Creating an Identity: Choosing Self-employment in Montreal.

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A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Sociology and Anthropology

Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

December 2005

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis explores the reason why four Montreal based Internet web designers, who form part of what is considered "Generation X," would reject the notion of working for a corporation. Two of the designers studied owned the company in question, while the other two were employees.

It is based on fieldwork conducted over a three-month period, between February 2002 and May 2002. This thesis is based on information gathered through one on-line questionnaire, 16 formal interviews, and observations of day to day activities as well as 11 production meetings.

It is framed on the theoretical perspective of self-identity proposed by Anthony Giddens. In chapter one, a history of the anthropology of work is presented, pointing to a gap in studies on the Canadian self-employed workers. In chapter two, multidisciplinary literature on the corporate worker, situating the reader on the Taylorist working conditions is discussed. In chapter three I answer the question "Why become self-employed?" using academic literature on self-employment in Canada, as well as explain how the two business owners studied also answered and acted upon this question. In chapter four I again explore academic literature focusing on creativity. The four web designers studied considered creativity important, and I also explain why. In the final chapter I foresee the future of the Internet company studied, based on my fieldwork and theoretical perspective used in this thesis.

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1.INTRODUCTION

Cohen (1994) in discussing organizational studies writes that " [t]hroughout the various theoretical traditions which have dominated organisational theory, the individual is assumed to be plastic, to be modelled by the logic and imperatives of the organisation's structure" (p. 92). He is very critical of these various approaches as they continue to influence contemporary theory, painting organisations as static 'cultures', which mould their constituents' behaviours, not bestowing individual agency.

This thesis is intended to argue individuals, working in modern business environments construct their own working identities based on past experience, present circumstances, and what is foreseen for the future (Giddens, 1991). It will also argue, this identity construction is organized through the structure of a small business, *because* of the value placed on creativity.

A brief overview of anthropological studies in the workplace

Much of the literature over the last century, on the North American workplace has revolved around the changing role and status of the entrepreneurs and workers. Whereas in 1880 it was thought business owners possessed "personal virtue and natural superiority" (Nightingale, 1982; 36), slowly through the various theoretical debates, this superiority has abated and the employer has lost his 'natural' ability to lead. At the same time, the worker went from being a skilled craftsman, to one considered a mere 'component' of the production process, and is now once again being recognized as having decision making powers and valuable insight into labour processes.

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Prominent theories such as Frederick Winslow Taylor's principles of 'scientific management' (early 1900s) proposed that in order to cut costs, increase productivity and ensure management control of the skilled worker, the job could be broken down into many parts. In this way, the employer could take over the means of production that had been in the skilled workers hands.

Through the 'human relations' approach (1930-1960) the 'irrational' employee who showed 'pathological' tendency towards conflict could be better managed if properly trained – but the power was to remain with the employer. Although as Nightingale writes this approach was also a loss for the employer, as "[s]uccess and virtue were now associated with human relations skills" (1982; 45) taking away some of the 'natural born qualities' leaders had been thought to possess.

Anthropology made its first appearance in industrial workplace research, with the Hawthorne Studies, in Chicago (1930s). In the later stages of the study, Lloyd Warner and his students were called in to assist with the research and use their anthropological methods (observation). Wright writes that Warner wanted to "treat the shop floor as a small society in which every aspect of the life was interconnected in a social system (1994; 6). The workers studied had been segregated from the other employees and were being watched, so as not to disturb, as is done in science experiments. Warner learned about of the informal work systems employees' initiated with the intention of keeping output stable. This was in contradiction to the formal systems determined by the employer. The strength of this research related to the use of anthropological methods although it was criticized for its 'top-down' approach of

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analysis, as anthropologists had not questioned the "distribution of power and resources" (Baba, 1998; 19). Furthermore, they had not positioned the worker in the "wider framework of social, political, and economic systems" (Wright, 1994; 8-9). Later research would correct these faults.

During the 1950s-1960s full participant observation was now being used. Researchers had to learn how to work as employees did, including learning the language used in the workplace. Studies were still looking at conflict between management and employee, but anthropologists were looking at it from other perspectives. The literature produced during this era supported the labourer and took on a "Marxist and cross-cultural critiques of other disciplines' intellectual effort" (Baba, 1998; 20). This meant there was little, if any support from management or companies for studies, and getting access became more difficult. As a result theories on organizations and how they work grew outside of anthropology during the 1960s and 1970s. By then anthropologists were focussing their efforts oversees as few were studying Western organizations (Baba, 1998; Hakken, 1988; Hamada, 1998).

In the 1980s anthropology was helpful with debates in social sciences as it relates to methodology and data collection (Hamada, 1998). During this time the American corporation was faced with competition. Globalisation, 'lean' structures, downsizing, technological changes, immigration, the increasing participation of female labour, all worked towards changing the workplace, greatly affecting the worker. Employees now were viewed as 'valuable,' as Baba writes about the value of knowledge, "75% of the value added of all manufactured goods is knowledge content" (2003; 19). This ultimately increased the 'value' of anthropological studies in the workplace - when

"working people are viewed by management as exerting direct influence or control over the production process, then anthropologists move to the center" (Baba, 1998; 24).

Today there is a large emphasis on the globalised workplace (Hamada, 1998; Gluesing, 1998; English-Lueck and Saveri, 2001; Baba, 2003), and on the "*maquiladoras* of the periphery" (Lee, 1998; emphasis in original text). Blim (1992) writes of the *unevenness* in the "global factory." He writes that manufacturing is the driving force behind the capitalist world economy. As the global factory spreads, it is doing so in local and regional settings, at different levels. Europe and Asia have been gaining ground, while Latin America and Africa have been losing ground. Local and regional systems are important, and so is petty commodity production. In 1984, the International Labor Organization assessed that between 20 to 45% of the manufacturing in half of third world countries is produced by "very small enterprises" (Blim, 1992; 15). Petty commodity production also plays an important role in "late-developing capitalist countr[ies] such as Italy" (Blim, 1992; 15). Petty commodity production is changing the relationship of the worker. For some there are new possibilities while for others there is abuse. Home workers and family run businesses are being used, and they are working in conjunction with local, regional and international commerce. We therefore cannot ignore the work that is being produced in a small-scale environment. As Blim writes about the global factory, it "is distinguished by a highly fluid interaction between international markets for goods *and* systems of production and labor, and by complex systems of horizontal and vertical economic linkages that incorporate a wide variety of capitalist agents and workers" (p. 16). Blim argues that local and regional governments and policies are

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influential to the development of the global factory[1] and that we should avoid grand

narratives when discussing world capitalist systems. We should "eschew

universalizing current conceptualizations of labor process and regimes and social

structures of accumulation and to utilize them as heuristics in a structural analysis of

the variety of contemporary world capitalist terrains" (Blim, 22-23).

Anthropologists are well situated for learning about these processes and for learning

how people combine the local and the global in their work live. Hamada (1998)

discusses the role of anthropological studies in the workplace in a globalised world of

today. "Today's multinational firm is more like an ever-changing web of multiple

networks that regulates and facilitates the most effective movements of materials,

goods, services, energy, information, capital, technology, personnel and their

resources across national borders" (p. 3). He continues by affirming that if

anthropology is to remain pertinent, anthropologists should advance strong theories

able to explicate "rapid culture change, acculturation and power in the context of

globalisation" (p. 3).

Nash (1998) argues that the one of two priorities for work anthropologists is to find

ways of arranging and advancing "policies for overcoming the growing gap in wealth

worldwide" (p. 4). The second priority is to not only examine "political economic

frameworks" (p. 4) but to also put them into action. As she writes "posturing by some

anthropologists is in denial about the existence of class struggle as it is being

reconfigured and restructured by the workers in new industrial settings" (p. 5). These

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[1] He describes how after the postwar period the South Korean and Taiwainese governments were
critical for the expansion of their respective industrial economies while in Latin America the
"*compradors*" are responsible for the underdevelopment of their countries (Blim, 1992; 21; emphasis
in original text).

anthropologists are arguing that workplace studies should be located through the lens of globalisation. Arguably there is much work to be done here, as there are dramatic social changes in play on an international level. Multinational corporations are setting up in new locals on a daily basis, affecting both workers at home and abroad.

Anthropology of work is currently researching the privileged workers involved in the globalised industry (the multinational corporations), as well as those on the periphery (the petty commodity producer in growing economies), and yet we have ignored a segment of the Canadian workers - our small business owners. Whereas we are researching how companies in the globalised world function and how the worker is responding, we understand little about the Canadian worker who chooses to work at the local level. Why are they opting out of the global marketplace, and how are they going about doing this?

The gap in workplace ethnographies

We know a great deal about the American corporate worker. We know a lot less about the Canadian worker. Much of the literature has focussed on the relationship between employee and the manager. The focus on employee-manager relations could be classified as being awkward for anthropology. As Nash (1998) tells us when The Society of "Anthropology of work" was officially formalized in Washington, D.C, in 1977, and looking for a name, "anthropology of work" was chosen *because* anthropology no longer wanted to be associated with a managerial viewpoint on industry.

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The focus on employee-manager relations can be credited on the fact that management techniques were attributed for the success of American business after the post-war period (Smith, 1990; 1). It is my belief that where fieldworkers and researchers select to conduct their studies also partially accounts for this focus. For example, over the years, much multi-disciplinary, research has been done on formal work organizations such as multinational corporations[2]. Besser (1996) studied Toyota, Beynon (1975) studied Ford in Britain, Orr studied (1996) Xerox, Graham (1995) studied Subaru-Isuzu, and Kasmir (2001) studied at Saturn.[3]

And now as much focus is how globalisation is affecting the worker, when studying North American workers we are once again a located in large formal organizations. These types of organizations rely on management directing employees, which makes studying employee-manager relations obvious and sound. But what about other types of work organizations? What would we learn about workers if we explored smaller organizations that do not have such a global focus?

Hodson (2004) analysed over 130 ethnographies, and in terms of locations, we find ethnographies completed in the automobile industry (Besser, 1996; Beynon, 1975; Graham, 1995), the government (Blau, 1963), construction workers (Applebaum, 1981; Cherry, 1974; Clawson, 1944), medical profession (Bosk, 1992; Cassel, 1991; Diamond, 1992; Foner, 1994; Fox, 1959; Haas, 1987; Katz, 1999), manufacturing (Buraway, 1979), emergency services (Chetkovich, 1997), domestic workers (Cock, 1989; Constable, 1997), office worker (Crozier, 1971), restaurant (Fine, 1996),

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[2] Anthropological studies conducted during the 1940s were funded by industry, such as Sears Roebuck and Company, through the Committee on Human Relations in Industry at Chicago University (Wright, 1994; 8)

railway (Gamst, 1980), funeral industry (Howarth, 1996), banking (Jackall, 1978), managers and employees in corporations (Jackall, 1988; Kanter, 1977), fishing industry (Johnson, 1988), to name a few (for complete list of the ethnographies see Appendix 1).

Hodson's analysis related to his interest in understanding the most repeated relationships in these ethnographies. He found the following recurring variables: *labour force* (women, minority), *organizational characteristics* (bureaucracy, autonomy, abuse), *employee attitudes* (fulfilling work, job satisfaction, pride, commitment) and *behaviour* (procedural sabotage, infighting, conflict, strikes) (2004; 16-23). In analysing the variables discussed in the literature, Hodson found the strongest variable related to work was worker lack of autonomy, which was found to be destructive to employee experiences and attitudes (2004; 30). Hence management techniques as practiced affect worker attitudes regarding work lives.

If one looks at the locations of ethnographic studies listed by Hodson, the small business owner is virtually absent. And yet, in Canada, 2.5 million Canadians or 16.7% of the labour force owned their own businesses in 1997 (Lin, Compton and Picot, 1999). The only anthropologist I could find looking at self-employment was Douglas Caulkins (1992), in the U.K., although self-employment has been looked at in the developing world (Simon, 2001). Existing research has let us understand the employee struggle with lack of autonomy, and yet, we have rarely explored the autonomous worker. I propose we examine the small business owner.

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[3] Many of these studies were conducted on the factory floor, although Orr studied technicians in the field.

Why is it important to look at the self-employed worker? Firstly, self-employment is important to the Canadian economy and is steadily rising.[4] In fact self-employed workers increased by an average of 4.1% a year between 1990-1998 (Lin et al, 1999) in Canada. In the 1990s it is self-employment, which has resulted in the creation of three out of four *new* jobs (Lin et al, 1999; Anonymous, 2000). Statistics on self-employment indicated this increase is relevant for all age groups in Canada (Manser and Picot, 1999).

Secondly, as studies have not looked at the small business owner we know so little about them. Why do people start their own business? And in our case, why would web designers desire to start their own business? Why would they not work for others? How would they go about starting their own business? What values are important to these web designers? Where would they locate their office space, and why? Who would they hire and why? These are the questions I asked in order to understand more regarding the autonomous worker.

My thesis is intended to fill this gap in knowledge relating to the small business owner in Canada. I studied a small Internet company in Montreal.

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[4] In the United States it has remained stable between 1989-1997 (Manser and Picot, 1999)

Meeting the designers at CREATIVE MEDIA - Studying an Internet company

Why study an Internet company? I had wanted to study an Internet company as it related to my education and my work experience. I had started my education by studying Human Resources Management and was specifically interested in the corporate environment as it related to how workers were treated by their employers. This education had led me to working, for over a decade, for a multinational corporation in the computer industry. My education, work experience, and realization that the economy had forced large companies to change how they manage their employees (Smith, 1990; 1) had left me intrigued with Internet start-up companies. As I was reading the literature on the 'culture' in Internet companies, I was noticing a shift in priorities for the workers, which resulted in a fresh, new and exciting workplace. It proved very different from my experience in the hierarchical corporate environment. The workers appeared to have much more freedom and the reward systems were changing.

While I was deciding on my fieldwork location[5], the local papers often discussed local Internet companies. At the time the media darling in Montreal was Zeroknowledge (Riga, 1999a and 1999b). They produced Internet privacy software for computers and databases. They had received regular press since the late 1990's regarding their product and for their innovative recruiting methods.

The most exciting articles discussed hiring practices and working conditions; they highlighted the 'exotic' nature of Internet companies. Internet companies were

portrayed as quite different from the traditional corporate environment, especially as it applied to working conditions and management style. Zeroknowledge, for example, claimed to provide an in-house laundry, a message service, coffee bar, fitness facilities, games room, monthly allowance for rejuvenating body and mind and a unisex bathroom. Glorious - certainly not what I had encountered in my corporate experience.

In terms of leadership and management style, on their website Zeroknowledge[6] claimed their approach was built on the principles of "courage, mutual trust and excellent communication." (November 22, 2001). Zeroknowledge wanted the best people working for them, and in order to do this they felt they had to allow for creativity. They did this by hiring from a diverse community, and by allowing for flexibility in working hours. Individuals were allowed to customize their benefit package to suit their personal needs. This management style was quite contrary to previous styles in the corporation (Kunda, 1992; Perlow, 1998; Hochschild, 1997; Nippert-Eng, 1996). Typical corporations showed little flexibility, visibility was key and corporations were also "greedy" (Nippert-Eng, 1996) by invading the home environment. I wanted to explore the Internet management first hand.

Methodology

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[5] Family obligations influenced my decision to find a fieldwork location in the city I live in, Montreal.
[6] www.zeroknowledge.com

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CREATIVE MEDIA is a Multimedia company primarily producing Internet websites,

but they also work with other media forms such as CDROM, DVD, and video

productions[7].

Initially I had not intended on studying CREATIVE MEDIA as I was planning on

studying another Web based company – Company A. I had intended on examining

the theories regarding charismatic leadership, as one of the founders of Company A

was a local celebrity. At the last minute this study fell through and I was scrambling

to quickly find a dynamic environment to focus my research on. In my last discussion

with my planned informant at Company A, I asked her if she knew any other Internet

companies I could study. She suggested CREATIVE MEDIA. In fact, she sent an

email to Norman[8] and I, in effect introducing us. It went like this:

Norman meet Kristine
Kristine meet Norman.

This was my introduction to Norman at CREATIVE MEDIA!

As I prepared to meet with the owner of CREATIVE MEDIA, I wondered if my

approach to study charismatic leadership would be applicable, as there was no

celebrity running this company. On my first day my suspicions were confirmed.

CREATIVE MEDIA was a completely different environment. The age group I was

observing was much younger than I had anticipated, including the owners. They were

also a much smaller company, with only four designers. Chapman (2001) discusses

methodology in industrial anthropology and argues that by using traditional

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[7] During my fieldwork I did not observe any of these other media forms being worked on as there were no contracts for these types of media during my fieldwork.
[8] All names in this thesis have been changed to protect confidentiality.

anthropological methods such as interviews we are able to "talk about what [is] important to the manager whom we [are] interviewing, in terms of understandings that [are] his, not ours" (p. 23-24). I believe that by not having a specific theoretical focus, initially, I was also forced to focus my research questions on what was important to the designers at CREATIVE MEDIA. I let the designers direct my focus.

I spent the first hours observing the movement to see where it would bring me. After Norman seated me at one of the desks in his "pod[9]" I asked if I could look at some of the magazines in the office, to get a better picture of CREATIVE MEDIA, based on the literature subscribed to. I also asked Norman for a copy of a formal business plan.

Norman turned out to be my primary informant. I think Norman enjoyed the process of having an "anthropologist." It turns out that both Norman and Michelle, his partner, had already been interviewed for magazines, newspapers and websites so they were used to talking about themselves. At the time of my fieldwork there were two owners, Michelle and Norman, and they have two full time employees, Samantha and Mark as well as a bookkeeper, Fran. No one was married, but at the time of my study Michelle and Mark had life partners. They were all between the ages of 27-30. They spoke English the whole time I conducted my fieldwork, but Mark and Michelle are bilingual[10].

While I was browsing through the magazines I quickly found there was not much to watch, as all four designers spent the majority of their days busily working

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[9] The Creative Media designers called the arrangement of workstations a "pod."

independently at their workstations, not making any noise. Participant observation

would not be applicable, as I was unfamiliar with Internet programming.

My fieldwork lasted from February 2002 to May 2002. I started with a mini on-line

survey and asked a little about education and work history. I felt by starting with an

on-line survey I was using a method of communication the designers were familiar

with and I thought it would break the ice. Chapman (2001) discusses using

anthropological methods in studying industry and finds questionnaires are appropriate

for learning information specific to that moment in time, but "examining processes,

movement over time" is better suited to repeated interviews (p. 27). I found this on-

line questionnaire helpful as it is through this survey that I decided to focus my study

on identity (Giddens, 1991), why the owners had started a business of their own, and

why the two employees had selected (and been selected to) to work for CREATIVE

MEDIA. I would conduct formal interviews to get answers to these questions.

I conducted 14 formal interviews during the fieldwork stage of my study and

conducted two more interviews after the fieldwork was completed, one in May 2003

and the other in February 2004. 13 of the 16 interviews were recorded[11]. I

concentrated my interviews on the two owners of CREATIVE MEDIA, as I was

interested in self-employment. In total I interviewed Michelle on five occasions, while

six times with Norman. Two of the later interviews were with both owners together[12].

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[10] In the province of Quebec French is the official language, while a minority of the population speaks English.

[11] Mark, in our first interview, asked not to be taped, although he agreed for subsequent interviews. When I conducted an interview with a long-term tenant in the building, he also requested that the interview not be taped. The third interview, with Fran the bookkeeper, was not taped because there was so much background noise.

[12] I did this in the interest of saving time for the owners of CREATIVE MEDIA. I could sense as the fieldwork progressed, especially with Michelle, that time away from her responsibilities was becoming more and more problematic.

Interviews with the owners lasted between 45-60 minutes each. I met separately with Samantha (two times) and Mark (three times). These interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes. I was aware of the problems with time - there never seemed to be enough of it - and attempted to be sensitive of their limited time (Hirsch and Gellner, 2001). I also met with Fran the bookkeeper on one occasion, to get an "outsider" perspective, as she was not part of the inner circle the designers occupied. I wanted to understand the changes that had occurred recently in the building, as the vacancy rate had plummeted and the tenants had changed from largely light manufacturing (rag trade) to artistic/computer design, so I also interviewed a long term tenant of the building.

As well as conducting interviews, I observed 11 production meetings of which I took notes. In the productions meetings I observed the 'formal' day-to-day happenings in the workplace where the job tasks and project status were discussed and delegated.

I also spent a considerable amount of time in the office observing the informal moments of the day-to-day happenings. This observation time was invaluable to my study, as I was able to better understand the progress of producing a website and it provided me with a real sense of who CREATIVE MEDIA was. It is one thing to ask questions about the work, but to actually watch it is another thing altogether.

I am still in contact with Norman at CREATIVE MEDIA.

It should be noted that I felt my outsider status throughout my fieldwork[13]. Early in my study I was asked about my background, and where my husband worked. We

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[13] I was not allowed access to certain moments intended to be shared from within the members of CREATIVE MEDIA. One way was to not let me know about the chatting that went on between

both came from the corporate environment. I also felt that if I had been from another country, or at least another city, there would have been some curiosity about me - I would have been 'exotic.' But, Norman, Michelle and I had even gone to the same university, which meant they already knew the answers to many personal questions, so they stopped asking.

In the process of CREATIVE MEDIA making the decision to allow me to study them they asked me if I would be interested in questioning them on money. I told them that I would not be interested in their contracts and books. They were happy with this response, and they made money one topic of conversation I was not allowed to bring up. This being said, after my fieldwork was completed I did find it necessary to ask Norman about the salaries of all the designers during the time of my study.

As Norman and Michelle allowed me into their workplace, they were realizing changes would need to be made in the near future in order to keep their business alive. The results of this study are therefore very specific to the time I spent at CREATIVE MEDIA.

Organization of the remainder of this thesis

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designers. I knew it was happening, but I was never given privy to what was said. On other occasions, things happened after I left. I was at CREATIVE MEDIA on the Samantha's birthday. I was there when she received all of the personal phone calls congratulating her on her birthday (it was the busiest day as it comes to phones during my study). On this day there was no mention that she would be celebrated by her co-workers, but after I left Samantha was given a birthday cake. Also, even though I spent many days at CREATIVE MEDIA, little excursions meant to motivate the designers, such as purchasing wireless mice were done on days that I was absent. When Norman returned to CREATIVE MEDIA after the SXSW conference he was excited about sharing the information related to the conferences he had attended (SXSW is a film and interactive conference, based out of Austin, Texas. Part of the conference is dedicated to handing out awards for innovative websites). During one of the production meetings he suggested to the other designers that "all four of us" should go out over beer or lunch and discuss what he had learned. I was also in the room, which meant there were five of us.

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The remainder of my thesis is separated into four sections.

In chapter two, I will discuss multidisciplinary literature on the corporate worker. This literature review is intended to situate the reader on the working conditions employees have been subjected to over the years, especially as it relates to Taylorist principles. The deskilling process began on the factory floor, but it has slowly moved into the white collar and service industry occupations under the rubric of routinization. It is important to understand what has been written as the images of the controlled worker, working in a boring job, without any pride for the product has resonated at CREATIVE MEDIA.

There are two parts to chapter three. In the first section, I examine the academic literature relating to self-employment in Canada. The academic literature on self-employment has often asked why someone would want to become self-employed. The academic literature generally uses aggregate data to answer this question and formulate theories. The second section relates specifically to the fieldwork I conducted. I also asked the question "why become self-employed?" but this question is answered in my thesis using qualitative data.

In chapter four, there are once again two parts. I begin with an elaboration on the concept of creativity, as explored by academia. As the evolving corporations have adapted to the workers, in particular to the demands of the Gen-Xers, they have also slowly recognized the importance of creativity to business survival. After elaborating on the concept of creativity as understood by academia I will explore how the web designers studied defined and viewed creativity themselves. Through my research

project it was found that all the designers of the web design firm studied considered

creativity important. But as we will see, their conception has its own unique

characteristics and meanings.

In the final chapter I discuss what I foresee in the future for Creative Media, based on

my fieldwork and theoretical perspective used in this paper.

2. WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE WORKERS, AND THEIR MANAGERS

Before we explore the small business owner, I think it is important that we look at completed studies on employed workers. Why? Because even though my thesis is on small business, ideas about what it is to be small business owner are framed around the non-autonomous worker working in a large formal organization.

Workplace ethnographies on the blue collar worker

Looking at the research already conducted, we have learned much regarding those who work for corporations and other formal organization such as how they are treated, how they conform, or fight back. We have learned about the decisions management have made to instigate changes towards a more profitable enterprise and how this is affecting the workforce. They have largely accomplished this by taking away the power the employees have over their knowledge.

Adam Smith was the first to suggest the manner in which the *process* of work was done should be reworked. He suggested "instead of paying high-priced, skilled workers to do a job from start to finish, employers could split the job into its constituent parts and assign each task to minimally qualified workers, thus greatly reducing costs and increasing output" (Leidner, 1993; 1). This was a loss for the craftsmen as Braverman argues "the detailed division of labor destroys occupations ... and renders the worker inadequate to carry through any complete production process" (1975; 73). Frederick Taylor, with his principles of scientific management, took this one step further, and removed the decision making process from employees as well, and gave it to managers. He felt the skilled trade worker should have his

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"brain work ... removed from the shop floor and centrered in the planning or lay-out department" (Frederick Taylor as quoted in Garson, 1975; 214).

Principles of scientific management which fragmented and deskilled work all the while giving power back to the employer was originally initiated with blue-collar workers (Chinoy, 1955; Braverman, 1975; Beynon, 1975; Balzer, 1976; Milkman, 1997; Devinatz, 1999), although it has also affected the white-collar worker (Braverman, 1975; Garson, 1975; 1988) and service industry jobs (Hochschild, 1983; Garson, 1988; Leidner, 1993).

How has this affected the worker? Prior to Taylorist factory process workers possessed the power, as they possessed the skill. Management could not control output as it was the craftsmen while performing their trade or task who "learn or improvise, and use at their own discretion only" (Braverman, 1975; 113) the information they knew. But with Taylorist factory process, and the breakdown of the actual work into parts, this knowledge could be taken away from the workers and given to management, so that they could create rules, regulations and processes intended to increase output. The role of management as "watchdog" of the production process has been reflected in the workplace ethnographies. Balzer (1976) found during his fieldwork, workers knew management was constantly watching them, "encouraging" them to promptly return from their coffee breaks or lunch. In fact Graham (1995) noticed that the line would start moving after ten minutes brakes even before workers were back at their stations. Davinatz (1999) argues surveillance affirmed the manager's role in ensuring employees were always producing at optimum levels, which also led to fatigue and injury (see also Graham, 1995).

Huw Beynon (1975) studied blue-collar auto parts workers in Britain and discovered

that because the job had become so routine and broken down into parts, the work had

become boring as well. The workers complained that they were going "blank" (p.

109) while on their shift. "The line here is made for morons. It doesn't need any

thought" (p. 114). Although the breaking down of the job was meant to increase

profits for the employers, this boredom resulted in inattentiveness, which

unfortunately could lead to errors, inadvertently increasing costs (Barker, 1999; 2).

For the employee the costs of the boredom were worse – as it could lead to injury.

Employees can be bored, but Taylorist manufacturing processes has also resulted in

lack of pride in the final product. Chinoy has written that because the job is broken

down into parts workers have become alienated "from the fruits of their labor" (1950;

85). They could not relate to the final product, and they had only participated in the

fabrication of a small part of it. Beynon also found Ford workers on the assembly

plant did not identity with the final product, but worse they also did not want to buy

the cars, because they had no care for how the work is completed (1975; 110-112).

Managers with the objective of increasing productivity focus on errors. Garson (1975)

writes that the "work flow" in modern factories (and offices) is organised is such a

way to facilitate calculations for individual productivity, as well as to count the

individual errors (p. 213). Balzer also noted management spotlight errors. Managers

produced charts for all to see, which detailed the errors made in the fabrication

process (see also Graham, 1995; 118), belittling employees. Balzer writes, "Now I

understand that when people appear to be talking about their jobs, they are frequently

talking about the environment in which they work, and the way they are made to feel about the work they do" (1976; 325).

Devinatz (1999) studied a manufacturing process in a high technology firm writes about the ways he observed managers control employees. Controls were intended for only one purpose "maximizing the worker's productivity, no matter what the physical, psychological, or social costs to the workers" (p. 81). He argues that high-tech work is no improvement over the harsher manufacturing jobs of the 19th century. The employees in various departments and job responsibilities are forbidden to listen to the radio, even though the radio keeps them alert. The employees are also forbidden to talk, laugh, or share a joke. In order to discourage the talking tables utilized by employees are moved around by the supervisors in order to isolate employees. If workers do not achieve their prescribed output levels they are harassed, given written warnings, punished by being sent to less desirable departments, laid off, fired, denied promised raises or not told they were working with toxic products.

Routinization in white collar and service industry occupations

Deskilling and fragmentation was first noticed with the blue-collar worker, but this process has also been observed in the white-collar worker as well (Garson, 1975; 1988). Garson (1988) blames the introduction of Taylorist principles, in white-collar jobs, on the introduction of computers in the workplace. Braverman on the other hand argues the transformation of white-collar work began earlier with the publishing of a book, by William Henry Leffingwell (Braverman, 1975; 305-6), detailing how scientific management principles could also be used on white-collar workers.

In its earlier stages the white-collar worker had been equated to being like a craft, and workers having a close relationship to owners of companies. "[I]n terms of function, authority, pay, tenure of employment (a clerical position was usually a lifetime post), prospects, not to mention status and even dress, the clerks stood much closer to the employer than to factory labor" (Braverman, 1975; 295). Braverman argues with Taylorist principles being applied to the white-collar worker, the job were also subjected to routine, rules, methods, and time constraints.

This has been reflected in the ethnographies. Social workers who used to be "free human beings while doing worthwhile work" (Garson, 1988; 73) have become mechanized workers who do not feel they are helping anyone. Garson describes how social work has changed from being a place where social workers took the time to discuss individual cases as they arose to an automated system where questions are pre-determined and answers are plugged and benefits calculated by the computer. Over time, the highly educated knowledgeable and problem solving social worker has become focused on making reports and on fulfilling quota requirements. As jobs have been retooled, for some social workers there has been a deskilling process, whereby the education required is now reduced, and slowly over the years the salary of the social worker has also slipped. As Garson argues, the professional social worker has become a clerk.

In the service industry routinization of the job has also been documented (Garson, 1988; Leidner, 1993). Leidner looked at insurance agents and window crew at McDonalds. Both of these workers had their behaviour standardized by their organizations as it related to customer relations. The routines at McDonald focussed on speed, while for the insurance agents it was intended to give agents controls over

the conversations with potential clients. "The routinization of the life insurance

agents' job was both extensive and intensive" (Leidner, 1993; 148). Agents were

taught what to say, how to say it, the body language to use, mood, thoughts and

appearance. But, Leidner argues that for these agents routinization was not viewed

negatively as the agents felt that through the 'skills' they were learning they would be

better able to manage their customer and succeed at selling them insurance. It

allowed them to better control customer conversation, as well as leaving them with

some decision-making powers. At McDonalds, the routine also was not considered

unpleasant by the employees, as through the routinization customer behaviour was

also controlled and routinized. The customer knew when entering the restaurant what

questions would be asked ensuring a speedy response to questions; even difficult

customers could be better controlled through the routinization. Leidner argues

previous studies have focussed on the conflict between management and employee,

and the resistance towards routinization, and argues that for employees in the service

industry the focus is misplaced. The routinization is intended to help both

management and employee control the customer, and therefore routinization should

also be seen for the benefits it provides.

Unfortunately, routinization can ultimately lead to deskilling as "[t]he same routines

keep less competent or dependable worker from undermining organizational

standards, however, can prevent better workers from using their talents and common

sense to meet the demands of particular situations" (Leidner, 1993; 126). Garson

(1988) also noticed this. She interviewed employees at a McDonald's franchise and

found that all aspects of the jobs, including management, had been routinized and

could not be tracked and counted through the use of centralized computers. Cooks no

longer needed to know how to cook; they just put the pre-measured food on the griddle. Cashiers did not have to know how much food cost, as prices were entered from a central location into the computer, and each item was described (or pictured) on the actual cash machine. The cashier would not necessarily notice price increases. Managers had all decisions calculated by the computer – including calculating how many employees would be needed for a shift. As the manager told Garson "[b]asically, I can't be any more creative than a crew person. I can't take any more initiative than the person on the register" (Garson 1988; 35). In fact it was found that thinking is a hindrance to the productivity objectives.

Deskilling also exists in occupations where skills are highly valued. Orr (2000) discusses the differences between the rural and city technicians at Xerox. There are obvious differences related to territory covered (rural technicians have a larger territory). Because of the critical mass for city technicians, they were able to specialize. Rural technicians, on the other hand, had to understand how 66 different models should be serviced. City technicians fixed only the broken machine, as it was easy to get to a customer site. The rural technicians were never certain as to when a machine broke down, so he serviced all the machines at a customer site as a preventative measure. The rural technician envied the city technician for being specialized on a certain machine type. The company, on the other hand, decided in order to reduce costs all technicians would have to generalize – thereby deskilling the technician. Orr argues the company was making changes to the jobs, without actually understanding what was being done by the technicians and why.

Downsizing the corporation and the corresponding retooling of jobs

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Competition has forced companies to reduce costs and increase profits, and one way

corporations have responded to this competition is by downsizing and becoming

'lean' and through restructuring. This has changed jobs dramatically. Smith (1990)

looked at middle managers in an American bank, which was in the process of being

downsized. She found that as middle managers were being downsized, the

responsibilities and tasks of remaining employees were being retooled. Computers

had taken away some of the monitoring responsibilities once performed by middle

managers, and given them to lower level employees. Computerization in an *ideal*

world can have a positive effect for "both manufacturing and white-collar

occupations, leading to expanded tasks and responsibilities" (1990; 175). And for a

few these expanded opportunities do present themselves, but for many more the

reverse occurs (Garson 1988 noticed this for a few social workers). Hull (2001)

found restructuring of jobs meant assembly workers in Silicon Valley also had to

make decisions previously reserved to managers, resulting in an increase in their

technical and communication skills. Unfortunately these employees are not being

paid more for jobs with higher responsibilities, and in some cases are hired on a

contingency basis.

A contingent workforce that can be let go at a moment's notice has been one way

corporations have responded to a competitive marketplace (Smith, 1990; Graham,

1995; Barley and Kunda, 2004). Although downsizing was intended to reduce levels

of bureaucracy and ensure a more flexible workplace Smith states "[t]he concept of

flexibility, while providing tangible benefits for employers, currently portends more

troublesome results for corporate workers themselves. Clearly, managerial and

nonmanagerial employees alike end by paying the costs of flexibility and corporate restructuring" (Smith, 179).

As a result of downsizing and the flattening of organizations, the way control is exerted on workers has changed. Barker (1999) for example discussed the "concertive" control participation and teamwork in a manufacturing company entails. Employees make decisions collectively for the good of the company as "[i]t's the right thing for us to do if we are going to be successful" (p. 122). These teams do not have supervisors. The team works together in determining and controlling the work that has to be done. They make decisions and control them collectively. Decisions such as hiring, and discipline are also left to the team.

The new forms of Fordism and the sharing of knowledge

"Knowledge" and recognizing that workers possess knowledge has been recognized in the literature, and employers have been encouraged to listen to workers in order to harness this knowledge. For Subaru-Isuzu auto factory workers in the United States, Graham (1995) examined a new and improved model – the Japanese model.

It was touted as being more democratic than the traditional American model, giving some decision-making powers to the "associates," where equality among various levels of employees was important, and where worker participation was considered essential. The company, understanding volunteerism and community is important to Americans, appealed to the workers by telling them that they should "involve themselves in the job as they would volunteer in the community" (p. 95).

But the company manages this volunteering spirit. One way to do this is to ensure they hire the right people. There are many phases to overcome before being hired – tests in problem solving capabilities, workers interaction with other group members was scrutinized and there was an invasive medical test. Once hired, new associates are subjected to extensive training and initiation program, in order to learn how at Subaru-Isuzu they are one big happy family. New hires are told about 'kaizan,' where ideas about how to improve the production process are important, giving the associates the impression that their ideas are important. Unfortunately, even though they were told Subaru-Isuzu was not like other American car manufacturers, this was not the case. Early into her study Graham found associates made suggestions but as the production line went into full speed suggestions were ceased as associates realized kaizan was mainly concerned with productivity, and that "worker input was not valued" (p. 59).

Ultimately, kaizan is seen as another way for management to dominate workers and their ideas. Graham calls this model 'post-Fordist' as it incorporates Taylorist principles, but it is more "multidimensional and hegemonic in methodology" (p. 132). Through the Japanese model the company "attempts to harness a worker's total physical and mental attitude" (p. 133). Rinehart, Huxley and Robertson (1997) on the other hand argue that the Japanese model is rather neo-Fordist, as it does not offer a more "humane" (p. 202) work environment for the workers. Workers are still managed with principles of scientific management, such as time-study and workloads, and the work is no more interesting. "We didn't discover many challenging jobs ... Most of them were quickly learned, highly standardized and repetitive. The only

break from monotony was job rotation, but that was a matter of multitasking, not multiskilling" (p. 204).

Dreaming of Self-employment

Kasmir (2001) also looked at how employees were encouraged to participate in the production process. She examined Saturn Corporation and "the regime of enterprise" (p. 8). At Saturn, employees were encouraged to think in a self-reliant manner, and to take responsibilities for their actions.

Risks were encouraged – even if it meant pulling the plug on an active production line. Saturn wanted the employees to improve on the manufacturing process, and by encouraging the enterprising character of an individual the hope was to increase profitability and reduce error. It was sold to employees as a way to improve on their sense of self worth.

To do so, the company capitalized on the worker bad experiences in the auto industry. Workers took risks by leaving secure jobs (as it relates to benefits) and without union protection, but employees did so because they did not want to "go traditional anymore" (p. 9). Kasmir argues the workers saw doing so as an act of bravery, but she argues it is in fact a form of exploitation. Worker desire for independence has a long history in the United States, and Saturn is incorporating this dream by promising it will occur within the factory walls. "The enterprise regime thus uses a novel method of exploitation and profit-making; the remaking of the self as a more fulfilled person" (p. 11).

As Kasmir discussed, employees have a long history of dreaming of self-employment and yet little research conducted by anthropologists on the self-employed. When employees discuss their lack of satisfaction with their jobs, and what they could do about it, they discuss wanting to "go it alone." Going it alone is a response to the way they have been treated as corporate employees because of deskilling and the way they are being controlled by management.

Milkman (1997; 116-123) describes how auto-industry workers were given severance packages and some used the money to become self-employed. Becoming self-employed allowed them to move away from the "dictatorship" (p. 118) they had been subjected to as employees. They had not necessarily planned on becoming self-employed; it was something they evolved into through circumstance, luck and timing. Similarly, Beynon (1975) asked the line-assembly workers what their ideal-job would be, and they responded that they would look for something "outside of the system" and that they wanted to be "their own boss" (p. 114). Chinoy (1955) also met auto industry workers wanting to leave the factory and become self-employed. In fact, some were preparing for self-employment while still employed in the factory, by taking courses. The reason sited for becoming self-employed did not have anything to do with monetary gain, but to "escape from the disabilities of factory work" (p. 82).

As we can see, self-employment has been on the radar of many workers for many years. The question now is why is self-employment on the rise? In the past workers remained loyal to their employers when they were taken care of financially for the work they did (salary, pensions and health), even if the work itself was unpleasant. Lately as a way to reduce short-term costs companies downsize, layoff employees,

hire employees on a contingency bases, with lower wages and no benefits packages. This may be a misguided policy for corporations looking for employees. For example, Chinoy (1955) noted, prior to the implementation of a pension plan, autoworkers were concerned about being laid off as they aged, which motivated them to consider and look at other revenue options, such as self-employment. Later, after the implementation of company pension plans, older employees no longer considered self-employment as they did not want to lose their seniority. When Chinoy returned to the factory several years later, only a few who'd expressed an intention to become self-employed had done so. These workers were younger men in their twenties. Also, Chinoy (1955) and Milkman (1997) noted paying high salaries might reduce turnover rates.

One wonders with all that has been written about large formal work organizations why workers remain employed in them, especially as the power of owning the knowledge has been stripped away. Especially in 2005, as the Canadian workforce is more educated than it has ever been. This is what I set out to find out when I studied a small Internet company in Montreal.

3.WHY SELF-EMPLOYMENT?

PART ONE: Literature Review on Self-employment

Changing face of Self-Employment in Canada

The criteria in Canada for small business include businesses employing less than 50 people and making less than $2 Million per year (Chisholm, 1998), which makes CREATIVE MEDIA a small business.

O'Neill (2003) writes that in 2003, almost 42.5% (6.7 Million) of the Canadian workforce was employed in small businesses, with 9.6% of workers were employed in businesses with fewer than 5 employees[14]. This number is predicted to continue to rise, as already discussed, because this is where new jobs are being created. It has been speculated that one of the reasons for the increase in self-employment has been because of the changing labour force composition towards service industry[15], which happened in the 1990s (Manser and Picot, 1999).

Statistics indicate self-employment is on the rise and that characteristics of self-employment are also changing. Whereas during the 1980s, 60% of the self-employed

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[14] 20.4 (3.2 Million) were employed in medium sized businesses (50-499 employees) and 37.1% (5.8 Million) were employed by large businesses (500 and over employees), according to O'Neill (2003), in 2003.

[15] As would be expected, the labour force has evolved since the early 20C when 44% of the labour force was employed in agriculture, and 25% was employed in the service sector. In the 1960's manufacturing topped 33% of the labour force. In the early 1990s there were only 4% employed in agriculture and 20% employed in manufacturing. The service sector was now attracting the new jobs, with 73% of the labour force employed here. Consequently as a result of the shift by 1990 over 50% of labourers were now engaged in managerial, professional, clerical and sales. (Wanner 2000)

also hired employees (Manser and Picot, 1999), by the 1989-1997 time frame this trend had diminished. By the late 1990's 90% of the self-employed were no longer hiring other workers as they were working on their own (Manser and Picot, 1999; Anonymous, 2000). This had led to speculation that self-employment conditions and benefits are deteriorating.

Furthermore, whereas many of the self-employed had been working full time, by 1997 22% of the self-employed were part time (Manser and Picot, 1999). In fact it has been observed that between 1980-1990 men increased their part time status, while for women more worked full time (Kuhn and Schuetze, 2001) indicating there are some gender specific traits to self-employment. More women and fewer men reported self-employment income in 2001 compared with 1997.

Although there was an increase in net amounts earned by these women, self-employed men still earned more than women did. In 2001, the average Canadian man earned $18,327 from self-employment, while women earned $10,523.[16] 1,027,730 women and 1,556,570 men considered themselves as self-employed in Canada in 2001. For men, this was a drop of 1.2%, which was reported in all provinces but Ontario. In Montreal, 86,700 women and 126,030 men considered themselves self-employed. For women this was an increase of 14.3% over the 1997, while for men it was increase of 1.9%. In Montreal, women earned on average, $14,358 while men earned on average $24,577 in 2001.[17]

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[16] http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/030903/d030903d.htm 02/03/2005
[17] http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/030903/d030903d.htm 02/03/2005

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Who is self-employed in Canada? Inasmuch as they are predominately male (Manser and Picot, 1999; Hughes, 2003), they are generally older (Bernhardt, 1994; Manser and Picot, 1999), with more work experience (Bernhardt, 1994; Manser and Picot, 1999) with a majority being married with children (Bernhardt, 1994), and more educated (Manser and Picot, 1999).

The occurrence of self-employment is ascending for College and Master's level students and while it is descending for Bachelors and Doctoral graduates (Finnie and Laporte, 2003).

In terms of personal rewards, overall job satisfaction is superior with the self-employed than it is with paid employees (Finnie and Laporte, 2003)

Why Self-Employment?

Much of the literature asking 'why become self-employment?' has been framed around aggregate data, and is inconclusive. Analysis of the data has resulted in multiple conflicting conclusions. Money, for example, is a recurring theme in the question of 'why become self-employed?' (Blanchflower and Oswald, 1998; Bernhardt, 1994; Arai, 2000; Rehman and Frisby, 1995). Bernhardt (1994) looked at the earnings and investment incomes earned in 1981 in Canada, and found that white self-employed men were at a financial advantage, which at the time led many to speculate money was the primary reason people selected self-employment. Although, according to Canadian Social Trends (Anonymous, 2000) 45% of self employed workers made less than $20,000, and only 4% earned over $100,000 by 1995. Similarly, Arai (2000) argues money is not a valid reason as salaries are better when

employed rather than self-employed for the majority of people. Furthermore self-employment salaries are better for men than they are for women, yet self-employment is on the rise in women. Rehman and Frisby (2000) point out money is not necessarily how some evaluate business success, which would indicate that money is not a reason to choose self-employment. While only partially answering the question, aggregate analysis does offer a starting point for further analysis.

Theories on Self-Employment

Early research pointed to the individual "personality" (Dana, 1997; 53) or "traits" (Rehman and Frisby, 2000; 44) to explain likelihood of entrepreuneurship. Today there has been a shift away from individual characteristics. More recent literature argues that when looking at reasons to explain self-employment more than one factor should be considered.

Orthodox and Reactionary

Dana (1997), for example, looked at international studies on "ethnic enterprise" (p. 52) to better understand why some immigrant populations become self-employed while others do not. He points to previous theories on ethnic self-employment which focussed on the individual, cultural influences making one "predisposed" to self-employment, the response an immigrant group receives from the 'host' country and opportunities related to working in "ethnic enclaves" (p. 58). Dana argues that more than one factor may be at play, and argues for a new "framework" (p. 52) when

looking at reasons for self-employment. He argues for "orthodox entrepreneurship and reactive self-employment (p. 52).

An *orthodox* response to self-employment would indicate the immigrant's propensity to self-employment already existed before migration and forms part of their culture. A *reactionary* response would have occurred after settlement in the host country due to necessity or a loss in social status. In either case, he acknowledges adaptability to circumstances and argues specific immigrant groups become self-employed for different reasons. Dana determines many variables explain self-employment and that we should not treat immigrant populations in a homogenous fashion when considering policies for immigrant populations.

Liberation versus Marginalization

Rehman et al (2000) researched self-employed women who consulted in the sports and fitness industry, usually from home. Rehman et al discuss how in Canada there has been a shift to knowledge-based workers, and these women form part of this category. They also asked why individuals select self-employment over paid employment from the perspective of the Liberation versus Marginalization theory.

In their literature review, Rehman et al discuss how in the liberation perspective, women would normally be blocked from reaching the top echelons in a corporate ladder. The form of consulting the women do in this study would allow them many tax advantages and higher profits as well as flexibility in scheduling. Self-employment would be liberating because it allows the women to reach the personal

and professional goals they would not normally be able to attain if they remained in the traditional working environments.

The marginality perspective on the other hand is based on structural theories, which focus on self-employment as being low paying, lacking in both job security and long term financial benefits. Women are leaving the highly visible environment of the corporation and retreating to their homes reifying their traditional place in the home. It is also marginalizing for the women who have never entered the corporate environment, as they are selecting self-employment, when they cannot find another source of employment.

Rehman and Frisby examined why the women entered into self-employment, how they started or ended their businesses, and discussed flexibility. They determined these questions fit into both the marginality and liberation perspective. They argue that this theory is over simplistic because there are a multitude of reasons to explain why women select and remain self-employed. They argue that when researching self-employment other factors should also be examined, such as "broader social" factors such as gender relations (p. 58), and the business stage (start, middle, maturation) of the enterprise (p. 59).

