Anthropology and Business

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BUSINESS AND ANTHROPOLOGY

Business and industry are fundamental ways of organizing economic activity to meet basic human needs in modern market societies. *Business* means the buying and selling of goods and services in the marketplace (also known as commerce or trade), while *industry* refers to the organized production of goods and services on a large scale. These terms, when used in the anthropological context (e.g., business or industrial anthropology[1]), may be used to refer to one or more of the three major domains of anthropological research and practice in the private sector 1) anthropology related to *the process of producing goods and services, and the corporate organizations in which production takes place*; 2) ethnographically-informed *design of new products, services and systems for consumers and businesses, and/or 3)* anthropology related to the *behavior of consumers and the marketplace*. In this article, we explore these domains, beginning with a discussion of the historical development of the field, and continuing with an overview of the contemporary landscape.

Part I: Historical Development of the Field

Early Colonial History: Anthropological roots that trace back to European colonial interests also connect, albeit indirectly, to the international trade of that era and the commercial activities associated with such trade. Early in the 19th century, for example, the Court of Directors of The East India Company made a formal decision to acquire anthropological knowledge of India, as such knowledge was deemed to be of great value in the administration of the country. Subsequently, Frances Buchanan was appointed by the Governor-General in Council to undertake an ethnographic survey to enquire into the conditions of the inhabitants of Bengal and their religion. Likewise, in Nigeria, where the British government employed a National Anthropologist for research purposes, the journal *Africa* was established in 1928 to harmonize research policy and practice in the colonies "for the solution of pressing questions that are of concern to (among others)…traders working for the good of Africa", according to Lord Lugard, the first Governor General of Nigeria in his article in the first issue of *Africa*. These traders included Lever Brothers and John Holts, companies that secured the produce of the colonies for British factories and in turn shipped the finished products to the colonies (Azuka Dike. *The Global Practice of Anthropology*, 1997).

While the actual value of European anthropology to colonial interests has been called into question, there was, at least, sufficient potential there to justify the funding of a Colonial Social Science Research Council (CSSRC) in Great Britain from 1944 to 1962, an organization that advocated a practical research agenda for anthropology in the colonies. It is, perhaps, not a coincidence that during this same period (i.e., the 1950s),

[1] The term 'business anthropology' come into usage in the 1980s, when anthropologists became full-time, non-academic practitioners in niches related to consumer behavior and marketing. Prior to that time, the term 'industrial anthropology', 'anthropology of work', or 'applied anthropology in industry' were used more frequently to denote areas of research and practice focused on business related phenomenon. More recently, the term 'business anthropology' has begun to be used more generically to mean any application of anthropology to business-oriented problems.

British industrialists, led by Israel Sieff (a co-founder of Marks and Spencer, a department store chain), requested support from British anthropologists to deal with quite different issues in England; e.g., staff relationships and productivity in corporations. The industrialists were rebuffed, however, with the reply that anthropology was an exploratory discipline, and thus could not be used for anything so concrete as recommendations to businesses (Sarah Pink, *From the Colonies to the Modern Organization: Public and Private Sector Applications of British Anthropology*, forthcoming).

The relationship between anthropology and colonial interests is part of the world history of applied anthropology, and is one of the reasons why European anthropologists were slow to adopt applied anthropology as a formal area of research and graduate training in the latter half of the 20th century. The kind of work supported by the CSSRC became tainted with political incorrectness as independence movements grew in force around the time of World War II, causing embarrassment for some anthropologists who found themselves linked to colonial purposes. As a result, many European anthropologists threw the 'applied baby' out with the bathwater, and application simply was off-limits in many places until the last quarter of the 20th century. The mantle of leadership in application consequently 'jumped the pond' to the United States -- the home of pragmatic philosophy, with important implications for the relationship between business and American anthropology in the 20th century and beyond.

The American Context. On the other side of the Atlantic, the United States was experiencing its industrial revolution during the latter part of the 19th century, and with it the focus of applied anthropology shifted from studies of Native Americans to research based in industry. The rise of American industry was accompanied by a theory of organization known as 'scientific management', developed by the engineer Frederick W. Taylor[2]. According to Taylor, the activities of both workers and managers should be determined by 'scientific' methods – thorough investigation of the skills and actions needed to perform a given role, careful selection of individual workers and managers based on their ability to perform the role, and detailed instructions that would direct each employee's behavior so that maximum output could be achieved with minimum input. Frederick Taylor believed in the theory of 'economic man' – that individual employees would respond rationally to economic rewards by increasing their productivity to maximize rewards to themselves. The trick was to find exactly the right kind and amount of incentive – sufficient to motivate the worker effectively, but not so generous as to detract from profitability. This approach, he believed, would reduce labor-management strife, as all actors would be satisfied with their situations.

Taylor didn't have to worry about unions interfering in his plan to optimize the productivity of the workforce. Prior to the 1930s, manufacturing companies did not have industrial unions, as many did later on in the 20th century. Up until the mid 1930s, American unions were organized along trade lines (e.g., carpenters, glassblowers, shoemakers), not by industry (e.g., automobiles, steel, textiles). This reflected the craft-

[2] Many of the basic tenets of scientific management are implicitly in force in today's corporations.

based organization of production that was common at that time[3]. The less skilled production workers of the growing manufacturing firms were not permitted to join trade unions. As manufacturing companies expanded in scope and influence toward the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, their managers very much wanted to keep unions from organizing the less skilled production workers. The 19th century had been a period of serious labor-management conflict in the United States, with members of trade unions regularly going on strike against their employers, and violence sometimes breaking out[4]. As industrial technology began to replace the skills of the craft workers, managers looked forward to the day when the trade unions would decline in influence (which they soon did). Managers were still concerned, however, that the less skilled production workers, who were becoming more numerous as national markets for mass produced goods expanded, would organize unions of their own, something they wanted to avoid at all costs.

One effective approach to avoiding unionization was a benign theory of management known as *welfare capitalism*, an ideology that became central to the future relationship of business and anthropology. The hypothesis was that if management treated the workers well and ensured that they were contented, labor strife would subside and unions would not grow stronger. This approach was especially prominent during the economic boom years of the 1920s, when employers spent money improving workers' quality of life. They built new housing for workers, created flowerbeds, parks and libraries, and set up elementary schools for the workers' children. Management also formed company unions that negotiated 'sweetheart deals' (e.g., union leaders were treated very well, and they agreed to whatever management wanted). As a result of these efforts by management, the union movement did not advance in the 1920s, and there was a reign of relative peace in the ranks of less skilled industrial workers up to the time of the stock market crash in 1929.

The Hawthorne Project. It is against this backdrop that the Western Electric Company (now part of Lucent Technologies) began in 1924 at its Hawthorne Works near Chicago a series of experiments aimed at increasing the productivity of the workforce (see F. J. Roethlisberger and W. J. Dickson, *Management and the Worker*, 1939). These experiments reflected both the influence of welfare capitalism and Frederick Taylor's scientific management movement. The company wanted to find out how to improve working conditions so that worker fatigue and dissatisfaction would be reduced (i.e., welfare capitalism), and they believed that a single variable (such as factory illumination) could be manipulated to make this happen (i.e., scientific management). In these

[3] In craft production, skilled workers with deep knowledge and experience in all aspects of a particular craft make products by hand (e.g., shoes). This manual process yields high quality products, but it is very slow and not suited to mass production for large national markets. Craft workers used trade unions to maintain some measure of control over the conditions under which they worked (e.g., who could join the trade, how they would be trained, what they would be paid). Such trade unions were much like medieval guilds.

[4] Members of the trade unions would go on strike against their employers if their interests were not protected, but these strikes were not legal, and violence often broke out as union members clashed with private security guards, state militia, and even federal troops. Sometimes, people were killed in these struggles. American workers at this point in time did not have a federal law granting them the right to form a union, so employers could have workers arrested and charged with crimes such as conspiracy.

particular experiments, however, the results did not make sense from the standpoint of scientific management theory. The experimenters found that worker productivity increased when the lights were made brighter (as expected), but productivity also increased or stayed the same when lighting was decreased, even to the dim level of moonlight. This result definitely was not expected, and could not be explained by the prevailing theory of the time.

Intrigued, the Hawthorne researchers instigated a further series of tests to explore the anomaly, one of which was called the Relay Assembly Test Room (RATR) experiment. In this test, a group of women were isolated in a laboratory where their conditions of work and output could be measured carefully. The experimenters then varied the working conditions, giving the women rest breaks, snacks, incentive pay, and then gradually withdrawing each of these, while they measured the number of relay assemblies each woman produced. Again, the same mysterious results emerged – productivity was sustained or increased no matter what the experimenters did to working conditions. We now know this phenomenon as the 'Hawthorne Effect', meaning that non-experimental variables are affecting the experimental results, but at the time the outcome was inexplicable.

Hawthorne researchers called upon Harvard psychologist Elton Mayo to help them interpret the mysterious results of their experiments. With his help, they came to realize that they had inadvertently altered the working conditions of the women far beyond those of a normal work environment. For example, the researchers themselves had become the women's supervisors, and had developed a congenial relationship with their research subjects. Two women who were not cooperative in the project had been replaced with two other women. Neither of these conditions paralleled those that might be experienced on the shop floor. Further, the women themselves had developed an 'esprit de corps' in which they worked together as a team, encouraging and helping one another if one fell behind[5]. In other words, the women had developed a distinctive social system, and this system itself had become part of the production process and was no doubt contributing to the enhanced level of productivity that was being observed in the experiment. Now, rather than simply being interested in how one variable (illumination) influenced another (fatigue), the Hawthorne researchers started to became interested in understanding the relationships among variables in the social system, and what their effects on production might be.

As discussed by Helen Schwartzman in *Ethnography in Organizations (*1993), Hawthorne initiated in 1928 a massive interview project involving 20,000 employees, aimed at obtaining a better understanding of psychological factors that affected the workers. It was these interviews that uncovered the tendency of workers to band together as a means of defense against anything that might be perceived as a threat. This tendency

[5] The account provided here is the 'official' version that emerged after internal disputes regarding the appropriate interpretation of the data had been settled within the research team. Richard Gillespie's *Manufacturing Knowledge: A History of the Hawthorne Experiments* (1991) provides an illuminating exploration of the differing interpretations among Hawthorne researchers regarding the significance of the experimental results, and explains how Mayo's views came to dominate social science lore on the subject.

produced a uniformity of behavior among individual workers; e.g., reluctance to ask for a raise, which might create a rift within a work group. This tendency gradually came to be conceptualized as the worker's social system or social organization, and it was an interest in understanding this social system that prompted the next and final phase of the Hawthorne project.

It was at this point that anthropology entered the Hawthorne Project. Elton Mayo had established a friendship with two prominent anthropologists, Bronislaw Malinowski and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, and he therefore knew that anthropologists study natural social systems in the field. It was this very approach that Mayo wanted to adopt for the final phase of the Hawthorne study. Through his professional network, Mayo was introduced to one of Radcliffe-Brown's students, W. Lloyd Warner, who had just returned from fieldwork in Australia, studying the Murngin. Warner consulted with the Hawthorne researchers in designing and conducting the next phase of their experiment, and with this act he fathered industrial or organizational anthropology.

With W. Lloyd Warner as design consultant, the Hawthorne researchers conducted the final phase of the Hawthorne project, known as the Bank Wiring Observation Room (BWOR) experiment. This portion of the project was aimed at exploring what workers actually *did* on the job, in contrast with what they *said* during the interviews. For the BWOR, a replica of the shop floor at Western Electric was constructed, into which a typical work group (14 male bank wirers and their supervisors) was installed. The workers performed their tasks as usual, while a trained observer watched them and recorded their interactions over a time period extending for several months during 1931 and 1932, the depths of the Great Depression. To gain a better understanding of the worker's point of view, a second researcher, not present in the observation room, conducted periodic interviews with the workers. Warner encouraged the researchers to read anthropological theory, and to analyze their observational data much as an anthropologist would in studying a small society such as a band or tribe.

The BWOR study was the first to demonstrate empirically the starkly contrasting points of view separating management and the workers. Hawthorne management had accepted Frederick Taylor's concept of 'economic man' (i.e., workers are rational actors who respond to economic incentives), and therefore they had devised a complex piece rate incentive scheme that guaranteed a minimum hourly wage in exchange for a minimum daily standard of production (the 'bogey), plus an additional sum that was determined by the amount of output produced by the entire group in excess of that which was guaranteed by the minimum hourly wage. Management believed that this system would encourage workers to maximize their efforts up to the point at which fatigue and discomfort inhibited additional production. Part of this incentive scheme was the notion that slower workers would be spurred on by those in the group who worked faster (much as they witnessed in the earlier RATR experiment).

In reality, however, the piece rate system had exactly the opposite effect to what the managers envisioned. Workers had their own notion of a 'fair day's work' which was considerably below that which management envisioned as desirable under the piece rate

incentive system. The workers' informal standard was translated into a certain number of units to be produced by each man during the day; this was basically the amount of labor required to produce the 'bogey'. Anything produced in excess of this minimum was frowned upon and negatively sanctioned by the group. If a worker set a fast pace and produced more than the minimum standard, he was subjected to verbal abuse (e.g., called a slave), 'binging' (using the thumb to snap the third finger against the violator's arm), and eventually, the most dreaded punishment – ostracism or virtual banishment. Often, the workers would produce their quota early in the day, and then subtly scale back effort in the afternoon, while enjoying one another's company (all the while keeping an eye out for management). This work culture arose from the workers' belief that a higher daily rate of production would prompt management to raise the 'bogey' (i.e., the minimum daily standard of production), cut the hourly rate, or layoff some of them. The Hawthorne project was conducted during the depths of the Great Depression, so it is not surprising that workers feared such actions from management.

The Hawthorne findings were in conflict with the existing management theory of the day. According to Taylor, the economic man was an individual, and incentive structures were set to encourage individuals to give their maximum effort, and to push their peers to do the same. Yet in the BWOR, the workers did not respond as individuals, but as a group, and they had developed their own informal theory of management that was based on distrust of managers, not on an interest in economic gain. Here was the first solid empirical evidence of *informal organization* (what we might call an occupational subculture or counter-culture), defined as the actual patterns of social interaction and relationships among the members of an organization that are not determined by management. Researchers were able to map this informal organization by quantifying interactions among workers, and to graphically depict networks of relationships between different work groups or cliques, much as network analysis today reveals informal patterns of communication and exchange among individuals. The informal organization that was depicted very much contrasted with the *formal organization* (interactions defined by the rules and policies of the corporation) that management had put in place to enable pursuit of the company's goals. The corporation thus was comprised of two kinds of organization that were not aligned with each other – one a rational organization designed for instrumental purposes, and the other a spontaneous, natural form of human social interaction that arose in response to inherent human interests and needs. These findings made clear that workers were not simply 'factors' in production, much like machines, but were sentient beings who assigned their own meanings to phenomenon, and who protected their interests through mechanisms of their own design. Although this insight seems obvious to us now, it was a startling breakthrough in the early 1930s, and it represented a severe critique of Taylor's scientific management theory.

One of the most significant findings to emerge from the Hawthorn Project was that workers exert considerable influence over industrial productivity. As long as machines did not control the work process, as they did not in those days, workers could manipulate the pace of production in many subtle ways not easy to detect without an army of supervisors. Management was no longer fully in control of the corporation, as

the theory of the day assumed, but had to deal with a powerful natural force that, from management's perspective, did not respond to the logic of economic incentives. From the worker's point of view, of course, the men of the BWOR were being quite logical, since any behavioral pattern other than that which they exhibited could end up costing them in the long run. Interestingly, this latter anthropological view is not the one adopted by the Hawthorne researchers, who accepted Mayo's interpretation of the findings, which held that the BWOR workers were acting in an irrational manner, based on psychological "maladjustment". A different industrial future may have unfolded if the alternative view had prevailed.

