, particularly in urban areas.

UK 2000s⁷



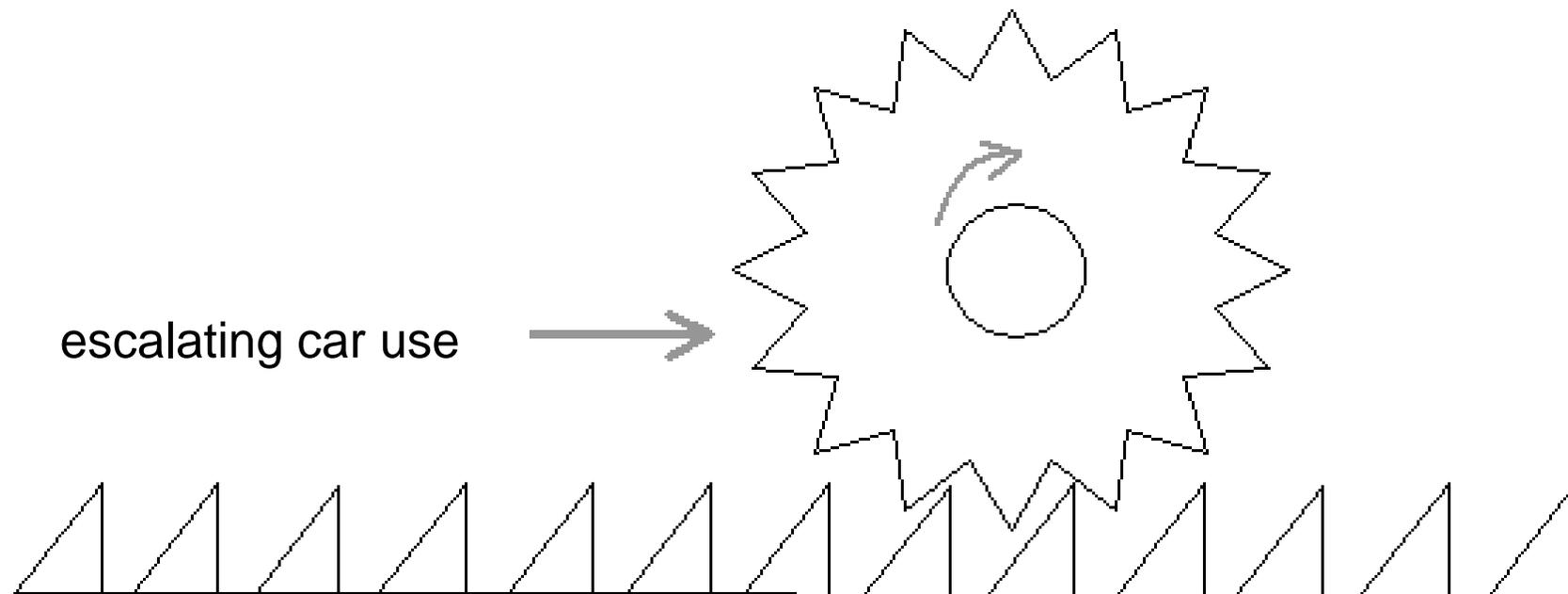
China 2000s⁸



Ratchet

Air conditioning – buildings designed to require escalating levels of energy consumption to maintain a particular temperature. (Shove, 2002).

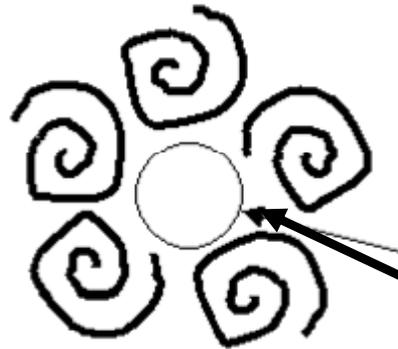
Transport – Design of out of town shopping centres requiring trip by car



System of Systems - Whirlpool

What are the tools? – car, road space, fuel, PT stops, pavements, tax

How is it done? – Steps, stages, expertise and who does it, which mode is chosen



When to drive? – What activities work, leisure, where to? Local shops?