Push/Pull

Push/pull is by far the most widely utilized theory regarding self-employment. People are pushed into self-employment because there are no jobs available or pulled into being self-employment because of the benefits it offers (Blanchflower and Oswald,

1998; Manser and Picot, 1999; Lin, Compton and Picot, 1999; Li, 2000; Kuhn and

Schuetze, 2001; Finnie and Laporte, 2003; Hughes, 2003).

Kuhn and Schuetze (2001) looked at Canadian data to better understand the

differences in self-employment for men and women, not just at the entry point, but

over a period of time to better understand the 'flow' of self-employment. They

determined more unemployed men enter self-employment than employed men,

arguing they were pushed into self-employment as a response to the reduction in

employment opportunities.

Finnie and Laporte (2003) looked at data for Canadian College and University

graduates and found they were 'pulled' into self-employment because there were

finding earning levels were higher with self-employment, as well as having a higher

job satisfaction rate.

Peter S. Li (2000) also looked at self-employment for Canadian immigrants and found

earnings for self-employed are lower than those who chose employment between

1980-1995. Li argues immigrants who do opt for self-employment do so in order to

circumvent adversity to employment.

Some have found that the push/pull theory is inconclusive. Manser and Picot (1999)

attempted to determine if the pull/push perspective could answer why the self-

employment rate in Canada has increased in the last decade, while it has not in the

United States. They determined that both push and pull factors are at play and

perhaps there are other reasons in Canada to explain the rise in self-employment.

Reasons such as increase in both personal income taxes and payroll taxes. Becoming self-employed could reduce personal income taxes, while companies could be contracting out in order to reduce the payment of payroll taxes (see also Lin et al, 1999).

There are many other reasons that could be at play such as technological change, which reduces operation costs, the fact that Canada has a health care system while many Americans need to work for a company in order to get health care. Hughes (2003) argues research surveys and aggregate analysis have usually concentrated on unemployment to explain push/pull and have not looked at other factors such as bad working conditions.

Lin et al (1999) also looked at the push/pull dichotomy in Canada, during a time when the unemployment rate was high, as they wanted to determine if people were pushed into self-employment because they could not find employment. Or are they pulled towards self-employment because they want to be their own boss? They wanted to understand if self-employment was a long-term proposition or something temporary until something better came along (see also Anonymous, 2000). They conclude that both the pull and push theories are unconvincing to explain the correlation between self-employment and unemployment. Lin et al (1999) determine that other factors explain why self-employment is on the rise as unemployment has also increased, such as demographic changes, technological change, structural changes, the use of contract workers and public policies (Lin et al, 1999).

Conclusion regarding literature review relating to self-employment: Advocating for qualitative research and long-term studies

It is hard to dispute the validity of the studies using aggregate data (Bernhardt, 1994; Blanchflower and Oswald, 1998; Manser and Picot, 1999; Lin et at, 1999; Arai, 2000; Li, 2000; Kuhn and Schuetze, 2001; Finnie and Laporte, 2003; Hughes, 2003.) I would argue these studies and their results are good entry points into further studies.

The use of aggregate data allows for an identification of variances based on such things as gender, age, and ethnic group as well as point out statistical changes, yet provides only a minute understanding of each individual business owner's case. One way to enrich our understanding of individual choices is by taking a qualitative approach to collecting data, through such anthropological methods as conducting fieldwork. Fieldworkers could then supplement existing research, by asking further questions relating to paths taken by each business owner.

The current literature on self-employment examines self-employment trends, at a specific time. Allowing for long-term fieldwork would unveil the *on-going* nature or "flow" (Kuhn and Schuetze, 2001) of running a business. Fieldwork tools such as observation, informal and formal interview allow for an in depth understanding of the business. It is by looking back at the history of the business from the moment it was conceived that allows us to comprehend its current status, and anticipate the future, based on the reflexivity of the owners.

This is what I set out to do at CREATIVE MEDIA. I also explored the question of why become self-employed.

PART TWO: Self-employment at CREATIVE MEDIA

The fateful moment when Norman and Michelle decide to become self-employed

In the remainder of this chapter we will learn why Norman and Michelle started

CREATIVE MEDIA, as they related it to me, in their own words. We will also learn

why they set up their offices in the NEW ARTS Building. Looking at the physical

location is important because to outsiders it provides visual clues as to the message of

what CREATIVE MEDIA sets out to be. The discussion I had with the owners of

CREATIVE MEDIA relating to the location chosen also clearly demonstrates how

'road blocks' force one to make speedy and unanticipated choices in one's life.

Choices that relate to self-identity.

Creative MEDIA was opened in 1999 (the company was three years old when I

conducted my fieldwork) although Norman and Michelle had pondered the idea of

self-employment as they were going through university in Montreal during the mid-

1990s. Norman and Michelle had met at school, as Norman was Michelle's teaching

assistant for one of her Communications classes[18].

During their university days Norman and Michelle had also spent years working in

menial jobs such as bartender, assistant manager of a record store, or caregiver in a

group home to pay for their studies. But probably more influential to Norman was the

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[18] They had both started their studies in other disciplines – Norman in Political Science and Michelle in
Pure and Applied Sciences. So Communications studies for them was a choice they evolved into.
Norman wrote in his on-line survey *"Communication Studies, my final academic experience was what
I would call my first focused, and intended education experience, so I will briefly explain that, and
leave all others as 'taking classes until I discovered what I really wanted to do.'"*

time he had spent in his youth working on his computer and familiarizing himself with the Internet. Indicative of his love of the local cultural scene, he had also been actively involved in the local Montreal music scene writing reviews for a small paper[19].

But it was only after finishing school and initially working in their chosen field - for others - that Norman and Michelle finally started their own business. They had not been happy working for others and learned from their day-to-day experiences. It was during one of those decisive moments that Norman and Michelle decided to go into business together.

As Michelle was graduating from university, Norman had been working as a freelancer for a small multimedia company in Montreal, TECHCO. Within six months of graduating from university Norman had encouraged Michelle to also join TECHCO as an employee. Unfortunately both Michelle and Norman were experiencing a divergence in opinions with the owner of TECHNO and both started feeling unsatisfied, but for different reasons.

Norman considers creativity and being creative important. He also admires creativity in others. He had seen some of the personal work by the owner of TECHCO, considered it creative and had decided that was the reason to work at TECHCO. But as he continued to work with the owner of TECHCO he began to experience a disagreement in opinions as it relates to the implementation of projects. He felt there should be some sort of personal stamp left on each project. It was during his time at

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[19] During the time of my study he was sharing his knowledge of the local music business to a young musician, who needed help with publicity.

TECHCO that Norman began to feel uncomfortable in the working environment he was in. So, for Norman who wanted to compose and keep his creative 'self-identity' intact, the narrative he was constructing about himself was being challenged:

At that time (before working with TECHCO) *I thought he was an outstanding designer who never got a fair chance to fairly design. So when I saw a lot of the personal work that he was doing I thought that it was really really well done and then that was probably the problem that ended up leading to us splitting - that his personal work he gave it his all, his professional work he never did. So the whole relationship started to fall apart because he still had this attitude that my private work I don't bring to work and what I do for work if it is not so good it does not matter. Whereas my attitude was "this is your company, so this is 100% your own thing." That was one of the major battles we got into.*

Michelle also speaks of her previous designing job working for TECHCO with dissatisfaction but her displeasure relates more to management style and lack of control she felt she had. She was given too much responsibility for projects without direction, which she found overwhelming, but it was also making her feel unimportant:

Yeah, you were pretty much left to your own devices. .... I had projects to – project manage things when that was not what I thought technically I thought I was going to be hired on for. I'd be given a sort of project – here is the site – and I'd be basically building it. I did not know what the schedule was. I did not know what the budget was. I did not know what my resources were. Or anything. So I was sort of left to my own devices. You know, I'm pretty independent and I've freelanced before. So I know how to get things done. You're not given any constraints, not being told, you know "the client has a tweak, do it after 48 hours." I always had to do things right away. It was just interesting because I had no guidance. You really didn't feel important as if you were contributing to the company. So it's really weird because you are doing a lot of hours, but not really being recognized for it or anything...It's not just the recognition, it is being constantly part of a team and then going "Hey," we really like the projects we're working on, what we're doing is interesting. I was also plunked down to be a project manager for a huge project and I did not have enough experience. And I was plunked down on it. So sometimes you feel like you are doomed for failure. You didn't have that guidance.

Michelle was asked why she wanted to start her own company and she responded she wanted more control, a more balanced life and flexibility and that it wasn't money.

Wasn't money. Wasn't recognition. I think it was to have more control. If you are owning your own company then in the long run you are better off. ... Ultimately you have more control over the quality of life that you have. ...How many hours you have over the week. Technically in the long run you'll end up having a better quality of life because again you have more control.

Norman's reason for starting CREATIVE MEDIA related more to creativity and wanting to have a nice place to work at every day with a nice working environment. He wanted to have fun.

Well, I do have visions of money. I would like to have more money so that I could, if I wanted buy a new house or buy a car, those kinds of things. Have that kind of security. Or basically, maybe, have that $10,000 back in the bank when I just started, which isn't necessarily there because everything is in the company. But really the most important thing for me was to be able to get up in the morning and be excited to go to work. Because getting up in the morning became tedious, which it was working for other people, then why even do this? ... getting up in the morning is the most important. Being excited to go and do something that day at this place.

Norman by his own admission is not a big spender, and although we did not discuss salary at the time of our study, I would learn later that Norman and Michelle made somewhere between $35,000-$44,999 a year. They were obviously not rich, but they were not poor either. They had enough money to eat, pay for rent, and take the occasional holiday. They also did not have the financial responsibilities such as mortgages, cars and children. So when Norman and Michelle discuss not making 'big money' they meant millions of dollars.

With the $10,000 Norman had saved up over the years Michelle and Norman started CREATIVE MEDIA together, Norman as CEO, and Michelle as President and Creative Director.

When it was decided they would quit TECHCO Norman started working from home. Michelle on the other hand started using the same computer Norman had used at

TECHCO on the TECHCO premises. So as Michelle says *"the transition was the easiest."* In fact the transition from employee to company owner was so transparent Norman told me that *"owning my own company wasn't in my head until six months after it started."*

The transition from employee to employer was so smooth and ad hoc that even after three years in business Norman and Michelle did not have a formal business plan. On my first day at CREATIVE MEDIA I asked Norman to give me anything he had to explain who CREATIVE MEDIA was - something that perhaps was given to potential customers when conducting a sales pitch. He could not produce anything in hardcopy version. It was suggested I look at the website. When I prodded a little further I was given a document that was a work in progress and was presently being worked on by Norman. I would learn later that what I had been given was the document being worked on in order to get some funding for a special project with a Canadian government-funding agency.

This document described who was working at CREATIVE MEDIA – either permanent or contract employees. The website on the other hand focused on the creative make-up of CREATIVE MEDIA and discussed past projects. Norman and Michelle had not gone through the process of formally constructing their company, but they knew what they wanted to be, and that is – a creative company. That was the first and foremost priority of CREATIVE MEDIA during my fieldwork. And this is how they presented themselves to the rest of the world.

One of the reasons Norman and Michelle had no formal business plan relates to the fact that Norman used his own personal savings to start CREATIVE MEDIA and consequently was not required to request a loan from a Bank. Going through the process of requesting a loan would have forced them to prepare a business plan. The speed at which CREATIVE MEDIA was started is also a factor. But in conversation I learned Norman did not consider CREATIVE MEDIA a 'company,' which I also believe explains why he did not have any formal documentation. Being a "business owner" implied a certain type of business pattern Norman wanted to avoid.

I didn't really think of it as owning my own company. I thought of it as, I don't know, doing something. I never really saw the word "company" attached to what I wanted to do actually. I don't know if it makes any sense. ... It was more of a lifestyle choice. I had an idea that I could do this better, while it was almost an extension of doing freelance work. ... It's hard to explain, because it's not – when you think of company you think corporation, you think institution. At least that's the way I see it ... It's just that for me the image of company means corporation, it means big corporation. So that I think when we were trying to start it, the idea of company or the term company did not apply to myself. Even though it was.

Norman and Michelle did not start CREATIVE MEDIA because of the money. On the contrary, Norman did not want to make 'big money' and disliked 'big business.' He felt those types of companies were not creative. He often spoke of Celine Dion as an example of what he did not want CREATIVE MEDIA to become:

... You don't have to be Celine Dion. Great, she is probably a billionaire already, but she produces music that masses loves, that I hate. I think there is enough people out there that hate Celine Dion that do something different. Yeah, they will never be her level of importance, but there are more than enough people doing creative things, earning a living, making in some cases a very good living and taking it to a higher level. Being more elevated or snobby. Elevation or snob is the same thing. Somebody who takes their art more seriously. Somebody who does something that is different or more interesting. ... You ask Celine Dion, you sit down with her, and you ask her if she thinks she is an artist, she'll think that she is one of the most talented people on the planet. I am sure that the people who surround her, who love her music they'll say it, that she is one of the most talented people that I have ever heard. In my opinion she is the most boring. You know, the most staged. She is the least emotional.

Doesn't really have a heart, she's just a heart beating, just a voice with great vocal range. Who cares? ...

In answering the question the vocabulary used by Norman points to what he does not want to become.

The values of the 'generation' – a contradiction of the corporate model.

When Norman and Michelle discuss the work situation they have tried to create they discuss it in terms of values that are important to them. Norman, when discussing wanting to put a personal stamp on his work, wants to have some pride in his accomplishments. He does not want to just perform on the job; he wants to put his heart and soul into the work. He is willing to sacrifice making 'big money' for this.

Michelle speaks more of treatment by superiors, and wanting to have more control of her work, her life and she wants to also make a statement as to the outcome of the final product. She wants her voice heard and her ideas respected.

These values have often been ascribed to 'Generation X' in the popular media. It is not surprising then to hear these same values being used by Norman and Michelle, as they also fit the criteria used to determine an individual member of this 'generation.' 'Generation' X is a term defining people born in between 1960-1980. Douglas Coupland (1991) coined the term as a result of his non-fictional book of the same name.

"Generation" as a term differs here from our usual anthropological sense of a generation. When anthropology studies generations, it implies a connection to family

and it entails a history, with an older generation (or two) and a younger generation. The use of the word generation in this thesis does not imply a past, or a link to family. It relates to the present. Generation as used here is a group of people connected through images principally generated by the popular media, primarily based on their birth date. It is a label. And, as a label created by the popular press it also generalizes, insinuating all people born between these dates are similar in attitudes towards work.

Of relevance to my thesis is how the popular media, as a result of their 'unique' work values, has portrayed this group of workers. It must be said that the discussions relating to the Generation X has been centered on the white middle class[20], which I suspect is because of the shrinking of the middle class. It does not distinguish along gender lines, education, social class, ethnicity or geographical location[21].

The popular media has discussed how Gen-X is different from the generation that preceded them, the Baby Boomer. According to the media reports coming out of the United States, the Gen-Xers had watched their parents and had learned. They had observed their parents work diligently for corporations, become financially secure receiving steady incomes, benefits and in some instances protection through unions. And then their parents work lives came crashing down as two economic recessions forced companies to lay off employees in droves. This has apparently greatly altered the work views of the Gen-Xer. Whereas the Boomer had been career oriented and materialistic, the Gen-Xer is not. Descriptions, such as 'desire more life balance'

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[20] Sherry Ortner (1998) argues that we should be careful with media images, as they are not based on any theoretical underpinnings. For example, she demonstrates the importance of social class.
[21] I am comfortable using these media images here, as the designers of CREATIVE MEDIA are white educated middle class individuals.

(Bennett, 1988; Gross and Scott, 1999; Maynard, 1996; Booth, 1999; Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, 2000), 'necessity for perpetual learning on the job' (Tulgan, 1996; Anonymous, 1999), 'feeling part of a team' (Tulgan, 1996; Maynard, 1996), 'not about making money' (Bennett, 1988; Zelz, 1992; Jennings, 2000), 'desire for more control' (Zelz, 1992; Anonymous, 2000), 'putting a stamp on each project' (Zelz, 1992), 'wanting to feel important' (Tulgan, 1996) are often used in reference to the Gen-Xer. Lancaster and Stillman (2002) have said that Gen-X has less confidence in institutions that they do in themselves.

The 'generation' of workers I conducted my fieldwork with also possessed the values as it related to their work, and it is what attracted me to them in the first place. As a result of these values, the popular media has proposed ways for companies to attract potential recruits, by not making the interview process too work oriented, by offering flexible benefits packages, or by selling the learning that one will accomplish in the job (Hladun, 1990). How is it that Generation X values contradict the values that have generally been associates with corporate mentally?

Corporations and other formal work organizations, as we saw previously, have been known to control their workers – no matter if the worker is blue collar, white collar, professional or service. Corporations are known to dictate the hours of work (Balzer, 1976) leaving little room for the flexibility desired to "have a life." They watch their employees to ensure they are working at optimum levels (Davinartz, 1999) leaving little room for exploration and play. Decisions are controlled at the top (Kunda, 1992; Hochschild, 1997) leaving little room for the worker input. New models, such as the Japanese model, give the impression that they want to listen to worker ideas, but

ultimately do not (Graham, 1995). Workers are judged by the amount of hours worked (Hochschild, 1997) giving the impression the final product is not important. Corporations are interested in maximizing profits, yet Generation X is not interested in making money. In striving for optimum profits corporations have reduced the work performed to boring and repetitive tasks, taking the power away from the worker. Generation X on the other hand, always wants to learn. They dislike boredom, preferring creativity.

Norman, Michelle, Mark and Samantha all possessed the values of their 'generation.' But rather than opt to work for a formal institution or corporation. Norman and Michelle created a workspace they could call their own, and set up their physical workspace so that it would not look like corporate model. Mark and Samantha were allowed to share in this workspace as they shared the same values as Norman and Michelle.

Physically moving away from the corporation

Deciding where to set up offices is important, especially if you are pronouncing what type of company you are. On my inaugural day at CREATIVE MEDIA it was visually straightforward to recognize the message conveyed by the designers in their choice of location. Their choice was about moving away from the "corporate model."

CREATIVE MEDIA is located in the city of Montreal. If we consider the train station, as the centre of Montreal, CREATIVE MEDIA would be located a fifteen minute walk away from the centre of downtown. The train station is located in an

area of town that has been going through resurgence for almost a decade. This urban renewal was apparently sparked by the high-technology sector setting itself up here. Although at the time of my study Montreal was the 15th largest city in North America population wise, it ranked 10th in terms of employment opportunities in technology. It ranked second in terms of aerospace jobs, fourth in terms of information technology jobs and third in pharmaceutical (Miron, 2002). Fortunately for the city, in 2001, of all new technology investments only 12% were Internet related.[22] It has been speculated that one reason Montreal was slow in attracting Internet companies might relate to the fact that the Parti Quebecois government, and more particularly the language minister, Louise Beaudoin, were afraid of the impact the Internet would have on the French language. Ironically, it was the fact technology based sites were not being developed in French, which created a need for these types of sites in Quebec. Quebec based entrepreneurs have been slowly creating web sites relating to such specialities as technology and stock markets, which are now being used by French populations in Europe.

In close proximity to the train station, IBM put up a high-rise fifteen years ago. And then only several years later came the Bell Centre, where all the Montréal Canadiens Hockey games are played. And prior to her much touted retirement and isolation in Las Vegas, Celine Dion had concerts here, perpetually is seems. At the time of my fieldwork the Parti-Quebecois Government[23] had spent considerable time and money touting the new E-Commerce business sector in Montreal (Friedman, 2000). That building is right across the street from the Bell Centre. CGI a large Canadian IT

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[22] Which meant that Montreal was largely unaffected when the Internet bubble burst (Riga, 2000).
[23] When the initial announcement was made the Finance Minister – Bernard Landry was offering companies willing to participate, tax credits of up to 25% on salaries for those working in technology

company has moved their headquarters there. In this district the streets were relatively clean, and filled with hurried business people in their long blue coats, carrying briefcases.

CREATIVE MEDIA is not located is this renewed and affluent part of town. This is dramatically clear as one walks away from the train station. Leaving the business and shopping area located at Place Ville Marie and heading East one ends up on St-Catherine, an older and run down part of town to get to CREATIVE MEDIA.

Here the sidewalks are less well maintained by the City on snowy days. There are cigarette butts, newspapers, as well as McDonalds cups littering the ground. The people walking the streets are more casual in appearance, wearing jeans and running shoes. The crowd is also obviously more artsy, with coloured hair and imaginative wardrobes. The streets are filled with trucks delivering goods to the many stores in the area - stores carrying such products as fabric, electronics, inexpensive shoes and clothing. It is also obvious here that homelessness is an issue the city has not paid enough attention to.

The NEW ARTS building where CREATIVE MEDIA is located was built in the early 1900's. It is a "plain" looking building based on American models of its time (Gournay et al, 1998). The buildings were built to be versatile so as to accommodate both office space and light manufacturing, which were the primary types of employment available at that time.

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jobs, and located at the E-Commerce Centre for up to $10,000 for each job, for a period of 10 years. The objective for the government was job creation of up to 20,000 new jobs.

Through the twin sets of doors entering the building is a coffee shop on the right. CREATIVE MEDIA is located on the second floor. The hallways are wide and the ceilings are high. It has a sense of grandeur. The walls are white giving an impression that no interior decorator was hired for inspiration. The floors are hardwood but in dire need of maintenance, only partially protected with stain and varnish while surprisingly other planks are bare.

In the last ten years the building has gone through many changes. As the previous tenants died, generally tailors, the building slowly emptied, making it difficult for the owners to pay for its upkeep. Ten years ago new elevators were put in, meaning the elevator doorman was no longer required. The building went through a stage where it was virtually empty, five years ago the empty spaces began to be rented out by a younger demographic group of members of the artistic community, and most recently by entrepreneurs working within the computer industry. It is not until the economic revival of the city and the low availability rate of rental spaces that the building began to fill up again.[24]

The past grandeur remains – which leaves hope that its present owners will complete the building transition. Not only does the building need major repair work, it also needs attention to details – such as putting permanent numbers on individual business doors. Like many of the businesses in the building, CREATIVE MEDIA has a temporary sign fixed on its door made with a standard black ink jet computer printer. On this sign I see CREATIVE MEDIA Inc and Magazine Inc.

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[24] At the time of my fieldwork Montreal had one of the lowest costs of living, in comparison to other large North American cities.

Moving to the NEW ARTS building

Before setting up offices in the NEW ARTS building, Norman initially set up

CREATIVE MEDIA in the old offices of TECHCO, which was in Old Montreal in

another building. As they were setting up their new business, a Montreal development

company noticed the beauty in this building in Old Montreal and approached the

owners of the building to sell it. The economy was beginning to improve in Montreal,

and the developers took advantage of the situation and in turn morphed the building

into a residential condo project while maintaining its structural integrity, thereby

forcing all the people renting some space out. As I was resentfully told by Michelle

"If you walk down there now, you are gonna see some nice Italian kitchens. They

made them into very nice high priced condos.[25]*"*

Norman and Michelle received their eviction notices during the 1999 Christmas

season and within a short time frame were forced to look for a new place to work

because they would be out of the building by May 2000. To complicate matters, they

were not the only company searching out space. There was a whole building or

people working in creative environments looking for a new location[26]:

> *... But we were a bad position because we had a whole bunch of people all leaving*
> *that one building. All sorts of similar companies. You had designers. You had*
> *photographers. You had all sorts of people needing big spaces. Loft style spaces, so.*
> *It's not like we were only one company looking, we were a whole bunch of companies*
> *all looking at the exact same spaces... It started getting into the position where the*

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[25] In fact, the developers of the condo project have won heritage awards for having transformed a
historical building. In truth the developers put great care into transforming the building from its
original state as a paper factory (it was located in Paper hill) to residential lofts. The developers are
proud of having been part of the blossoming of a once decaying neighbourhood into something grand.
[26] Not only were companies looking for new spaces to rent as they were being forced out of Old
Montreal, but so were the poorer residents. This was documented in the National Film Board
documentary "645 Wellington, " directed by Kaveh Nabatian.

landlords were having a field day, almost, in my opinion. They were being a little bit, kind of assholes as far as the price. Kind of promising and then not. (Michelle)

Moving is always difficult to do, especially when you are not prepared to do so. There were several considerations evaluated in determining a new location. The first consideration was price. Money was a big issue because the arrangements in the Old Montreal building had allowed them some financial leeway. They were sharing offices with yet another company and were being given gratis access to the Internet. But being evicted meant having to make their own arrangements for the Internet and paying for the costs, which can total $600 to $700 a month. They therefore decided to share the office space with Mathew, the owner of Magazine Inc. and hence divide the cost of the Internet hook-up.