A new school of thought emerged in organizational theory as a result of the Hawthorne findings, and it held sway for the next two decades -- the *Human Relations School*. This school of thought was based on *functional equilibrium theory*, a theory widespread in the social sciences at the time, which viewed human organizations as integrated social systems, with specific structures that interacted to maintain a smoothly operating whole. Each individual was seen as being tied to the whole, yet still having his or her proper place and function in the system. Within the context of this theory, conflict between management and workers was seen as pathological, reflecting the disruption of an equilibrium state, and was to be ameliorated by making adjustments in the pattern of interaction among individuals and organizational structures. A disruption of the equilibrium state would affect worker morale in a negative way, and this in turn would interfere with efficient production. The Human Relations School aimed at creating harmonious worker-manager relationships that would ensure optimal productivity in a company (some later called this 'cow sociology' – contented workers give better work). Mayo argued that a work groups' informal organization either could support management goals (as seen in the Relay Assembly Test Room experiment), or work against them (as in the Bank Wiring Observation Room). Management needed to adjust its relationships with workers to ensure the former result, not the latter. This school of thought was prominent in American industry for the next twenty years, and was highly influential in shaping the practices of the first generation of industrial anthropologists.

Not coincidentally, the Human Relations School often is associated with welfare capitalism, and with a tendency in managerial thought and action to resist unionization of the workforce. The anthropologists who were prominent within the Human Relations movement appear not to have questioned the status quo ante assumptions upon which this movement was founded, and consequently they and their colleagues often have been judged as management-centric in their research and practice, a judgment that may not be completely fair given the anthropologists' landmark efforts to understand the perspective of the Hawthorne workers.

The Human Relations Movement. Ironically, Warner and his colleagues did not have further opportunity to continue their studies at Hawthorne during the 1930s. This was the result of two developments. First, the Hawthorne researchers followed-up on the Bank Wiring Observation Room study by initiating a program of psychological counseling with workers that they believed would contribute to industrial peace. No further studies of social interaction on the shop floor were conducted (while industrial

psychology as a field expanded). Secondly, as the Great Depression unfolded in the 1930s, severe economic deprivation meant that companies did not have the resources needed to continue to support research of the Hawthorne type. Thus, little industrial anthropology was conducted in the United States during the remainder of the 1930s.

As the United States recovered from the Great Depression and then entered World War II, production pressure intensified and internecine 'feuding' between workers and management erupted once again, becaming an increasingly serious threat to the economic welfare and security of the nation. Any effort to ameliorate this conflict was viewed as contributing to important national goals. Intellectuals were motivated to become involved in Mayo's Human Relations project primarily because of such critical national interests, and not as a result of concern for the competitiveness or profitability of individual firms.

The group of anthropologists at Harvard during the time of the Hawthorne project also was influenced by a general interest in modern institutions, and they found many opportunities to conduct observational studies in large corporations, and to apply their insights toward the goal of industrial harmony, from the 1940s through the 1950s. This generation of industrial anthropologists, including Conrad Arensberg, Elliot Chapple, Burleigh Gardner, Robert Guest, Solon Kimball, Frederick Richardson, Leonard Sayles, and William Foote Whyte (who was trained as a qualitative sociologist) undertook a series of important studies both of workers and managers, with the goal of discovering factors and forces that could be manipulated to achieve an equilibrium state in the organizational system (i.e., the elimination of conflict).

Anthropologists who worked in industry during this period continued to be influenced by Elton Mayo's conception of social science as therapeutic or clinical practice. In keeping with functional equilibrium theory, Mayo believed that a key role of social science, including anthropology, was to gain a better understanding of human social systems in industry in order to permit the design of effective interventions that could alleviate pathologies such as labor-management conflict, resulting in more smoothly functioning organizational systems. If a social system was not in an equilibrium state, the anthropologists believed that they could contribute to restoring a healthy equilibrium by identifying sources of friction in the social system, and recommending ways to transform adversarial or rebellious relations into productive collaboration. The anthropologists did not question the asymmetrical relations of power in a company as a key source of conflict; these were taken as given.

During the 1940s and 50s, anthropologists were hired by management to work on problems in specific plants, such as high turnover, absenteeism, strikes, and poor worker-management cooperation. They studied various aspects of social structure and relations within the industrial enterprise, such as informal relationships among workers, actual work processes, status hierarchies, relations between workers and managers, union-management interaction, and voluntary associations in the workplace. Many of these studies identified the small work group as a critical factor within the industrial system,

thus opening a new area of study in the social sciences that has been highly productive from a theoretical standpoint.

Companies that hired anthropologists during this period included Sears, Roebuck & Company, the Container Corporation of America, International Business Machines (IBM), Inland Steel Container Company, Libby MacNeil and Libby, Bundy Tubing Company, and the Eastern Corporation. Some of the anthropological studies of such firms produced industrial ethnographies (case studies) of the entire company, with a focus on the factors and forces that influenced human relations within an integrated social system. For example, Warner and Low (1946) conducted their famous case study of a major industrial strike in Yankee City (Newbury, Massachusetts), explaining connections between the social system within the factory and larger economic, technological, and social forces that contributed to the strike. Yet, the anthropologists saw themselves not as "hired guns", but as scientists, working to discover laws of human interaction that could establish the foundation for a science of human behavior. W. Lloyd Warner, the founder of industrial anthropology, had a larger theoretical agenda that he hoped to advance through the study of modern institutions such as industrial organizations (see also E. Eddy and W. Partridge (Eds.) *Applied Anthropology in America*, 1978).

Methodologically, Eliot Chapple and other anthropologists aimed to obtain a detailed, quantitative record of interactions among workers and managers in industrial settings, much as a naturalist would record the behavior of an animal species in the field. Detailed measurement of actual behavioral interaction would help to pinpoint the sources of tension and conflict between different industrial roles. This knowledge could then be used to make precise adjustments in patterns of interaction that could contribute to a reduction in conflict. Chapple developed a new technological device, called the Interaction Chronograph, which helped to record quantitatively the interactions among individuals as they unfolded in real time (see Eliot Chapple, *The Interaction Chronograph: Its Evolution and Present Application*, 1949). This device may be viewed as the precursor of modern videotape analysis of workplace interaction that was later pioneered by a second generation of industrial anthropologists.

Frederick Richardson's work provides an example of a key social variable – the human contact -- discovered by the anthropologists through observational methods, and describes how this variable could be used to improve worker-manager relations (*The Elusive Nature of Cooperation and Leadership: Discovering a Primitive Process that Regulates Human Behavior*, 1978. The contact pertains to the behavioral interaction that takes place between a supervisor and his or her subordinate in face-to-face meetings. Richardson suggests that it is possible to predict the performance of a work group solely by recording the supervisor's contacts that last one minute or more. High performing units display "contact moderation" about 90% of the time. The anthropologists argued, based on studies of primates and other animals, that conflict between work groups is exacerbated by physical separation and a lack of on-going contact. This behavior pattern is one in which a supervisor spends one-half to three-quarters of his or her time engaged in contacts with others. The contacts are well distributed across the group, with the average length being fairly short, but not curt. Typically, there are 15-30 contacts per

day, with a good balance between group and pair contacts. Supervisors of high performing groups also were found to be more talkative, more dominant (cannot be interrupted easily), more flexible in style, and less flappable. These supervisors over and under-react less to excessive talking or silence from others, maintaining their own rhythm of speech. This description was derived from close recording of behavioral interactions, and it was used to advise managers on ways to improve the productivity of their workers.

It is clear from the discussion above that industrial anthropologists of the time studied not only workers, but managers as well, something Fredrick Taylor had difficulty doing, as managers resisted the application of his methods to their ranks. Being able to study both workers and managers meant that the anthropologists had to gain access to, and establish trust with, both of these groups, a feat that was quite difficult to do in times of industrial unrest. Anthropologists were virtually the only group of researchers capable of performing this feat, although later they were criticized for being too close to management in their assumptions and point of view.

After the Hawthorne Project, W. Lloyd Warner shifted his focus to the contemporary community in his Yankee City studies (Newburyport, Massachusetts). The focus of this project was the social stratification of a community using the anthropological techniques of direct observation and interviews. It was in this project that Warner uncovered the importance of both the voluntary association and the corporation as distinctive modes of social integration in American life. Warner found that both of these forms of organization bring together and articulate diverse social elements, including individuals, families, and ethnic groups, in ways that are not typical in other societies. Anthropologists conducting studies of families, work, and corporations only now are beginning to follow-up on these insights.

Especially important to our understanding of industrial anthropology in this period was Warner and Low's study of a major strike affecting several Yankee City shoemaking factories. The intensity and duration of the strike, which took place during the depths of the 1930s' depression, were a surprise to many observers, since the workers in the plant had never mounted any job action in the many decades of the factory's history. Warner and Low (*The Social System of a Modern Factory*, 1947) were able to trace the roots of the strike to changes in the technology, work process, and social relations within the factory, and they also linked these micro-level changes to larger technological and economic transformations unfolding at the macro-level of the nation. Over some decades before the strike, shoemaking production technology had gradually evolved, reducing once highly skilled craftsmen to less skilled and more interchangeable workers in a more heavily mechanized production process. The deskilling of the workforce had destroyed the traditional social system within the factory, which was based in a hierarchy of increasing levels of skill in the craft of shoemaking. Workers' identity and self-esteem were tied to their capacity to move up the skill hierarchy as they gained increasing experience and expertise. But technological changes destroyed the skill hierarchy, reducing once proud craftsmen to a more or less undifferentiated mass of deskilled workers. Such changes generated a sense of loss of control and autonomy among the workers, drawing them into a group with shared interests. At the same time,

the ownership of the factories themselves had changed hands, shifting from local ownership to distant owners in New York City. The absenteeism of the factory owners removed social constraints against strikes that had been in place when the owners were integral members of the community. As a result, members of the community supported the strike in a way that would not have been possible before, and this support made a lengthy strike possible. As a result of the strike and its community support, the workers organized an industrial union and were successful in their demands against management, thereby reflecting similar changes that were taking place across the country. Through this study, Warner and Low showed that behavior inside a plant cannot be understood fully without also knowing the connections between the plant and its historical, social, economic, political, and technological contexts. The discovery of the open-systems nature of work organizations was an original theoretical contribution that pre-dated Selznick's (1949) work on the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) that often is credited in the management literature as the first research to demonstrate organizational-environmental interactions.

In 1936, Warner left Harvard and went to the University of Chicago where he founded the Committee on Human Relations in Industry. This group encouraged and supported the work of many industrial anthropologists and sociologists, such as William Foote Whyte, whose qualitative field studies of various industries have became classics of the organizational theory literature. Another significant event during this period was the founding of the Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA) at Harvard in 1941. Several of the founders were industrial anthropologists who published their industrial research findings in the SfAA's journal *Applied Anthropology* (now *Human Organization*).

The Decline of Industrial Practice. Around 1960, a number of significant changes in the social, political and economic context of the United States influenced the development of academia, and with it the trajectory of industrial anthropology. Instead of continuing to establish itself as an important subfield of anthropology, as might have been projected from its promising start in the previous three decades, the anthropology of industrial organizations entered a prolonged period of decline from which it has only recently begun to emerge. This decline is related both to a waning interest in modern institutions within the mainstream of anthropology, and to a scarcity of practitioners, that is, individuals who conduct the science and craft of anthropology (whether research or application) inside industrial and business organizations. Reasons that may be given for the decline are as follows:

•*Change in Academic Environments*. With the end of World War II, and the Soviet Union's launch of Sputnik in the 1950s, major changes swept over American higher education. Record numbers of baby boomers entered college, along with returning GIs, and the ranks of college students exploded in number. Simultaneously, the American government was eager to continue the technological advances that had helped the Allies to win the war, and toward that objective the National Science Foundation was established to fund academic research. These developments meant that academic anthropology, and federal funds for fieldwork in countries outside the United States, grew

both in numbers and stature. American anthropologists now had growing numbers of academic employment posts, and the means to travel abroad to conduct research. The academic discipline of anthropology emphasized the significance of fieldwork outside the US as necessary to the creation of a "real anthropologist". Those conducting research in the United States (such as the industrial anthropologists) were relegated to a second class citizen status, which ultimately pushed many of them out of anthropology and into the business world. Some became professors in business schools (e.g., Frederick Richardson, William Foote Whyte, and Leonard Sayles), while others started businesses or became business consultants (e.g., Burleigh Gardner and Eliot Chapple). This meant that they were not able to produce a new generation of industrial anthropologists.

•*Shift in Social Science Theory*. The Human Relations School and functional equilibrium theory were incompatible with the emerging reality of labor relations in American industry, which was increasingly characterized by severe labor-management conflict and strife[6]. As the organized labor movement grew in strength, collective bargaining and the 'union contract' came to be the answer to labor-management relations on a daily basis, rather than the smooth equilibrium sought by the Human Relations clinicians. As a result, this movement and its practitioners gradually faded into obsolescence. The industrial anthropologists themselves appear not to have realized what was happening until it was too late. Historians of social science have criticized this generation of industrial anthropologists for being too management-centric, and not connected sufficiently to the working class to foresee the rising tide of unionization and its theoretical consequences. In the meantime, other disciplines such as industrial sociology were developing new theory to explain organizational behavior. The most prominent of these (and still dominant) is *contingency theory*, which explains what is happening in an organization through correlations among formal variables such as organizational structure, technology, and the environment. Studies conducted under this theoretical regime rely upon quantitative data drawn from large surveys of scores or hundreds of organizations, and rigorous statistical modeling of survey results. Anthropological methods were sidelined as appropriate mainly for "case studies", which were suspect as unreliable and non-generalizable to a large population of organizations.

•*Political and Ethical Issues*. The era of academic expansion in the 1960s and early 1970s brought with it serious concerns on campuses regarding the ethical propriety

[6] During the Great Depression, unionism of all kinds declined as unemployment grew to unprecedented levels. The moral authority of business (and its capacity to practice welfare capitalism) was severely damaged, and thus, when a slow recovery began in 1932, the previously harmonious labor relations disappeared. Labor agitation mounted as workers were called back to their jobs, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt, concerned that labor unrest could derail the fragile recovery, decided that the federal government would sponsor collective bargaining as part of a strategy to get the economy moving again. When this approach was ruled unconstitutional, the US Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act in 1935, which for the first time gave workers the right to bargain collectively. Shortly afterwards, the Council of Industrial Organization (CIO) was formed to organize less skilled workers on an industry-wide basis. Now, when the union called a work stoppage such as that which took place during the Flint sit-down strikes of 1936-37, the government no longer interfered, and the unions began to make serious headway toward their goals of improved wages and working conditions for unskilled workers. The modern union movement was born. Over the course of the next several decades, union bargaining succeeded in transferring approximately 16% of shareholder wealth into the pockets of working people.

of conducting research under the auspices of powerful sponsors such as governments or corporations. Just as anthropologists in Great Britain reacted negatively when their ties to colonial administrations became a subject of public criticism, so American anthropologists reacted with distaste when they found out that certain agencies of the US government had attempted to engage anthropologists in research that would become part of counter-insurgency programs in the developing world (e.g., Project Camelot). Such revelations, together with a growing anti-war movement in the US, turned anthropologists away from government service, and fostered a suspicion of any powerful sponsor who could use anthropological research in ways that might injure those studied, and also injure anthropology in the process. In addition to government, multinational corporations also were identified as potentially dangerous sponsors. During the 1960s, American multinational corporations were dominant overseas, making inroads into foreign markets and setting up factories in developing countries to reduce the cost of production. Academic anthropologists who were conducting fieldwork in the very places that American business was investing often saw the negative consequences of industrialization, including increasing poverty, new disease threats, and the disintegration of traditional social supports.

One notorious example of such tragedies was the malnutrition and infant death that followed Nestle's introduction of infant formula in the developing world. Often, Third World women could not afford to continue to buy formula in the amounts recommended, nor could they ensure that bottles were sterile or that water to mix the formula was pure. Formula often was heavily diluted with contaminated water, leading to infant diarrhea, malnutrition, and outright starvation. Women who relied on formula instead of breastfeeding could not switch back to the breast, since their milk supply dried-up when not used. Nestle was aware of these problems, yet would not withdraw the formula from countries where these problems were manifest, triggering a massive global boycott of Nestle products. Such instances of unethical corporate behavior further alienated anthropologists from industry, and caused some to begin labeling any work for industry as 'unethical'. This label stuck as the American Anthropological Association promulgated principles of professional responsibility in 1971 that prohibited any research that could not be freely disseminated to the public. Since industrial research sometimes is proprietary (i.e., owned by the company and not publishable without their permission), this code of ethics virtually banned industrial anthropology for the next two decades.