Why travel? – fun, leisure activities, commuting, shopping, visiting/caring for family

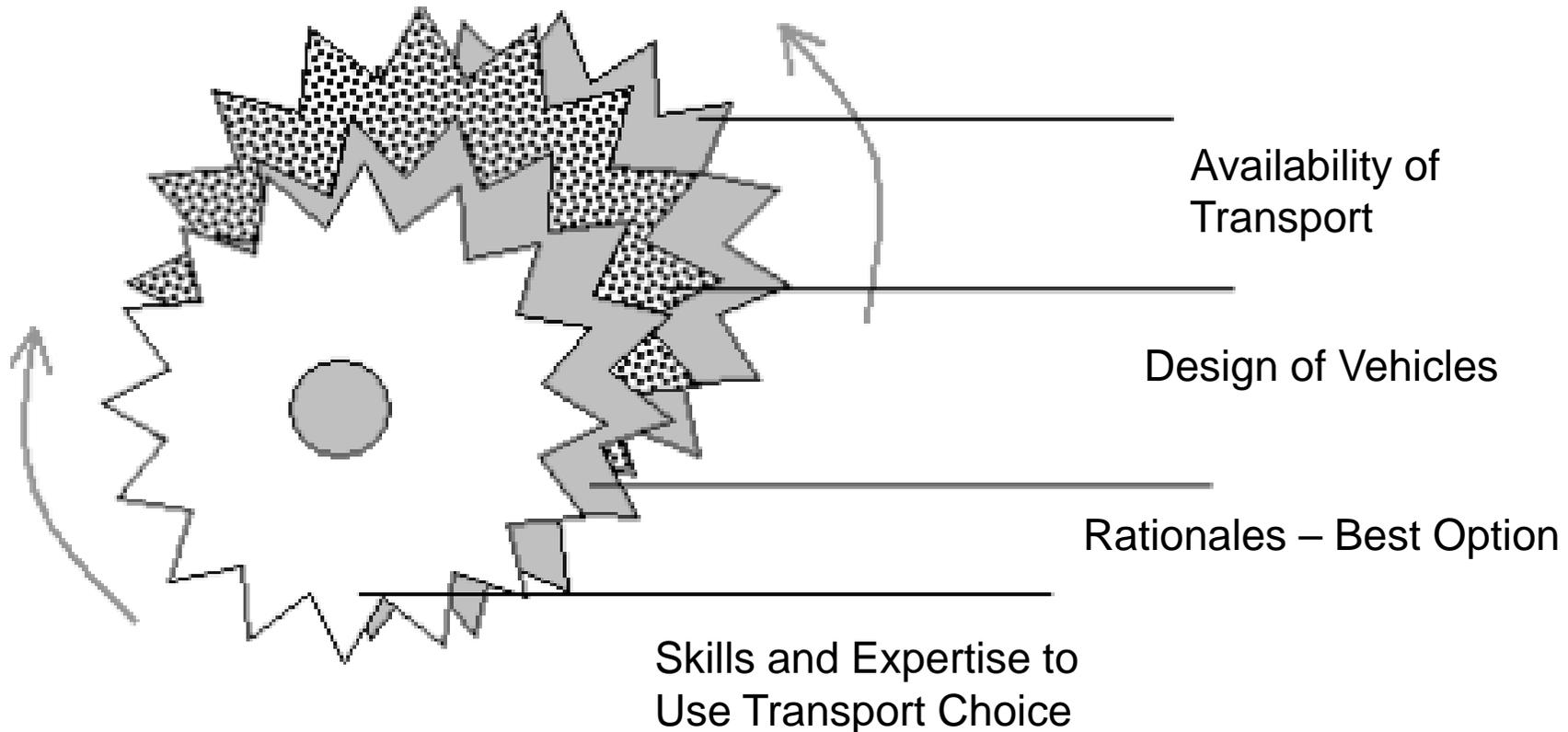
How to travel – what are the options? – Walking, cycling, PT and driving

Understandings of service, of what it means to do the transport emerge as a consequence of constituent practices, technologies and conventions.