They had found the formula at the building in Old Montreal successful, and therefore wanted something similar. The second consideration was familiarity.

We used to have an office down the street, which is in a great building .... I think it was deemed a historical building. Down in that area you've got the Palais des Congrès. You've got the "City" (meaning the administration of the city of Montreal) that was into making that part of the city into a Cité Internationale...sort of business oriented, high tech because you've got the Cité de Multimedia which is down there, everything like that. Needless to say, [this building in Old Montreal] in as much as it was gorgeous outside was kind of getting dilapidated inside. The rents were cheap. You had the nice big windows like here. ... So when we were looking for office space we looked pretty much in Old Montreal. But we ended up going back to [the NEW ARTS] building because the rent was right, the space was right, the space was available. ...So when I used to go down to work I used to walk down this street (pointing to the one we are sitting next to) all the time. You know, you can't help but miss the [NEW ARTS] building (Michelle points to the next building) and this building. ... And they've got storefronts downstairs. But uh, I usually passed by this space because it's on the corner, the windows are nice and high and it was a space that always intrigued me. . The thing is that from the street level looking in, it was all painted black. I was always convinced for two years that this place had been burnt down or something and they never did anything about it... (Michelle)

The third factor and most influential related to personal preferences, generally relating

to architecture, such as the historical age of the building and the size of the windows.

They chose a building they like on an aesthetic level.

...I've got an appreciation for buildings, and old buildings, and definitely spaces like this where you've got sort of little square windows, that are pretty much original in as much as they are not great insulators. (Michelle)

...Really I am not interested in the kind of newer style building. I really like the feel of an old building. Also living in the Plateau[27]. I just like those kind of buildings, that kind of layout. That kind of period of the city, so. Big windows, means lots of light, I think really has a really comfortable feel. (Norman)

Customers had absolutely no input into where the CREATIVE MEDIA offices would

be located. In fact Norman told me that he wanted the workspace to be "theirs" and

that rather than have a customer go to the NEW ARTS building, they go visit the

customers. He wants to keep the office more personal.

And I think that if for example it was you and me, and you were actually a client, and I'm sitting here and I trying to impress you, and you know that is a different game, than being creative, working with a client and getting them to work with you is a separate thing from creating. And if we were sitting here and I'm trying to tell you how serious we are and we want to work with you and all of a sudden you hear someone yelling "Fucken Shit" from across the office. You know, those two environments don't mix. So whereas there are times where clients will come in here, and usually a client will come after they know us a little so that they know what to expect. I like the idea of being able to do whatever we want and not having to feel censured. It's funny you know Mathew had somebody come in for their insurance, talk about insurance, RRSP plans a couple of weeks ago you know, and we are all kind of being quiet, and I don't like that feeling. (Norman)

Of vital importance to the owners of CREATIVE MEDIA, they were following a

standard they believe has been set by other design companies:

I guess that is all part of the whole creative company idea. I don't know where I get it. It's not like I have a model and I say " I've seen that company and I want to be like them." I think there is almost a certain standard or design for a creative company. In that it is a place where we create, where we build, where it is an open environment

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[27] Plateau is a part of Montreal where the artistic community likes to live.

for communication. Where it's about having a studio environment where people can create things (Norman)

Norman and Michelle did not want to look like a big, boring, heartless corporation. They took the cues regarding what a corporation organization looked like, and responded in an opposing manner. They located their offices where corporations would not. They organized the physical workspace in contradiction to the typical corporation. More importantly they did not want to behave like a corporation. Corporations as they saw them were large and boring. They decided to use the one tool they could to ensure they did not repeat the corporate mentality, the one tool they felt corporations could not exploit – a focus on creativity.

4. SELF-IDENTITY AS CREATIVE

"Where individuals cannot live creatively, either because of the compulsive enactment of routines, or because they have been unable to attribute full 'solidity' to persons and objects around them, chronic melancholic or schizophrenic tendencies are likely to result.

Anthony Giddens (1991; 41)

PART ONE: Literature Review

In this chapter there are two items I want to discuss - identity and creativity.

As mentioned, Norman and Michelle decided they wanted to work in a creative

environment. It was clearly articulated to me on many occasions that "we are

creative." So I set out to understand what this meant to the owners of CREATIVE

MEDIA. In fact, I would learn that creativity was used as a beacon for most

decisions. It was also used as tool for defining their self-identity.

Identity in the workplace

Organisational theory has tended to view 'organisational culture' as controlled by

management, which is reflected in early management of the manipulation of identity.

Mayer (1980) discusses how at Ford, during the pre first world war period,

immigrants arriving from Poland, Russia and other European companies were not

considered productive workers by Ford. At the time absenteeism was high, as well as

the turnover rate, which was very costly for Ford. In order to save money, Ford

instituted a policy whereby workers would be paid $5.00 a day for their work, if they

participated in training programs intended to Americanise the European workforce[28].

The workers were educated in personal hygiene, manners, wardrobe, personal living

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[28] This policy was managed by the sociological department of Ford.

arrangements, as well as in the English language. The populations that participated in this program did so mainly for the monetary reasons. Ultimately the program failed as the wartime economic situation, as well as technological competition, rendered it difficult for Ford to afford such a high premium in salaries. As Meyer writes "the program offers a most interesting insight into the managerial mentality for an important period in the development of the American workforce" (p. 79). Companies are no longer as omnipresent as it relates to identity, but they are still very present.

With contemporary business models, such as the Japanese factory model, the employer expected the worker to take on another identity – that of a team player (Graham, 1995; Hull, 2001). Graham (1995) discusses the extensive recruitment process intended to ensure the workers are in fact team players. Graham found that many potential workers quickly understood that they needed to portray the identity of being team players, and put on a "charade" (p. 32) during the recruitment process, for the benefit of management, which continues into the plant once they are hired. They did so because they needed the job. As she writes about this charade, it is a "peculiar form of compliance, its potential for resistance never surfacing" (p. 34).

Leidner (1993) discusses identity as it relates to routinization for the service industry workers. In order to ensure the employees understand how to present themselves, and follow the script, employers can dictate how workers should think about their jobs. For the insurance agent, "[t]he company strove to inculcate optimism, determination, enthusiasm, and confidence and destroy habits of negative thinking" (p. 183). Routinization of the individual personality as a McDonald's window crew comes with its own challenges – being cheerful and helpful, even when dealing with difficult

customers. The agents are being told how to control the customer, even if it means

ignoring what the customer has said. This molding of identity by the companies in

question according to Leidner goes against American ideals of authenticity and true

identity (p. 181)[29], which could potentially be problematic for the workers. To

counter this problem the companies used "physic strategies" (p. 189) - explaining to

the employees how they were being provided with tools to help them with their

customers. Leidner argues that the high turnover rates at these companies may be the

"modal response" for dealing with the problems of identity manipulations.

Cohen (1994) argues that organizational theory mistakenly understands the

organization as the ones granting identity on to their members. He argues individuals

have an "active voice" (p. 94) in organizations and that the boundaries are elastic

enough to allow members to give personal meaning through "symbolic means" (p. 94)

to their personal "interests and attitudes" (p. 94). Although organizations may try to

convey one message, individuals interpret them differently. Not only do they

interpret, but they also "negotiate the relationships among the organization and their

many other social commitments" (p. 94). Individuals possess different competing

interests, attitudes and within larger organizations represent different business units.

Add to that the "extra-organizational factors" and "it becomes clear that the

organisation bears little resemblance to the neatly arranged and methodical flow

charts on the chief executive's office wall" (p. 97). With all of these demands

individuals do not assimilate passively the organizational identity as it is presented,

but rather they integrate the organizational "commitments" (p. 98) to their own

individual needs.

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[29] This is not the case for the Japanese Geisha, whose work requires "insincere flattery" (Leidner, 1993; 181).

individuals do not assimilate passively the organizational identity as it is presented, but rather they integrate the organizational "commitments" (p. 98) to their own individual needs.

English-Lueck and Saveri (2001) discuss identity for the worker involved in the global marketplace. This worker is able to construct an identity at the individual, local, national level, take on the identity on a situational basis, but also present it to others – which the authors call "evangelising identity" (p. 11). The technology work is variable, demanding and challenging. Consistency does not exist, and work may change at a moment's notice. Relationships are important, because one may be forced to call in global expertise. As English-Lueck et al write of the relationships "the connections are imbued with issues of identity. Creating and maintaining the connections requires finding a commonality, rooted in similar avocational, professional, or ethnic/national affiliation" (p. 8). Differences may also be used to explain ambiguity. Identity in this instance is not only rooted in the local, national identity, it is also rooted in the work. So someone would refer to themselves as being "technical."

Cohen (1994) and English-Lueck et. al. (2001) argue for individual agency as it relates to identity. How is identity formation different for the self-employed? Anthony Giddens (1991) is very helpful in understanding this process. Giddens argues that what was once known and explained through tradition and habit has now been replaced by uncertainty, and that "all knowledge takes the form of hypotheses." (Giddens 1991; 3) The result of this perpetual uncertainty is that we now live in a world of "doubt," which is "a pervasive feature of modern critical reason." (Giddens,

1991; 3) Giddens tells us modernity is a "high risk culture" because the days are filled with uncertainty and change.

Reflexivity becomes a project for the individual. "The reflexive project of the self, which consists in the sustaining of coherent, yet continuously revised, biographical narratives, takes place in the context of multiple choice as filtered through abstract systems." (Giddens, 1991; 5) The individual must "*create* ontological reference points." (Emphasis added: Giddens, 48)

The creation of these reference points is a continual process over time. It is not simply "a collection of traits" (Giddens, 1991; 53) one has or accumulates, but "presumes continuity across time and space" (p. 53). Giddens tells us a person who has a 'normal' sense of self-identity has a sense of their own autobiography, which they can articulate to others. They are also capable of filtering out the 'dangers' to their self-identity if they are being truly honest to themselves and work towards keeping this self-identity alive. The individual must moderate for themselves with everyday experience. "Lifestyle" as Giddens tells us becomes significant. How does Giddens define lifestyle? He sees it as a "more or less integrated set of practices which an individual embraces, not only because such practices fulfil utilitarian needs, but because they give material form to a particular narrative of self-identity" (Giddens 1991; 81).

As tradition loses its importance, and the more daily life is reconstructed with a tension between the local and the global people are forced to take lifestyle choices as one of their options among many other options. People have many more options and

considerations to look at when deciding who they want to be. And obviously, some people have more choices than others do. The choice to become self-employed or working for a small business was definitely a lifestyle choice, as would selecting to work for a corporation.

Giddens provided an analytical perspective as it regards modernity and self-identity. I provide an observed perspective. The 'narrative' the designers constructed regarding their work identity was negotiated at various levels and on a daily basis, through the help of the 'organization' they had built.

As we will see a little later the owners of CREATIVE MEDIA considered their self-identity related to creativity. But first, I would like to discuss how creativity in the corporation has been discussed in the literature.

Creativity in the corporation

Prior to the current focus on creativity in corporations, Raudsepp (1987) discussed how corporations have preoccupied themselves with productivity and quality in order to meet their objectives. This despite finding creativity can improve quality, increase profits, motivate employees, increase skill levels, and improve teamwork. It is now recognized that without creativity companies cannot survive (Gryskiewicz, 2000).

Creativity in the business environment currently is seen as a tool for coming up with revenue generating ideas, which in a sense is another way a managing productivity. The objective of productivity is to produce something that will sell. As a result of this

way of looking at creativity, discussions have focused on the different stages of creativity, and its distinction from innovation.

West (2002) distinguishes between creativity and innovation in work groups, elaborating on some of the confusion and contradictions leading to an understanding of innovation and creativity. They reviewed literature, and determined creativity is the first stage, leading to the second stage of innovation. Creativity is then the process of generating the idea, while innovation is the actual "doing." Innovations may be creative, but this would not necessarily be so in all cases. For example, setting up a new workgroup in one factory may not be creative as it is already is use in other factories. West and Farr (1990) argue innovation is a social process, but that creativity is an "individual cognitive process." (West et al, 1990; 11) It is as a result of this distinction between creativity and innovation that West (2002) is able to determine that external demands inhibit creativity, but assist innovation.

James, Clark and Cropanzano (1999) discuss the difference between positive and negative creativity, which is something other articles have not discussed. Positive creativity leads to innovative and creative ideas while also having positive effects on employee morale. One of the best ways to ensure there is positive creativity is to ensure there is a social climate that encourages positive creativity and reinforces the principles of positive creativity. Negative creativity on the other hand leads to theft, sabotage and undermining the goals set by the company. It can occur when superiors do not give employees the freedom and control to work towards positive creativity. Negative creativity has not been discussed much in literature, and yet is important to understand especially as we see an increase in criminal charges being laid on

executives in corporate America. At CREATIVE MEDIA, I only observed positive creativity.

Creativity in the artistic milieu

The assumption regarding creativity and its relationship to commerce has always been that there is a conflict because those working in the artistic milieu are considered to be outsiders. Keith Negus (1995) looked at the music industry to understand this level of conflict. Negus mandates for a clearer understanding between creativity and innovation, because within the music industry there has been no clear understanding as to why certain musical styles are selected, over others, for development. This has led to a misconception that smaller, independent companies produce creative results, while the larger corporate forms of business have not (1995; 327). He argues that more often than not what has been identified as innovative is what has, in retrospect, been found to be commercially successful. He asks "[w]hat about 'innovations' that were not commercially successful?" (1995, 328). For Negus, creativity in the music industry relates to the future as the producers are always looking for the next big thing. They are making decisions as to what *may* be successful, based on previous trends.

What is creativity for a small Internet company?

PART TWO: CREATIVE MEDIA is *Creativity*

Whereas anthropological literature on creativity takes on the approach of looking at what is considered as "traditional" and attributes "creativity" to change[30] my major finding was creativity was the main reason for working at CREATIVE MEDIA.[31] The designers discussed creativity, not as a way to make more money, but creativity as their main objective. It was their "raison d'être." Creativity related to their self-identity. Making money was important, especially in order to survive, but making "big money" like corporations strive for was not the objective.

As this was the case, during my time at CREATIVE MEDIA I focused around two questions as it related to creativity. The first one being, what is creativity? As we will see, the type of business CREATIVE MEDIA was into, Internet based web design, influenced the answer to this question. My second question related to how creativity was fostered. I learned it was cultivated and articulated at three different levels – personally, internally, and externally.

Being creative is a thought process

What was creativity at CREATIVE MEDIA? Most importantly it was a thought process.

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[30] Creativity then becomes an act that propels a cultural process. In explaining this cultural process, anthropologists often looks back to understand the history of the people being studied and what predicated this change. Crowther (1994) looked at the traditional salmon dance as it was performed and discusses how the act of being creative can change the ways in which a ceremony was traditionally performed, and lead to reinforcing the Haida identity within Canada. Narayan (1993) similarly discusses the creative process and how individual Hindu Gurus storytellers could improvise a traditional story during storytelling in order to adapt to current historical situations to advance their own agendas. Beatty (1999) also looked back and attributed creativity to modifications in language for the Naishan Dene. Berlo (1989) looked at creativity, through the feminist lens and found that acts of creativity can lead to independence from men, while others found that it could challenge traditional male dominance (Babcock, 1993; Tsing, 1993). Through self-critique, anthropologist have even gone one step further in its discussion on creativity, through an analysis on how we write our ethnographies (see Part II of Lavie, Narayan and Rosaldo, 1993).

At the time of my fieldwork CREATIVE MEDIA created websites for use by external

sources, with certain needs, although they were hoping to develop one of their own

websites soon. Sometimes the customers had a general idea of what kind of website

they wanted, or in other cases they had very specific criteria. Either way, when going

through the act of designing a website there was always a thought process behind it.

They were creating with a problem to solve, with a specific goal in mind.

Creativity, also I think that I might have said at some point, doesn't necessarily mean or have to be the traditional you know "it's a pretty picture," it's designed by somebody who calls themselves an artist. That's one way to see creativity. But to me creativity is the way somebody thinks about the problem (Norman)

For Michelle, the thought process leads to some innovation, doing something that has

not been done before.

Uh. Creativity – it's being smart, it's being uh, you know. Creativity ... coming up with solutions for whatever sort of problems. It's coming up, taking the project as a whole, taking the project and what it's supposed to do and coming up with sort of different more new inventive ways, or just an interesting way of trying to get it across. As opposed to the status quo. Sometimes you end up doing the status quo – whatever. Yeah, it's trying to come up with innovative ways of doing things, I guess. ... I always sort of approach things from a logical point of view. So yeah. I see it as sort of problem solving. Inventive problem solving. (Michelle)

Samantha also believes creativity is a thought process, but for her it is something that

you build on as you go. Like her art, it was an evolving process.

Hm, the creative process I guess, begins with the idea, with the concept. Um. ...It's the entire project. ... If I'm thinking ... Flash[32]... I am thinking from A to Z. It doesn't stop. Because you are constantly creating things. You are constantly thinking about it, even though I will have built a prototype, as you start adding things it is organic, you know. You keep "Oh, I hadn't thought of this," "I can have this little flourish here," "I can add this." It's just constantly developing (Samantha)

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[31] Which is a subject that has been largely unexamined in the literature on Generation X and self-employment.

[32] Flash is a computer program.

Creativity in the web environment

Creativity at CREATIVE MEDIA was understood as something quite specific to the

web environment they worked in. In my interviews this message was clear when it

was stated that they were not a technology company:

We are taking a creative approach. We are looking to always do something new and inventive. Whereas they (the technology companies) are always looking for something that is efficient. And it works, and sometimes that is the right answer. There are companies where that makes sense. There are companies when dealing with web stuff, they don't need somebody like us. They need something simple, efficient and it works and there is a background and no one looks at it. That's it. Um. Also, whereas also for us, the key focus is on the visuals and the technology that drives the visuals. For most technology web companies we've worked with, it's usually the technology is there and the visual is an afterthought. So they work on building the technology and the visual is an afterthought. Plus we are trying to get more and more out of just being a company that builds websites. ... (Norman)

Michelle had also worked for a technology company and this is how she describes

what is produced:

"Technology company" is somebody who is going to, you know create, using higher level programming languages to basically create software that is used on the web. That is a technology company to me. You've got hosting companies. That is a technology company to me. A technology company could be making cash register systems or e-commerce systems and everything like that. ... Well, they might have a teeny department that provides graphics. OK. Whereas that might be a teeny department, it is sort of an afterthought. It's something that they need to have, but again their focus isn't on necessarily on design or anything like that. It's more focused on the application part. (Michelle)

But at CREATIVE MEDIA this was not the case. When creativity is usually

discussed in the literature it is typically discussed as something apart from the rest of

the business which is why it can be broken down into two parts as West (2002) has.

For example, a company will produce computers, with efficiency and cost in mind,

but now it is recognized that in order to continue making money, companies must

come up with new ideas. Creativity for a corporation then is an add-on to a

production process already in place. For Michelle and Norman, on the other hand,

they were saying CREATIVE MEDIA *is* a creative company

Even though they were not a technology company, there were particularities relating

to creativity in a web environment. In my early conversations with Norman on

creativity he indicated there was a clear difference between creativity in the classic

sense of a painting, as he felt one of his responsibilities was in also satisfying the

customer rather than making it a personal experience between the painter and the

canvas.

What we do is design, but truthfully it is commercial design. So whenever we do commercial design it is different than painting a painting. When you think of a painting there are always rules ... but... you don't have to answer to anybody. You are painting something and that's it. We're doing something that is commercial. It's commercial design, commercial arts, so that in many ways what we are doing is problem solving. And rather than just solving the problem with the easiest answer or the easiest solution, we try to find the smartest solution and the smartest and most creative answer. (Norman)

Whereas Norman had indicated the difference between painting and creating a web

site relates to who one is painting for, Samantha discussed the actual canvas as being

quite different:

... there is a difference. I had only worked with painting and drawing (when she was an Arts student at university) *That was my focus. Painting and drawing is capturing one instant. It's a photograph. And it's kind of ironic that the thing that I excelled the most at, at first, was the animation, because you have a painting that is one moment in time, and that's it. You have one composition – it's more like print. Whereas web is more organic- it moves, it changes, um, to adapt to that. And it's information structure, it's information architecture. So there is a big difference, a very big difference.* (Samantha)

Although Norman was creating for the customer, he got more satisfaction out of being

creative for himself, even if his customer could not see it. In order to help me

understand the difference, Norman gave an example of a creative project CREATIVE

MEDIA had recently worked on which they were proud of. This was a government

web site:

I will give you an example of something that we did recently. .... It's not the most creative site. It's a government site. They want it to look nice. They want it to just be a place where you can go and get text information and leave. So not the most exciting project, in essence probably no more exciting than a regular brochure. But rather than just playing to the lowest common denominator and saying "Yeah, oh well." We could have just taken the text, slapped it onto an HTML page, put some pretty pictures on the top and put pretty pictures on the bottom and left. We said "Ok, lets try to challenge ourselves, let's try to do thing in a different, and smarter ways. In this case we did not necessarily use the digital, creative side, although we did try to do a good and elegant job of it. We said "let's take this opportunity to build a some kind of little small computer technology behind it so that the site is easy to update, easy to work it." So that the creativity in that kind of project is not in the front, and not in the way we naturally see it but in the way it's constructed behind. So that its constructed in such a way so that the fonts, the text on any page is a certain font ... and the client or we decide that that font isn't working and we want to make it Arial, we can go to just one little place in the file, change it to Arial and it changes everything throughout the site. Versus the way we used to always work which was page by page by page by page and go in and manually fix everything. And that is for me an example of a creative solution to a problem. (Norman)

Creativity and the issue of profitability

As mentioned, making money was not the objective of CREATIVE MEDIA. This

being said, during my fieldwork I observed the importance of feeling creative and

working in a creative environment at CREATIVE MEDIA while the owners were

experiencing financial troubles.

During my fieldwork the owners of CREATIVE MEDIA struggled with maintaining

this value. They struggled with it because they knew they were not making any

money, but for them the objective of setting up CREATIVE MEDIA was not to make

money, but to be creative. This being said, Michelle questioned the relevance of

maintaining creativity as she saw their contracts dwindle. Norman informed me

Michelle had asked him if targeting creative companies and wanting to work on

creative projects made them "snobs." The owners were keeping the financial troubles

to themselves although I was seeing the signs of it..[33]

While waiting for interviews to take place I observed the workplace was not visibly

impacted by the outside world as there were no visitors and the phones had been

quiet. The only noise had been the clicking of the keyboards. Norman stated this was

how they communicated with external customers[34]. One of the reasons I had not

questioned this lack of interaction and associated it with financial troubles was

because the company sharing the office space with CREATIVE MEDIA also had the

same level of 'inactivity.' It seemed "normal."

Michelle often brought up the issue of money in our conversations relating to

creativity and imaginative insight acknowledging there was no time to get inspiration

as "... *you know, sometimes you don't have the luxury of doing it because we don't*

have a multimillion dollar, you know, project...." But, in order to keep the workplace

synergy alive Michelle put aside her worries about money in order to allow for

creative experimentation, which she knew was especially important for Norman. She

could justify it with hopes there might be a lucrative project in the future.

