Introduction

PRACTICING RELIGION FOCUSES on what people do and say rather than only on what they think and believe. Practices are the interconnected strings of activity that constitute our personal lives and the social relationships that shape the contours of our collective existence. They are what we do to get things done. Some take hardly any time at all; others unfold over months and years. Many of them become so routine that we rarely think about them; others require extensive deliberation and discipline. All practices are an interplay of habit and improvisation, of choice and constraint.

Emphasis on practice in the study of religion is an emerging and yet insufficiently elaborated development. It valuably directs attention to how religion is enacted within the everyday settings of our personal lives and in the public discourse and power arrangements that govern our lives together. It boldly challenges the notion that religion can be understood in terms of predefined categories of affiliation and belief or that religion is too subjective, too idiosyncratic, to be a focus of academic inquiry at all. Practicing is observable. It is observable in gestures, demeanor, speech, social arrangements, and public policies. Practicing religion occurs not only in ashrams and churches and mosques. It happens in homes and hospitals, on the street, at work, and in art galleries, concert halls, government offices, and prisons. Understanding religion as a practice necessitates delving deeply into what happens in these situations. It requires paying attention to how the social interaction there unfolds through time, how people express their intentions and feelings, and what they do with their bodies as they devise the routines and rituals that give their lives spiritual meaning.

This approach represents a continuation but also a departure. The study of religion has long been fraught with divisions that reflected its origins in

multiple disciplines. Sociological, anthropological, psychological, and historical studies of religion have differed in how they approached the topic. The literature has also been divided between hermeneutic and positivistic epistemologies. The interpretive literature has drawn heavily from qualitative studies while the positivistic literature has favored quantitative research. The various studies have differed greatly in levels of analysis, ranging from micro-level studies in which individuals' beliefs and actions were taken as the unit of analysis, to macro-level comparative historical studies focusing on modernity and secularization. Within disciplines, the literature has also been fragmented in terms of favored theoretical arguments and counterarguments emphasizing rational choice, social psychological assumptions, cognitive evolution, and cultural influences. Much of the literature has dealt only with Christianity in the United States.

Many of these divisions persist and, if anything, have deepened in recent years as work on religion has proliferated. Research interests have significantly expanded to take greater account of race, gender, and sexual orientation. Theoretical approaches pay closer attention to feminist, queer theory, anti-racist, and anti-colonial arguments about domination and resistance. Considerably greater numbers of studies focus on Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism. More of the research published in English-language venues has been conducted in Africa, East Asia, South Asia, and Latin America, and US-focused studies pay greater attention to the diverse religions of immigrants. Suggestive cross-fertilization also continues within disciplines: work on religion draws variously from phenomenology, relational sociology, ritual studies, cognitive science, and evolutionary psychology. Surveys of the literature in handbooks, edited compendia, and review essays underscore the proliferation of topics and approaches.

A growing body of work nevertheless has developed concepts that have mobilized new research spanning disciplinary boundaries. The "lived religion" approach that emerged in the 1980s encouraged scholarship in history, religious studies, and eventually in ethnographic sociology to focus on grassroots activities outside of religious organizations rather than the formal theological teachings of those organizations. Lived religion provided a broad umbrella under which to study street festivals, prayer groups, home altars, gifts, holidays, and burials, among other manifestations of religion that engaged people in ordinary life. A second development focused on "materiality," as featured in studies of religious art and architecture, icons, portraiture, and photographs. A third

development emphasized the discursive structures evident in sermons, testimonials, conversion narratives, music, prayer, and stories about spiritual journeys. Together, these developments broadened the scope of religion scholarship beyond its Protestant-centric traditions to pay greater attention to other religions and to the intersection of multiple traditions. Epistemological assumptions about structure and agency, gender, power, and mind-body distinctions also commanded greater interest.