The Fragmentation of Industrial Anthropology in Academe: 1960-1980. After the demise of the Human Relations School, industrial anthropology splintered into several branches, the principal ones being 1) Marxist and neo-Marxist critiques of industry at home and abroad, 2) the ethnography of industrial occupations and professions, and 3) the study of industrialization processes outside the West. Academic anthropologists who did not practice inside corporations, but studied them the outside, at a distance, were responsible for much of the research and conceptual development during this period.

Marxist Critique of Industry. For some anthropologists, a focus on the negative consequences of industrialization at home and abroad led to a radical critique of the

existing industrial order and to a cultural analysis framed in terms of Marxist, neo-Marxist and post-Marxist theory[7]. The Marxist tradition was well suited to the conditions of modern industry after World War II. As collective bargaining gained strength in US industry, workers and management clearly came to see themselves as separate parties on opposite sides of a struggle for economic gain, much as they were portrayed in Marxist writings. In this environment, anthropologists focused on the ways in which management used its power to increase the productivity of the workforce, and how the workers responded. An especially prominent stream of research in this vein centered upon managerial strategies to reduce workers' skills and their jobs (and thus their wages, numbers, and power) through the process of technological innovations. The union movement had been successful in its efforts to improve wages and working conditions, but in the process unions had ceded control of technological change to management. Before World War II, workers had significant control over the work process, and in some industries they could virtually speed up or slow down the work process at will. Intent on gaining something in exchange for higher wages, American management generally insisted on the use of technology as a 'managerial prerogative', meaning that management had the right to implement new technology whenever and however they saw fit. Managers used improvements in production technology and automation to wrest control over the work process away from the workers. Technology was used both to reduce the number of workers needed for a certain level of production, and the level of skill workers needed to do their jobs. Machines increasingly did the work that previously had been the province of skilled craftspeople. The process by which workers lost skill over time became known as deskilling (as discussed by Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capitalism*, 1974), and it was associated with the rise of tedious, repetitive industrial jobs that were demeaning, boring, and alienating. Once management had control of the work process, they could speed-up the rate of production in order to increase output without increasing costs, thereby improving profitability. Workers often had little choice but to go along with this program if they wanted to keep their jobs. Many workers lost their jobs anyway as technological advance reduced the need for workers in many industries.

[7] Marxist criticism focuses on the mode and relations of production within capitalist economic systems, meaning the way in which economic value and surplus value are produced, and social relations between management (as the agents of the capitalist owners of the means of production) and workers (the proletariat). Marxism holds that capitalist economies are predicated on an immoral and unsustainable exploitation of working people. The difficulty stems from the notion of profit, which is viewed as surplus value (i.e., not required to cover costs) produced by workers, but not returned to them through wages. In other words, the wages that workers are paid do not represent the full value of all that they produce. Rather, a portion of this value is diverted to profits that management uses to enrich itself and to enhance the enterprise. Marx believed that capitalism eventually would collapse because workers would not have sufficient income to absorb all of the goods that they were producing (and that had to be produced to keep profits growing). Rather than waiting for capitalism to self-destruct, however, Marx advocated that workers rise up against the owners of private enterprise and create a new social order in which the proletariat, through a socialist state, would become the owners of the means of production and all of the economic value produced by it. Neo-Marxism and post-Marxism updates (or revises) classical Marxist theory by incorporating new ideas and explanations that address criticisms of classical Marxism, and/or extend Marxian-like arguments into the post-Fordist era. Obviously, capitalism has not yet collapsed, and neo-Marxism helps to explain why this is so and what it means to those who reject capitalist economics.

Industrial anthropologists in the Marxist and neo-Marxist traditions carefully documented the strategies workers used to cope with such adverse employment conditions. Anthropologists and qualitative sociologies were among the first to empirically demonstrate the informal working knowledge that people use on the job, both to get the work done, and to protect their jobs, skills, and earnings (e.g., K. C. Kusterer, *Know-How on the Job: The Important Working Knowledge of Unskilled Workers*, 1978; Louise Lamphere, *Fighting the Piece Rate System: New Dimensions of an Old Struggle in the Apparel Industry*, 1979). While management often assumed that less skilled workers did not have much need for intellect on the job in an age of automation, anthropologists found just the opposite – workers brought their intelligence with them and used it to solve work-related problems that management could not or would not address. Anthropologists conducted this research both in the United States and abroad, delving into numerous industries, including mining, automobile manufacturing, and garment production.

An example of an ethnographic study of industrial work that is Marxist in orientation is provided by Louise Lamphere's (see above) study of a New England apparel factory. She begins with an historical description of the development of the apparel industry in the US, explaining why this particular industry has remained labor intensive, and exploring strategies managers use to maximize profit under conditions of intensive competition. The key managerial approach to ensuring a reasonable profit is maintenance of low wages. The hiring of marginalized workers (women and immigrants), and locating plants in low wage areas are managerial tactics used to ensure low wages. Lamphere also documents the coping strategies of workers and their union as they struggle against a relentless drive by management to continuously reduce labor costs by 'scientific' means, a process that also threatens jobs, wages, and skills.

Marxist and Neo-Marxist anthropologists often highlight the special adversity faced by women workers in industry. Gender-related traits are used as reasons to bar women from the most lucrative jobs in industry, while restricting them to low status or dead end jobs that pay poorly. Women also serve as a 'reserve army' of the unemployed (a Marxist concept), ready to go to work when needed (e.g., during World War II), but then finding themselves removed from their jobs when male workers become available again. At the same, women workers continue to be responsible for domestic production (housekeeping and child rearing), leading some writers to suggest they are 'doubly exploited', as discussed by Carol Holzberg and Maureen Giovannini in *Anthropology and Industry: Reappraisal and New Directions*, 1981. Union organizations that take advantage of women's plight when attempting to organize groups of workers simultaneously deny women leadership roles within the organized labor movement, meaning that patriarchal practices are not restricted to the capitalists. Anthropologists have documented some cases in which women have overcome these barriers to participate in and even lead union movements.

Generally, anthropologists do not confine their analyses to what is going on at the shop floor level, but like W. Lloyd Warner, they trace lines of influence from the corporation to the nation-state and even the global economy. The Marxist anthropologist

June Nash, for example, studied a multinational petrochemical company, including in her investigation the work of global middle managers with whom she conducted interviews (*The Anthropology of the Multinational Corporation*, 1979). Nash' work is unusual in that most anthropologists working in the Marxist tradition do not study managers, only workers (a bias which has limited the impact of their analyses). Nash was surprised to find that the managers were just as alienated from their work as others who had no managerial authority. Her investigation is classic in showing how this company is connected to larger economic, political, and social forces. More recently, Nash (*From Tank Town to High Tech: The Clash of Community and Industrial Cycles*, 1989) has examined the transformation of a mass production company into a technology-intensive defense producer (General Electric), focusing on the effect of these changes on communities and families in the local area (Pittsfield, MA). This work is important in showing that workers are not passive observers of such changes, but active participants in the change process. Helen Schwartzman provides a useful discussion of Nash's work in *Ethnography in Organizations* (1993).

Occupations and Professions. While many Marxist and neo-Marxist anthropologists followed the activities of industrial workers who were largely deskilled, other anthropologists in the decades between 1960 and 1980 focused their attention on members of industrial occupations or professions whose remaining or continuing skills afforded them a place of status and distinction within the work context. Members of occupations or professions often have characteristics that parallel those found in small-scale societies, such as a unique system of meanings, practices, and a language that distinguishes them from other work groups. It was Durkheim who noted that '…occupational activity (is) the richest sort of material for a common life'. Workers who cooperate together in the same activities and share similar experiences also tend to associate with one another and to form a collective identity.

The common life of occupational members gives rise to a *work culture*, which Herbert Applebaum defined as a system of knowledge, techniques, attitudes, and behaviors appropriate to the performance of work and social interactions in a particular work setting (*Work in Market and Industrial Societies*, 1984). The features of a given type of work promote certain patterns of behavior while suppressing others; these patterns are reinforced through selective hiring, formal training, and the informal enculturation of new recruits. Work cultures are not only influential on the job, but off the job as well, with traditions, beliefs, and behavioral standards extending themselves into the worker's general life and life style. Work cultures may be compared along several dimensions, including social relations among workers, time-orientation (i.e., the extent to which time provides discipline in the work process), authority structures, relations with peers (e.g., friendship), language (i.e., jargon that fosters a sense of identity), dress and demeanor, gendering (i.e., the sex-typing of occupations), and roles and statuses.

A work culture lends itself well to application of the classical concept of culture that was prevalent during this period, and the ethnographic method, and anthropologists have used ethnography to record the distinctive cultures of many different occupations

and professions. For example, Herbert Applebaum studied construction workers, yielding insights on the relationship between the technological requirements of an industry and the nature of its work culture (*Royal Blue: The Culture of Construction Workers*, 1981). Applebaum was himself a construction worker, and so he had first-hand knowledge of the craft through many years of participant observation. His ethnographic account of life as a construction worker depicts a world in which highly skilled craftspeople (carpenters, masons, electricians, cement finishers, ironworkers, sheet metal workers, plumbers and others) often own their own tools, accessories, and trucks, and in many cases have been in business for themselves at one time or another. They know their business better than anyone else, and they thus control the work process, with an emphasis on quality. If a general manager places too much emphasis on speed, the worker is likely to walk off the job. Workers gain the respect of others through the quality of their finished work, and highly respected journeymen consider themselves to be the peers of the engineers and other overseers. It is the craftspeople and their supervisors who make most of the decisions at a work site, and since the latter have come from the ranks, they are usually on friendly terms with the workers. Hiring and firing happen on the job site, not in the home office. The personal networks of the supervisors and foremen are the sources from which workers are selected, based on past experience. Workers also determine whether or not conditions are safe enough to commence or continue working. These conditions create a work culture that is highly satisfying to its members, who take pride in work that they control.

Applebaum observed that the construction industry has not been affected by the increasing mechanization of work processes and specialization of tasks that has led to deskilling in many other industries. Rather, construction workers have maintained a high level of skill in which workers control much of the work process and trade unions have great strengths. These features, in turn, are related to the technological requirements of the industry, including the uniqueness of each building and site, the temporary duration of a given project, the variation in work processes due to changes in weather, and the inability to stockpile a product. All of these requirements have prevented the advance of mechanization, and have enabled construction workers to maintain their independence and autonomy.

Over the years, anthropologists, sociologists, folklorists and others working in the qualitative research tradition have contributed much to our knowledge of many different occupational and professional work cultures[8]. Particularly well known is the work of Frederick Gamst, whose career was devoted to producing a literature on railroading (see for example *The Hoghead: An Industrial Ethnography of the Locomotive Engineer*, 1980). Descriptive studies of occupational and professional cultures in many different industries[9] created a foundation of knowledge that contributed greatly to our

[8] Like occupations, members of professions (e.g., attorneys, accountants) also tend to form cultural patterns, but professions have relatively greater work autonomy and control compared with occupations.
[9] This includes studies of accountants, high steel workers, locomotive engineers, longshoremen, medical school students, nightclub strippers, police, professional dance musicians, rodeo workers, social workers, timber loggers, underground miners, waiters, and many others to numerous to mention. A thorough discussion is provided by Harrison Trice, *Occupational Subcultures in the Workplace*, 1993.

understanding of cultural phenomena in organizations more generally, and set the stage for the emergence of the concept of organizational or corporate culture during the 1980s.

Industrialization Processes Outside the West. During the 1960s and 70s, the rise of fieldwork outside the United States was supported by federal agencies such as the National Science Foundation. Such support enabled anthropologists (and members of other disciplines, such as sociologists) to explore the changes taking place in nations that were just beginning to develop an industrial infrastructure. A prominent theory in the social sciences at the time, known as *convergence theory*, predicted that societies around the world would become ever more similar to one another in their ways of life, based on the technological imperative of industrialization (William Form, *Comparative Industrial Sociology and the Convergence Hypothesis*, 1979). The convergence hypothesis holds that as national economies shift from traditional agriculture to modern industry (i.e., large scale mass production) as the primary mode of production, the technologies of industrialization would require parallel changes in society and life style across many different nations, including the break-down of the extended family, migration from rural to urban areas, the congregation of populations in urban centers, the need for increasing discipline of the work force, mandated formal education for children, and similar occupational structures. Many of these societal changes, it was argued, follow from the fact that industry organizes production on a mass scale at certain concentrated locations (e.g., factories, mines, mills), and this tends to attract people who seek a livelihood, as well as smaller supplier firms, that provide products and services both to the primary industry and its workforce. The industrial requirements for literacy and regimented individual and group behavior were the reasons why societies increasingly required formal education for children, with schools also serving as a means to teach discipline to the future workforce.

Some theorists believed that every industrializing society, regardless of its history and culture, must follow the same evolutionary pathway as that taken by Western societies, with respect to the development of its economic and socio-cultural systems[10]. An ethnocentric implication of this assumption is that non-Western nations will be able to industrialize only to the extent that they emulate Western societies in their institutional structures, values, and behavioral patterns. From this point of view, traditional indigenous customs (e.g., kinship obligations, spiritual orientation) are thought to impede the transition to industrialization.

Anthropological studies of societies in the midst of industrial transitions provided a critique of convergence theory, based on historical specificity and cultural relativism. A thorough discussion of this literature is provided in Carol Holzberg and Maureen Giovannini's 1981 review, mentioned earlier. Anthropologists provided a more complex and nuanced view of preindustrial societies, demonstrating that various aspects of their traditional social structures and life ways may complement industry. For example, Clifford Geertz demonstrated that indigenous entrepreneurs can play a crucial role in economic development (*Social Change and Economic Modernization in Two Indonesian*

[10] The one great exception to this thesis – the Soviet Union – ended up supporting the convergence hypothesis when socialism collapsed at the end of the 1980s and early 1990s.

Towns: A Case in Point, 1962); Max Gluckman showed that dual economies, in which indigenous people straddle two economic worlds (the village and the urban center) can co-exist effectively with industry, and are necessary to the fulfillment of human needs *Anthropological Problems Arising from the African Industrial Revolution*, 1961); and June Nash's work explored the role of traditional cultural forms such as rituals in easing the transition to industrial life (*We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us: Dependency and Exploitation in Bolivian Tin Mines*, 1979). Other contributions of anthropologists expanded our knowledge of industrialization processes in several related areas, including qualitative changes that take place in pre-existing institutions, the emergence of new institutional forms, the role of ethnicity and race as factors in structuring social relations within and beyond the industrial workplace, the role of women in industrialization processes, and the relative costs and benefits of the shift to industrial production. The knowledge base accumulated through anthropological studies in the developing world also supported radical critiques of mainstream models of economic development models, including dependency theory which holds that both industrial development (as seen in the West) and underdevelopment (witnessed in the so called Third World) are interdependent parts of a single global system of modern capitalist production.

Through fieldwork outside the US, anthropologists made significant contributions to diffusion theory, a multidisciplinary approach to understanding the adoption of innovations (i.e., products or technologies new within their context) within populations, nations, and cultures (Everett Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 1962). Anthropologists contributed to the expansion and increasing sophistication of diffusion theory, which is one of the principle theoretical frameworks underpinning the modern marketing discipline. Some of the most significant discoveries made by anthropologists have focused on the aftermath of new product diffusion into geographic regions where specific technology-based commodities previously were unknown. Often, unintended (and negative) consequences have been the result. For example, Pertti Pelto (*The Snowmobile Revolution: Technology and Social Change in the Arctic*, 1973) studied the introduction of snowmobiles to reindeer herders in Lappland. Families of herders that were able to afford to purchase and maintain a snowmobile also were able to increase their herds of reindeer as a result, since more reindeer could be herded with a snowmobile versus skis that had been used traditionally. At the same time, however, the snowmobile itself frightened the reindeer and this new stressor tended to deplete the herds overall. Consequently, a de facto class system of haves and have-nots emerged in a society that traditionally had been more egalitarian. Such studies were the forerunners of the modern emphasis on consumers and consumption processes.

In addition to the aforementioned literature, there are three other anthropologists whose work deserves special mention. Each studied business organizations in quite distinctive ways that do not fit into any of the categories described above, and/or later applied theoretical constructs to business problems, and each was precocious or prescient in his vision of future developments in global economic and social systems. The work of these three scholars is relevant to the relationship of business and anthropology in the current era.