Norman and Michelle reacted differently to the financial situation, and I attributed

this to their responsibilities. Michelle was responsible for the day to day running of

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[33]As my study progressed Michelle appeared increasingly agitated and appeared to be having sleepless nights. The lack of sleep began to wear on her face. She also became irritable and impatient. Initially I thought it was my study which was problematic to her, even though I often asked her if my study was bothering her. She claimed it was not. She also often apologized for the boring day that I'd had, as there had been nothing "interesting" to study according to her.

the office as she was Creative Director, while Norman handled more of the long term

projects as a the Business Development Manager. At the beginning of the week,

usually a Monday, a production meeting was chaired by Michelle to follow up on the

progress of website development and to ensure that any help required was properly

channeled. Michelle in effect managed the short-term projects at CREATIVE

MEDIA. In these productivity meetings Michelle, Mark and Samantha would be

slotted a start and finish date for each task to be worked on that week.

At the production meetings Norman would be given administrative tasks. Norman

appeared to participate in these meetings at the urging of Michelle, albeit on occasion,

reluctantly. On occasion he seemed to want to stay out of the production meetings,

probably because Michelle was the creative director of projects. But she often wanted

the advice or approval of Norman and without it some of the projects slowed down.

So whereas all at CREATIVE MEDIA treasured their time for creativity, Michelle

also seemed to be struggling with the day-to-day reality that money had to be made.

This was obvious on the day Norman came back from SXSW conferences in Austin,

Texas. He had spent time with other web designers and was energetic, full of life and

wanting to talk about all the conferences he had attended and all of the ideas it had

generated. He decided to use this time during one of the productions meetings. He

talked for quite some time, and although Michelle did make her comments during this

meeting, it was obvious she wanted to get back to the objectives of the production

meeting – which was running the day-to-day business of the designing websites. She

stopped the discussion as Norman was talking about CREATIVE MEDIA being close

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[34] The designers were not communicating verbally, but I would later learn they were messaging amongst themselves.

to getting recognized by the Internet community and started discussing the problems they were having with one of their customers.

Norman's responsibility related more to the long-term viability at CREATIVE MEDIA, and was more general in perspective. His primary role was working on customer development – his objective was to contact a few potential customers each week in the hopes of drumming up business. He would prepare promotional packages and contact the potential customers via email. The only time I heard him call a potential customer was when he heard that an American documentary filmmaker was looking for a website developer to build his new website, for free. And even the first contact that was the prelude to the call was initiated through email.

Articulation of Creativity – Three Levels

As mentioned, creativity was articulated and fostered at three different levels – personally, internally and externally. Each member of CREATIVE MEDIA as an individual saw him or herself as creative (personal). You could not be a member of CREATIVE MEDIA if you did not possess the personal level of creativity. As a team (internal) they also saw themselves as creative and there were several ways in which to ensure this continued to be the case in the future. At this level, all participated in the creativity, but it his was primarily controlled by Norman and Michelle. Furthermore they portrayed themselves to the outside world (external) as creative. Little was done on the external level, but I did find that for certain things on the external, "risks" had to be controlled or minimized in order to maintain the integrity at the personal and internal level. Because of Norman and Michelle's control, Mark

and Samantha were usually isolated from these "risks" and therefore they had little input at this level.

Personal

One could not become a designer at CREATIVE MEDIA unless one was already creative at the personal level. At the personal level, creativity existed in the past as well as in the present. The creativity of each designer had been constructed through an individual journey each had already traveled. But this "biographical narrative" also had to be maintained through daily individual actions.

Past experiences – working lives and childhood experiences

Perhaps one of the most influential factors as it related to creativity and its importance to all of the members of CREATIVE MEDIA, was past experience, especially as it related to past working experience. All had either worked for a 'technology' company full time or on a contract basis, and all had disliked the experience. In fact, the reason CREATIVE MEDIA existed was *because* the owners had loathed working for a technology company.

Samantha also had learned from past experience. With her Fine Arts degree where she had found the intimate environment at school enriching, she was always exploring new ideas in design. But her previous employer had been a company where value was placed on making a lot of money. She had been a receptionist. She experienced several problems that resulted in her being unhappy with the situation. As the

receptionist she was the initial point of contact for anyone entering the building – but she was also alone on the main floor as all the other employees worked on the floors above her. She basically greeted visitors as they waited to meet their ultimate appointment. Coming from a Fine Arts background she found nurturing, this loneliness was difficult for her. At the time she was hired she had been promised some guidance in order to develop some of her skills on the Internet, but this promise never materialized. She ended up having to learn her skills on her own time, and with the guidance of friends, like Michelle.

In terms of other personal experiences, in our conversations the designers never brought up childhood. When discussing creativity it was always related to past working experience. It was when I brought up the subject that it would be confirmed that childhood experiences played a role, especially for Michelle and Mark.

Michelle I would learn was brought up in a semi-creative milieu, especially through her father's influence. "*My father was a sculptor, so he was always some kind of artist – so he basically did his own thing. So he would sell his sculptures at craft fairs...* " His career choice and example must have been a leading factor in Michelle's value placed on creativity[35]. Her childhood experience, with money and creativity being polarized, reaffirmed her claim that money was not important if creativity was. As Norman informed me "*Her mother's side was more upper class and her father's lower class. She probably wavered between the two since her parents were divorced.*"

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[35] It also played a role in the career choice of Michelle's brother, who is an illustrator.

The same can be said about Mark, although his experience is quite unique. Norman

told me Mark came from a lower class background "by choice." Mark's father was

very creative, especially as it related to working with his hands. His father was also

obviously not motivated by money.

... When I was a year and half we actually moved to the country, pretty much, not nowhere, but very rural... Forest. My father built the house with power tools. No electricity. No phone, no TV, radio, gas, propane. Until I was 14. I went to a small school in that Township, in the Laurentians. ...pretty much grew up like the ultimate hippie kid. ... It was me and my dad for most of my childhood. (Mark)

Norman does not appear to have had any creative influences in his life as he says:

My Dad and his family seems more traditional- my dad was an accountant, there are a lot of doctors on that side of the family, there are very few entrepreneurs. On my Mom's side, my grandfather owed his own tie factory in Montreal while my step dad worked in the smuck business for a few years, then had his own store for a while. His own little dépanneur. And then my uncle which is my Mom's sister's husband owns a candy and chocolate factory in Montreal. (Norman)

But he also denies that these entrepreneurs had any role in his decision to becoming

self-employed as well. As he told me once, "*I never really thought about it.*"

... I did not make the connection. Until starting this business, which is what I think I have described to you before was just a reaction to having worked at other companies and feeling like if not doing it better, doing it differently. So it wasn't even, like I'm talking and realizing running a business and I think it is something I never thought about, I mean, in a conceptual sense. ... In running a business, but conceptually I wasn't thinking that way but then when I think about it I was always with my grandfather who would always go to his company, it was his business. (Norman)

Creativity - Something you possess?

James et al (1999) discuss the importance of role models, and how they can positively

affect the likelihood creativity will occur. Literature discussed by James et al

highlight that most positive role models are of similar gender, ethnic similarities and

social status within organizations. I observed this first hand at CREATIVE MEDIA.

At CREATIVE MEDIA, gender played a role in understanding the creative roots.

The reason for this is because Michelle had found Samantha to work at CREATIVE

MEDIA, while Norman had brought Mark in – so it would be natural that they agreed

on the roots of creativity.

Samantha in one of our conversations related to me how she came to be at

CREATIVE MEDIA. She had wanted to work at CREATIVE MEDIA after hearing

from friends about how the owners allowed for personal growth and how they

considered creativity important. She learned about Michelle and Norman's working

environment while she was already working at another Internet company in Montreal.

She was extremely frustrated working in a company where image and money were

motivators and felt a need for change. As Samantha felt that the product – the

websites - and having creativity seemed more important to Michelle and to Norman,

Samantha then actively pursued Michelle about working at CREATIVE MEDIA, and

had an ongoing on-line relationship where she would email Michelle her latest work,

and accepting criticisms and assistance from Michelle. They also discussed the

progress over a couple of beers on the odd Friday night at a bar in the Plateau area.

Samantha says this was very helpful and gave her the confidence to start working at

CREATIVE MEDIA when Michelle felt Samantha was ready to work at CREATIVE

MEDIA. This also gave Michelle time to decide if she was right for working at

CREATIVE MEDIA. It is in these forms of communication that Michelle informed

Samantha the technical side could always be worked on and developed, but that the

creative side was something that was either there or not.

I'd see Michelle I'd ask her about how she got into it, how she was doing and you know, she told me that she was self taught, and that it was more important in her head to have, like an eye, a good sense of composition and all that stuff rather than technical which could be taught. (Samantha)

In fact in my observations of the office I was left with the impression Michelle could

sometimes be bored by the technical stuff. During one of the production meetings I

noted Samantha and Mark would talk about some technical stuff relating to a website

they were working on while Michelle began to look over her notes. She was probably

listening, but seemed to have tuned out the conversation somewhat. I surmised that at

this point the technical details were of no real concern to her as long as the creative

ideas she had suggested were realized.

Michelle had informed Samantha that she thought creativity was something you

possess, and Mark also felt the same way, but he thought that you could enhance

creativity by possessing the technical skill.

Creativity is non-technical, imaginative things. I see it being more imaginative than skill based. I see it being more using the skill that I have, and applying it to do technical things. And applying it in an imaginative way. (Mark)

In order to better understand how Mark understood the difference between creativity

and technology I asked him to explain this difference using the example of pottery,

knowing that he was an avid pottery maker. It was with his answer that I realized his

views were a little divergent to that of Michelle and Samantha regarding which one

was more important initially. This though was not surprising, in my opinion, because

he was the 'techy' in the group.

It has both parts. ... Making the clay is technical. That is a formula. You can be creative with the way you do it but mainly it's technical. There are set parameters, you know exactly what to do. You actually sit down with the clay at a wheel that's - it's still technical because you have a skill set that you learned to get a basic form. Once you have it at a certain level you can become creative with it. That is what I

think. I mean, I guess, anybody can be creative no matter what. But in terms of a job and design and stuff. To be really creative you need the technical bit first. And then be able to apply that creatively. ... (Mark)

Both Mark and Norman felt you needed the technical skill before you could actually implement the creative. For them creativity could not exist independently of the technical skill and knowledge. I observed this first hand after one of the production meetings. Mark and Michelle were working on a website together. Michelle wanted Mark to implement some changes but she was not certain it could be done. Michelle had some specific visual in mind, which Mark needed to code. If he could not program it, it would not work. They ended up finding a solution and discussing the esthetics of the site they were working on and deciding which software to use

Michelle on the other hand felt that on a personal level possessing a sense for the creative was more important than possessing the technical, and she had transmitted this idea to Samantha. Michelle had felt creativity could not be taught whereas the technical could. Interestingly when I asked Norman about salary levels, I would learn Mark was the highest paid of the group, as Norman and Michelle had taken pay cuts. Mark possessed both technical and creative capabilities, and was being rewarded for it.

Mood

So how did one foster the creativity on a personal level? One way was through recognizing your mood.

As my fieldwork progressed I was sensing something was not right. Michelle was starting to get agitated and looked tired. In one of our interviews she was clearly demonstrating signs of tension and moodiness. Something was definitely bothering her, but she was not openly talking about it.

To complicate matters before starting one of our interviews Michelle decided to mop the floor in the conference room and move furniture around because as we entered the room we discovered that the exposed pipes were leaking condensation on the white couches. This was an unexpected mishap that most likely embarrassed Michelle. As this was the day that I had decided to discuss creativity, the mishap compounded the mood Michelle was already in. So when I began to ask Michelle questions about what creativity was to her, and at CREATIVE MEDIA, her response was *"Gosh, my mind is not in that part right now."* She was frustrated and not feeling very creative, which she felt affected her output level. Sharke (2004) on the other hand has found that a "low mood" may actually assist in increasing creative juices and augment production.

Time

During our interviews Michelle was more vocal than anyone one else at CREATIVE MEDIA about the time pressures that she felt on the job. It was obvious she was working long hours, and that she was also working at home at night and during the weekends to get some of the work done. Even though one of the reasons she had wanted to be self-employed was because she had wanted a better work life balance. Norman also worked from home after office hours on occasion, but did not seem to let

this affect him as much as it appeared to affect Michelle. Samantha and Mark more

often than not left the 'work' at work, in fact Samantha did not even have a computer

at home. Norman once told me that Mark "had a life" which did not give him time to

work at home.

As mentioned Michelle managed the day-to-day progress of projects, and felt the time

constraints more than the others did, although you could sense the stress increase in

all as the week progressed. By the end of the week the office would be really quiet

and everyone would be listening to his or her downloaded music selections, with

headphones on. Most projects had a time limit set for the end of the week.

Michelle would tell me that time affected her creativity by increasing the level of

pressure:

Oh God, work! (laughing) *Sometimes you feel stifling creativity sometimes is just lack of time. It's a time constraint. Sometimes working under pressure actually sparks something. Sometimes you could have five months to brainstorm something and you are still not going to do until the week before. Um. Stifling creativity is sometimes ... (Michelle)*

Wardrobe – a personal choice

It could be argued the issue of wardrobe as it relates to work is an internal issue

(Leidner, 1993) where wardrobe choices are selected by management. But at

CREATIVE MEDIA it was more of a personal issue. During my fieldwork both

Norman and Michelle had indicated they could not work in a corporation with formal

dress. This would not have allowed for creativity. And they wore their jeans to

work.

Norman wanted to be comfortable and only replaced his running shoes with loafers on the day he went out to meet a customer. Norman also felt that by dressing this way he would be conveying the message to others that he was working in a creative milieu, and that he was externalising the narrative that he was a creative person. Giddens (1991) argues that the body is important in modernity to self-identity. "Routinised control of the body is crucial to the sustaining of the individual's protective cocoon in situations of the day-to-day interaction" (Giddens, 1991; 56). One way of doing this for Norman was through his wardrobe. He acknowledged that because of his wardrobe the Royal Bank would not want to work with him, but this was not a problem, as he did not want to work with them either. The Royal Bank was not the 'creative' type of customer he wanted to work with. Hence, with his wardrobe Norman was keeping the corporation, or "pertinent dangers" to his creative self-identity at bay. Furthermore, as Giddens argues, consumption patterns become a form of self-expression for the individual (p.197-198) As we know creative people, such as artists, are known to not be financial secure (or actually quite poor), and therefore I would argue that Norman knew this and intentionally modified his consumption patterns as it related to his wardrobe in order to portray his desired self-identity as a creative individual.

What Norman and Michelle did not acknowledge was that the corporate model has seen some changes of late with regards to wardrobe. For example, casual dress has apparently become more acceptable by some corporations as creative work has become more desirable in corporations.

I was recently asked if I had considered whether Norman and Michelle had been wearing their relaxed jean attire for financial reasons. Initially I questioned if this might have been the case as well, but upon reflection I determined that it was not, through a recollection of personal experience. After having conducted this study I returned to paid work, for a corporation. Casual wear was permitted, and all willingly participated in it. Even though we were all working and making an honest wage, the management was often 'forced' to notify us by email as to what constituted business attire. Management felt we were taking the notion of casual dress too far. They wanted us to look more professional (which proves Norman's point), even though the only people who saw us were our co-workers. We were never physically in contact with customers. Which leads me to believe that wearing casual dress for both Norman and Michelle was really about comfort, and their desire to look creative. Money was not an issue. Florida (2002) argues that creative people do not dress uniformly, but rather as a way to express their individuality, and I believe that is what Norman and Michelle were intending with their attire.

"Playing" on a personal level

Although Samantha and Michelle had indicated that you needed to be creative at the onset – that it was something you possessed, it still needed to be encouraged on an individual level. This was done through experimentation Samantha called *"playing."* Michelle and Norman fostered playing by allowing for freedom to explore new ways of doing things, by allowing searching the net for ideas, by encouraging the use of new software, and by working on non-revenue generating websites for friends or organizations they valued. This was a good strategy according to James et al (1999)

who reviewed literature on creativity and found if children were given autonomy and

ownership in both the home and school environment, it would result in positive

creativity.

As mentioned, Samantha was encouraged to develop websites on her own, even if it

meant working for free on a website for a friend. This freedom was one of the major

reasons she enjoyed the work at CREATIVE MEDIA. Playing was meant to be risk

taking with the objective of learning something that could be applied to a website at a

future date.

We can also take the time to develop our own things. Um, like the [the name of a
specific project] *too, is like an extension of Norman. He wants to do something very
interesting. He wants to create something where you can have a bunch of artists
putting, you know, in their input to create stuff up. It's not the whole thing, but that
requires some playing ... Everybody gets to be involved. So.* (Samantha)

I asked Norman about the personal development of his designers to see what things

were done at CREATIVE MEDIA to ensure that there was always room for it. But

Norman reminded me that allowing for freedom to explore was not only about being

creative, it was also critical for the survival of CREATIVE MEDIA as well, because

of the constant changes in technology. This is also an important value for the Gen-

Xers as their desire to perpetually learn ensures that they are up to date for any future

opportunities (Tulgan, 1996).

*Mistakes still can and have been made. We are still a design company, and the
Internet is going in strange direction, nobody knows which direction it is going in.
We can choose our own way. We can say "we're still sticking doing visual things
with Flash and Flash plug ins. And what happens in six months from now, is like
bang, nobody uses flash anymore, technology is going out the window, it's going in
this other direction. ... I think we're lucky that somebody like myself and Mark are
natural explorers, that we both love what we do, that actually at this point I would
almost rather be sitting at my computer at night and surfing on the Internet rather
than watching television. And by doing that and just end up learning and you start to
see the direction. I also personally like the thought process of thinking about where*

*things are going to end up, and where they are going to go. So it's part of me
naturally.* (Norman)

Getting Away from the Office

Playing would most often be done at the office, especially for Samantha who did not

have a home computer. But on other occasions, playing would not be enough for

stimulating creativity on a personal level. For Michelle coping with time constraints

and blocked creativity was dealt by getting away from the office, if she had the time.

Especially as she was also working long hours, and the fatigue was setting in.:

*Stepping away from your computer, which is something that we do not do enough.
You know, discussion. Looking at different sources. Just sort of looking around you.
When you are walking down the street or whatnot. Looking through magazines, even
just simple things like watching television. Going to visit museums. ... Technically
off hours, it's also stuff that we should be doing while we are in the office to tell you
the truth, but we don't do it. ... We get ourselves into bad habits in my opinion. Well
it's so easy. You've got so many things to do during the day. It would be great if you
could have a whole afternoon just to screw off and go to the gallery. We are not
making the time to do it. We kind of need it, but whatever.* (Michelle)

I witnessed the benefits of getting away first hard when Norman came back from

SXSW in Austin. He spent a couple of days attending conferences and parties with

like-minded individuals involved in digital media. It was obvious upon his return,

from the energy Norman generated, that he had been enlightened, rejuvenated and

inspired from his time away from the office. Norman felt this energy as well, and felt

the need to calm down. He acknowledged returning to the office was a little bit of a

shock, because of the clutter and mess, and that time away had been good for him.

During his stay in Austin he kept a journal of his experience, detailing who he spent

time with and doing what. It was obvious from the contents of the journal that he had

spent a lot of time thinking about the Internet industry as a whole, and about how to make CREATIVE MEDIA better and the direction he wanted CREATIVE MEDIA to move towards in the coming year. Norman in particular wanted the creative aspect, the new ideas, to be formally documented so that they could be shared among the other members of the design team; he wanted each designer to specialize in order to avoid duplication. His time in Austin had given him the time to think about some ideas as to new research areas he wanted the designers to explore. He came back wanting CREATIVE MEDIA to become more active within the Internet community as he felt that this was one way of getting noticed. He had also left Austin with the knowledge and confidence that many other design companies were like CREATIVE MEDIA in terms of size, age demographic, optimistic for the future and experiencing the "...*same kind of insularism that we experience on the plateau...*"[36]. Norman emailed all of the designers a copy of his thoughts, and gave me a hardcopy. He wanted all the designers to read it, and suggested they meet over lunch to discuss its contents.

Recognition

Although for Norman the objective was not to make money but to be creative, on a personal level he did want the recognition from his peers, which was also observed by Lysloff (2003). Lysloff also studied an Internet community, though he conducted his "fieldwork" from his home through chats. He found a community of Internet users sharing the same interest – music. These users created their own digital music, and shared it with others over the web, for free. He found creativity and originality were

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[36] From handout given to me on March 20

extremely important to these users. These users did not make any money from their

original creations, but what was strived for was a positive review "telling you that

your music was awesome" (Lysloff, 2003; 246)

He had wanted the recognition for making creative websites. He decided it was time

to start working on a project he had been thinking about for several years, his own

website called *Local Stories*. He had received some development funding from a

Canadian government agency in the hopes that he could advance the creation of this

website. He also had gone to SXSW with computer in hand and had shown some of

the web developers at this conference the CREATIVE MEDIA website they had

recently worked on. He received praise for the website and was hoping that in the

next year they could be nominated for recognition for any number of the sites they

had developed. So although Norman did not necessarily want the money, he did want

the recognition for being a creative company from his peers. He shared this desire at a

lunch with Mark, Samantha and Michelle on hand, and although Michelle supported

him she casually debated the requirement for formal recognition from SXSW at the

lunch.

Mark also indicated recognition for creativity in development of web sites was

important. When Norman had gone to SXSW he made frequent phone calls about his

time at the conference. On one of the days, Norman had been able to speak with an

"Internet guru"[37]. This was special. He was considered an Internet guru because

according to Mark he was very creative in terms of technology. He was able to do

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[37] This is how Mark described the individual Norman met with.

things that were not done before on the web. The recognition related to the creativity

in the coding.

Mark also talked about receiving some recognition on a personal level from people in

the Internet community that shared the same principles as CREATIVE MEDIA did:

It reflects, it reflects on people looking at our work and liking it. That's one difference definitely. And there is other companies we see doing that too – those are the companies that we usually find that we respect the most. We'll look at their work, and we'll find that – we'll see some work and if it's very very similar to things that we would like to do, then we kind of back track and look at the company that did it. Often times we find those are the companies that their work shows through the whole spectrum that those are the ideas that they have also. Or seem to have, you know. ... Norman knows these guys from Texas, from England who have the same type of skills, and same type of work that we do and they ... think that way also. (Mark)

Although on a personal level Norman wanted the recognition, he did admit that with

this recognition would make it easier to secure other contracts:

When the day comes and Universal music calls us up because they saw the [musician site]*, and saw ten of our things, and they suddenly realize these guys have a very good vision, then maybe, when people come to us because they want our vision versus coming to us because they got to throw at a company, that's where the change will happen. Once we do something that is award winning, that people go: "I want something like that, because I like the way CREATIVE MEDIA does it. I like the CREATIVE MEDIA style, I like the CREATIVE MEDIA approach." That's when things will start to change for us.* (Norman)

Internally

At CREATIVE MEDIA, Norman and Michelle may have denied they were managing

the 'culture of creativity.' But they did so, and the most effective way of ensuring the

creativity was to not to repeat the 'corporate model' as they understood it, because the

corporate model of doing business resulted in boredom and producing unimaginative

web sites.   But first, they had to hire the right people.

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Hiring and working with the right people

One of the major ways of ensuring creativity on an internal level, was by hiring

creative people. Norman and Michelle hired only the people that would fit into the

CREATIVE MEDIA on a creative level. Norman was working on a document

requesting some funding from a government agency during my fieldwork, and in it he

indicated that *"building a strong and effective production team is a long and difficult*

process, especially if you are looking to only hire the best people. Rather than hire for

the sake of growth, CREATIVE MEDIA has always maintained that it's better to wait

to grow if the right people haven't yet come along."[38] In fact, Norman told me one

day that hiring six people was the maximum he would allow, before it started

jeopardising the culture he was building. He felt that if he hired more people the

specific creative environment he was trying to work with would be harder to manage.

He felt that if he hired more than six people he might not be able to enjoy his work,

getting up in the morning and showing up at the office.