The "practice turn," as it is called, has proven attractive as an approach that embraces much of this work. Practice theory is a collection of ideas in the social sciences about the importance of situating the study of human behavior in the ordinary contexts in which it occurs. As it pertains to religion, practice theory builds on Émile Durkheim's well-known discussion of sacred ritual and Max Weber's work on meanings and theodicies. It borrows from a rich lineage of anthropological work evident, for instance, in Clifford Geertz's definitional essay on religion and in sociological contributions such as Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's discussion of the social construction of reality. It draws from Pierre Bourdieu's emphasis on the situational dispositions that shape and are shaped by processes of reflectively and bodily engaged social interaction. It embraces Michel Foucault's and Talal Asad's focus on status distinctions and power. It is situated in epistemological discussions oriented toward the structured but agentic actions of persons and collectivities and in discussions of the embodied characteristics of thought, intentions, discourse, and emotions.[1]

The late-twentieth-century literature on social practices focused on how best to make sense of human behavior while acknowledging its complexities and enormous variations. In contrast with positivistic approaches that objectified human behavior in an effort to generate theoretically parsimonious law-like generalizations, practice theory emphasized research truer to the diversity and complexity of social life and sought less to produce empirical generalizations

1. Practice theory is discussed in chapter 1; for introductory essays and overviews, see Joseph Rouse, "Practice Theory," in *Philosophy of Anthropology and Sociology*, edited by Stephen P. Turner and Mark W. Risjord (New York: Elsevier, 2007), 499–540; Theodore R. Schatzki, Karin Knorr Cetina, and Eike von Savigny, eds., *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory* (New York: Routledge, 2001); and Davide Nicolini, *Practice Theory, Work, and Organization: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); and for a valuable discussion of practice theory's roots in American pragmatism and influence in sociological theory, see Neil Gross, "A Pragmatist Theory of Social Mechanisms," *American Sociological Review* 74, 3 (2009), 358–79.

than to identify sensitizing concepts. The key points that emerged in this period were these:

- The thoughts and actions of human persons take place in lived and imagined situations, which are concrete in the sense of being emplaced and providing the situational cues and material affordances that shape and are shaped by the ensuing social interaction that occurs within them.
- Human action and interaction is purposive, less in the sense posited traditionally of being driven teleologically by long-term goals, but more in the sense of being guided by provisional prior intentions, plans, and decisions, and by immediate intentions in action that provide feedback and alternatives during the temporal unfolding of purposive action.
- Human behavior is best understood through consideration not only of the causes and consequences of action but also of the feelings, bodily kinesthetics, and interpretive discourses that render it meaningful.
- The situated character of human behavior does not occur in a spatial or temporal vacuum but is conducted by persons who bring relatively stable selves grounded in previous interaction and memory, and thus including dispositions and gendered, racial, ethnic, sexual, and religious identities in their social interaction.
- The situated action of individuals pertains to communities as well, which necessitate investigation in terms of space, temporality, identity, and their competitors and environments.
- Power dynamics—interpersonal, institutional, and societal—play a significant role in structuring the action and interaction within practices engaged in by individuals and communities.

The practice approach is thus concerned with understanding the details of situated temporal action and is interpretive, though not in terms of time-ordered unidirectional causality, but in examining the structuring processes through which situational, dispositional, and unequally distributed power arrangements affect the agentic activities of individuals and collectivities.

In the years since these emphases emerged, practice theory has again shifted. What might be termed its "second generation" has focused less on epistemological orientations, especially in moving beyond a phenomenological emphasis on the perspectives and experiences of the individual to embrace ideas of social structure and the decentering of the self in discourse, and more on substantive studies. Voluminous work has been done on religious practices. Much

of this work has been ethnographic, conducted through close participant observation in settings that illuminate in greater detail how practices are influenced by the situations in which they occur. Studies of pilgrimages, dietary rituals, speaking in tongues, devotional practices, and political rallies are among the many investigations that shed new light on practitioners' intentions, feelings, and narratives, and on the roles of bodies and material affordances. The second-generation literature is also informed increasingly by experimental studies of situational cues, habits, improvisation, and cognitive processes.

Studies of religious practice take for granted the arguments advanced in social constructivism; namely, that religion is not an essentialized category that can be identified in terms of a few defining core components, but is a culturally constructed category, the construction of which has developed over time, varies according to context, and is held in place by power as much as by conviction. Second-generation practice-oriented research has been less concerned with why religion exists at all than with how its various manifestations are constructed and maintained. Large questions about what counts as religion at all are mostly answered by the fact that religion is well-institutionalized and that even terms such as "secular" and "spiritual" occur in relation to these institutionalized designations. Religion in these institutional manifestations is maintained by the devotion of adherents and by persons in positions of authority but also by the resistance of persons who disavow being religious.