Thomas Rohlen wrote a classic ethnography focusing on a medium-size Japanese bank (*For Harmony and Strength*, 1974), explaining the cultural logic of Japanese organizational structures and practices just as these were becoming acutely interesting to business scholars and practitioners in the West. Rohlen's approach of entering the bank as a trainee, and participating in the full training program with a cohort of new recruits provides numerous insights into Japanese management methods that would not be available otherwise. For example, he describes a training exercise called Roto, in which recruits are required to leave the training academy and not return until they have persuaded a stranger to allow them to perform some household chore free of charge, a very difficult task in a nation where favors from strangers create onerous obligations. Recruits who finally found someone willing to allow them to discharge this task were so grateful that they did any job gladly, no matter how dreadful (e.g., cleaning an outhouse). Managers used this exercise to instill in trainees the notion that the nature of a task should not determine one's attitude towards it; rather, one's attitude should determine how a task is perceived. Such normative approaches to employee control are becoming more common in Western firms that have adopted the practice of consciously fashioning 'corporate culture' as a means to instill values and norms that generate their own self-policing discipline.

Edward Hall, who is said to be the most frequently cited anthropologist among business authors, developed a novel theory of culture as a network of biologically based 'primary message systems' that humans extend and enhance through social communication. Hall's interests ranged far beyond language and into the nonverbal and contextual aspects of communication. Much of his work was aimed at explicating the role of space and time as contextual dimensions of communication; through this work he invented a number of constructs that have become standards in the world of international business, including the concepts of monochronic and polychronic time (i.e., time experienced as linear and segmented versus time experienced as cyclical and non-segmented), and high-context and low-context cultures (i.e., cultures in which most of the informational content of a message is embedded in contextual variables versus cultures in which most of the information is explicit and encoded in language). These constructs were presented in *Beyond Culture* and *The Dance of Life*. Hall and his partner Mildred Reed Hall wrote a series of books applying Hall's theoretical work on intercultural communication to the field of international business, especially directed toward businesspeople in the United States, France, Germany and Japan. The Halls' interests are in helping businesspeople to translate and interpret communication processes and events across cultural boundaries, and to prevent cross-cultural misunderstandings. Hall's books have been translated into sixteen languages, his work often is cited in business textbooks, and his ideas have been incorporated into the international business lexicon.

In the late 1970s, Alvin Wolfe developed the idea of a new level of socio-cultural integration above the level of the nation-state (*The Supranational Organization of Production: An Evolutionary Perspective*, 1977). In his 1960s study of the African mineral extraction industry, Wolfe discovered a complex, global-level network of wealthy individuals, families, corporations, and states operating together to ensure that raw materials for the world's industrial plants are indeed produced. Nationality was not

an issue; the supranational network operated regardless or in spite of the interests of individual nation-states or other actors. Indeed, the 'supranational integration of the economic sphere', as Wolfe put it, tended to supersede political, international ties and cleavages. Wolfe postulated that the nation-state was not the highest or most complex level of socio-cultural integration, as had been proposed by previous theorists (e.g., Marshall Sahlins and Elman Service, *Evolution and Culture*, 1960). Rather, supranational networks seemed capable of transcending individual nation-states in political and economic maneuvering. These observations still appear fresh and relevant to theorizing on globalization processes.

The themes developed by these anthropologists, particularly ethnographic exploration of corporate entities outside the US, and communication within cross-cultural contexts, have continued to resonate in the millennial era that is described next. The next era is distinguished, however, by the re-emergence of anthropological practice in the business world, that is, the application of anthropological knowledge to business-related problems by practitioners, rather than strictly academic interest in industry, which the case from 1960 to 1980 (with a few exceptions, such as Edward Hall). The reasons for this important change, and its implications, are examined below.

Part II. The Contemporary Landscape

Globalization: 1980 to Present. The last two decades of the 20th century witnessed a transformation of capitalist economies, marked by increasing global flows of goods and services, worldwide deregulation, and the diffusion of converging information and telecommunications technologies (together, sometimes known as globalization[11]). These factors have acted in concert with other important socio-economic trends, including rising per capita incomes in industrialized and newly industrializing countries and shifts in the demographic composition of industrialized nations, to alter the competitive landscape for American corporations. New markets were opening around the world, and new competitors were rising in nearly every industry. American firms found that they could not maintain the economic hegemony they had enjoyed during the brief period following World War II and up to the 1960s and 70s. In what became known as the 'post-Fordist' world of the late 20th century[12], the (American) producer was no longer king; indeed, no producer was. Instead, consumers were recognized as the crucial actors under the rules of the 'new economy', in which services often generated more revenue and employment than goods, and the knowledge content of a corporate asset often was more valuable than its tangible matter.

[11] To observers such as Jonathan Friedman (*Globalization, the State, and Violence*, 2003), these flows do not represent a new stage in the evolution of capitalism, but rather reflect the most recent cycle of de-centering in the point of capital accumulation, this time from West to East, and a resulting loss of Western hegemony that leads to horizontal and vertical fragmentation, as the loss of hegemony weakens nations as a source of collective identity, and people seek 'rootedness' elsewhere.

[12] Fordism pertains to the structures and ideologies generated by mass production as an economic system, where the producer (a la Henry Ford) determined nearly everything about the products that were made (and how they were made) and consumers (as well as employees) had no choice but to buy what was put in front of them (or to do the work that was dictated by the rigid moving assembly line where such products were made).

New and emerging markets in Asia, Eastern Europe, and certain parts of the developing world became lucrative targets for corporations, as consumers in these regions gained sufficient incomes to support purchases of services and goods offered by multinational and transnational firms. Saturated consumer markets in the West fragmented into specialized niches, requiring companies to learn much more about the preferences of demographic groups that they previously had lumped together or simply taken for granted. Gradually, it dawned on American firms that they no longer understood (if, indeed, they ever did) their customers, whether these were in their own country or abroad. To understand and reach these consumers both at home and abroad, the firms themselves had to change their policies and practices, sometimes in fundamental ways. Yet, the metamorphosis required to turn Western corporations away from the 20th century's producer-domination, with its self-focused and functionalist perspective, and move them toward a more globally competitive, consumer-centric view of the world is no small matter. Who better to join this sort of millennial quest for renewal than an Other-focused discipline such as anthropology?

Economic and technological turbulence in business environments opened new opportunities for relationships between anthropology and business in the post-Fordist era. The anthropological incentive to respond has been influenced by three developments. First, there has been a significant gap between the production of new PhDs in anthropology and the rate of vacancies in academic employment openings since the late 1970s. In 1984, for the first time since the survey of new PhDs was conducted by the American Anthropological Association, non-academic employment for new PhDs exceeded academic employment. At first, only a small trickle of these graduates moved into the private sector (it is estimated that there were about 100 full-time business practitioners around 1990), but as word of their achievements grew (described below), the trickle grew into a steady stream[13]. Second, academic institutions have faced mounting pressure to seek external funding for research from federal agencies (to offset both direct and indirect costs), and these agencies (e.g., the National Science Foundation) have been directing a greater share of grant monies toward strategic, interdisciplinary issues and problems (i.e., those that are of greatest concern to society, versus individual disciplines). Such problems may involve private sector actors such as corporations (e.g., knowledge and distributed intelligence, micro-markets in developing nations, disaster prevention and recovery). Working with corporations in such contexts no longer seems beyond the pale of appropriate anthropological involvement. Third, in response to its growing practitioner ranks, the American Anthropological Association (AAA) revised its principles of professional responsibility during this era, removing language that essentially forbade research that could not be publicly disseminated. The AAA also founded the National Association for the Practice of Anthropology (NAPA) in 1984, and several of this organization's officers have been full-time business practitioners or academic consultants. NAPA's first monograph encouraged relationships between business and anthropology (i.e., Marietta Baba, *Business and Industrial Anthropology:*

[13] Unfortunately, the American Anthropological Association has not conducted its Survey of New PhDs in over a decade, so the percentage of new PhDs entering business employment at the present timeis not known.

An Overview, 1986)[14]. The stage was set for American anthropology's second major foray into the world of business practice.

We will review three interdisciplinary domains in which anthropologists have explored new opportunities through business-related research and practice, including 1) organizational behavior and management, 2) ethnographically-informed design of products, services, and systems, and 3) consumer behavior and marketing[15]. Each of the three domains is fairly well established, with some representation in academic departments of various kinds[16], a tradition in the scholarly literature, and an active community of practice, including positions in major corporate research laboratories and institutes (e.g., GM, IBM, Intel, Microsoft, Motorola, Xerox), business functions (e.g., marketing) and consulting firms (at one point, Sapient employed more than 20 PhD anthropologists). Scholar-practitioners are not unusual, since corporations often grant access to scholars in exchange for some service (i.e., strategic research). Each of the three domains operates at both national/regional and at international/global levels. Some scholars and practitioners specialize in the former, some in the latter, while others are competent at both levels.

An exhaustive review of the literature in these domains is beyond the scope of this article. Rather, the intention here is a general overview, with the scope of discussion limited to *illustrative empirical research and practice conducted primarily by American anthropologists*, both academic and non-academic. Also, additional factors and issues related to the historical development of the domains after 1980 is considered.

Organizational Behavior and Management. Continuing the tradition established by W. Lloyd Warner and his colleagues in the 1930s, this line of inquiry grows directly out of the producer-orientation with its focus on the *interior* of the firm – describing and explaining the behaviors of people and groups inside the corporation, and possibly trying to effect modifications in these behaviors. Anthropological interest in organizations continues to be inspired by a conception of formal organization as 'society writ small', thus constituting a site for the production and reproduction of distinctive localized systems of meaning and practice (i.e., culture). Warner's encompassing vision of inquiry at multiple levels of analysis (e.g., industry, enterprise, work group), as well as interactions among these levels, also is sustained. The substantive focus of the research has changed considerably, however. While Warner and company were interested in treating the problem of labor-management strife with functionalist theory, the post-Fordist anthropologists have other agendas.

Anthropologists studying businesses today are part of a larger universe that examines organizational phenomenon in general (see for discussion Helen

[14] This monograph actually was NAPA's second publication, but the first was a membership directory.
[15] These terms are taken largely from the literatures and traditions in which much of this work is published, although some is published in/by traditional anthropological journals and presses. Each domain reflects an interdisciplinary field. Many of the anthropologists are joining established groups of colleagues from other disciplines, but some authors are 'hybrids', remaining both in anthropology and joining other fields as well.
[16] Including anthropology departments, business schools, and interdisciplinary research centers and institutes.

Schwartzmann, *Ethnography in Organizations*, 1994). Yet apart from the master concept of culture (and that, of course, is in disarray), the private sector literature does not reflect a coherent theoretical agenda, or even a discourse organized around competing schools of thought. Rather, the literature may be clustered into three general areas that reflect enduring anthropological interests, as well as historical developments in the larger frame of post-Fordist capitalism: organizational cultures in technology-based firms; boundary-crossing in a global context; and regional perspectives on work and corporations. These three areas are interrelated, and distinctions between particular works assigned to each may be somewhat arbitrary.

In the review below, further developments in the anthropology of work and occupations, neo and post-Marxism, and/or industrialization outside the United States that do not involve empirical research or practice *inside* a business organization (i.e., with access to the business) are not considered (e.g., research on academic-based scientists, engineers, or physicians; research on unions), unless such work has fairly clear implications for corporations or industry as a whole.

Organizational Cultures in Technology-Based Firms. In the 1980s, the business community was introduced to the concept of 'corporate culture' via the consulting industry (e.g., Terrence Deal and Allen Kennedy's *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life*, 1982), yet there was considerable oversimplification of the construct as it diffused via this mechanism. Academic anthropologists were under pressure to bring more enlightened views to the management literature, but many were skeptical of the corporate agenda of 'culture change' (see special issue of the *Anthropology of Work Review* edited by Patricia Sachs, 1989). Within this context, a small number of anthropologists were able to gain access to corporations for basic research purposes, via networks based at corporate research laboratories and research universities. The first wave of anthropologists to examine organizational behavior at this time were intent on demonstrating the subtlety and complexity of anthropological conceptions of cultural phenomenon in organizations, and on introducing the 'native's point of view' as a valid and powerful source of empirical data. This latter goal was meant to distinguish anthropological work from that of other academic disciplines that also claimed authority in the area of 'corporate culture' (e.g., psychology), yet sometimes represented culture as a monolithic phenomenon (e.g., see the first edition of Edgar Schein's *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 1985). The anthropologists also were influenced by previous literature on occupational and professional cultures. Their earliest efforts conceptualized corporations as complex configurations of interacting technical and managerial sub-cultures.

For example, Kathleen Gregory, in an oft-cited paper in the *Administrative Science Quarterly* (1983), employed ethnoscience ethnography to uncover 'native view paradigms', or ways that technical professionals inside Silicon Valley computer technology firms understand their social worlds. Gregory explained the use of ethnoscience methods to elicit 'native' taxonomies or classification schemes which in turn signaled the existence of occupational boundaries within the firms. These taxonomies could be used to a gain deeper understanding of occupational identities, and

experiences that were most important to individuals affiliated with particular identities. Gregory was one of the first to identify 'the project' as a critical activity for many computer professionals; this later proved to be a key insight for decoding the cultural logic and social practices of hackers (see below).

Later in the 1980s, Frank Dubinskas (who at one point in his career wrote cases for the Harvard Business School), studied a biotechnology start-up firm and deconstructed the conflict between executives and PhD molecular biologists, showing how differences in the temporal patterning of their activities created serious conflicts around the goals of research, how to make choices among projects, whether research direction should change, and which projects should be dropped. Dubinskas found that managers and biologists possess fundamentally different images of the self that are related to their notions of developmental time, giving rise to stereotypical images of the other (e.g., mature versus immature), and explaining why the two subcultures frequently conflicted in ways that thwarted the company's performance.

It was also during the late 1980s that Elizabeth Briody and Marietta Baba investigated General Motors' difficulty repatriating managers from overseas duty (*Explaining Variability in Repatriation Experiences: The Discovery of Coupled and De-coupled Systems*, 1991). Drawing on cultural materialism, they described two antithetical subcultures within the corporation, one pro-international and one anti-international, each dominating different organizational units within GM, based upon historical and economic factors. Depending on a repatriating manager's destination upon return, his (all were male) knowledge pertaining to overseas environments would be valued more or less highly by one of these subcultures, respectively, leading to significant differences in post-repatriation job assignments and job satisfaction. This discovery was enabled by statistically testing the validity of several different 'native hypotheses' against a database of information about expatriate assignments and repatriation outcomes, and modifying these hypotheses systematically until one hybrid model was found that explained most of the variance in the data set.

Around this same time, Julian Orr made significant contributions to our understanding of culturally constituted meanings and socially organized work practices among groups of technical workers who are not considered 'professional' or 'managerial'. Orr was based at Xerox's Palo Alto Research Center (PARC), and while there he became known for his research on Xerox repair technicians (Julian Orr, *Talking About Machines: An Ethnography of a Modern Job*, 1996). Once a service technician himself, Orr was interested in why service technicians were able to repair technologically advanced copiers in about 95% of all cases, usually without much or any resort to the company's expert help system, even though they had little if any knowledge of the physics or engineering underlying the machines. After following pairs of technicians for about three weeks, Orr discovered that they solved difficult machine repair problems by telling each other stories of past machine failures, and finding in their stories diagnostic and procedural clues about how to proceed with the present case. Significantly, these stories were not only ones that the technicians themselves had experienced, but ones they had learned from their colleagues through war story swap meets that took place whenever

technicians gathered informally (e.g., at training sessions). The company had no idea that this knowledge resource even existed. Xerox modified its practices based on Orr's findings, by equipping all technicians with mobile radio phones so that they could communicate with one other, and with roving 'tiger teams', more readily. Orr's work also was innovative in conceptualizing the technicians' work practices as a triangular relationship among the technician, the customer, and the machine, such that the customers became a source of knowledge about machine misbehavior, and technicians became a source of knowledge about customers. Technicians, Orr discovered, often needed to repair a customer relationship, as well as a machine. This research demonstrated the economic value of tacit knowledge possessed by employees who previously had not been considered 'knowledge workers'.

