

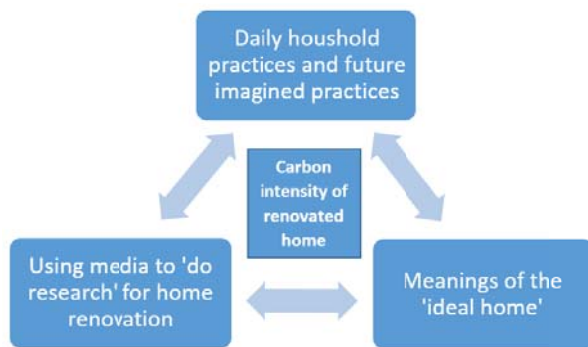
MEDIA AND THE IDEAL HOME: SHAPING CARBON FUTURES

Research Context and Aim

As Australian homes age and householders increasingly choose to renovate to meet their housing requirements, decreasing the carbon intensity of renovated homes becomes critical to addressing climate change and sustainability in the built environment.

This research will:

Examine the relationship between media use and the concept of the ideal home to consider how this currently shapes the carbon intensity of the renovated home, and investigate how this relationship might be reconstituted to decrease the carbon intensity of renovated homes.



Methodology

Focus on everyday practices not individual behaviour. A social practices approach with qualitative methods.

- 6 pilot, semi-structured interviews
- 20-25 household semi-structured interviews
- Short videos of re-enacted and in situ media use and renovation features

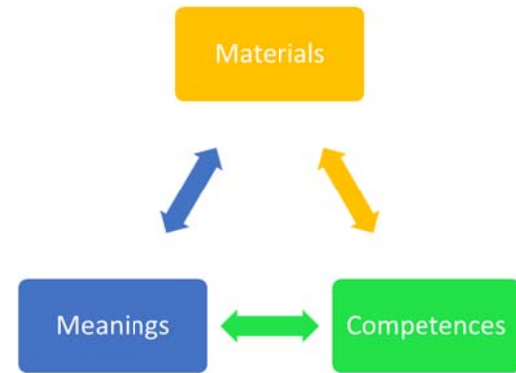


Figure 2: Social practice elements (Shove, Pantzar & Watson 2013)

By collecting and analysing data through a social practices lens (to consider the materials, meanings and competences that constitute daily practices) I avoid problematising, and therefore finding solutions in, individual attitudes, behaviours and choices.

Transcripts of interviews and videos will be coded using Nvivo and an in-depth thematic analysis will be undertaken to develop a narrative which combines findings with relevant literature.

Towards results

Reshaping the ideal home through media.

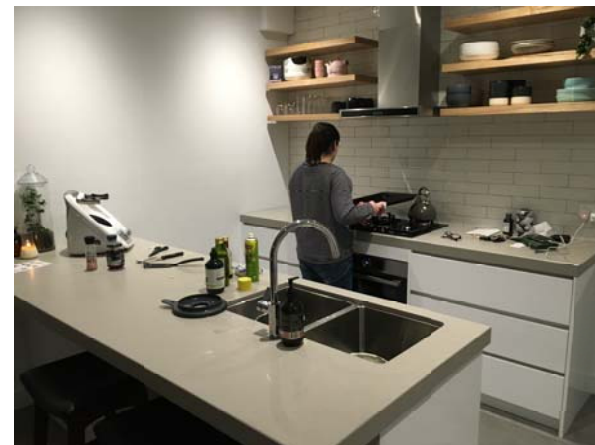


Figure 1: A home renovator's 'ideal' kitchen

An extensive review of the media, home renovation, housing, consumption, and social practices literature, and five pilot interviews, has resulted in the following points of interest which will guide future data collection.

- What is normal, what is expected and what is ideal in a home have all changed dramatically over time as have daily household practices
- There is tension between meanings around privacy, sanctuary and performance within the home
- Media is clearly represented within all the elements of social practices occurring within daily household routines (as per figure 2) but to date has received little attention in the academic literature
- To date, behaviour change approaches have not been particularly effective in addressing carbon reduction within households.

"I suppose going from The Block, we'd look up Beacon for a certain light, have a look at the price and go 'oh that's really expensive, what else can we find?'" P1

"...people want extra bulkheads, they want extra niches, they want shelves in their showers to put their shampoo on and all this extra stuff. Which is fair enough, I mean everything goes with the times I guess" P2

"So people would invite us over but I felt like I couldn't offer that as well and it was always the excuse, 'when our house is renovated'. So now that it is, I'm thrilled" P3

Box 1: Select quotes from pilot interviews

By conducting an analysis of various practices (renovation practices, everyday household practices, future imagined practices, and 'doing research'

using media) I expect to be able to map out how these intersect to shape current carbon intensity patterns and therefore how they might be re-shaped or un-made to decrease the carbon intensity of home renovations.

Anticipated impacts

Looking beyond the common behaviour based solutions to carbon reduction this research will provide a practice-based analysis to highlight potential changes to design and material selection in renovation, and the daily household practices in renovated homes. By revealing the complexity of factors that lead to current renovation outcomes this analysis would be relevant to industry (designers, practitioners, retailers) and to policy makers seeking to reduce the carbon impact of housing.

Meanings of the ideal home have changed over time and can be reshaped through media to address our carbon impact.

Contact

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