The constructivist perspective underlying practice approaches to religion has evolved from suggesting that religion can be identified functionally as a source of sacred experience and meaning toward asking what all may be involved when a person prays, bows, kneels, worships, testifies, visits a shrine, views an icon, feels divinely inspired, or practices something deemed religious in a hundred other ways. The vast diversity of these practices means shifting from earlier efforts concerned with categorizing them and seeking generalizations about them toward a focus on the *how to* of observation and analysis. Knowing that whatever the topic under consideration may be, it will be different in a year's time and in another context, the task is for researchers to learn and sharpen the analytic tools that are likely to prove useful in the next time and place.

In the chapters that follow I describe the central concepts and arguments now advancing the study of religious practice. I foreground studies both of religion and of related topics that serve as empirical examples. These concepts and studies are located in a variety of disciplines and subfields and draw on disparate analytic traditions that can be furthered in subsequent interdisciplinary research. The literature on religious practice developed initially along two lines

that largely made separate contributions: discussions that advanced the approach in terms of epistemological arguments, on the one hand, and empirical studies that offered insightful descriptive evidence, on the other hand. Epistemological contributions drew from Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Michel de Certeau, Pierre Bourdieu, Henri Lefebvre, Michel Foucault, Talal Asad, and others who challenged decontextualized positivistic approaches to knowledge. Notable empirical contributions included studies of prayer groups, street festivals, and religious experiences by Robert Orsi, Thomas Csordas, Saba Mahmood, and Lila Abu-Lughod, among others. In the decades since these contributions were made, theoretically informed empirical studies have expanded through the work of anthropologists, historians, religion scholars, social and cognitive psychologists, and sociologists into a wide range of topics that illuminate significant aspects of religious practice such as its role in the construction of sacred space, in gendered social relationships, and in somatic learning, affordances, the visual and performing arts, meditation, and ritual. These contributions are rich with suggestive insights for further exploration.

The historical moment in which we live makes it imperative to better understand the role of religious practices in our world. The frequency with which religion dominates national and international events testifies to that imperative, as does the vast number of study groups, worship places, meditation centers, college courses, and scholarly books and articles about religion. The diversity of religious practices and the contextual variation in how the sacred is understood and experienced falsifies the assumptions of earlier scholarship suggesting that religion could be essentialized under simple generalizations about its core components and societal functions. Its diverse manifestations further demonstrate the necessity of locating religious practice amid the convergences of mental, emotional, and bodily experience and the social interaction that shapes that experience. Interesting as it may be to read about a poll or political speech or pilgrimage or act of violence that invokes religion, the take-home will be disappointing—and not only because the news cycle reboots minute by minute—unless greater care is taken to understand these events.[2]

2. Practice theory does not argue that beliefs are unimportant, but seeks to embed the discussion of beliefs in the situations in which beliefs are enacted and embodied and in which they are constituted as dispositions and intentions. As Danièle Hervieu-Léger observes, following de Certeau, "belief is lived." Danièle Hervieu-Léger, "Religion as Memory: Reference to Tradition and the Constitution of a Heritage of Belief in Modern Societies," in *Religion: Beyond a*

If the current practice turn is to inspire new research that provides new insights about religion, we need to take stock of what has been learned, not in terms of demographic and attitudinal generalizations, but about the repertoire of concepts and questions that can serve usefully in the conduct of this research. I have organized the discussion that follows under the following headings: theories, situations, intentions, feelings, and bodies. Studies have illuminated one or another of these, but students of religious practice must be aware of the potential influence and interaction among all of them. Whether the topic under consideration is a festival, religious art, private devotional routines, or a worship service, these are all relevant to the investigation.

The need to start by discussing theory is that the practice approach represents a departure from how the study of religion has been theoretically grounded in the past. Social science discussions of religion typically reference the work of Émile Durkheim and Max Weber in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, turn next to mid-twentieth-century conceptual contributions by writers such as Clifford Geertz and Peter Berger, and then discuss recent studies in these lineages. The unifying thread in standard interpretations of that work has been an emphasis on *classificatory concepts*, such as Durkheim's concepts of sacred and profane, Weber's ideal types, Geertz's definitional essay on religion, and Berger's idea of a sacred canopy. Classifications of these kinds seek to describe the conceptual categories in which people in ordinary life organize their worlds and at the same time identify the characteristics that facilitate scholarly investigations to advance. Classification contributes importantly to grassroots and scientific knowledge, but has proven repeatedly to be less stable and more diverse than earlier generalizations allowed.