The entire corpus of research at Xerox PARC (to be discussed in greater depth later in the article) was highly influential in placing anthropology at the center of a movement within American corporations known as 'knowledge management'. As demonstrated in Orr's studies, many different types of work groups develop tacit and/or embodied systems of local knowledge that are embedded within their work practices, and represent intangible assets that may hold great value for the corporation. Knowledge management is a set of principles, practices, methods and tools that enable firms to identify such assets and convert them to more explicit form so that they can be further developed and leveraged for the firm's benefit (e.g., the mobile radio phones are an example of such a tool). At Xerox PARC, and later at a spin-off organization called the Institute for Research on Learning (IRL), many of the core constructs associated with the knowledge management movement first were conceptualized. An especially important contribution emerged from the ethnographic research of anthropologist Jean Lave, who was involved in the early development of IRL, an institution dedicated to understanding the social context of learning[17]. Lave's research on Liberian tailors revealed that learning is situated in a community of practice -- an occupational network (such as Orr's repair technicians) that shares a set of work activities and a common identity. Lave found that learning takes place within a community of practice through 'legitimate peripheral participation', a process by which apprentices come to master increasingly more difficult and complex tasks as they gradually adopt the identity of the group. Lave collaborated with Etienne Wenger to adapt this concept for learning in various corporate work settings, and to write a popular book on the subject (*Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*, 1991). These developments coincided roughly with an explosion of interest in the emerging 'knowledge economy', and (a bit later) with the Japanese management scholar Ikujiro Nonaka's research identifying tacit-explicit knowledge conversion as a new source of innovation for corporations (*The Knowledge*

[17] IRL was founded in the late 1980s with a seed grant from the Xerox Foundation. Its initial impetus was the report *A Nation at Risk*, which portrayed the United States as deficient in educational achievement compared to competitor nations. IRL was charged with the mission of 'rethinking learning'; that is, conducting research on learning that went beyond studies of cognition and other psychological factors and considered the role of social context. IRL focused on two contexts of learning – schools and work places. While some of the work conducted at IRL squarely addressed the design of learning and training efforts, from early distance learning programs to the design of expert systems that support call centers, other research projects examined corporate transformation initiatives using ethnographic methods (e.g., studies of 'empowerment'; see Melissa Cefkin, *Toward a Higher-Order Merger: A Middle manager's Story*, 1998).

Creating Company: How Japanese Companies Create the Dynamics of Innovation, 1995). Communities of practice (or 'CoPs' as they became known) were highlighted as one of the key loci that embed tacit knowledge, and this concept entered the business lexicon as the knowledge management movement diffused around the globe.

While the studies described above maintain continuity with the previous era in their focus on occupational 'subcultures' or communities, the very notion of 'culture' and even 'subculture' had become increasingly problematic by the 1990s. Anthropologists seemed more interested in the blurring and crossing of boundaries than in descriptions of what they might demarcate. Interestingly, American corporations also were working hard on the project of taking down functional boundaries that had been built up over a century of Fordist practice; walls dividing functional 'silos' inside corporations were found to increase product development time (and thus product cost) and also were responsible for defects in product quality (e.g., engineers didn't cooperate with manufacturing). The great transformation from the vertical to the horizontal corporation was underway, with a huge investment in information technology to force information and work to flow more efficiently *across* basic processes (e.g., product development), instead of inefficiently up and down chains of command, as it had in the Fordist period.

Thus, rather than focusing on occupational subcultures within specific firms per se, anthropological research inside corporations after the early 1990s tended to reflect efforts by corporations, communities, or individuals to cross boundaries of various kinds, whether functional, national, or otherwise (as described here and in the next section). As it turned out, however, during the 1990s, the Fordist structures proved difficult to dislodge. For example, in the mid 1990s, Marietta Baba investigated a major corporation's effort to streamline its product development process by introducing a single 'strategic' technology system that would replace hundreds of different systems then in operation across dozens of different technical groups (*The Cultural Ecology of the Corporation*, 1995). She mapped the cultural ecology of these groups, defining the ecological niches formed by their location in a two-dimensional product development environment. Baba was able to explain variance (e.g., resistance, adoption, reinvention) in these work groups' responses to the corporation's strategy as 'normal' extensions of adaptive patterns they had developed within the niches in which they were situated. Following this work, Baba separately explained why work groups resist electronic connections (e.g., CAD/CAM, electronic data interchange) with other groups when there are pre-existing relationships of distrust (*Dangerous Liaisons: Trust, Distrust and Information Technology in American Work Organizations*, 1999).

In the meantime, as the initial excitement surrounding the concept of 'corporate culture' abated, American management departments gradually adjusted to its existence, generally in one of three ways. For some, 'culture' became a variable or a set of variables in contingency models of the corporation, a system of constructs to be defined operationally and measured in surveys. For others who defined 'culture' in ways that defied such modeling (e.g., the interpretivist school), 'culture' became a specialty niche or boutique practice in a handful of select business schools. Important contributions were made by management scholars working in both of these traditions; for example, Dan

Denison modeled 'cultural factors' that correlate with high performance in organizations; Joanne Martin and colleagues parsed the management literature on corporate culture into three streams (i.e., integration, differentiation, and fragmentation), corresponding roughly with developments in organizational theory; Gideon Kunda's ethnography of a high technology firm revealed the human cost of normative control in a high commitment culture (this is only a tiny sampling of many rich offerings, which helped to establish the legitimacy of 'corporate or organizational culture' as a field of study). More likely, however, corporate culture was simply dispensed with or ignored by faculty in management departments as too complex or difficult to change. Publishing 'cultural' research conducted from a non-modeling perspective in top management journals was problematic, unless accompanied by significant additional quantitative analysis.

Anthropology departments for the most part were not heavily influenced by the developments described above, although faculty members in a few departments and some practitioners expressed interest in organizational research. Such interests were incorporated only very gradually as 'normal science' in anthropology via several mechanisms: individual faculty interest, course development, and funded research; student interest and the production of Masters' theses and dissertations focused on corporations; and the placement of doctoral graduates in corporations where they maintained identities as anthropologists and began to produce literature on their own. The academic departments that have become seats of graduate level teaching and/or research in the anthropology of private sector organizations included the College of William and Mary, Michigan State University, Northwestern University, Oregon State University, the University of North Texas, and Wayne State University (where the first undergraduate course on business anthropology was taught in 1984/85 by Marietta Baba). A number of other universities have permitted doctoral students to conduct dissertation research in corporations, or to focus on business-related phenomenon (e.g., Chicago, Temple, Yale). As a result, the literature began to reflect more enduring and immediate anthropological interests.

Boundary Crossing in a Global Context. In the 1990s, the literature tended to focus more on cross-cultural phenomenon in corporate settings, including studies of transplanted firms, firms based outside the US, and firms whose globally-distributed employees work virtually. The *Anthropology of Work Review* dedicated a special issue to these subjects in Winter/Spring, 1998 (edited by Tomoko Hamada). Over time, this stream of research has followed the currents of social science literature generally, shifting its attention to the construction of self, identity, and community in a world where traditional frames of reference are dissolving, and new patterns emerge to startle and intrigue. In each of the works described below, anthropologists discover individuals and communities whose selves and lives are transformed through work in a multinational or transnational business, suggesting that such organizations are becoming one of the most powerful forces giving meaning and direction to human experience in post-modern society.

Tomoko Hamada, who is known for her writing on Japanese companies in the United States, describes a case of alleged (and ambiguous) sexual harassment within a

Japanese owned plant in the United States (*Re-inventing Cultural Others in Organizations*, 1995). In this case study, an American female factory worker first aligns with her Japanese bosses in preventing formation of a union at the plant, for which she is rewarded with promotion to supervisory status. The woman is put-off, however, by Japanese methods for training junior members of the management team which she finds insulting, and she also is shunned by her former American peers who believe she has turned on them. In the end, the woman files a sexual harassment lawsuit against the Japanese plant manager, which is settled out of court, forcing the manager to return to Japan in humiliation. Hamada tells the story from multiple points of view over time, showing how different parties' perspectives form and evolve as they interact with one another, shifting individuals' self-representations in the process. The zone of cultural interaction is rife with paradox and inconsistency; new boundaries are constantly formed and re-formed along with new political alliances. Cultural identities are in flux and are created in situ; there are few static variables or invisible cultural assumptions that can be counted upon to create conflict (although American individualism seems to be a powerful theme in the case). People create multiple self-identities in the process of engagement with intra and inter-subjective dialogues in this fresh post-modern tale of cross-cultural encounter and betrayal in an American factory.

Douglas Caulkins sleuths the 'unexpected' entrepreneurs found in the deindustrialized region of Wales and Northeast England, where government policies have encouraged the development of indigenous, high tech start-up firms as a means of internal job creation (*The Unexpected Entrepreneurs: Small High-Technology Firms, Technology Transfer, and Regional Development in Wales and Northeast England*, 1992). Generally speaking, high tech entrepreneurs are not attracted to such 'rust belt' areas, but surprisingly a group of them have launched new firms in the deindustrialized peripheries of the U.K. outside Southeast England. The entrepreneurs were 'unexpected' in a double sense – they neither intended to start their own firms, nor did the region initially appear to possess the cultural or economic infrastructure to support them. Caulkins discovered that many of the entrepreneurs were highly trained engineers who only started their own firms after they encountered career obstacles at large corporations. He identified four distinct types of career paths that resulted in different types of social networks, each of which enabled the entrepreneurs in question to form a specific kind of successful start-up. Caulkins examines the cultural ecology of these start-ups and their prospects for growth on the basis of the entrepreneurs' self-defined trajectories.

Carla Freeman (*High Tech and High Heels in the Global Economy*, 2000) describes the pink collar female informatics workers of Barbados who have fashioned a quasi-professional identity that distinguishes them from their blue collar sisters toiling in nearby factories. A professional dress and demeanor complements the 'cool' look and feel of their office environments, while reflecting and reinforcing the disciplined habitus required by the informatics industry. Significantly, the production of their informatics work cannot be disentangled from the women's consumption practices; many of the women engage in regular global shopping trips to purchase materials that will be transformed into affordable articles of clothing to be purchased by their co-workers. The informal economy of trade in clothes supplements the low wages earned in the formal

economy, while the low-priced fashions allow the women to stock their closets with an array of stylish outfits. The informal economy thus supports the formal one, and it appears that the latter could not be sustained without the former. Production and consumption processes also mutually reinforce one another, while being enmeshed in global flows of goods, services, capital, and people. Freeman's engaging analysis is edged with criticism, as she interrogates the relationship between the workers' clothing preferences and managerial intentions to discipline and control their female subordinates.

At the turn of the century, anthropologists also have been at the forefront of inquiries on distributed work, a hallmark of the global economy. Anthropologist Bonnie Nardi is known for her research on 'information ecologies', a concept that situates mediated communication technologies within their contexts of use (*Information Ecologies: Using Technology With Heart*, 1999). Nardi's research has shown that human face-to-face communication has advantages that cannot be replicated or substituted by any of today's communications media (supporting touch, shared activities, attention management, and network development), but also has costs (disruption, expense, effort) that may not always be sustainable over the long term. The social linkages that are built and sustained by face-to-face communication are a necessary prerequisite for effective distributed work. Therefore, a firm must understand the ecological context of mediated communication so that effective choices can be made regarding the types of technologies selected and the appropriate sequencing of face-to-face and mediated communication events.

Marietta Baba, Julia Gluesing and their colleagues (*The Contexts of Knowing: Natural History of a Globally-Distributed Team*, 2004) also study distributed work, and provide an ethnographic account of an American-based global firm's attempt to transfer a marketing methodology to a French retailing company via a global virtual team. Internal conflict breaks out within the team regarding the cultural appropriateness (phronesis) of transferring certain aspects of the methodology, and this nearly brings about the team's destruction. Ironically, it was only when team members' interests shifted from factional conflict to more individualized self-interest that they were able to cooperate and collaborate. The resulting move toward virtual community was enabled by the corporation's global incentive system and strategy, which threatened to undo the careers of squabbling nationalists. This study challenged conventional management theory by demonstrating the mutable character of key variables over time (e.g., interdependence), showing that agents' behavior causes variables to fluctuate, meaning that a variable cannot be set at one point and assumed to remain stable, as is the case in many theoretical models. The ethnographic account also revealed that the geographical distribution patterns of people and resources on the ground are relevant to the processes of distributed cognition, and to the ways in which leaders exploit historical, cultural, and linguistic resources to further their own agendas.

The literature described above marches to the beat of many drummers. There are multiple audiences, with different research problems, goals, and languages, including cultural anthropology; science, technology and society studies; the anthropology of work; organizational behavior; applied anthropology; and others. The result is a fragmented

literature that is difficult to access and somewhat awkward to summarize or synthesize. Yet, understanding may be enhanced through the juxtaposition of diverse intellectual currents, and one approach that may provide a pathway toward such articulation is the recent (or renewed) tendency of anthropologists to study geographic regions in the US that are characterized by distinctive industrial, corporate and/or work behavior, and then to join forces or at least read and reflect upon each other's work, and compare what they have discovered and learned from each other. This stream of organizational behavior literature is described next.

Regional Perspectives on Work and Corporations. Another Warner legacy was the regional contextualization of industrial phenomena (e.g., the Yankee City studies). Anthropologists have continued this tradition, but have modernized it by reflecting new themes of global integration (e.g., via technology, or immigration) that find expression in regional economic patterns. Of special interest are geographic areas that generate distinctive economic forms, such as Silicon Valley with its high technology start-ups. Some anthropologists have invested a decade or more in their efforts to describe and explain such regions and the companies they create. Significantly, when individual anthropologists or groups collaborate in studying the same region, or compare their observations across regions, more significant discoveries are possible.

A prime example of collaboration in regional studies is the ongoing research focused on Silicon Valley. Anthropologists began studying Silicon Valley in the early 1980s with Kathleen Gregory's dissertation, entitled *Signing Up: The Culture and Careers of Silicon Valley Computer People*[18]. This study was one of the first to depict in detail the social structures, processes, practices, and systems of meaning underlying the remarkable capacity of this unique region to generate large numbers of technology-based start-up firms, despite their high risk of failure. In her pioneering research, Gregory explained the importance of computer professionals' commitment to new technology 'projects' rather than firms per se; it was this connection to a project that enabled people to move around from firm to firm, an essential element of the dynamism of the region. Gregory did not completely unpack the 'project'; that was not her focus. Further insights into the substantive nature of these projects had to wait until later, and they turned out to be crucial.

Nearly twenty years after Gregory's study, in a special issue of the *Anthropology of Work Review* edited by J.A. English-Lueck (*Doing Good: Work as Mission in Silicon Valley and Beyond*, 2001), several anthropologists took up the thesis that high technology work, based in firms such as those found in Silicon Valley, may be framed in moral terms that relate to the social benefits technology promises to deliver to its producers and consumers. Based on long-term ethnographic research in the Silicon Valley region, and on studies of specific firms such as Apple, a number of anthropologists have discovered that the language and culture of high technology work is permeated with a sense of 'doing good', a social construction with roots that connect Silicon Valley to notions of

[18] Eleanor Wynn, the first anthropology intern to study at Xerox Palo Alto Research Center (PARC) (discussed in greater detail below), helped Gregory to gain access to Silicon Valley firms for this landmark study.

technical 'progress' grounded in the Industrial Revolution. Authors contributing to the special issue illustrate various aspects of this construction. For example, Chuck Darrah's informants (*Techno-Missionaries Doing Good at the Center*) engage in emotion-laden descriptions of Silicon Valley as a future-oriented, progressive geographical locus whose power derives from the innovative potential that may be realized in cultural diversity. Or, maybe not -- residents are just as likely to disagree with this premise, and argue with each other over it. Darrah postulates that the zealotry bred by life in the Valley may be a reaction to the invisibility of most people's work (e.g., making microprocessors for automobiles), the fragility of living on an earthquake fault at the edge of the Pacific Ocean, and/or the banality of spending much of one's day dealing with the logistical hassles of moving people around a region that is overcrowded with other people, highways, and automobiles.