One of the ways of ensuring the right people were hired was to certify that they shared

the same values as it related to creativity – the potential new hire had to understand

creativity was important, and that it's validity was not challenged. They recruited

from their community of contacts and often called these people 'friends,' therefore

making the workplace user-friendly.[39]

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[38] From document given to me by Norman.
[39] Not only did they hire from within their community of friends, but also when they were looking for feedback this is also where they went. For example, on the occasion where they had to do market

Samantha is a perfect example of how this was done. Prior to working at CREATIVE

MEDIA, when Samantha was looking to find a better job, she had been actively

working with Michelle to improve her technical style to compliment her creative side

for several months before Michelle decided she was ready to work for CREATIVE

MEDIA. Fran, the bookkeeper was also hired when they decided they were leaving

TECHCO because she was a friend of both Norman and Michelle. As it turns out Fran

had also been hired at TECHCO because she knew the CEO there.

*Yeah, because she was working part time as a bookkeeper, receptionist and that stuff.
And she would always sort of come over and complain, and everything, and we
realised that we didn't really have time or the interest in keeping up books, like paying
bills or writing out cheques, and that sort of stuff. Um. And so we asked her if she
wanted to come along, not to mention part time because she does her music thing on
the side. So it was sort of good, it sounded easy.* (Michelle)

In one of my discussions with Fran I was informed all the workers at CREATIVE

MEDIA, including her had a similar sense of humour, were of similar age, which she

claimed was important to Norman and Michelle as this helped everyone get along.

She indicated that she might not have as much experience as the next person might

but that they knew and liked her. Furthermore, she liked working at CREATIVE

MEDIA. She preferred the size of CREATIVE MEDIA, as it was small. 'This

company is small; they are funny, smart and young. At the same time they are

creative. I did not like working for TECHCO. It was bigger. They were a software

development company. The people were not interesting. They weren't warm and

they had no sense of humour. I feel proud of CREATIVE MEDIA. My mother even

looked at their website and liked it. I feel there is a sense of quality. I don't need the

income. I do it because it's fun.' [40]

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research, in order to get the needed funding for a project, they conducted their market research within
their community of friends and contacts.

Mark had worked with Norman on a contract when he had been freelancing, and also knew his work. So when he was looking for someone for CREATIVE MEDIA he sent Mark a note and Mark decided to come work for CREATIVE MEDIA.

I think that's the key thing, is that, I think everybody we've chosen, or ended up hiring, we kind of knew somewhat or another. Like, you know, I'll tell Mark. I worked with Mark on a contract when I first got out of school. So I knew him. We kind of kept up a very lose friendship, but we were always in touch even' few months or so after that. So that when we were looking for somebody I kind of sent out an email to all kinds of different friends that I know and just figured, well he's working somewhere (Norman)

Norman and Michelle had learned this through past mistakes. Mark told me that at one point CREATIVE MEDIA had been ten contract employees, but some quit while one was let go. One of the reasons people left was because they felt that they were not making enough money. But, I was told by Mark of one employee was specifically asked to leave because he did not get along with the others and it had been creating a bad environment to work in. This employee was made to understand that working at CREATIVE MEDIA was likely not the best place for him, as he was not contributing to the team. When I asked Norman about this employee I was informed that he had directly challenged their desire to be a creative company.

Ed was handling coding and production. He was not a creative person really. The conflicts were, looking back mainly that he was not very diplomatic in dealing with people when he had a difference of opinion. He wasn't a team player, and after about a month of working with us didn't enjoy being part of a more creative company. But rather than quitting, he got more and more difficult until we had to challenge him and ask him to leave. We are still friends though... (Norman)

This being said, when I asked Norman and Michelle in an interview how they fostered the specific environment at CREATIVE MEDIA – the one Samantha had fought so hard to participate in, and the one Fran liked working in, their response was:

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[40] From interview notes - not recorded.

You know what, I think we could just lie and make up a story, but I think it just almost came naturally. I don't think there was ever an intention to do anything other than to just do things the we that feel comfortable with. And I think that probably for Samantha and Mark it is a similar thing. I don't know if you feel any differently. I don't think there was... (Norman)

There wasn't - there is no sort of, we're gonna go in here and we are going to treat people this way and we are gonna make sure that the culture is like this. ... I can't really picture anyone else, although I guess some people do do that, but I can't really sort picture somebody going "OK this is the way it's going to be." (Michelle)

I think for me, the only theory that I have behind what I do, or whatever, is simple and it's one that I have always felt and which is do on to others what you want done to yourself. In other words, this is the only possible thing that I would reference as a theory, and it's not really a theory but it's just a natural way that I live my life. Treat somebody with respect and they are going to treat me back. And that's the culture we create. And 'for me also, it also happens that when I treat somebody with respect and they don't treat me back then I won't work with them anymore. They wouldn't be the right person to work with us anyways, so. (Norman*)*

Life is too short to start wasting your time on people who, yeah. (Michelle)

One of the lingering questions I was left with as I conducted my research at

CREATIVE MEDIA was the hiring from within the community of friends. If

creativity is about being inspired to create something new and innovative, if it is about

solving a problem in an innovative manner, does hiring from the same circle not limit

this creativity? Although I understand the hiring from within the community as a way

of limiting conflict and ensured that the designers were all in agreement with the

importance of creativity, hiring "like" people can limit the creativity.

James et al (1999) in their literature review also found this. They found that if one

hired from diverse ethnic communities or mixed genders, some of the values and

beliefs could be put into question and re-evaluated, resulting in creativity. They also

found limited conflict and chaos could also enhance creativity – it was basically a

delicate balance. West (2002) also argues for heterogeneous hiring practices, but

argues that it is important for the goals to be understood. In the case of CREATIVE

MEDIA, it was clearly understood by all designers that creativity was the objective. West argues that hiring from a diversity of professional backgrounds could also encourage creative thinking. Samantha was from an Arts background, Mark was from a Creative Arts background and both Michelle and Norman were from Communications backgrounds. The diversity in education backgrounds may have helped with the creativity, but ultimately all of their educational experiences had prepared them for working in creative environments.

In order to avoid the problems Norman and Michelle wanted to avoid, by hiring from within their community, James et al suggest programs be put into place in order to encourage group cohesion, which would lead to creativity. But I do not believe that Norman and Michelle, at the time of my study, were equipped to do this in the formal sense, as they did not have a business background and felt the corporate model was boring. Plus it went against their principles. But by hiring from within their group of friends they ensured they shared the same values and work ethic, which created this group cohesion.

Interestingly, in the journal that Norman prepared after the SXSW conference in Austin, he documented a conference held by the "Internet guru" Mark told me about. Norman wrote "*He doesn't like working with people who do similar work as him, but people with different skills. He sees that the key to working on projects is to have a diverse group with definite skills in specific areas.*" Norman and Michelle also resolved the issue of difference leading to creativity by hiring on contract basis from a community of friends, as needed for special projects. But this could lead to conflict. I once witnessed a conversation between Michelle and Norman where they felt a

contractor working out of New York was not treating them properly. It was felt that

the contractor was treating them as if they were subordinate to them, when in fact they

had hired her. So working with contractors outside of their community of friends

could lead to the conflict Norman and Michelle wanted to avoid.

The workspace encourages creativity

Once you have hired the right people to work for you, you have to ensure that the

workspace is conducive to creativity. Both Norman and Michelle had indicated to me

that corporations have cubicles and that managers are behind closed doors limiting

communication. But they also wanted it to be personal. They did not want this

impersonal corporate format.

You spend most of your life at work. Or most of your week I should say. So. It's like
your home. If you like to have a nice environment at home, then it's also equally nice
to have an environment at work. Some people say it's just enough to have the big
windows. Light. I personally do not know what it is like to work in an environment
where it's all carpet and cubicles. I've never experienced that and hopefully will
never. That will be the day I work at home. ... The space reflects the company. If
you know yourself ... if you've got somebody who has a very nondescript apartment
and it's never really been moved in, and they have no artwork on the walls. Not to
make too much of a correlation, it kind of says something about that person as well.
If you move into an office and don't give a shit what it looks like and it's all functional
and say "I'll stick a desk there" then you are not really paying attention. I am not
going to go to some fung shei course just to make sure that there is good energy going
around. But you know what I mean. I like a nice environment. (Michelle)

Prior to my fieldwork, and the one of the primary reasons for wanting to study an

Internet company was because the office space as it related to Internet companies had

received much press because it went against the grain of a contemporary corporate

office of the 1980s. Gone were the office doors, gone were the cubicles for employees

and offices for managers. Gone were the carpets. Hardwood floors were now in. The

office space was now also organized physically to recognize the need for creativity.

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The corporate model of the past was constructed in such a fashion to acknowledge the

hierarchical way of organizing people, but also because employees were expected to

follow the rules and think inside the box. They were not expected to veer from

accepted norms. With a workplace that prizes creativity, this way of organizing an

office space no longer encouraged or facilitated creativity, and needed to be changed.

Internet companies are often believed to be located in loft style spaces and in older

buildings. As well, the manager worked next to his or her employee. According to the

literature on this subject, there were several reasons for this change as by doing this

the result would be improved communications between all members of the

organization. Fest describes the "new" workplace where some companies have

adopted new workplace designs such as having no walls or offices allowing for easy

access to all levels of management. "Everybody can talk to everybody else. It puts

you in the fastest speed you can literally function at. ... There's no secretary and no

interference" (Fest, 2001). Semenak (2001) writes that informal meetings are the

result of walls breaking down in the knowledge-based economy through more open

informal and spontaneous conversation.

Internet companies have created a new office space at the corporate level as well, as

they are now beginning to be organized towards a "traffic oriented" (Florida, 2002;

122) model that facilitates communication to encourage creativity that is required for

innovation. Florida tells us that those corporations are changing and that they no

longer need to organize themselves around bosses who want "privileged

communication, and workers who followed routines and thus must be put into

standardized spaces to discourage deviation" (p. 127).

This type of phenomena exists only in newer companies, not in a large corporation.

As Fest indicates older companies are having a harder time adopting this new

workspace design primarily because those having to make the changes are the ones

losing their secretaries. In the Fest article it is said that this type of workspace design

works best for companies that are in the creative process of producing ideas. Which

is the type of company that both Norman and Michelle want.

So what did the owners of CREATIVE MEDIA do in order to ensure their office

space was conducive to creativity? As well as choosing a 'creative' location they also

personalized the office to their liking, by allowing for items accumulated from family

and friends to be in the office. Thirdly, the furniture in the office space was also

standard Internet company furniture, which allowed for communication and

creativity.

The first time I entered CREATIVE MEDIA I was struck by how it looked – it was

exactly what I had read about in the literature, except that CREATIVE MEDIA shared

its space with Magazine Inc. The whole of the CREATIVE MEDIA office was

furnished by IKEA. I recognized the furniture as soon as I walked in. Rather than

being installed at individual workstations these workers were set up in "*lily pad*[41]"

formations. Lily pads are three identical desks joined together as one would put

puzzle pieces. Three people are meant to work together, with the computer terminals

in the centre, which means that the three people would be looking at each other, if

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[41] This is how Michelle referred to the set-up.

they peeked above their screens. It turns out that purchasing office furniture is the

personal choice of Michelle, which according to her she has to negotiate for.

Norman is going to have a different opinion, we usually go to IKEA. We usually sit there and have these little tiffs. People call us like Mom and Dad. We will take things, and we are usually in a kind of agreement but sometimes were not. All the stuff in the conference room is stuff that I really liked, but people didn't really want. But we eventually got it. Because we actually talked our way through it and everything like that, and I was really happy about it.... (Michelle)

Other pieces were picked up from various places over the years and have some sort of

sentimental value attached to them. Family and friendships have been allowed into the

boundaries of the workplace through the office furniture. These items are statements

relating to the importance of family and friends to the owners of CREATIVE

MEDIA. As well, the decorations are meant to personalize the office space.

...These are my couches actually. ... I got these from my brother who got them from Sally Anne or something. ... I've had these for years. ... With these kind of tables you had three choices in colours. One was like white, one was a mahogany type sort of I call it ???? wood, the darker stuff, and then you've got this colour. Some of our furniture is the legacy from our old place when we didn't really have, when we were starting up and we didn't have much, like these shelves. I can't stand them. I would really like to do something ...it depends... we are waiting for cash flow for getting better... I would like to get cabinets with doors so we could hide stuff, magazines, so we don't get so dusty.   ... That (pointing to an oil painting hanging above the conference room) *was a gift from another design company that we did their site for. They specialize in urban design. In graffiti design. They did that for us. They put [*the words CREATIVE MEDIA] *in the corner, in graffiti style writing. And they posted keyboards keys that writes up CREATIVE MEDIA on the bottom. These photographs* (pointing to another wall) *are from a friend of mine who kind of left them there on day. So it's nice. That little gob we call the glee gob. ...He's actually a known cartoonist from around town. Mathew knows him well ... These are a series that* [a friend] *did, so it is kind of cute, so it's Normans. Other than that we don't have any other art work. That's my bike... An ex-boyfriend brought it back from Beijing so I don't really ride it. You can't really turn it because it gets stuck on your knees. It's for a shorter person. The brakes are rail brakes so it's not really made. The pedals are broken, the tiles are flat. ... Norman doesn't like it. But he forgot about it.*
(Michelle)

Even though the layout was intended to facilitate communication and sharing of

information, it was not always obvious this happened. In the cubicle layout existing

in the corporation, workers have to informally set up "meetings" when information needs to be shared. The same was the case here. On one occasion, Norman was preparing for his weeklong trip to Austin for the SXSW conference and Michelle was concerned about the contract with an American documentary filmmaker. Even though she could have talked to Norman, as they are only a few feet away from each, she got up and went to his desk to ask him the status of the project. Norman was obviously aware of the situation but was keeping the information to himself, and had not told Michelle about the status, and furthermore did not appear worried or concerned about the project's status. Michelle on the other hand wanted to know whom she should speak to while Norman was away. Norman had not been able to get hold of the customer because the customer was not available as he was busily working on his book tour. Norman was hoping to get hold of the customer before he left but was non-committal. Michelle and Norman did discuss what was expected and needed to be done and agreed that the conversion of files from the old to the new service provider needed to be done immediately, but the design on the new website could wait until Norman returned. Although Michelle wanted to talk about it more, Norman would tell her "*I don't see it as a big deal.*" But it was obvious Michelle was not reassured. She continued to talk about it some more, and then suddenly the conversation stopped. While this whole conversation transpired Mark and Samantha were silent. So even if the layout was built around the flow of information, information could still be blocked and controlled at will through behavior.

Even though the new office space was intended to ease communications between the designers, there were ways to block the noise, which could also block communications. All the designers had headphones on, and used them when they

wanted some quiet time for uninterrupted thinking. Also, I noticed that even though the designers were set up in lily pads, at eye level of the screen could block out the person working at another terminal in the same grouping, therefore also limiting contact.

One of the best ways of limiting communications was through chatting. The designers were set up to chat, and it was obvious from the sudden laughter between two people, or the sudden response to a question that had been sent through chatting that the chatting occurred on a regular basis. Through chatting the designers could limit the communications on a need to know basis.

Michelle and Norman subscribed to several magazines relating to Internet design. In these magazines there are articles relating to the innovative in office design. But, the office space is not personalized to the tastes of the designers themselves, as professionals such as architects and interior designers have decorated these spaces.[42] The magazine offered extremely expensive office design ideas, notions that Michelle and Norman had not been able to adopt. Perhaps as a result of this, both Michelle and Norman seem oddly self-conscious about their office space. For Michelle it is the clutter and the dirt that bothers her, while for Norman it is more the lack of order, which gives the office an unfinished look to it.

For me it's actually finishing the office. When the bucket is sitting right there, for me the office is not finished. It's not for me clutter because for me clutter is what human beings naturally make. Cleanliness, well you know, eight people in here who are not mopping every week, you know it is going to get a little bit dirty, the floors. So that is why we are looking at getting someone to come in every couple of weeks, mop up, fix

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[42] In the magazine articles one Internet company based in France has maintained the original décor of the building - a Louis XIV style décor. Yet another Internet company based in England has decorated their office with a Japanese garden equipped with a pond where carp can swim. (Magazine – Cre@te Online. January 2001 Pages 48-51)

up. But it's like plants in the office, more artwork on the walls, getting things finished. Where as I really feel like they are not, this room (the conference room that we are sitting in) until about three months ago had no furniture. It was empty. And just because we never got around to actually sitting down and talking about, you know, "I want to put this in here, I want to put that." And really working on a space to fix it up. So it took us a year to even sit down and do that. The front of the office bugs the hell out of me. Not clutter and dirt, but just that, you walk in and feel like no one has taken the time to finish that part of the office. ... lamps, tables, so that it actually becomes a sitting and reading area in front of the office. (Norman)

I think that my first priority is to have the place consistently clean. That I would like. Then work on the office space. The space is important for a couple of reasons. Accessible to stuff, like archived CDs. To find archived CDs. To locate client files. After a lot of time you start to get a lot of stuff. Papers and everything. You need to have an archiving system. Something like that. With four people I can ask "Hey do you remember where this and this is?" The second you start getting up to 5s or 6 people that is when you start getting things lost. That is when you really start to notice that you need a better system. So yes it's important. (Michelle)

The Home/Work Boundary

Considering the actual physical interaction observed during the time of my fieldwork, I wondered if the designers at CREATIVE MEDIA could not work from home. Was it really important to be working together?

The home-work boundary is an ideological construct that has evolved over the years (Nippert-Eng, 1996; Hochschild, 1997; Mirchandani, 1999). Nippert-Eng clearly documented the mental gymnastics that workers go through in order to separate the two spheres with the use of keys, calendars, clothing, eating habits, alcohol and coffee. She also found that people separated the spheres in varying degrees (*segmenters/integrators.*) Running your own business increases the chances you are more integrator than segmenters. Norman and Michelle email each other on weekends, and see each other on a regular basis after hours, especially on Fridays. But, they have tried to ensure work does not totally take over their lives. The amount

of separation between work and home has varied over the years as they have experimented with working from home and working for others in offices, so they understand their own reactions to the home/work boundary.

Maintaining a happy balance, without it affecting their work or their home is what they are striving for. Mirchandani (1999) argues the reason workers create rituals is to separate the home-work boundary (public/private) is to validate and associate value to work – because we devalue the time spent on household chores. "I argue that making the distinction between work and non-work is intrinsic to maintaining the aura around work." (Mirchandani, 1999; 92) No one at CREATIVE MEDIA ever indicated the struggle with the chores at home being a problem. Perhaps this might have to do with the age and family status of Norman and Michelle. They were both unmarried, and did not have children. They did not have to face the daily time bind that Hochschild (1997) has described. Norman and Michelle though, did face different challenges as it relates to the struggle with the home/work boundary. Whereas Michelle would have to control how much work she lets into the home, Norman has to motivate himself to get the work started:

I think ... I struggle with what a lot of people who have done freelance work struggle with. It took me a couple of months to realise it but I can't work at home. I am not productive working in the same place where I sleep and do everything else, There are ways around it. You can set up an office and find other ways to trick yourself but psychology I need to have a certain separation. In a way I am still not good at it because I still bring work home with me at night. But there is still that feeling of, I come here. I'm here from 9:30 to 6:00 or 7:00 and then this is the time when I am in front of the computer and being productive and there is no distractions. (Norman)

For Michelle working in a communal workspace has its benefits and advantages:

Yes but I would go ballistic. I hate working from home. On the occasional day, fine, on the constant basis no. Personally, I am not going to hide it, I do not have enough

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discipline. When I started out freelancing. I put this pressure on me, " I have to get up at 7:00 and start working in my pyjamas. "Won't even properly take a shower. And have breakfast. Just start working, and then work until two o'clock in the morning. Without taking lunch or supper or going out to eat. I can't separate the two. So for me to actually get up and go to an office is an important thing. (Michelle)

But for Norman, there needs to be a distinctive distance from the office and the home.

Most probably because he does appear to have difficulty with leaving the home milieu

to work.

Whereas when I was working at home, there was always the OK I get up half and hour later than I thought I would, go to the store and get something, stop for a coffee, all of sudden it's one o'clock and I have just started to work. Um. That problem lead me to realise that there is my home, there is the neighbourhood and there is the thing that I do when I am around there. Then when I am around here, this is where I work. It is a psychological thing. (Norman)

For Norman there needs to be a clear distinction, and there needs to be a transition

period from the time he leaves home and the time of begins to work.

Firstly, the fact that living in the Plateau it's walking distance here. It's also still far enough that I don't feel like I'm just stumbling out of bed and going to work. We were looking at places in the Plateau and it would have literally been a five minute walk away. Which would have been very nice but ... it would not have been much of a separation. At least here, it's a bit of a separation. (Norman)

Norman recognizes this problem and knows of others who have managed to work

around it.

... there are people that figure out schemes to almost psychologically trick themselves. I have heard of some people who do work at home and do freelance work at home. ... One of the best ones was someone who owned say, a duplex or a triplex, and they had a bachelor apartment, where they basically converted that to their office. So in the morning they would literally say goodbye to the family and then just walk downstairs. But in that psychological breakage, even though they were two minutes from home, one they go around the corner into that office, they are there and at work and there is no connection between the two. (Norman)

I wondered if it had anything to do with being a creative company, but Norman

indicated that it had more to do with him and how he was, and that it had nothing to

do with the type of work he did.

*I think I would be exactly the same way because that is the way I am . ... Know
matter which job I am doing I think I would need that separation.* (Norman)

Norman and Michelle mentioned repeatedly throughout our interviews that theirs was

a creative company. So, being in the building they had selected, with a multitude of

art galleries, mixing with other creative minds, I would have expected them to check

them out for design inspirations or to view new trends first hand with the intent of

integrating this into their work. If nothing else, to advertise the business and engage

with the artistic community in the hopes of meeting with potential clients. Michelle

admitted she had not ventured the halls to explore the art. Mark had done so, albeit

reluctantly and only because he had visited the gallery of someone he knew. More

surprisingly, was learning that Samantha had not visited the galleries when she had

studied art at university! Art was not considered work, although CREATIVE MEDIA

viewed itself as a creative company. A personal inspiration (private) was not

considered work (public). Plus, the fact that Michelle did not like what she saw in the

galleries did not help.

Samantha is in fine arts; honestly I don't think she has done it (visited the art
galleries*). I guess I associate the building strictly with work. I'm not a big fan of
contemporary art. If I go into the gallery I am like zoom zoom zoom and I am out. ...I
don't know how they sustain themselves honestly. ... Kudos to them but I do not know
how they do it.* (Michelle)

Furthermore, being at CREATIVE MEDIA was the time when work should be done, and visiting the other galleries even if what was viewed eventually was incorporated into a website was not seen as properly using the time to work.

I mean again, part of this for me is that this place psychologically is my place of work, so for me to go to an art gallery kind of invades the workspace. It might sound strange. My lunch time I am not going to explore the building in a personal way. Because I am in the work mind set. (Norman)

As mentioned, Norman, Michelle and Mark had all worked from home as freelancers. They had experienced the challenges of working from home, and felt they could not work from home as owners and employees of CREATIVE MEDIA. Norman stated his problem was more of a personal nature. Michelle felt it had more to do with the type of company they were not - a technology company. She felt it was important to be working together because they were a creative company. As a creative company it was important that they have strong communication, in order to maintain a certain level of creativity.

Not to mention that I find it really great to, in as much with the technology you are able to do it. It's nice to sit down to ask question to people if you are stuck on something to ask somebody's opinion and they can come and look over your shoulder. To sit down and collaborate with people. Again you could do this over the Internet as well but it is not the same. As far as operating expenses are concerned we would probably be saving a couple of hundred bucks each month. When you start to balance the pros and cons, we're a creative company, not purely a technology company. If we were a technology company I would say yeah, we would do it. (Michelle)

I think that there are different challenges (with running a company from home). I think that if the four of us had a really good home office we probably could run this company virtually, without an office. Environment would change, communication would change but the work could be done with the same level and quality. ... It would change the collaboration. It would change the communication. The collaboration obviously because there isn't that opportunity to look over somebody's shoulder and say good, bad, back and forth. Also, although all the emails and the kind of communications that we do, see or hear, that's still all there. It would continue exactly the same way. There is still the stopping, joking, talking that would be lost. That is part of the culture. The company would run, the work would run, everything

on that level would stay pretty much the same. It's the culture that would change more than anything else. (Norman)

In my interviews with Mark I learned he had found working from home as a freelancer to be a challenge. Living and working at home had given him some freedoms and he had become used to staying up later with his roommates. But to his surprise he has enjoyed the transition from freelancer to being an employee at CREATIVE MEDIA. He found working from home was *'alright'* for the first year, but as the year progressed he discovered he was starting to experience difficulty with the creative aspect. His freelancer status meant he was isolated and he realized he had no one to bounce his ideas off of. Bouncing ideas off the Internet is possible, but it is much easier for Mark to do it in person. Creativity would be lost if one worked at home.