The practice approach locates itself within much the same theoretical tradition but emphasizes different aspects of these influential contributions, particularly the meta-concepts that provided analytic tools, rather than the culturally circumscribed applications to which they were put. For instance, instead of taking Durkheim's categories of sacred and profane as fundamentally different aspects of reality, the practice approach emphasizes Durkheim's discussion of the rituals in which people engage to create, maintain, and empower these divisions. And instead of favoring Weber's categories of inner- and other-worldly asceticism, the insights to be drawn from Weber focus on the status relations and disciplines that lend themselves more to certain practices than to others.

Concept, edited by Hent de Vries (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 245–58, quote on page 253.

As a rule, the practice approach emphasizes *structuring processes* instead of classificatory concepts. Structuring processes refer to series of actions that unfold over time and do so within the constraints of circumstances, resources, and previous activities. Structuring processes take account of the reality that outcomes are shaped by multiple converging conditions. I discuss the theoretical contributions associated with this shift from classificatory concepts to structuring processes in chapter 1.

Chapter 2 discusses the characteristics of *situations* that shape the way religious activities and experiences take place. Practices are influenced by the discrete physical and temporal spaces in which social action occurs. They are constructed by the actors involved and in interaction with the other people who may be present as well as physical objects such as rooms, furniture, and food. Whether a study is conducted using ethnographic methods that directly take account of these interactions or is a survey or is based on archival research, the point to understand is that religious practices make use of and bear the imprint of the situations in which they occur.

I discuss *intentions* in chapter 3. Although some research has focused on intentions, these are admittedly difficult to study effectively because they are for the most part subjective. A person who intends to pray but does not, for instance, is hard to think about because the intention may be known only to the person. Nevertheless, religions so frequently emphasize intentions—stating, for instance, that what a person intends by helping the poor may be as important as helping itself—that the topic bears consideration. As it happens, advances in the philosophical and linguistic study of intentions offer useful insights.

Feelings are the focus of chapter 4. Feelings have been emphasized especially in studies of religious experience and ritual. The argument in many of these studies is that powerful feelings are a significant reason for these experiences and rituals being deemed sacred. However, these arguments warrant critical scrutiny in relation to religious practices, some of which may not include powerful feelings at all. The two broad questions that merit consideration are: under what conditions do certain religious practices prompt kinds of feelings, and what are the rules in various situations that govern the public expression of those feelings?

The role of *bodies*, which has been the focus of increasing interest in studies of religion, is addressed in chapter 5. Insofar as religious practice is conducted by people in concrete situations, it goes without saying that bodies are involved. However, the extent and ways they are involved varies considerably, as evident

for instance in comparisons of Muslim prayers, the clothing of Orthodox Jews, and the postures involved in Buddhist meditation. Important questions include the kinds of somatic and kinesthetic imprint these activities may have on the body and how people learn or unlearn these bodily sensations.

Many of the studies conducted with an interest in the practice approach have been ethnographic and historical, taking advantage of opportunities for in-depth exploration of the situations involved and people's negotiations of the constraints and opportunities present. Ethnographic and historical studies are well-disposed toward observing social relationships as they unfold and the language and emotions and interactions that result as well as such matters as ritual events, food, clothing, and spatial arrangements. Quantitative research has also contributed significantly to understandings of practices. Controlled experimental-design studies, for instance, have examined how people respond to situational cues and how they learn skills through practice. Surveys offer opportunities for closer examination of the role of childhood practices, responses to artifacts and hypothetical situations, and the stability or instability of practices. Beyond their empirical implications, such studies also suggest the value of what Karin Knorr Cetina has termed "methodological situationism," which examines situational variations and biases that may challenge generalizations based on large population studies. Insofar as knowledge is situational, derived from our many situated experiences, social science is enriched by investigating the practices that occur within them.[3]