In another piece appearing in the same issue, E. Gabriella Coleman writes about the practices of hackers[19] affiliated with Linux (many of whom presumably live in Silicon Valley, and whose products are used by Silicon Valley companies). Linux is a firm whose productive output depends primarily upon the voluntary contributions of thousands of software developers working together over the Internet to generate technically excellent and economically competitive software that is used by major global corporations such as IBM. Linux-based products now are competing with Microsoft on the open market in a David versus Goliath-style drama that has thousands of computer industry watchers on the edge of their seats. Linux grew out of the open source code movement. Open source code makes the core computer programming of software products freely available over the Internet, as guaranteed by an ingenious legal instrument called the 'copyleft'. No one can copyright code that has been copylefted, so it remains free. Coleman compares the hackers' practices of production and moral notions of freedom to those of medieval guilds; both developed methods that are technical and aesthetic in nature. The hackers are motivated to high levels of performance because of their love of programming – for them it is a means of artistic expression and a means of technological innovation. Due to the copyleft and the Internet over which code is shared, there has been an explosion of free software projects, each of which is like a mini-guild. The *projects* turn out to be the central organizing mechanism through which the mini-guilds are embodied -- each has its own source code, technical documentation, organizational structure, technical emphasis, computer language preference, and style of development. Newcomers to a project must prove themselves through an apprenticeship in which they demonstrate their commitment and skill through collaborative learning. Coleman points out that with Linux, there is no commodification of software, yet the products still circulate in the market. Further, the technology does not set the moral or social aspects of work; these are shaped by the community of practice (i.e., the hackers). She also argues that the hackers' high performance proves that intellectual property protection is not a requirement for the creation of cutting-edge technical products. The hackers are not in a crusade against capitalism, but neither are

[19] In this context, hacker does not mean the criminal who illegally gains access to someone else's computer for ill-gotten gain, but rather an individual who is an expert and insider in the occupational culture of computer programming.

they reifying it. Rather, their work appears to represent a 'qualified means' (perhaps an alternative) by which participation in the market can best be carried out.

The Silicon Valley work suggests that *some* organizations (e.g., Linux) have found (or individuals within them have found) a means by which to enable or enhance a sense of moral purpose or mission in the experience of work, and that these organizations enjoy an increased level of effort, productivity, and/or innovation gains resulting from the motivation that derives from such moral enhancement. The moral sources of economic performance may be realizing an additional boost under late capitalism as a result of a process through which work becomes sacralized, much as some consumption experiences have experienced sacralization during the post-Fordist era (see discussion in next section on consumer behavior). Sacralization does not mean that work is somehow religious or spiritual, but rather that one's work and/or work products come to represent something that transcends ordinary experience, that they (by some process) have become more powerful and extraordinary than that which is merely the banal self of everyday life. If some individuals or groups regularly experience their work or work products in this way, there could be a payoff from which some corporations or other organizations may derive benefit.

On the darker side of regional studies, long-term investigations of older regions depict work that has become, perhaps, increasingly profane. Based on ten years' of research in the region, Donald Stull and Michael Broadway describe the modern meat and poultry industry as it has developed within the American central plains (*Slaughterhouse Blues: The Meat and Poultry Industry in North America*, 2004). The study takes an unflinching look at the process of meat production today, comparing it with the slaughterhouse experience described by Upton Sinclair 70 years ago. Many things remain unchanged, especially the rigidly organized, labor-intensive factories that turn cattle and chickens into human food on 'disassembly lines'. This is ugly, grueling, dangerous work, where getting product out the door counts more than workers' physical safety. Language and cultural differences between largely Anglo managers and primarily Asian and Mexican hourly workers mean that there are two different workforces in a plant, with very different views about the way in which a plant's ideals of safety, productivity, quality, and loyalty should be put into practice. These differences exacerbate the plants' productivity and safety problems.

Building on the corpus of Stull's work over much of the 1990s, Mark Grey (*Immigrants, Migration, and Worker Turnover at the Hog Pride Pork Packing Plant*, 1999) takes a closer look at the experience of Mexican immigrants inside this same industry and region. Despite its low wages and poor working conditions, the meatpacking industry attracts significant numbers of immigrant workers. It also experiences some of the highest turnover rates in American industry, sometimes surpassing 120% per year. Turnover contributes to high accident rates and poor productivity, but management is not fully motivated to invest in strategies that would reduce turnover significantly, due to the steady flow of low wage migrants from Mexico. Turnover is, in part, a reaction to poor working condition and labor relations in the plant. The management does not allow individual workers to personally care for or improve the

condition of their cutting tools, thus contributing to physical strain, injury, and accidents. These physical woes, in turn, contribute to turnover. Grey discovered, however, that turnover also is a strategy used by migrants for their own purposes. They work until they have saved a nest egg, then travel back to Mexico with these monies, where they reunite with their families, rest up from the hard work in the plants, and then travel north again, when they are sure to be rehired. This is a strategy that enables the immigrants to earn and save far more money than they would in Mexico, while not being forced to remain completely trapped in low wage, dead-end jobs. Anglos workers in the plant resent the immigrants' ability to escape managerial control and create a new kind of 'seasonal work' for themselves.

While the Silicon Valley studies and that of Donald Stull are longitudinal inquiries that represent basic research funded from various sources over many years, the work of Mark Grey is more strategic in nature, focused on an underlying problem and undertaken at the request of Hog Pride's management[20]. As Grey himself explains, he had an opportunity to interview and observe the managers during his sojourn at the plant, and he discovered to his surprise that they were disinterested in making changes that would enable maximum reductions in worker turnover (he still made recommendations along these lines). The managers did not want to invest the funds required to reduce turnover below 60% annually, since this would cut into profit margins; they would prefer to reduce turnover moderately, and continue to rely on a steady stream of low wage immigrants to 'make their numbers'.

This paper and others like it suggest that anthropologists are, at last, 'studying up' (i.e., conducting research on individuals and groups whose social status and/or power in the context of the research site may be above that of the anthropologist)[21]. However the paper also raises issues regarding the costs that accrue to this privilege. Management, as Grey suggests, is ubiquitous in problem-oriented research in corporations. They provide access to the company, informants, documents and archives, artifacts, and may review manuscripts for publication[22]. An academic anthropologist cannot even get approval

[20] Strategic research may combine both 'basic' and 'applied' goals; it pushes the envelope of knowledge, but also focuses on pressing problems or issues. Sometimes the invitation to begin a strategic study is offered by the corporation, but at other times the anthropologist requests entry, with funding from federal agencies and/or an academic institution. Strategic research has been supported by grants and contracts from the firm, federal agencies (e.g., NSF, NASA), and sometimes consulting contracts. In addition, firms hired anthropologists full-time to conduct such research in-house (e.g., GM, IBM, Motorola, Xerox PARC). The training of students on such projects may be permitted; dissertations have been completed as a result of these endeavors, and graduates often go on to work in the corporations. In many strategic studies, anthropologists gain access to corporate field sites in exchange for their agreement to provide recommendations addressing the problem under investigation; most often, these recommendations are not published, but are considered proprietary. University-based anthropologists retain the right to publish research results, although the company usually has the right to review and comment on the publication draft, so that proprietary information is not released to the public.

[21] Even though many other disciplines are too, and doing it even more rigorously and critically than anthropologists at this point; e.g., policy studies, operations research, finance, critical management studies (they 'study down', but are critical of management); the list goes on, we are johnnies-come-lately by far.

[22] It is recognized that there are many levels of management in a corporation, and that in large corporations, there may be substantial differences in power and authority between levels. Generally speaking, it is the higher levels of management that have sufficient control over funds and/or access that are required to grant

from her institutional review board without management sign-off on a study, and without this, there are no publications. Management also may provide needed funds to support research, in the form of grants, contracts or consultancies. There are many risks inherent such situations. Management may try to influence the project or its findings in subtle and not-so-subtle ways. Or, they might cancel or re-direct a project in mid-stream if they don't like the way its going or the sponsor gets reassigned or fired. A key issue is that no matter what problem the anthropologist is investigating, there is a good chance that someone in management is going to be involved in the problem (i.e., one of the causal factors), and may be right at the heart of it. This is due to the fact that anthropologists typically do not take a management-centric view of the situation, as observers from other disciplines might, and when such a view is abandoned, it turns out that serious problems often involve management in some way (how could it not be so, when management is in charge of the company?).

Obviously, it is a delicate matter to negotiate criticisms of management when management has so much power in the context of the anthropologist's work. Reactions to criticisms from management are unpredictable, depending upon the overall context, and on the relationship between the management that is sponsoring the research and the management that is being criticized. It might be feasible to present the criticism in an ethically responsible manner (e.g., without identifying individuals or subgroups, and only identifying policies), and with felicitous results. Or, it might be that the anthropologist gets backed into a corner, where it is obvious that a particular individual is culpable in a particular case. Indeed, the management may 'set up' the anthropologist for such a dilemma, without the anthropologist's prior knowledge. Possibly, the management could become hostile toward the anthropologist and reject both her and her findings in a defensive backlash. More likely, the findings and recommendations will be ignored, as the recommendations are found to be too costly and/or infeasible for political and cultural reasons related to the self-interests of those in power. All of the factors mentioned above make this work difficult, frustrating, and risky, and *could help to explain why there is not more of it after all these years*. Some anthropologists have concluded that strategic research on organizational behavior is impossible because of the contradictions just described; others have decided that it is too important not to take the risk.

Anthropologists have not been silent on these matters, and indeed these issues have been subjects of considerable angst in the literature for several years, as more anthropologists have ventured into the world of modern organizations (see for example special issue of the *Anthropology of Work Review* edited by Linda Hogle and Gary Downey, Fall 1999). Tensions between anthropologists and powerful others in fact have prompted some highly respected corporate-based anthropologists to leave the field altogether (as discussed below). It is likely that the problems described above are *one reason why anthropological studies of organizational behavior have not flourished in the way that studies of consumer behavior and design have in recent years*. These latter areas also require encounters with management, but they are less likely to run headlong

entry to anthropologists for purposes of research, whether basic or strategic. In this paragraph, references to management pertain to those managers with sufficient authority and power to grant entry, and to whom anthropologists 'report' for research purposes (e.g., submit reports).

into criticisms of management since their focus is more squarely on products, services, and consumers.

Another reason for the difficulty anthropologists have had in studying organizational behavior and management over the years may relate to the lack of receptivity anthropology has experienced in management departments within business schools, in contrast to a more positive response in marketing departments. The difference may relate to the positivist nature of management as a field[23], compared with marketing which has made room for interpretive approaches that resonate with the more artistic and creative side of that discipline (e.g., in advertising). Management, after all, is about control, and anthropologists who have studied corporations never have agreed that 'culture' can be controlled by management. Indeed, we have asserted the opposite -- culturally constituted meanings and social practices are naturalistic phenomena that defy the rationalist grasp of managers. Also, the anthropologists themselves may be difficult to control (as described below in the discussion of Xerox PARC). Thus, the anthropological approach to corporations is counter-cultural to management, and has not been embraced by many management departments, nor is it embraced by many practicing managers in the US (although there continue to be exceptions, and these may be growing in number in some places).

Returning to the question of boundary crossing, there is one other especially salient boundary that has been crossed in the literature on corporations -- that which separates management and the worker. During much of the 20th century, anthropologists were more or less partisans in the continuing struggle between these two classes of employees that co-exist in business organizations. In Warner's era, anthropologists often were management-centric in their views, following Mayo's influence; Marxists held sway in the years between 1960 and 1980. The labor-management struggle has continued, as evidenced in some of the literature discussed above (Hamada, Coleman, Grey), but emphasis on it is muted, and anthropologists are no longer so polarized. The American workforce's participation in unions is at its lowest level in the past half-century or more, and, almost by default, the focus of anthropologists who work inside businesses is not labor relations. What's more, theoretical developments in the social sciences have encouraged the representation of social actors (workers and managers) as agents with complex agendas, while methodological trends have encouraged research collaboration with these same social actors; this in turn has meant that more points of view are taken into account in the conduct of research. Thus, rather than focusing either on workers or managers and ignoring or caricaturizing the other, anthropologists have tended to talk to both groups and include their voices in published work. As a result, we see that worker/agents may take advantage of situations to their own gain (Grey, Hamada), derive

[23] A subfield called 'critical management studies' has developed in conjunction with the growth of critical theory. Its themes are 1) that power may be abused in organizational contexts, leading to the mistreatment of people, and the need for utopian thinking, and 2) that scholars should align their interests with those of the mistreated (see John Jermier, *Critical Perspectives on Organizational Control*, 1998). This area of research and theorizing is stronger in Europe than in the United States. Business anthropologists in the US have not been heavily involved in this movement thus far.

pleasure from creative interactions with markets (Freeman, Coleman), and be capable of overriding management to assert their own interests (Baba). We also discover that management/agents can be pawns in their own (or others') game (Briody/Baba, Hamada), are constrained by forces beyond their control (Caulkins), and may be motivated by social goals that transcend the individual quest for money and power (English-Lueck, Darrah). In short, we have a more subtly textured view of the actors and relations among them, which is an indication of theoretical and intellectual maturity in this subfield.

Ethnographically-Informed Design of Products, Services, and Systems. Another stream of research and practice that flowed from W. Lloyd Warner's original invention is sometimes known in the vernacular as 'design ethnography', but may be more accurately described as ethnographically-informed product, service, and system design (including work systems). The emphasis of research described in this section rests on the notion of a marriage between ethnography and design, a novel concept often attributed to collaboration between anthropologist Lucy Suchman and Rick Robinson (the latter founded E Lab, later acquired by Sapient). Design is a profession in its own right, and it cannot be limited to the design of products, services and systems. Many other things can be designed – work processes, organizations, cities, policies, anything that humans can make or imagine. Designers are considered 'creatives' (i.e., there is an artistic aspect to their work), and their marriage with intellectuals and researchers (anthropologists) is an interdisciplinary challenge. The creation of 'design ethnography' thus represents the birth of a new interdisciplinary subfield that joins together anthropology and/or other qualitatively-oriented social sciences with the design profession (see Susan Squires and Bryan Byrne, eds., *Creating Breakthrough Ideas: The Collaboration of Anthropologists and Designers in the Product Development Industry*, 2002).

While on the surface, design of products and services may seem far removed from the Hawthorne Project, its roots can be traced back to the decades-earlier efforts of Frederick Taylor and Elton Mayo to improve interactions between people and equipment in the production process. These early streams of investigation on the 'human factor' in production eventually gave rise to the subfield of 'human factors' research, a multidisciplinary off-shoot of psychology that identifies aspects of human psychology and its context that must be taken into account in the design and development of new products. 'Human factors' is both a field of study, and an area of research and development in corporations that produce advanced technology for the market.

In the 1970s, one company that was committed to pushing the envelope of knowledge on humans factors (broadly defined) surrounding advanced computing was Xerox's Palo Alto Research Center (PARC). PARC was interested especially in human-computer interaction and the development of artificial intelligence to support this interface; they also funded graduate student interns in this and other areas related to computing. The first anthropology graduate student intern to work at PARC in the late 1970s, Eleanor Wynn, focused her dissertation research on office communications, which

aligned with Xerox's interests in office automation and the 'paperless office' concept.[24]. Wynn was followed by Lucy Suchman in 1979, an anthropology graduate student at UC Berkeley, who initially was interested in office work practices, but later became intrigued with the idea of machine intelligence in a computing context. Suchman did not come to PARC to study 'human factors', but her work radically reconstituted the nature of the design industry, nevertheless.

Suchman established her formidable reputation at PARC by videotaping pairs of users attempting to make copies of documents using an expert help system, and then comparing the users' conversations and actions during this process with the machine's automated instructions (*Plans and Situated Actions: The Problem of Human Machine Communication*, 1987). Suchman had been influenced by Garfinkle's ethnomethodology, which provided the methodological framework for this investigation. Contrasting the two points of view side-by-side (i.e., those of the users and the machine), Suchman portrayed communication break-downs between them, as humans moved fluidly among several different levels of conversation (e.g., simple requests for action, 'meta' inquiries about the appropriateness of a procedure, and embedded requests for clarification of procedures), while the machine was severely limited to producing responses that its designer had programmed into it in anticipation of stereotypical responses that users 'should' make. While these observations might not seem revolutionary now, they were a lightening bolt at Xerox PARC, and led the corporation to change the design of its copiers to make them simpler to use. This research also gave Suchman a reputation for bold and fresh insight, and enabled her to expand the role of anthropology at Xerox PARC.