As a freelancer his first 6 months were while he was living with a roommate so his office was in his large bedroom, dedicated to one end of the room. When his roommate left he took over the second bedroom and converted this into an office. His freelancer environment consisted of a virtual office, in which three other employees were also working from home with separate phone lines. When meetings were required the freelancers would go to the owner's place and have the creative meetings. He chose to return to a more traditional work environment with an office as an employee. This is when he started working for CREATIVE MEDIA. Mark claims returning to work, as an employee also required an adaptation, as it was initially difficult to work within a restricted space. It was also difficult to work in an open concept, which was more social. Mark chose to *"just work through and wade it out."* Within a couple of months he began to *"love the open concept."* It works well for him, but he says that he can see where it might be a problem, especially for those who

do not work efficiently, or where there is a situation where another member of the group affects others.

Michelle though felt that having an office increased the level of professionalism at CREATIVE MEDIA. They were not just a design company, not just a technology company, but had an office.

...I always had these grandiose ideas, where I could travel the world and still do what I want to do, the idea is clients, if they want to come see you, you have to come to the office, they can come to the office. You are not going to invite them to home. They also have a different perspective if you have an office rather than work from home. Not that I really care. It's also that. Uh...I mean, ... They want to know where to call. If they are calling one office and they are talking to me, but actually want to talk to someone else I can put them on hold. Imagine if a client all of a sudden I say "They will have to call you back." How annoying would that be? ... (Michelle)

Perlow (1999) found that in the long term, there is an apparent productivity gain with working from home as the worker supposedly has fewer distractions in the home, and in some cases, the worker works longer hours. Furthermore, once the employee does finally have the face-to-face communications they are more effective because the worker has had more time to prepare for meetings. Norman and Michelle try not to work from home, but find that sometimes this is the best option for getting important work done on time. But, Norman and Michelle need to urge each other in order to finally decide that this is the best option. I observed as Michelle encouraged Norman to work from home:

You know what, probably when she says something like that (suggests to Norman that he work from home) *- I probably will. Because there is a point, sometimes, where If I am feeling distracted sometimes it is good to work at home. Sometimes I will do it and it is not so good. ... But if I can be silent in my own space sometimes, and sometimes it doesn't work, but a lot of times I won't do it out of guilt. Well, it's like I shouldn't be at home; I should be with everybody at work. ... You know what, she* (meaning Michelle) *is the same way. If I say to her, look you're not getting anything done this week, take Thursday and Friday, work from home. And then a lot of times it*

like "huh, that was really good." I could focus on something for eight hours while not having any distractions. (Norman)

But Norman also acknowledged that even though the workspace was intended for creativity, the fact that it was an office on occasion could stifle creativity. If he had been able to get up and go for a walk, or do some travelling when he was feeling less creative, he could. But he still had to deal with being in an office environment:

... like sitting in the office. It's funny, I do think the whole idea of this just being an office where its traditional in certain areas, although it is not in its open feel, a lot of people would say that it is not a traditional office. But because there are still some things in essence that are traditional- you have your computerization. You work "there," you come in, you leave. So that does not encourage creativity. I think it stifles it at some points. (Norman)

Working as a team

James et al (1999) argue one way to foster positive creativity, is to ensure the social climate offers some support for it. Furthermore, James et al argue fostering positive creativity will reduce negative creativity which can lead to behaviors such as stealing from one's employer or finding ways to avoid doing the undesired tasks. Dickson (2003) also discussed ways to foster creativity and argues one should encourage as many ideas as one can, even bad ones. Scientists have been found to have many more failures than successes (Dickson, 2003). In the music industry, where artists constantly have to renew themselves and being creative, there are also more failures than there are successes (Negus, 1995). Rejected ideas by one company have been improved upon by other companies and led to success. Dickson suggests rejected ideas be revived on occasion, and re-examined from another perspective to see if new ideas can improve upon the initial idea. CREATIVE MEDIA on occasion used this method to assist with creativity. West (2002) argues workgroups must also be able to

resolve conflict effectively in order to spur creativity. Conflict is beneficial during the later stages of innovation, and must come from external sources, not internally. This would not have worked for CREATIVE MEDIA, as we will see later.

One of ways the designers at CREATIVE MEDIA worked through their difficult days was to switch projects for a couple of hours and put a fresh perspective on things. Creativity was something that all the members at CREATIVE MEDIA helped each other out with. Michelle and Samantha on occasion did this when they were stuck or getting bored with something they were working with. It helped them with their inspiration. Mark who was very skilled in the technology area would sometimes move back and forth between being 'technological' and 'creative' in order to keep the creativity alive. There was never any shortage of help if required. Michelle always asked how projects were going in development meetings and asked if there was a requirement for assistance from other members of the team.

That is why Michelle is saying if you want to start with the design you could use me as a back up, if you get stuck pass it off to me for a couple of hours, I'll tweak around with it, it's kind of fresh. You hand it back. It's fresh for her – it's nice sometimes to take somebody else's work, because you already have a good structure with it. And your "maybe I should align here" and your not, you haven't like just been sitting there and saying "I don't know what to do with it next." You know, so that is always good. You take it for a few hours and move things around pass it back. And then its like "OK, now I am not stuck with it anymore." Now you can see it, you can look at it again and really see it. It's important. It's very important... (Samantha)

Sharing of information with co-workers

Projects were evaluated on whether or not they had been creative, and once a website had been deemed creative, the template could be used on another project, making creativity shareable. The intention was to reuse good ideas. But at the time of my

study, there was no formal way of storing these ideas for future use. When Norman came back from SXSW he decided that he wanted to have a more formal process of archiving ideas so that they could be used on future projects, but it had not been implemented at the end of my fieldwork. During my fieldwork I did observe on two occasions Michelle and Mark discuss where something specific was filed so that it could be used on a current project, as Mark was the one who was maintaining the files. And I know Michelle had felt some sort of frustration during one of our interviews with how things were filed in the office. She had also wanted a more formal process, to make it easy to retrieve.

Sharing of information is what the Internet is about. So it was not only shared internally, but could also be shared to members of the Internet community. Norman did all of his research on the Internet. So did Michelle. Mark was on a message board for people who were searching for technical assistance and with his expertise he was willing to share his knowledge. But limits could also be placed. During one of my days at CREATIVE MEDIA Michelle had tried to enter a website where information had been free in the past, but now users had to subscribe to the site. A barrier had been put into place.

Playing on a collective level

On an internal level, rather than on a personal level, Berg (1998) argues that playing at work is important, especially with a diverse set of colleagues, but playing for Berg is different than the playing discussed by James et al (1999). Rather than experimenting, Berg suggests that as a group taking fun breaks, using toys, wearing of

costumes, in order to offer ways of getting creative inspirations. This was also done at CREATIVE MEDIA. Norman would initiate activities on a collective level to encourage this form of play. It helped boost morale on days where a lot of work had been completed and the designers needed inspiration. This is how Samantha evaluated this time:

Um, I think it was just that, in my head it was OK – "alright now we are just going to run outside and we're gonna take some photos. And we're gonna play with them. Like Norman, on Friday, we all went out to buy some mouse's for everybody and we decided "Let's get a web cam it will be fun." And he gets everyone involved and its Ok to take a little amount of time to start playing with different things, not just, you know, the jobs. (Samantha)

But this strategy is not always the best remedy for encouraging creativity in the team. It can be disruptive for some members. For example Michelle - because she had so much on her mind, a small chunk of time playing with the other designers was not enough to encourage creativity. It might actually have been counterproductive for her. She needed more time away in order to reenergize her batteries.

You know what it is generally really hard because sometimes you don't feel creative. So, it's stepping away from the computer. It's also getting some sleep. In my mind, when you are super stressed and you've got tons of things in your mind and it starts to get crowded. So I don't do anything specifically to ensure that I am creative. It's basically time off - it's vacations. When you get overload, you get overloaded. I am also in a different situation than Samantha and Mark are, for example. So they might be different, have different answers. Because I have more different kinds of information in my head, that I have to deal with in a day-to-day basis. ... I've got office admin, I've got human resources, ... even though Norman sort of handles it, I still have to deal with it. I've got project management you know..., it's not only technical and design, it's also a lot of admin. You know. (Michelle)

Breaking with pattern

Another way to stimulate creativity was to break with pattern. Although there were no

real formal processes, changing the way things had always been done could provide

the needed stimulus for creative ideas.

... I think everybody has that certain basic need for new stimulus. More stimulus. How would I do it? At this point we want to create an environment where the computer is not so tied to everything we do. Which we have tried to do a little bit here and there but is very hard. Something as small as that program ICQ (chatting) I was telling you about. We did an experiment to see what happens if we are not using it all day long, and we're not constantly chatting back and forth. Will that affect our workload ... it was a positive idea. Other ways I would do it is if we had a project, and I was the one kind of holding on to it and leading it I'm gonna try more and more myself to identify "Oh we need photos" rather than go with the initial instinct of "Oh I will just search on the web for photos I need and buy them from some photography company." To walk up to someone like Samantha and say here is the camera and leave the office for four hours and go. And it might be that having to be proactive where it's almost like giving a positive direction to encourage the changes in the office. ... It's always about experimenting, I think the second it gets stagnant we don't chose to change it, especially for a creative company is a bad point. You know, some companies is about instituting rules and regulations and I think that might be an interesting one to look at. You know, a large corporation needs those rules and regulations to operate when you are thousands of people. And it has a kind of a rulebook you have to follow whereas for us, the second it starts to develop habits you want break them. I think certain rules, certain work flows as far as producing is the work, is useful to have the rules, but as far as the creative side, as soon as the creative work falls into a pattern it's gonna suffer. (Norman)

Creativity comes at a cost.

West (2002) has found that within the manufacturing industry, in a study conducted

on 81 companies, innovative companies are more likely to have a lower market share

in their primary products[43]. At CREATIVE MEDIA, the creativity also came at a

cost. Because CREATIVE MEDIA was targeting specific customer types in the

creative and arts community, this limited who they were willing to work with. They

would take the corporate websites that came to them, but they preferred to work for a

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[43] One reason for this may be that smaller companies exist within a framework of uncertainty, leading the author to argue external competition created an environment where creativity and innovation are more common.

specific type of customer. They did not seek out corporate websites where large sums

of money could be made. They were looking for customers in industries that did not

have much money to spend on website development. Ultimately this decision meant

they were affecting their bottom line.

Yup, CREATIVE MEDIA could be bigger. CREATIVE MEDIA could have more clients, bigger clients. Could be twice the size. We could all have more money. We could have sold out to another company at different points. We could have done all of these numerous things which could have led to what most people would define as a successful company. But creativity ... as soon as you start to care about your work, and not, and as soon as your work starts to become an important part of your life. Not just a job where you work 9 to 5, then its hard. Other people, who have companies, they probably have companies with the anticipation of building the company so that they can be wealthy. Whereas this company was built for different things – it was built for me to do creative work. And if the wealth comes that's almost an added bonus. Um. Yeah, so I think it is at a cost to the traditional business. (Norman)

The creativity comes at a cost to the customer as well as they are charged more for

this type of added value. Not every web designer can design creatively as

CREATIVE MEDIA does. If someone had wanted a simple website that did not have

the creative coding or the visual creativity, they could pay much less somewhere else.

So when a customer contracts with CREATIVE MEDIA, they have to pay more for

the creativity.

It's something we would explain to the client. But in the end it doesn't really make a difference to them upfront but it's almost our way of being able to also justify some of things ... why do we charge more, why are we at this level of expertise or this level of quality, versus somebody else's. If you want we, again I'll go back to retail – if you want a sweatshirt, right. You can go get a sweatshirt from the gap for $50, or you can go get a sweatshirt from someone else for $10. But it's only the stitching that is holding it together. You know. So that we'll tell a client that by working with us you are getting smarter solution so that it can change, it can evolve, it will be easier to update. It's gonna be easier to work with. It's gonna look better, work better. All these different things and I think that is what sets us apart. (Norman)

Externally

On an external level, CREATIVE MEDIA portrayed the image of being a creative company because by doing so they had a better chance of securing the type of work they wanted. But, whereas internally it was important that everything be done in order to ensure the creativity, to a certain extent it did not really matter if the external world saw them as creative. For example, Norman had stated there were companies he would not even try to get contracts from and that he would not change his appearance to get contracts from these companies.

There was nothing done to control the external, but the external was controlled as it entered CREATIVE MEDIA. On several occasions subtle actions had re-affirmed my outsider status. But then, I was not the only one treated this way. The treatment was similar for Fran, the bookkeeper. When she entered the office she was not greeted by Samantha or Mark, only by Norman and Michelle, even if that. Even though she worked in the same pod as Samantha and Max.[44]

The portrayal to the outside world

CREATIVE MEDIA stated point blank, on their website they were creative. The word creative was used in the logo, and was used throughout the website. This desire for creativity controlled the customers and industries targeted to work with, and

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[44] Max was not an employee of Creative Media, although he was hired on one of the projects as a contractor. Norman and Michelle had extra workspaces available during the time of my study. Rather than leave it empty they had rented out this space to Max. He was rarely at the office on the days I was

who was hired to work at CREATIVE MEDIA, and who was admired and respected.

This is why they had no respect for the corporations because it was felt that they were

boring and did not allow for creativity.

They would have to explain this creativity to their potential customers, and as it was

not always obvious to see, especially if the creativity was on the technical nature, it

could make it hard to explain at the time of the sell:

When somebody calls us up and says "I need this change by tomorrow." And we say
we can do it, we can do it in an hour. It's because we've thought about it in advance
so that we don't tell them it gonna take two weeks and its gonna cost them ten hours
of work. But it is a hard thing to get across. (Norman)

But portraying themselves to the outside world through their website could be

problematic as well. During one of the production meetings I realized they had been

working on their own website for over a year. During this particular meeting there

was a sense of urgency, as Norman was attending the SXSW conference in Austin in

ten days and they wanted the website developed by this date. When I asked Michelle

about it she told me that it was harder for CREATIVE MEDIA to work on their own

website than it was to work on a customer website because they had to define

themselves; they needed to ask a lot of questions about who they were and what they

wanted to present to the outside world. The website they had up till now was

temporary, and Michelle did not feel presenting a temporary website to such an

important conference was a good idea. They wanted to look good, but first they

needed to answer all of those important questions.

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at Creative Media. The first time I saw Max I was informed by Norman that I did not need to interview
him because he was not part of Creative Media.

Customers were generally from the Montreal area. On one occasion, CREATIVE

MEDIA decided they wanted to work with an American Filmmaker, as they heard he

was looking for someone to produce his website. On this occasion, rather than sell

their creativity outright, Norman sold their 'Canadian-ness' and their 'neutral status'

as it related to American policy. The filmmaker was controversial and had warned

Norman that working on a web site for him might invite hate mail. Norman did not

mind, and either did the other designers, as they shared the ideas that were being

promulgated by the filmmaker. Identity is flexible, and was altered to suit the needs

of CREATIVE MEDIA. This being said, if Norman had not felt that working with

the filmmaker would allow for creativity he would not have sought out this customer.

The customer

Perhaps the biggest factor affecting the creativity a CREATIVE MEDIA was the

customer. Working on the same website over and over again could be tiresome, as it

would get stale. CREATIVE MEDIA tried to limit their contracts with government

and corporate web sites to a minimum, but were basically forced to take on some of

these contracts to pay the bills, which allowed them to work on other pro-bono

creative websites. They also did pro-bono work for community organizations and that

could not afford pay for their services, such as a cancer support group. They were

proud of this work. [45]

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[45] There have been many studies on the morality of exchange in anthropology (Bloch and Parry, 1989; Bohannan, 1968; Piot, 1991; Prasad, 1999; Mandel and Humphrey, 2002) as it relates to commodity exchange. At CREATIVE MEDIA the morality related to the selection of who they would be producing the commodity for - there was more value placed on a website that allowed for creativity on its various levels.

Their favorite customer was the one that was within the artistic community in Montreal, but even that could come with its own set of problems. During my study they were awarded the contract for a local singer. Michelle had secured this contract through a chance meeting at a party. At this party she met someone who had done the cover CD for this musician, and this artist was aware of the work that CREATIVE MEDIA did and liked it. It was through this recommendation that she got the contract.

Michelle was quite excited about this opportunity because they thought it would allow them to explore their creative side, until they were given firm instructions from the management company on how to proceed, which took the allure of working on this site away from them. It would not be as creative as they initially thought it would be.

Now it's interesting. That is going to be less sort of creative. ... Any project that comes in you sort of categorize. [The Singer] is sort of – the branding is already done, so the base concept, the branding is done already. For us it's basically working off that. At that point it's adapting an already established creative, visual creative, and translating it to the web. So at that point the creative aspect there is gonna be more based upon how we build it, so ironically the technology aspect. Working with the visual branding, you know. (Michelle)

Part of the problem with this customer related to the fact that he was part of the "machine" that Norman and Michelle did not respect. The singer had a large management company, and with this contract, Norman and Michelle were given firm guidelines that did not allow for flexibility. This was not their ideal customer. In one of our interviews, Michelle's aggravation of dealing with this customer was evident:

It is difficult because they say "we need it yesterday." And they have such and such a deadline and they give us nothing. You know. We need these things from them, and I don't know. It's a lot of babysitting. .... I am going to have to sit down with them on Thursday and get them to sign the contract. We already had contact meeting, but the head honcho was not there. And now he wants to be part of the contract meeting. You know. SO now we are going to have to redo the meeting essentially. After we

said everything in fine. This is the proposal that has been set up numerous times and they actually have to read the thing, they understand. They have to be spoon fed, and the reality is not a lot of people can do the work. I am really under the impression, especially when it comes to them developing their website, they realize they want it, they realize they kind of need , but they are not really wanting to do the work and help to make it successful. [The Singer's] album which is launching today, which is being touted as one of the biggest launching of an album in the history of Quebec and we've been saying. ... you can use this as a marketing thing, people are going to go to it, you've printed the god damn URL, ... you're not even going to give a free MP3, you're not even gonna, you know, join a mailing list, they're like, oh no it's not important. It's like come on you guys! (Michelle)

But then having too much freedom with a customer who did not know what they wanted could also cause problems of their own as well:

... But at the same time, sometimes when you are given carte blanche, it like too much of a white canvas, you know what I mean. Sometimes if you are given the hundred things you have to keep in mind, then it is a lot more sort of interesting because that does spark... You've got to see it as a challenge or an impediment. Depends on the day and how you are feeling. (Michelle)

The day-to-day challenges of working with a customer could be tiring and nonproductive. Not only was creativity an issue, but also of 'ownership' of responsibilities. During my fieldwork, one of the contracts CREATIVE MEDIA was working on involved working with the technical writers at the customer site. CREATIVE MEDIA was providing the creative ideas. But, often, they would come in on some mornings, and the technical team at the customer site would have changed something that would result in printing errors, or in errors relating to site appearance. Michelle and Mark would often discuss these changes. Michelle seemed particularly frustrated by it because she had not been successful in transmitting the information to the customer. Her customer contact did not comprehend what Michelle was trying to say.

At another time, both Norman and Michelle discussed the work they were doing for a company in New York. Norman and Michelle felt they were being treated like they were freelancers, which they did not like. Norman wanted to battle it out with the company, and wanted to know how far Michelle was willing to go. She was willing to go as far as canceling the contract. I was told later in New York there exists an environment where freelancers are paid less than in Montreal and both Michelle and Norman felt they had the expertise that distinguished them from freelancers. Norman and Michelle thought they provided more experience and knowledge with a greater service, and did not want to be treated as freelancers.

On the other hand, everyone at CREATIVE MEDIA wanted the American documentary filmmaker project even if it was pro-bono, as he was the clientele they were looking for in terms of his left wing political beliefs. CREATIVE MEDIA was not the only company that felt that way. Norman spoke with the filmmaker for fifteen minutes and convinced him to work with CREATIVE MEDIA. But the filmmaker also wanted the hosting to be done for free. After hanging up with the filmmaker, it took Norman all of five minutes to find a hosting company that would do it for free. The hosting company also knew who the filmmaker was, and since they liked Norman, and because Norman had given them a lot of business in the past they agreed to consider hosting for free. Obviously, this would not have happened so quickly and for free if the filmmaker had contacted a corporation.

They also saw it as a potential to try something new. Furthermore, Michelle and Norman believed that doing the website would be good advertising since the filmmaker also had a book launching soon. This, even if there was no money to be

made directly on the filmmaker project, CREATIVE MEDIA was looking for another

opportunity to work on an interesting project that would allow them to work on their

creativity.

A lot of those sites are for our portfolio, for our personal development. Like the [name
of project] ... *is a friends of Michelle's, and we knew, like, you get paid for a contract,
but you have to break into sort of a new fold in order to get the good, creative, fun,
exciting. We wanted music, the fun fashion types. We wanted interesting fun sites to
work on. So at the beginning we were getting paid by the corporate stuff but it was
OK, but sometimes it was the same old thing, you know. So in order to develop our
skills, in order to develop our portfolio, um, get our own practice, have fun, in order
to do what we wanted to do, we did some pro-bono work. Like* [the filmmaker] *is kind
of like that too. (Samantha)*

Norman had stated the workspace was theirs and that when they did meet with a

customer it was done externally to CREATIVE MEDIA. He wanted the workspace to

be comfortable. By not inviting the customer to visit the workspace, he was in effect

controlling how much of the customer was allowed into CREATIVE MEDIA.

During my fieldwork I never saw a customer at CREATIVE MEDIA. If there was a

customer meeting, the meeting was done at customer site. On one day though, an

insurance agent was supposed to show up, which led to the stress level in the office

raising somewhat prior to his expected arrival. He never showed up as he forgot

about the meeting. I was also informed that the same office stress occurred when a

financial planner met with the Magazine Inc. folks to discuss RRSP options.

Furthermore, communicating through the websites with customers might have also

been one way of controlling how much of the external was allowed into CREATIVE

MEDIA. The computer formed some sort of barrier with regards to communications

interrupting the creative moment. By not allowing for unplanned interruptions there

was more control placed on the creative moment.

The influence of Government bodies and other funding agencies

Norman had decided to have more control of the designs by creating his own website.

It was intended to be an interactive website where Montreal's artistic community

could come together. But, in order to have the time and money to develop his idea he

sought out funding. Norman had in the past contracted work to an individual who had

some experience in securing funding from funding agencies, and she was helping him

out with the hunt for money for his Local Stories project. Norman was very pleased

when he received some funding to get the project started. But to his dismay he

learned that the funding required him to produce a business plan, which is something

Norman was not familiar with in terms of a process. Eventually he decided to drop

his idea altogether because the funding stopped, and because of the bureaucracy

involved. He felt that the Canadian government funding agency did not quite share

his creative vision, and was not giving him enough of the freedom he desired to get

this project off the ground. He put the project on hold until he had enough money to

do it the way he wanted it done.

Because it is a little bit freer, then again I also just recently have found by dealing out with the [Canadian government funding agency], ... they have certain rules and regulations you have to. Until the day comes where I have this big chunk of money sitting in my pocket and I can slip thousand dollars bills and say "OK we're gonna work on this, this week. " In the end the reality if I was doing that, my money and my attitude would probably stifle creativity. Like I mean, I think it's probably always a battle back and forth ... It is always a battle between if you are doing commercial arts there is a battle there. I think even arts would claim that a gallery would stifle creativity. General public coming, and saying continue doing that, don't try this, do this, don't do that. Or maybe you have been doing that too long, maybe do this. The creative mind that makes part of the whole process, this feeling of creativity being stifled, either by yourself or by somebody else. (Norman)

Caulkins (1992) argues that there are different types of entrepreneurs – "the local hero", the "returning native", the "life-style immigrants", and the "entrepreneurial immigrant" (p. 126-130). Like the owners of CREATIVE MEDIA, the local hero is not as interested in making money as the other entrepreneurs are. They are more interested in the quality of life that becoming an entrepreneur can offer. As this is the case, government programs intended to assist the small business owner will not necessarily be seen as beneficial to this type of entrepreneur. Caulkins argues that government programs should be "targeted" (p. 132) to the specific types of entrepreneurs.