Practices, unlike classifications, are messy, fluid, and dynamic, extending from situation to situation and taking place over time. Indeed, developments in practice theory itself have increasingly emphasized the tension that characterizes them in everyday life between stable routine behavior that requires little conscious thought and the small or large adjustments that people make to accommodate changing circumstances and desires. Practices are characterized by a fundamental *plasticity*, João Biehl and Peter Locke write in *Unfinished*, by the "figuring out, disfiguring, and refiguring of lifeworlds."[4] As relatively

3. Karin D. Knorr Cetina, "Introduction: The Micro-Sociological Challenge of Macro-Sociology: Towards a Reconstruction of Social Theory and Methodology," in *Advances in Social Theory and Methodology*, edited by Karin Knorr Cetina and Aaron Cicourel (Boston and London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981); and on suggestions about examining practices in surveys, Michael Burawoy, "The Extended Case Method," *Sociological Theory* 16, 1 (1998), 4–33.

4. João Biehl and Peter Locke, "Foreword," in *Unfinished: The Anthropology of Becoming*, edited by João Biehl and Peter Locke (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017), x.

patterned sequences of activities, practices thus necessitate paying close attention to how regular or irregular they are and the conditions under which routines remain stable or change. The dynamics that run through the constitutive aspects of practices and that shape them in these significant ways include in various forms *habit*, *improvisation*, and *power*. These are the aspects that yield "know-how," the information that draws on past experience to make sense of present conditions and thus to shape responses and agendas. Each is implied in the situations, intentions, feelings, discourses, and embodied practices in which individuals and communities engage.[5]

Studies of habit have brought together recent interests in cognitive processing with earlier theoretical emphases in the literature on American pragmatism that identified habit as a central feature of human problem solving. John Dewey's work has been particularly relevant in this regard. Dewey characterized habit as the inseparable mental and bodily means of accomplishing tasks. It was socially derived and reinforced not only through specific routines but also as dispositions that reflected the impact of interdependent activities. Habit, which operated below the seat of consciousness, he argued, provided moral conduct its essential grounding and durability in contrast with spontaneous impulses.[6] Habit in recent research is understood as both situationally and dispositionally cued, which locates it within practice theory as the inclination that guides action in terms of experiences in similar situations and the memory of those experiences.

Habit is the practice that is (or should be) impossible to ignore in discussions of religion. The significance of habit in Jewish and Christian traditions is summarized in the biblical statement, "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it."[7] The training suggested includes cultivating good habits through such repetitive behavior as daily prayers, memorization of scripture, and worship attendance. The deadening

5. Archer's treatment of habitus and reflexivity provides helpful ontological background for the distinction between habit and improvisation; see Margaret S. Archer, "Routine, Reflexivity, and Realism," *Sociological Theory* 28, 3 (2010), 272–303.

6. John Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct: An Introduction to Social Psychology* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1922); the sources and impact of Dewey's work on habit are discussed in Serena J. Woolf, "The Nature of Habit: F. M. Alexander and John Dewey," *AmSAT Journal* 9 (Spring 2016), 46–56; Gross, "A Pragmatist Theory of Social Mechanisms"; and Larry A. Hickman, *Pragmatism as Post-Postmodernism: Lessons from John Dewey* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007), 241–54.

7. Proverbs 22:6 KJV.

possibilities of habit have been recognized as well. As William James observed, "Standing, walking, buttoning and unbuttoning, piano-playing, talking, even saying one's prayers, may be done when the mind is absorbed in other things."[8] Recent psychological research distinguishes habit in terms of the repetitiveness with which people give the same responses in a given context, the frequency and durability of these responses, the apparent automaticity or lack of immediate awareness and intention with which they occur, their efficiency, and in many instances the seeming inability of persons to exercise control over them. Neuropsychological studies suggest that human cognition operates as a dual processing system in which habit is typified by fast spontaneous processes rather than slow deliberative processes. The study of habit holds far-reaching and largely unexamined implications for research on religion, whether in inquiries of routine religious practices or in considerations about the circumstances under which people may be held responsible based on their intentions for the consequences of their behavior.[9]