Suchman attracted other anthropologists whose research further enhanced the reputation of PARC, including Jeanette Blomberg and Julian Orr (some of Orr's work was discussed in the previous section). Building on Suchman's research, Jeanette Blomberg initiated a series of studies investigating the use of technology in organizational context (*The Variable Impact of Computer Technologies on the Organization of Work Activities*, 1988). Her research argued for the necessity of looking beyond the 'human-machine dyad' in understanding how new technologies affect work and workers. This broader definition of the human-machine problematic suggested the need for a new technology design strategy that made visible the social, organizational and interactional dynamics of the workplace (*An Ethnographic Approach to Design*, 2003). The approach Blomberg developed with her colleagues Randy Trigg and Lucy Suchman integrated techniques and perspectives from work-oriented or participatory design originating in Scandinavia (Pelle Ehn, *Work-Oriented Design of Computer Artifacts*, 1988) with ethnographic studies of technologies-in-use. A central characteristic of their approach involved cycling between ethnographically-informed workplace studies and the development of design concepts and prototypes, with the active participation of both workers and technology designers. Hugh Beyers and Karen Holtzblatt (*Contextual Design: A Customer-Centered Approach to Systems Design*, 1998) commercialized many of the work-oriented design ideas pioneered by the Work Practice and Technology

[24] Wynn subsequently helped Gregory make contacts in the Silicon Valley computer industry for her dissertation research.

group at Xerox PARC and the participatory design movement more generally through their firm InContext Enterprises.

The work of this cohort of anthropologists at Xerox PARC, together with several others who joined both PARC and the Institute for Research on Learning (e.g., Susan Irwin Anderson, Melissa Cefkin, Francoise Brun-Cottan, Chuck and Candace Goodwin, Bridgett Jordan, Patricia Sachs) became known around the world for its innovative integration of anthropology and ethnography into the product and service development stream of a major corporation. A breakthrough came in 1989, when the Doblin Group of Chicago asked Xerox PARC to partner on a project for Steelcase, the office furniture manufacturer (see William Reese, *Behavioral Scientists Enter Design: Seven Critical Histories*, 2002). Steelcase wanted to understand how the workplace of the future would evolve and what kinds of work environments and designs it should be thinking about over the long term. Jay Doblin was aware of Suchman's group at Xerox, and wanted to bring ethnographic skills into the engagement. Xerox PARC agreed to co-fund the project, which became known as the Workplace Project. The project was situated in an airport, which was believed to have properties reflecting the workplace of the future (e.g., high fluidity of people and information, workflow extending into multiple kinds of space via electronic means). Suchman served as lead on this project for several years, and through it she assembled a talented interdisciplinary group of social scientists (including several anthropologists) and designers whose work would revolutionize the design industry. One of the individuals involved was Rick Robinson, then at Doblin, who subsequently went on to co-found E Lab in Chicago, an entrepreneurial firm explicitly dedicated to the concept of equally balancing all product design projects with ethnographic research and design talent The notion that all new product and service concepts should emerge from a contextually-rich understanding of the client's natural world, developed through ethnographic field research at client sites, captured on videotope, and analyzed using anthropological theory and methodology, was first conceptualized by Suchman's group in the Workplace Project, but it was Rick Robinson who took this concept to the market and made it profitable.

The research in question often is undertaken by interdisciplinary teams involving anthropologists and representatives of other disciplines (e.g., psychologists, designers, engineers, even clients may be involved). Ideally, this research seeks to acquire deeply nuanced, visually-based, contextualized knowledge of the consumer's or worker's world, and to secure an understanding of underlying factors that influence the consumer's behaviors (which assumes some knowledge of social and cultural contexts in which the behavior is situated). The goal is to know both <u>what</u> the consumer is doing and <u>why</u> she is doing it, and from this base of knowledge to create new ideas for product and service design concepts and improvements (see Christina Wasson, *Collaborative Work: Integrating the Roles of Ethnographers and Designers*, 2002). This approach, or a paler facsimile of it, has been copied by scores of firms all over the world, not all of which take seriously the need to analyze data using anthropological theory and methodology, however. E Lab was purchased by Sapient in 1999, but the idea of 'design ethnography' now belongs to the world.

Ironically, the researchers at Xerox PARC did not conceptualize themselves as 'applied anthropologists', for the most part, even though they arguably had a greater impact on business than any other group of anthropologists since W. Lloyd Warner and his generation. The Xerox PARC group's view was that they were part of the community of scholars engaged in the anthropology of science, technology and society studies, a field that was on the rise in anthropology during the 1980s and 1990s, and is enjoying an academic renaissance at the present time. In those days, Xerox PARC was a relatively independent organization that permitted its scientists a great deal of intellectual autonomy. And indeed, perhaps it was that very autonomy which contributed so much to the wealth of creativity and high value-added contributions this group made during its reign over the span of more than a decade. With increasing global competition, however, PARC and many other industrial labs came under increasing pressure to focus scientists' efforts more sharply on the company's critical priorities. Suchman's group was no exception. Although details remain to be written, reportedly tensions arose between Xerox PARC's management and Suchman's research group regarding its future direction and plans. When the issues could not be resolved to everyone's mutual satisfaction, the group elected to disband itself, and the individual members went their separate ways, unleashing a diaspora of 'creative destruction' – the diaspora both dismantled the greatest business anthropology resource known since the Human Relations School, while simultaneously releasing the creative talent of many anthropologists (and their ideas) to engage in other pursuits.

Today, the notion of integrating ethnography (and, it is hoped, anthropologically-informed analysis) into the design and development of new products, services, and workplaces or practices, has become accepted practice in high technology companies in the United States. Susan Squires, for example, describes work that represents the present form of 'design ethnography' in new product development (see *Doing the Work: Customer Research in the Product Development and Design Industry*, 2002). Squires visits a family kitchen at 6:30 am with her video camera partner to observe and interview a former focus group participant in her natural setting, with her two sons. Many discoveries are made: the boys do not eat the 'wholesome breakfast' that Mom prepares; Mom eats it herself, apparently unaware of what she is doing; the boys actually eat other, not-so-wholesome food (purchased by Dad), or nothing at all. In the midst of it all, Mom-in-law calls-up to check on what Mom is cooking. Later, at one of the boys' schools, Squires finds that the boy who ate nothing is consuming his lunch at 10:30 am. Squires provides a contextual analysis of this plus other field data, relating her discoveries to structural strains in American society that pit working women's realities against older values regarding protection of family members. The outcome of the research is a new product, Go-Gurt, a yogurt based snack that tastes good, is nutritious, and can be consumed on the go.

Direct observation of natural behavior in the field enables anthropologists such as Squires to gain access to a level of consumer behavior that is not reflected in focus group dialogue, where participants often share idealized representations of their activities, and may not be able to report on behavior that is out of conscious awareness. Video taping routines in the home or other natural settings for later analysis permits highly detailed

analysis of behavior and comparison across numerous field sites. Especially valuable is the comparison of survey and focus group data with analysis of ethnographic material; theoretically-grounded knowledge of the broader socio-cultural context and its emerging trends is necessary to explain discrepancies between these sources and relate them to client needs. Ethnographic research places the consumer in a wider context that explains why people do what they do, not only what, and also provides a deeper understanding of the value of certain products and services in people's lives.

In a very different application, Patricia Sachs' work at Nynex illustrates the way in which an anthropological analysis of ethnographic data can inform the re-design of work systems (see *Transforming Work: Collaboration, Learning and Design*, 1995). Customer repair work at Nynex became disjointed and inefficient when a new 'trouble ticketing system' was introduced that repair broke work down into small pieces to be distributed to disassociated individual workers. If a worker did not complete a repair job by the end of his shift, the job was re-cycled to another worker, without an opportunity for the two workers to talk to one another. An activity analysis conducted by Sachs showed that the whole activity surrounding repair work, especially making sense of a problem through conversations among multiple workers, is crucial in solving a customer problem efficiently. The new information system disrupted the natural activity pattern and made the problem resolution process much less effective.

The value of incorporating ethnography into product development and work practices research has been widely recognized in the design industry, so much so that new firms have arisen that specialize in design research and many of them explicitly include ethnography. To what extent these 'ethnographers' are anthropologists is a point of contention. Sometimes it appears that being an 'ethnographer' means a willingness and ability to go to a customer's location and observe, using a video camera. Contextual analysis of findings is strictly optional, and not well understood or necessarily valued by the design firm or its clients.

Ethnography for new products, services and systems or practices is generally focused on the individual or group level of analysis; i.e., the user and her interaction with a product or service, or the work group, user group, or customer group in context. This focus may be distinguished from the research stream in the previous category (i.e., organizational behavior) which has been oriented toward an entire occupational category, or the enterprise or industry level of analysis (e.g., computer professionals, a biotechnology firm, the meatpacking industry). There are both theoretical and methodological affinities between these two streams (e.g., an occupation engages in a certain form of work practice), but there also are points of distinction. One point of distinction is an emphasis on ethnographic methodology in design work; for example, a hallmark of Suchman's group was close analysis of videotapes and transcripts (e.g., frame-by-frame analysis of video). This emphasis could have (inadvertently) made design research vulnerable to representation by some as a methodology, per se, which in turn could have had the unfortunate effect of turning it into a methodology in some minds; i.e., 'design ethnography' that can be done by anyone who has a video camera. This did not happen to research at the organizational level of analysis, which draws upon

a wide range of methodological traditions from many different disciplines, and also has been much slower to diffuse.

Consumer Behavior and Marketing. In the Fordist era, firms were dominated by a producer's view of the world. Consumers and the marketplace were viewed as territory *exterior* to the business, a place that products and services were sent outward to. Often, firms made products first and then looked for the consumers afterwards, dictating what consumers would have to accept. Now, because of ever-intensifying competitive pressures, companies have been forced not only to listen to what consumers want, but also have come to view consumers as potential sources of innovation that they must draw knowledge inward from. This new perspective on the value of consumers, and the need for creative exchanges with them, has transformed the way consumer behavior is conceptualized and acted upon as firms create new products and services and take them to market.

Marketing also has changed. In the past, this field was dedicated to the description of consumers' decisions to purchase products – who buys what, and what factors influence the purchasing decision. Statistical analysis of survey data related to consumer demographics was the predominant methodology. The consumer was a number on a spreadsheet. Firms seldom looked behind the numbers to understand who the customer really was, or why consumers made their purchasing decisions. But the shift to a consumer-orientation has encouraged new approaches that go beyond mere description of purchasing outcomes. Now, firms are interested in gaining a holistic understanding of consumers' lives in context, and finding out what this may teach them about new opportunities to create or improve products, or how to make new sales. There also has emerged a realization that the purchasing decision is but a single point in a much more complex and expansive cycle of consumption that includes many other aspects (e.g., production, acquisition, actual consumption or use, disposal), all of which must be understood if products are to be improved for consumers' well being (and the firms' as well). As a result, there is a growing receptivity to inductive, qualitative approaches to consumer behavior that permit exploration of new research questions and theory building. This means that anthropology and ethnography are in vogue. Top business schools are teaching future business leaders the value of participant observation, close reading, and interpretive summary, while the faculty are following modern consumers into cyberspace, adapting their methods as they go (e.g., 'netnography', 'cyber-interviewing'; John Sherry, Jr. and Robert Kozinets, *Kellogg on Marketing*, 2001).

One of the first movers in this new marketplace for consumer knowledge was the entrepreneur-anthropologist Steve Barnett, who began in the late 1970s and early 1980s to develop innovative uses for an anthropologist's window on consumer behavior. At a series of entrepreneurial firms where he directed teams of anthropologists (e.g., the Cultural Analysis Group at Planmetrics, Research and Forecasts [a division of Ruder, Finn and Rotman], Holen North America), Barnett invented what were initially unorthodox ways of observing consumers and translating their behavior patterns for applications in marketing and advertising campaigns for major clients such as Campbell Soup, Procter & Gamble, Royal Dutch Shell, and Union Carbide. For example, in the

early days Barnett invented the 'unfocus' group, in which a cross-section of a firm's market is placed in a video observation room with a collection of objects and then given a (usually bogus) task of some sort; e.g., write a booklet for middle school students describing how electricity is generated, or build a 'safe' nuclear reactor using kitchen gadgets. Analysis of the videotape rendered ideas to be turned into advertising images; e.g., a campaign to raise electricity rates drew on consumers' lack of knowledge on the subject, or a campaign to gain approval for a new nuclear energy plant was based on consumers' desire to 'lock' any radiation inside. Some academic anthropologists were quite uneasy with this kind of activity, believing that events of the type described above did not meet the proper standards of informed consent. However, Barnett was not doing 'research' in the way this term is generally defined, so it is not clear that such standards would be applicable. Barnett developed the technique of placing video cameras in consumers' homes and in shopping locations, and interpreting thousands of hours of videotape with frames drawn from anthropological theory (e.g., symbolic action and ritual). Such approaches are now standard in the industry. Drawing on the 'paper trail' Barnett skillfully left behind as proof of his own marketing know-how, John Sherry describes numerous ethnographic projects undertaken by Barnett for various clients in the 1980s and 1990s (*Contemporary Marketing and Consumer Behavior*, 1995). In the early 1990s, Barnett moved to Nissan Motor Company, where he became Director of Product Strategy, helping Nissan to reconceptualize the automobile as a cultural artifact. Barnett's creative talent helped to transform anthropology from an academic discipline engaged with the theoretical significance of consumption to one of the most sought after professions at the cutting-edge of marketing and advertising. He blazed a trail that many other anthropologists were soon to follow.

That consumption is a thoroughly cultural phenomenon has been recognized by anthropological theorists for some time. American and European theorists have underscored the centrality of consumption in the production and reproduction of cultural patterns of meaning and practice (e.g., Marshall Sahlins, *Culture and Practical Reason*, 1976; Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, *The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption*, 1978; Pierre Bourdieu, *La Distinction: Critique Sociale du Jugement*, 1979). The British anthropologist Daniel Miller argues that this 'turn' represented a metamorphosis of anthropology, from a less mature state in which mass consumption goods were viewed as threatening (i.e., signifying both the loss of culture and a threat to the survival of anthropology), to a more enlightened outlook that frankly acknowledges consumption as the local idiom through which cultural forms express their creativity and diversity (Daniel Miller, *Acknowledging Consumption*, 1995). This rather amazing about-face has permitted a confluence of interests between anthropology and the field of marketing, which in turn has shed new light on territory stretching far beyond the mere consumption of goods in context. Material goods and services in all phases of their lifecycle (design, acquisition, maintenance, disposal) reflect cultural categories and principles, and their usage reflects cultural purposes.

Anthropologists have contributed much to an emerging interdisciplinary theory of consumer culture, which may be defined as a family of theoretical perspectives that define the relationships among consumer behavior, cultural meaning, and the market

(Eric Arnould and Craig Thompson, *Consumer Culture Theory (CCT): Twenty Years of Research*, 2004). This body of literature provides evidence of the role that material goods and services play in the definition of the self and the creation of a coherent sense of identity, even if one that is fragmented. Consumption is especially integral to cultural patterns in the advanced capitalist societies of the West, where individualism is prevalent and so much about the individual is ambiguous at birth. Consumption also is a generative source of new cultural patterns that can reconfigure blueprints for action and interpretation. Consumers are not passive adopters of products, but active innovators who also resist, mutilate, and reconfigure what they find in the market to suit their emerging interests. As active co-producers, consumers have powerful impacts upon products, services, and corporations. Anthropologists also have been intellectual leaders in explaining the ways in which institutional and social structures influence consumption (e.g., ethnicity, gender, class, age; see Janeen Costa, *The Social Organization of Consumer Behavior*, 1995). Their research has illuminated structures that channel consumer thought and action, and the influence such structures have on consumer experience (e.g., John Sherry, Jr. ed., *ServiceScapes: The Concept of Place in Contemporary Markets*, 1998). Indeed, there is sufficient literature now to underpin the production of a fulsome textbook that skillfully fuses anthropology and marketing into a seamless whole (*Consumers*, Eric Arnould, Linda Price, and Georgbe Zinkhan, 2002). Another useful resource for classrooms is Ann Jordan's *Business Anthropology* (2003).