System of Systems - Cogs

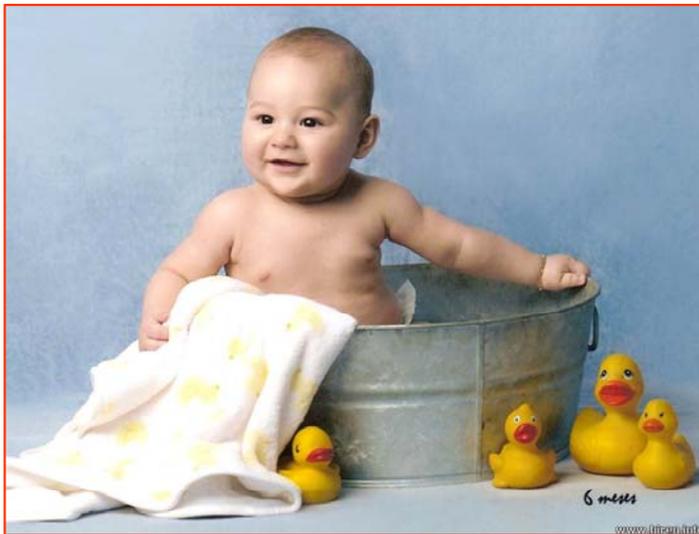
Clothes washing – changed from boil washing, yet the frequency of laundering has increased over time. (Shove, 2002).

Transport – Car ownership 1950s - present



Pinwheel

Bathing – changed from taking a weekly bath to a daily shower. (Shove, 2002).