Improvisation is the concept that best captures the cognitive and behavioral aspects of human conduct, which in Dewey's terms differed from habit in terms of greater spontaneity and impulsiveness but also thoughtfulness and innovation. Whereas habit implies continuities and conformity, improvisation evokes connotations of novelty, curiosity, malleability, adaptation, and deliberation. It is the emergent aspect of practices that gives them their agentic quality. Studies of improvisation in music, theater, sports, and organizational management distinguish it in terms of individuals' ability to adapt on short notice to new and unusual situations by creatively processing a range of choices. Improvisation is "slow" compared with habit in the deliberative cognitive processing and heavy reliance on memory it requires. The growing focus of research on improvisation stems from practice theory's insistence on the indeterminate character of action when considered in relation to the processing of situational cues and social interaction. While improvisation differs from habit in terms of its relation to the dual processing model of cognition, the two overlap and indeed are shown in research to be switched from one to the other as situations require. For the

8. William James, *Principles of Psychology* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1890), 5.

9. Valuable summaries of the literature on habit include Ann M. Graybiel, "Habits, Rituals, and the Evaluative Brain," *Annual Review of Neuroscience* 31 (2008), 359–87; Tom Sparrow and Adam Hutchinson, eds., *A History of Habit: From Aristotle to Bourdieu* (New York: Lexington Books, 2013); and Wendy Wood and Dennis Rünger, "Psychology of Habit," *Annual Review of Psychology* 67 (2016), 289–314.

study of religion, improvisation underscores the extent to which religious practice is pragmatic, deliberative, and often constituted as much by ad hoc behavior as by habit.[10]

Power in the form of facilitation and constraint is present both in general terms in situations and more specifically in the habits and improvisations of which practices are comprised. The role of state, institutional, and interpersonal power in religious practice has been recognized in anthropological, historical, and of course political science research, but has been surprisingly neglected in sociological investigations in which growth and decline of membership and free market assumptions about religion's separation from the state have been emphasized. But power at all levels shapes the activities that are possible and is shaped in turn by these activities. Its presence is evident in the force that habits exercise in daily life, the institutional power through which habits are learned, the social interaction that maintains them, and the political authorities that legitimate them. It is evident in the circumstances under which improvisation is or is not deemed desirable and the constraints that govern how much improvisation is possible. In Bourdieu's suggestive phrase, practice is "regulated improvisation."[11] In religion it is the organizational imprimatur that encourages parents to "train up" children's religious activities and the authority determining that certain innovations in doctrines and rituals are acceptable and others are not. Moreover, it is the power exercised in trade relations and working conditions and through information technology to embrace certain religious practices in preference to others. These regimes of power are the past and present macrostructures that influence what happens in local situations.

A focus on regulated improvisation posits that religion can be usefully understood in terms of the practices that take shape as habits and as ad hoc adaptations and innovations in the daily circumstances in which we live.

10. On improvisation, see Aaron L. Berkowitz, *The Improvising Mind: Cognition and Creativity in the Musical Moment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); David Hargreaves, Dorothy Miell, and Raymond MacDonald, eds., *Musical Imaginations: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Creativity, Performance and Perception* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); George E. Lewis and Benjamin Piekut, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Improvisation Studies, 2 vols.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016); Jeff Pressing, "Improvisation: Methods and Models," in *Generative Processes in Music: The Psychology of Performance, Improvisation, and Composition*, edited by John Sloboda, 130–79 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); and Eitan Wilf, "Semiotic Dimensions of Creativity," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 43 (2014), 397–412.

11. Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 21.

Regulated improvisation emphasizes the indeterminacy of human behavior, the reality we know from personal experience if not from religion that life is uncertain, events are unpredictable, and circumstances necessitate adapting and innovating. The habits and the adaptations and the implicit regulations that constrain them offer constructs with which to organize the discussion of religious practice, both in terms of personal circumstances and societal conditions. They serve as reference points for the situated interactive processes that practice entails. These conceptual emphases necessitate focusing on the temporal unfolding of learned sequences of behavior through which habits are acquired and in which improvisation occurs. The sequences take place in settings that include power dynamics, social interactions, and discursive formations that cue and constrain the emerging practices. The formation of habits and the improvisation in which individuals engage focus analytic attention on the repetition that is present, the idiomatic templates through which it is represented, the situational cues that prompt and disrupt familiarity, and the choices for adaptation and innovation on which individuals and collectivities deliberate and act.