The confluence of anthropological and marketing interests was furthered especially by the work of anthropologist Grant McCracken, who developed a theory to explain the 'manufacture and movement' of meaning in the world of goods, including mechanisms by which meanings are transferred from cultural contexts to consumers in a two stage process. McCracken postulated that meanings initially reside in the culturally constituted world, from which they are first moved to consumer goods by way of a pair of mechanisms – the advertising system and the fashion system. In the advertising system, meanings are consciously attached to goods to differentiate them and enhance their attractiveness to consumers. The fashion system not only produces waves of new designs, but also cohorts of opinion leaders (e.g., experts, journalists) to comment on these designs and their meanings, so that consumers will have a respected source to legitimize the meanings. Once meaning is attached to a good through these mechanisms, the meaning is then transferred to consumers by several other mechanisms in the second stage of the process. McCracken describes the mechanisms at this stage in terms of symbolic action or ritual, including a possession ritual (e.g., announcing one's inclusion or exclusion in a social group through a purchase), an exchange ritual (e.g., insinuating symbolic properties on to another person through a gift), a grooming ritual (e.g., coaxing value out of a good through utilization, such as polishing one's car), and a divestment ritual (e.g., erasing the aura of a former owner). This theoretical framework has been highly productive in explaining empirical phenomena and generating hypotheses for further research.

The emerging theory of consumer culture also was advanced by an important contribution from Russell Belk, Melanie Wallendorf, and John Sherry, Jr. (*The Sacred and the Profane in Consumer Behavior: Theodicy on the Odyssey*, 1989). In this

seminal piece, anthropologist John Sherry and his sociologist and psychologist colleagues report on a summer spent touring sites of consumption across the United States in an RV (i.e., the Consumer Behavior Odyssey). One of their significant observations was a purported shift in the boundary demarcating the sacred and the profane in American life, with certain consumer experiences being edged into what they defined and described empirically as 'sacred' space. Their paper provides theoretical and empirical evidence of dual processes – a secularization of religion and a sacralization of the secular. As sacred institutions become less potent as a social force, consumers long to experience what they can only imagine. Consumption becomes an effort to obtain closure between reality and some imagined ideal state. Thus, in various cases, what appear on the surface to be ordinary consumption events turn out to be, for their participants, extraordinary and even transcendent moments that promise powerful new purposes and directions in life, at least for that instant. In McCracken's model, this paper contributes both to an understanding of the culturally constituted world in which consumer meanings are constructed, and also helps us understand how those meanings may be moved to products by savvy marketers who can endow products with a 'sacred' aura through creative advertising campaigns.

Another significant contribution of anthropology has been to critique and expand constructs underlying consumer behavior and marketing theory, based on empirical research in non-Western societies. For example, Eric Arnould was among the first anthropologists to interpret his extensive, long-term ethnographic studies in West Africa for marketing audiences. In an early paper (*Toward a Broadened Theory of Preference Formation and the Diffusion of Innovations: Cases from Zinder Province, Niger Republic*, 1989), he problematized the notion of 'preference formation' (i.e., how a consumer develops likes and dislikes, an idea that is central to diffusion theory) by comparing the standard Western view of this construct with both a local construction that is compatible with pre-market socio-centric values, and an Islamic ethno-nationalist view, in which individuals achieve status through innovations based on 'Meccan' goods. Since then, Arnould has published an extended series of papers that draw upon ethnographic sources to shed new light on marketing concepts ranging from cross-border trade to relationship management (e.g., *West African Marketing Channels*, 1995), enabling an empirically-based globalization of the marketing literature.

The British anthropologist Daniel Miller is an especially prolific scholar, with multiple volumes on various aspects of consumption, spanning the late 1980s to the present. Beginning with his important *Material Culture and Mass Consumption* (1987), Miller has shown how commodities, as other material forms, are capable of acting as mythic structures, as classificatory systems that establish homologies among different models of sociality, and as a means of objectifying moral values. For example, in *The Theory of Shopping* (1999), Miller connects shopping to sacrificial ritual. He notes that sacrifice has two central features – it places the sanctifier in a relationship with a transcendent entity and thereby sanctifies the former, and it marks the transition from production to consumption (e.g., first fruits sacrifice). In shopping, which usually is carried out by women, the shopper is linked through bonds of love and devotion to a family, either an existing family, or one that she hopes to have one day. It is the underlying relationship that guides the woman's purchases, which are thoughtful and

thrifty. And as in sacrifice, purchase of the commodity transforms it from an object of production to an object of consumption. While consumer goods may be mechanisms of alienation, discrimination, or control, this case suggests that a mature anthropology does not make such judgments *a priori.*

Anthropologists also have produced literature exploring more explicitly the mechanisms by which advertising firms move cultural meanings from their context into the realm of goods and services. In an a volume based on observations by anthropologists based in advertising firms (Timothy Malefyt and Brian Moeran, eds., *Advertising Cultures*, 2003), Steve Kemper enhances our understanding of the relationship between the global and the local by analyzing the presentation of goods by advertising firms to traditional populations in the developing world (*How Advertising Makes Its Object*). He uses the case example of pressed power and scent in Sri Lanka, where the widespread diffusion of television has opened opportunities for marketers to offer modern products to villagers for the first time. As Kemper explains, the economic powers in the village (senior males) could interpret certain products (cosmetics for young women) negatively, and refuse to provide monies for purchase, unless their advertisements are culturally sensitive. The effective advertisement used neither the 'global' image of a sophisticated urban woman, nor the potentially condescending 'local' image of a traditional village girl, but rather created something that captured both the 'local idiom' while managing to be 'generic' at the same time – the 'sidevi look', which combined images that are modern enough to be attractive to a young woman, but still innocent enough to avoid offending her father. Kemper explains that most advertising firms in the developing world end up creating such images that blend local and generic themes, so that the end result is neither the global homogenization that is feared nor the local uniqueness that existed in the past. This explanation provides an organizational mechanism to account for the 'glocalization' phenomenon that anthropologists have reported in other contexts.

Anthropologist Barbara Olson (*The Revolution in Marketing Apparel: A Narrative Ethnography*, 2002) provides an insider's story of the role an advertising agency can play in detecting cultural shifts taking place in the market, and translating those shifts into changes in marketing technology that also moves products to the consumer and facilitate further cultural change. Olson has a unique vantage point as an account executive in an ad agency, one of whose clients was the brassiere manufacturer, Warner. When Warner first came to Olson's agency in the 1960's, its image was that of a prudish, old-fashioned maker of 'firm' products for older women. Because these were the days of women's liberation and bra burning, Warner was worried that their market was going to disappear. At her suggestion, Olson's agency began using anthropological techniques to gain a better understanding of the customer at the point of sale – inside the 'upstairs' department stores (meaning, stores for upper middle class women). What they learned from fieldwork was that these stores had experienced staffing cut-backs, sales women were harried and fatigued, and had little time to provide individual attention required to show customers brassieres. In those days, bras were kept in drawers, out of sight, and customers had to take them into dressing rooms privately to try them on. Olson's agency suggested that Warner put the bras on hangers and let the customers

handle them without sales help – a somewhat 'radical' self-service concept that was already in place at 'downstairs' stores serving working class women. But the idea was nixed out of hand by Warner's male hierarchy; they believed their upscale customers would never try on a bra that had already been tried on by another woman. Certain they had the right idea based on fieldwork, however, Olson's agency formed an alliance with a female department store buyer and persuaded Warner to try the idea in test markets. It was a sensation, and took off beyond all expectations, changing forever the way bras were marketed across the industry. After the Warner's campaign, it was commonplace for 'upstairs' stores to show lingerie in public. Consumers wanted convenience more than they wanted privacy. Note the role played by the agency in changing the minds of Warner executives. In the past, it was not unusual for (male) corporate executives to make decisions for (female) consumers about whom they knew little or nothing (other than what their wives might say). Olson's agency (using anthropology, and a woman anthropologist too) stopped Warner from making this mistake. This example reveals the way in which anthropological approaches are changing business practice, and how these practices in turn influence cultural patterns.

The literature in consumer behavior and marketing produced by anthropologists has been well received by marketing departments and corporations, with the result that anthropologists now hold positions in the marketing departments of several major business schools (e.g., University of Pennsylvania, Northwestern University, University of Nebraska, University of Utah[25]). It would appear that anthropology now is a permanent addition to the disciplines that comprise the academic marketing field. Some of the ethical and political difficulties that confront anthropologists studying organizational behavior are avoided by those focusing on consumer behavior, as access to corporations may not be required (although this is less true if the anthropologist is a full-time practitioner). This is a distinct advantage that recommends this type of work. There are drawbacks, however. One relates to the uneasiness that some anthropologists sense in the use that may be made of their work in ethically questionable sales (e.g., products that may cause harm). Yet, such risk is inherent in the production of all knowledge and its utilization, and this is no different. A more troublesome issue concerns the pre-fabricated consumption 'experiences' that are becoming almost a total institution in America. Not only do these threaten a 'numbing down' that may mask social control; they also may encode sacralization messages that, in fact, are hollow. In truth, the idealized images that consumption seeks to quench can rarely be satisfied by the act of consumption alone. The desire to consume is insatiable. While this may be a place we have been before, anthropology has not been so entangled in the mechanisms by which consumption is produced, and for some anthropologists, it is not a comfortable place to be.

Convergence of the Domains

During much of the Cold War era, corporations and consumption were neglected subjects in anthropology, even though it was obvious to all that these forces powerfully shaped the lives of anthropologists and the peoples we studied. W. Lloyd Warner's

[25] In 2005-06, this list will change as John Sherry, Jr. moves to become Chair of Marketing at Purdue and Eric Arnould moves to the Marketing Department at the University of Arizona.

discovery of the corporation as one of two distinctive American institutions was forgotten as anthropologists interested in modern societies aligned against capitalism, and many deemed research inside businesses 'unethical'. Consumption was at best esoteric exotica, for other reasons discussed previously. This rather strange state of affairs in which anthropologists seemed to disregard some of the most potent cultural forces of our age was bound to change sooner or later.

Over the course of the past twenty years, the relationship between business and anthropology has come of age. That is to say, a productive relationship has formed, yielding advances in the state of knowledge and practice. This has happened because of changes in the world, and changes in anthropology. The opening of the post-Fordist era meant destruction of an older economic order and the birth of a new one, with the inclusion of Asia and other parts of the developing world as major economic and technological platforms of global production and consumption. Ever curious, and going where the action is, anthropologists have been true to the disciplinary mission -- seeking the edge of the frontier and exploring the unknown. Our epistemological strengths enable us to go where few have gone before, and that is exactly where we are in the world of corporations, design, and consumers. The discipline has adjusted to admit observations from these field sites for a variety of reasons. There is, perhaps, less theoretical and philosophical polarization now, as the end of the Cold War and the rise of critical theory gradually have expanded the 'zone of contact' between those who were aligned with Marxian ideology and those committed to other theoretical and philosophical frames. Management journals now publish critical theorists who 'study down' in companies, while anthropology journals publish cultural materialists who 'study up' in the same types of firms. Boundaries are permeable and lines between categories are blurred, inside anthropology as everywhere else. Another influence on the relationship between business and anthropology has been the diaspora of the so-called 'institutional anthropologies'. Post-modernism and critical theory in other disciplines have had the interesting effect of making anthropology very attractive elsewhere (even as it sometimes appeared that anthropology itself was about to self-destruct). A centrifugal pull outward toward other fields has been in motion for the past two decades, leading many anthropologists to become hybrids, complete with graduate degrees in other fields (e.g., medicine, law, social work, education). One kind of hybrid is the business type, but this is just a specialized instance of a much wider phenomenon that is in the process of remaking anthropology, and has accompanied the rise of applied and practicing anthropology more generally. Hybrids admit external influences into anthropology, and if/when these reach a critical mass, hypothetically, there could be a tipping point at which anthropology changes in a qualitative way. A final force for change is the pragmatic need to place academia's graduates. If graduates cannot find jobs, then academia ultimately will shrink, so it is in the interests of academic anthropologists to gradually explore the new terrain of corporations, design, and consumption, and academic administrations will support this if it bears the right kind of fruit (stratified by institution, of course).

A look back over the long history of entanglements between business and anthropology shows many ironies. One is that the small world investigated by Warner

and company (i.e., labor-management relations in the context of Mayo's Human Relations movement) held the promise of leading them perhaps to a deeper understanding of modern institutions. Warner attempted to fulfill this vision in his Yankee City studies, but anthropology turned its back on these interests, abandoning them to sociology and the policy disciplines. It is ironic that the 'turn' we have seen the past twenty years toward consumption studies, which did not even exist in Warner's time, now constitute perhaps the most ambitious theoretical agenda for exploring modern American society that anthropology has yet produced. While there are a relatively small number of anthropology scholars at the forefront of modern consumption studies, their work has inspired a vast body of interdisciplinary research that enables us to better comprehend the mechanisms through which markets mediate the creation of meaning and social practice within a broader socio-historical frame of globalization and market capitalism. This did not happen because anthropologists decided to study modern society, but because anthropologists finally acknowledged consumption as relevant to their interests. In America, it also must be acknowledged that it happened because anthropologists joined the fields of consumer behavior and marketing (i.e., in business schools).

Another irony lies in a backward look at the Hawthorne studies. Anthropologists were not running the show in those days, and today we know that 'the boss' was wrong. Mayo (the boss) saw the BWOR workers as 'maladjusted', but he was misinformed. The workers knew what they were doing. The problem is, no one told American managers the truth. Most managers are not trained to grasp the idea of 'cultural logic' on the shop floor or in the office, even though they are trained to grasp that same notion in relation to the marketplace. That is ironic. If alternative explanations of Hawthorne had been advanced in the 1930s and anthropology had played a more decisive role in shaping the theory of organizations over the next several decades, the workplace that we know might be very different today, and anthropologists who study organizational behavior might be thriving like their counterparts in marketing. We must ask ourselves about the long-term implications of an anthropology that is perpetually marginalized in studies of private sector organizations and management.

What seems clear from an overview of the literature is that the worlds of consumers and producers are not two separate things. Consumption and production are intertwined, perhaps most clearly in the design process, which brings the producer (designer) and consumer (user) together in a collaborative juxtaposition. The service economy also represents the joining of these worlds, as one conceptualization of service is the simultaneous production and consumption of an economic activity within the context of a relationship between a producer and a consumer (e.g., teaching/taking a course). All of this suggests that the intersection of these two worlds is expected to become increasingly apparent as the 21st century evolves away from a Fordist producer-orientation, with its mechanistic and functionalized view of the world, and toward a more integrated, holistic perspective encouraged by a consumer-orientation.

Thus, while the three domains described herein will continue as distinct subfields with their own literatures, increasing areas of interaction and overlap among them are predicted. Anthropology, as a holistic discipline, is in a good position to conceptualize

the connections among the domains; indeed, they already were apparent in this article. For example, both design and consumption are activities that often take place within organizational contexts. Understanding these contexts -- the resources or opportunities, as well as the risks or constraints they pose – are significant considerations for anthropologists seeking an integrated assessment of human behavior in its natural setting. Further, organizations themselves are human constructions that are objects of design, and they also are sites of consumption. With respect to their designed nature, the formal and informal structures and policies of organizations are continuously being formed and reformed. These unfolding processes could become sites of ethnographic research, toward the goal of improving outcomes in organizational decision-making as it affects the design of new products and services, and the offering of these outputs to market.

Consumption also should become increasingly relevant as a focus of anthropological and ethnographic inquiry within organizational settings. As corporations out-source their services to one another, each organization 'consumes' their suppliers' services. While this may sound somewhat abstract and 'business-to-business' in nature, 'on the ground' it can become very individualistic and person-to-person; say for example, someone in Chicago trying to obtain help over the telephone from someone else in Bangalore. This interaction represents the consumption of one organization's service by another organization. If we begin to conceptualize the convergence of consumption and production, we may be able to bring to our study of organizations the theoretical and methodological insights gained through the study of consumer behavior, a theoretical maneuver that has not been optimally exploited in the study of organizations. An example of the potential of this kind of cross-over was provided earlier in the notion of the sacralization of work in America. Carla Freeman's research provides another example of the potential of investigating consumption practices within a production context. Daniel Miller discussed many additional examples.

Since the broader context of our lives is connected, there should be resonance among the various facets of our experience. And if globalization indeed means that boundaries are blurring, then the boundaries between employees and consumers, between the interiors and the exteriors of the firm, are blurring as well, and anthropologists who are interested in organizational behavior, ethnographically-informed design, and consumer behavior, may gain insights by spending more time talking together and reading each other's work.

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