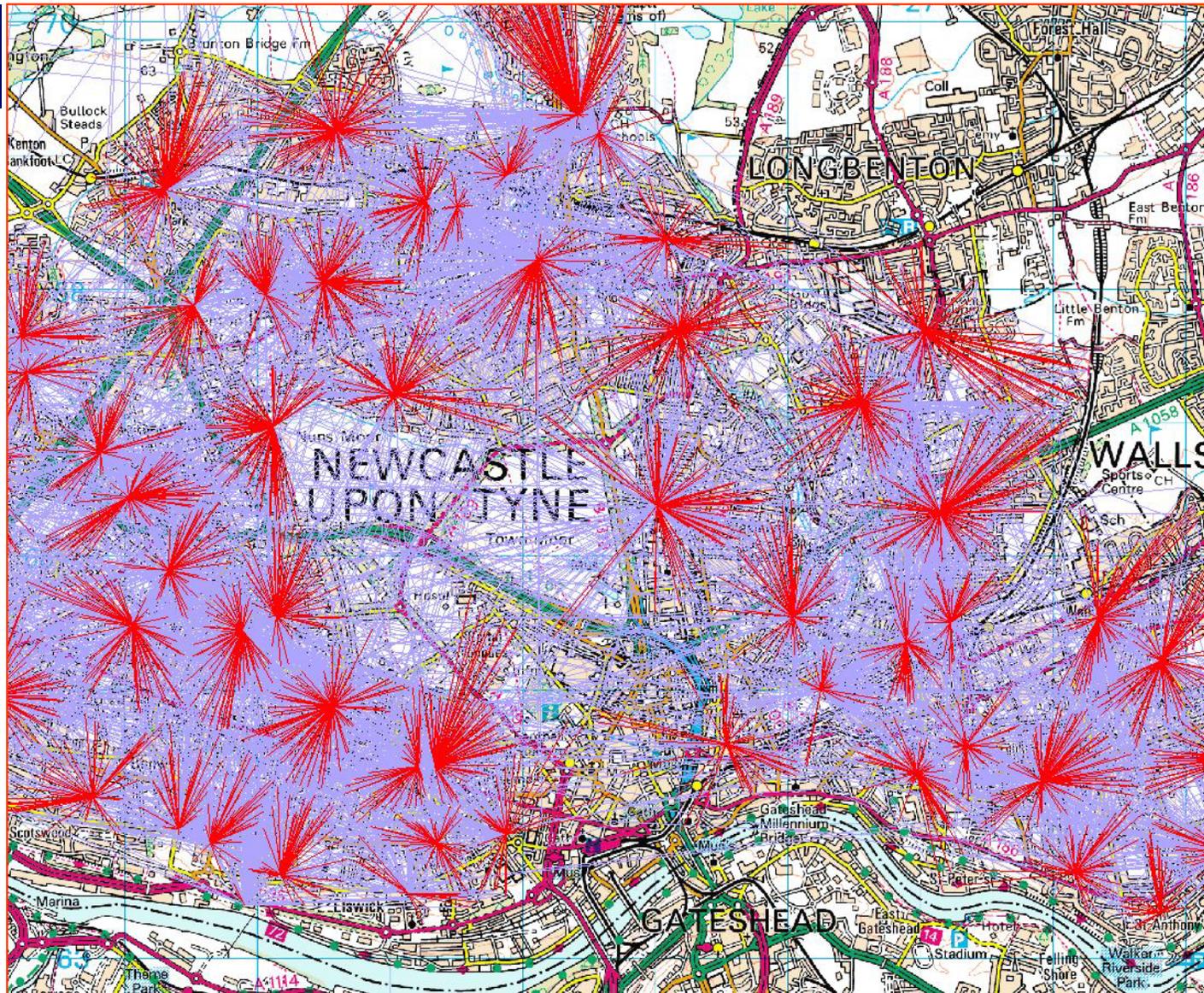


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Pinwheel – Travel to School



Post-Welfare Inequalities of School 'Choice' Household Resource Strategies from a North England Case Study (Jarvis and Alvanides, 2008)¹¹

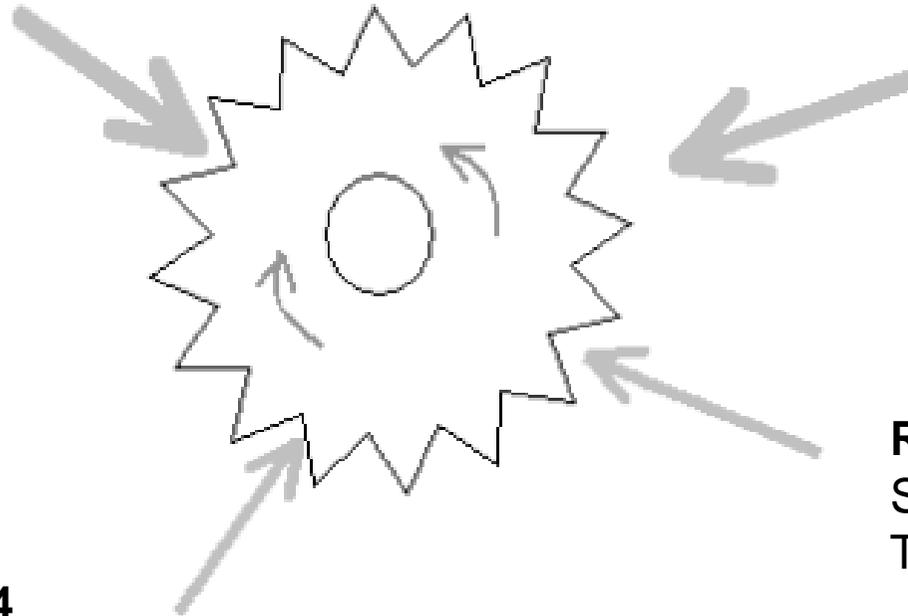


Pinwheel

Travel to school - Four competing rationales

Rationale 1

School
Choice



Rationale 2

Time pressures
School Run

Rationale 3

Stranger Danger
Traffic

Rationale 4

School Travel
Plans
Healthy Travel

Social Practice - Benefits

1. Identify reasons for unsustainable travel. Does not rely solely on individual to make change.
2. Allows the exploration of complex interactions involved in travel behaviour and other areas of life
3. Identify routines and habits and what happens to travel when these are disrupted.
4. Enable policy makers to identify the impacts of their decisions on transport and CO₂ emissions.
5. Provide the tools to deliver a sustainable and resilient transport network.

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