In looking over the Canadian government initiatives directly intended to help the small business, I would agree with Caulkins. The Business Development Bank of Canada offers a multitude of loan options for small businesses, intended to assist with the leasing of equipment, farm improvement or entering into emerging sectors. Loans range from $50,000 to $250,000, and are to be paid back within six years. The Business Development Bank of Canada has approved over 7500 loans, into total of $2.3 million for their fiscal year end March 2005 (these numbers are from the website). On the website, the potential self-employed is invited to fill out an "entrepreneurial self-assessment." It is 50 questions long, and asks questions related to *motivation, aptitude* and *attitudes* relating to self-employment (see appendix 2). After having answered the questions the potential self-employed worker will be informed as to whether or not they are above or below the average, as compared to the self-employed. Because, we are told "entrepreneurs tend to obtain overall results that are higher than those of the general population, and this for all characteristics" (as per website). Government programs are intended to facilitate in the implementation of a

small business by explaining the bureaucracy involved, and offer loans. In the 1990s approximately ¼ of business shut within two years, 1/3 in five years and 1/5 in ten years (Anonymous, 2005). The question then, is how could these programs be re-worked to better help business owners?

One way I found Government agencies can benefit companies like CREATIVE MEDIA, is through indirect methods. One of their newer customers was interested in a website because he had received some funding from the government to help develop his website. Otherwise the customer would not have had the money to develop one, giving CREATIVE MEDIA another opportunity to use their creative muscle.

Information is shared to the outside world

In the corporate environment everything is kept secret, with management holding things back from their employees, and employees having to sign disclosures saying they will not share any trade secrets. The Internet on the other hand was created on the notion of information sharing where everyone has easy access. Norman and Mark had learned how to design for the web by looking at the code behind the websites. This notion of sharing existed even external to CREATIVE MEDIA. Mark had mentioned to me that the "Internet guru" created these amazing websites. He shared his code to anyone over the Internet, at a minimal cost of $15.00, for information or use, in his or her own web designs. This willingness to share information allowed others to learn, experiment, and use the creative ideas of someone else for their own purposes.

Creative Failure

Articles and books on creativity as it relates to the workplace often discuss the
successes but the "failures" are rarely discussed. By looking at the failures as well we
can better understand how successes occur and how a success is so defined. As
mentioned, at CREATIVE MEDIA a success was not necessarily a result of making
money, but had other criteria. When I discussed a successful website with Samantha
she told me the process was important, which demonstrates how subjective the notion
of creativity is. Furthermore, what is deemed a success today will not necessarily be
deemed a success in the future, indicating its temporality.

*I think one of the best projects that we worked on here, for me, production wise was
with Michelle and Mark and I were working on a site called* [name of website], *and
we all sat down and brainstormed the basic idea. Mark said I think we should set it
up like this. It think that we should use this technology. And we discussed it. ... We
had a very good plan before sitting down to build anything, and the rest of it we just
all contributed. And it was constantly changing and it was such a beautiful, smooth
process. And the results was so nice. And it was very pleasant.* (Samantha)

This website was for a customer. All the designers had worked on many sites for
many customers. On occasion they would also design their own websites for their
own personal use. Norman for example had put pictures from one new year's eve
party and had a message board on this website. But he did not consider this website
creative. It was something he did to pass the time.

Norman also had another website in mind. At the time of my fieldwork he was
working on getting the funding for a particular project. I was given a copy of the draft
document to help me understand what the project was. The website was an original
website Norman had been developing for several years. It was content based and

about Montreal. It was intended to blend all of the friendships Norman had made

over the years, in the music, cultural, broadcast, journalism, and television industries.

It was meant to be an extremely creative project that would have new technological

advances developed in order to sustain it, and would hopefully make a lot of revenue

for CREATIVE MEDIA through sponsorships, advertising, sales and links. He did

not tell me, but Samantha informed me one day that it was also a "personal" venture.

As Samantha told me, the development of this website was discussed during one of

their first meetings:

*Um, for me, what interests me a lot is the content. I know ever since, ever since I had
my first interview for CREATIVE MEDIA with Norman, we ended up staying behind
after the interview at [name of restaurant] and he had a pitcher and we were going
off in Montreal and he was talking about his grandfather and how he has been here
since the beginning of the century, last century. He's been here since the 1910s, so
he's seen the developments. And Norman has been very close to his grandfather and
he has gotten all of these stories and he has been very much involved in these I guess,
these structures in Montreal, these communities, these infrastructure, this stuff. And it
was something that I enjoyed too. I thought it was very interesting. Especially with
his poli-sci background.* (Samantha)

In order to get the funding for this project Norman went through a government-

funding agency. He received the funding for the first stages of the project and started

working on it, even demonstrating it to his community of friends. But this project is

now on the back burner. The funding agency had made the bureaucracy too

overwhelming, daunting and created an extra workload CREATIVE MEDIA was not

willing to tackle, and in fact could not afford to take. Especially as one of the great

problems Norman ran into was that CREATIVE MEDIA ran out of funds, and needed

to work on websites that were providing the much needed revenue.

But I also think one of the major drawbacks to this project was that he did not have

the support of Michelle for this project. When I would ask how the project was going

to Michelle she would often respond things like "*I have not been involved in that*" or

"*we haven't really discussed it yet.*" Michelle was always telling me to discuss this

project with Norman, which I did. One of the most important factors influencing the

creativity at CREATIVE MEDIA was that each project was shared with the four

designers. Local Stories was the only project I observed during my study that did not

get off the ground, and the only project Michelle did not fully and outwardly support.

But in one of the interviews, one conducted with both Norman and Michelle, I asked

Norman why he was shelving the project his answer related more to a funding issue:

I will be candid with you on shelving it. We got funding from [the Canadian
government funding agency]. *You were here when that happened. Now, in figuring
out the* [Canadian government funding agency] *system, you have to jump from three
hoops to get fundable. There is pre-development, development, which is marketing
development and then there is production. And basically we were only able to submit,
you know they have only one or two funding periods a year. So I mean, I got sick of
having to jump hoops through three layers, the next problem is the way it worked is,
that* [the Canadian government funding agency] *would give us 50% of our money and
the other 50% we were expecting, and we knew we would be able to get through tax
credits. Which would have meant the project would have been funded and we
wouldn't have been money of our own. The problem was that the ... government will
give you the money, but only when the project goes live. So, we would have had to
incur 50% ourselves to get into year three when we get the money back. Which is fine
on paper, but for a small company to basically keep shovelling out on salaries X
amount of money to get there, we could not afford to....*

And then the agency turned them down for further funding.

And yet, during the same time as this project was temporarily shelved, CREATIVE

MEDIA did decide to work pro-bono for the filmmaker. This is a project that

Norman had aggressively recruited. Samantha was quite enthusiastic about it because

she thought it would offer her some opportunities to explore creativity through

playing, and because of the values espoused by the filmmaker. Mark in our final

interview told me it was one of the reasons he had wanted to come back to

CREATIVE MEDIA, after having left, because of the customers like the filmmaker.

Michelle though, although happy about the contract had already experienced

problems with the filmmaker team and was already distancing herself from this

project, although supporting it in principle.

Norman has kind of taken [the filmmaker] *completely under his wing, sort of thing. Because he has been talking to* [the filmmaker]. *I started off on a design while Norman was away, sent it off when Norman got back, got feedback, because they neglected to tell us that they really hated the look of the book. And that is what I was basing my design off of. Whatever. They were too afraid that we were going to get upset. You know. Which is, say it. So Norman based on his conversations has decided to go off with the design and worked on it and is basically dealing with them. So he's dealing with them, so he is kind of leading on the project. So we have to tell each other to let go and pass things off ... so he's technically leading the creative on it but at the same time we are all kind of giving an input and everything.* (Michelle)

Conclusion – Creativity is Self-Identity at CREATIVE MEDIA

In this thesis I set out to prove self-employed individuals construct their own working

identities, with the use of an organization that was created specifically to emphasize

their personal value system. This was ultimately a means to opt-out of the global

marketplace, as corporations were not viewed positively by the owners and other

designers of CREATIVE MEDIA.

Ronco and Peattie (1983) write that "[p]eople who want to make their work in their

own way often need an organization to do it" (p. 187). It is through organizations that

resources can be discovered and consolidated, where a defence against the outside

world can be created, where illuminating and enlightening work on an individual level

can be fostered (p. 188-189). This is obviously the case for the designers at

CREATIVE MEDIA, especially for the owners. They had tried working for others,

but found their desired work values non-valorized. It was through the creation of

their own organization, as a small business, that their own work values materialized.

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The owners of CREATIVE MEDIA had to create their own self-identity with regards to their working lives. They had taken past experience and used it to formulate their current identity – it was their "biographical narrative." It had been a "reflexive project," as Giddens calls it. The fateful moments in their lives - unhappiness with working conditions – led to the choice of becoming self-employed. Especially for Norman who wanted to work in a creative environment.

They could not create their creative self-identity alone – Norman and Marc had tried it through their endeavours as freelancers, but had not succeeded because they had found the experience blocked their creative juices. It is through combining their efforts in an organizational setting, that they had found the success of creativity. They had needed this structural element of a small business to develop their personal creative identities. The reason for this relates to an understanding of creativity as a being a thought process that was also a communal effort. Creativity could not be a solitary endeavour.

Creativity at CREATIVE MEDIA is a tool. By stating that they were a creative company, it was a way for the designers at CREATIVE MEDIA to distance themselves from the corporations they so disliked. Corporations as we saw in the introductory chapters of this thesis have taken the skill away from the worker in order to cut costs and more easily manipulate employees and control productivity. Even in occupations where 'brain' work exists, the jobs have been routinized for the same reason. This has led to dissatisfied workers, complaining about boredom. It has also led to workers without pride in the work that is produced. At CREATIVE MEDIA,

by structuring the design work so that creativity is key, the job would not only

become interesting, but there would always be opportunity to learn and play.

Furthermore, the designers themselves never felt they were being managed.

They ran their small business differently than a corporation would. It was not

hierarchical and learning resembled the 'apprentice' relationship. Herbert Applebaum

(1998) describes the work ethic of the craftsmen in 20th Century America, as one who

prides quality of work, and therefore gets a sense of pride and accomplishment out of

this work. Membership into crafts is strictly controlled (through an organization or

union) and access is only permitted to those who obtain it through apprenticeship,

training or education (p. 179-180). Applebaum (1992) writes, "craft occupations ...

are relatively insulated against the degradation of work process" (p. 532). CREATIVE

MEDIA, I would argue functioned much like a craft organization[46].

Creativity is the reason they rejected the 'corporate model' of doing business. The

location of their new office space was based on criteria relating to their self-identity of

being creative. It fit into their understanding of where creative people worked and

they believed it would help them with their creative endeavours. They worked on

creative projects because they saw themselves as creative people. It was also a way of

distinguishing themselves from the other web design companies. They had wanted to

distinguish themselves from technology companies and corporations because they did

not understand these working environments to be creative. The types of customer they

chose also reflected their creative self-identity. Although this limited their

opportunities, they wanted to work for customers with mutual values as them, in

terms of creativity, as well as politically, and environmentally from a global perspective. They had also surrounded themselves with like-minded people, who supported them in the decisions they made regarding creativity in the workplace. All of these elements were part of the construction of their self-identity, which had to be negotiated on a daily basis by all the designers at CREATIVE MEDIA. "Risks" had to be managed to protect the integrity of the creativity.

Anthony Giddens' theoretical perspective on modernity and self-identity is obviously helpful in this study as it allows us to understand the Generation X designers from their individual perspectives. Generation X has been portrayed in the media as a homogeneous group of individuals, and often is compared to their Baby Boomer counterparts. By using the theoretical perspective on self-identity proposed by Giddens we are able to better understand how each individual stands alone yet part of the "generation." As individuals the temporality becomes more prevalent as we understand how they negotiate their place in the world on a daily basis. It is here that we see that Generation X is taking charge of their working lives.

Anthony Giddens' theoretical perspective on modernity and self-identity is also helpful for our understanding of self-employment. Whereas others have answered the question of why become self-employed by using aggregate data, by looking at 'work' identity we are better able to understand the progression of a business, from the moment it was conceived. It is here we see that self-employment is an ongoing project. Decisions are made on a daily basis and they are not taken lightly. They relate to the self-identity of the owners of the business. Even though financial

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[46] Barley and Kunda (2004), on the other hand, argue that there has been a professionalization of the "itinerant expert" (p. 297-302) in the Silicon Valley, as there was a form of loose organization created

problems existed, the success of the company was evaluated based on their choice to be a creative company versus being a moneymaking technical company or corporation. To make other choices would have led to unhappiness in the working lives.

Giddens discusses pluralism of choice, reflexivity, creation of identity, way of revealing one's self, as if all of us have options. The owners of CREATIVE MEDIA had attended university, and were therefore knowledgeable about the fact they could afford to take chances with the creative skills they had learned. Their education in communications studies provided them with the knowledge to articulate ideas and use some form of media to do so. Their education had also provided them with the self-confidence needed, as they felt they could produce creative websites better than others, especially the corporations. Although their education had not necessarily prepared them for becoming business owners, it was the combination of their education, past working experience, and upbringing, that had led them down this path. They had a 'creative product' to sell. This is what allowed them to take chances to become self-employed. Ironically, the fact corporations have grasped the need to become more creative for business success, may have given the owners the confidence to become business owners – as they already possessed the much-desired skill of creativity.

They both knew to take the chances now while they did not have many financial or personal responsibilities was wise, especially for Norman who had the extra money. "Now" really was the time to take that chance. They had enough financial stability to

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with the contingentcy workfoce.

make an *investment* in creativity. They also had the time to dedicate their actions towards the creative endeavor.

Giddens argues that it would be a mistake to consider self-identity and the reflexive project to be confined to only the privileged, because "[lifestyle] refers also to decisions taken and courses of action followed under conditions of severe material constraint." (1991; 6) It could be argued that some have more choices, more time, more resources and more confidence than others do, allowing the self-identity to materialize over time. During the time of my fieldwork Michelle already viewed herself as a business owner. Norman was still reluctant to call himself this. But through the experience of running CREATIVE MEDIA and through the trial and tribulations of becoming more financially viable he was slowly identifying himself as a business owner.

While anthropologists are exploring how globalization is affecting the worker is large organizations, and on the periphery (Lee, 1998; Nash, 1998; Hamada, 1998; Gluesing, 1998; English-Lueck and Saveri, 2001; Baba, 2003) there is a portion of the workforce that is selecting to completely opt out of the global stage. They are choosing ways to organize their work lives locally, where they know they will not have to fight to protect their constructed work identity. Considering that three out of four new jobs are being created by the self-employed in Canada, it might be worthwhile to continue to explore why these workers are selecting to stay out of the global competition. I was privileged to learn that it had to do with the integrity of the work identity as creative. But as the self-employed are individuals, others may be choosing to organize in this way for other reasons.

5.What happens Next for CREATIVE MEDIA

Well, let me put it this way, we have had a pretty severe cash flow problem, and we have to scale back...which means to my serious, and utter dismay, we are laying mark and samantha off. I hope it's a short-term problem...but we'll see. I'm sure this will add a very different spin onto your paper.

So, it's been hard times... i was going to tell you when we went to coffee but michelle and I still hadn't discussed how to deal with this.[47]

On the day that I received this note I thought it must have been difficult for Norman

and Michelle to firmly maintain the "culture of creativity" at the company they had

built, even though they have known for quite some time about the financial problems.

Having Samantha and Mark "play" must have been expensive, and yet they allowed

them to do this while they knew that they were not making enough money to keep the

company going. In one of our final meetings I spoke with Norman about this.[48] He

informed me that he and Michelle had known for quite some time that things were not

going right – six months in fact. The reason being the contracts were suddenly drying

up and they were making proposals but not getting any responses. Norman was being

very pragmatic about it. He said there would be an evaluation process taking place

with him and Michelle over the next couple of months to see if the professional

partnership would continue. This has obviously been hard on their friendship. But

this is also indicative of modernity according to Giddens. He tells us "pure

relationships" are good for moral support, but that during times of fateful moments

they are at their weakest (1991; 187). Pure relationships cease to exist when, for the

individual, the benefits discontinue.

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[47] Email received from Norman just prior to my last day at CREATIVE MEDIA
[48] This conversation was not recorded. Norman felt too raw and emotional about the financial situation and did not want to be formally interviewed. At that time he felt that in a few months his emotions would be different and therefore did not want what was said on tape. I complied.

At this conversation Norman told me Michelle was having a harder time with this than he was, because she did not want to declare bankruptcy. She felt a lot of "pride" out of owning this company. This is a normal reaction, as Giddens writes, "a person who successfully fosters a sense of pride in the self is one who is able psychologically to feel that his biography is justified and unitary" (1991; 66). The creative company succeeding justified her creative self-identity.

Samantha and Mark did not seem to be hard hit from this news. They took the lay-off with a sense of calm. But then, according to the literature, Gen-Xers are prepared for this eventuality. After letting Samantha and Mark go, Norman and Michelle decided to get the assistance of a business consultant, from "a friend of a friend of a friend" to help them get back on their feet. Getting outside help when needed is a very modern way to react to challenges to self-identity. But this business consultant was strictly focused on business development. He did not focus on creativity. I met again with Norman a year after he emailed me about their financial troubles

The first thing we are focusing on is past clients and people that we have worked with before. Just because obviously if we have worked with somebody before chances are it will always be easier to do it again. The thing next after that is work with clients and industries we have already worked at and so the one that he is coaching me on is the move towards more high tech companies, or companies like [customer name]. Companies that we would find somewhat interesting and creative but have to have the money to pay. Rather, I mean there are some cultural organizations that might have the money to pay us, but they are few and far between and actually companies that have, you know, staff and money, and sell things. We have to match that with companies that we find interesting to work with. He has given me resources where I can go and check like online when they post, what bank has given money to what company, like that, so that I am going through it and looking at that. Or trying to get, let's say if we worked for a company, like [Company name], trying to get them to refer to other people as well. Or you know, develop new ideas and work with them. (Norman)

This resulted in a shift in their priorities. Whereas creativity was the key motivator

before, now finding creativity that also generated some money was the objective of all

projects.

*... I think probably in the back of our minds we still have creative project ideas at
heart but I think that the biggest lesson we learned... is that, at least for me, I cannot
speak for Michelle, for me, after 25 years doing this, it suddenly became clear that we
were running a business, as much as we were creating an environment for work. And
do fun things. So running a business ends up being a very separate thing. We are still
struggling with the mind shift, to really get into our heads that we are running a
business, and you know, when you do that money is as important as the creative side.
Uh, getting paid. ... But of course, increasing the quality of work we do, All these
things are definitely part of it, but ....what we have resolved over the past six months
or so ... is doing business development, and kind of coaching, you know, people who
do that, he's been helping us a lot to put into place the things kind of put things into
place the things that we don't have, or which we didn't have as a business which is
things like trying to do business development, rather than just rely on people calling
us when we haven't – you know referrals. Making sure that our administrative
system, and bookkeeping system is straight. So getting those things in place so that the
organization of the business is in place so that we can then probably be free to do
more of our own work.*

Creativity is still important to CREATIVE MEDIA, but as a result of the troubles

experienced getting paying contracts is now seen positively, even if the payment

comes from a non-creative project.

CREATIVE MEDIA is still working directly with the filmmaker, which has given

them some recognition from the local media. More importantly as it relates to their

self-identity, this customer has allowed CREATIVE MEDIA to maintain the integrity

of its biographical narrative, as the filmmaker shares their left-leaning ideals as well

as provide them the opportunity to work on the creative projects they so desire. While

the biographical continuity remains they are also now being paid for some of their

original work as well a new projects, as the filmmaker has more projects in store.

Ironically, the payments for these projects require CREATIVE MEDIA to be associated with a corporate organization because the filmmaker is associated with this organization. But, when I asked Norman about the contradiction of working with a corporation, he stated that the filmmaker was the go-between for these projects, and that although the large corporations were paying for this work, they were really working for the filmmaker.

The owners of CREATIVE MEDIA never declared bankruptcy.

In June 2004 Michelle decided she no longer wanted to work at CREATIVE MEDIA and left. This is not surprising as throughout my fieldwork I felt that she was the one struggling the most with the notion of creativity at CREATIVE MEDIA. It was obvious when Samantha and Mark were allowed the freedom to play, while Michelle struggled the most with the day to day challenges of finishing projects in order to generate an income. Also, when she asked Norman if CREATIVE MEDIA was being a "snob" for their desire to work on creative projects only, she was questioning her narrative. After leaving CREATIVE MEDIA Michelle travelled for a few months before returning to Montreal. She is now working as an employee for another company.

Samantha is teaching English in Asia.

Mark left CREATIVE MEDIA for one year, working for another company in the same building and on the same floor as CREATIVE MEDIA, an experience he did not enjoy, and is now happily back at CREATIVE MEDIA. Now that the financial

situation has improved at CREATIVE MEDIA is it not hard to understand why

Norman re-hired Mark. They shared a similar understanding of creativity, as well as a

technical appreciation of the Internet. Samantha's understanding of creativity had on

the other hand been more appreciated by Michelle.

Norman never questioned the importance of creativity. As he is now the sole owner

of the company I suspect that he will continue to work on creative projects, that pay.

He has learned from his experience and is now working on becoming more business

oriented, which he originally felt was not part of the creative persona. If his

relationship with the filmmaker continues I suspect he will get some additional

business not directly associated with the filmmaker, as this working relationship is

providing some much needed visibility. Fortunately for Norman (and Mark) this is

the type of business he wants to work with.

Appendix 1

List of ethnographies studied by Randy Hodson (2004) as per website:
http://www.sociology.ohio-state.edu/rdh/welist.htm

Workplace Ethnography File (W.E.)*

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Randy Hodson's Homepage

Workplace Ethnography (W.E.) Homepage

For comments on or additions to this list write: hodson.8@osu.edu

The following list of organizational ethnographies have been content coded for approximately
150 organizational, workforce, human relations, and management variables. Each case is based on:
(1) sustained direct observation of at least 6 months, (2) a focus on a single organization or a
small set of organizations, and (3) a focus on a specific group of workers within the organization. N = 204 total cases from 156 published books.

Applebaum, Herbert. 1981. Royal Blue, the Culture of Construction Workers. New York: Holt. CASEID = 06300

Balzer, Richard. 1976. Clockwork: Life in and Outside an American Factory. CASEID = 19600

Becker, Howard, B. Geer, E.C. Hughes, and A. Strauss. 1961. Boys in White: Student Culture in Medical School. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. CASEID = 19700

Barker, James R. 1999. The Discipline of Teamwork: Participation and Concertive Control. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. CASEID = 14600

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Besser, Terry L. 1996. Team Toyota: Transplanting the Toyota Culture to the Camry Plant in Kentucky. Albany: State University of New York Press. CASEID = 16000

Beynon, Huw. 1972. Perceptions of Work: Variations Within a Factory. London: Cambridge University Press. CASEID = 06800

Beynon, Huw. 1975. Working for Ford. East Ardsley, England: E.P. Publishing. CASEID = 06700

Biggart, Nicole. 1989. Charismatic Capitalism: Direct Selling Organizations in America. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. CASEID = 11600

Blau, Peter M. 1963/1955. The Dynamics of Bureaucracy: The Study of Interpersonal Relations in Two Government Agencies. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. CASEIDs = 16100 (state JTPA) and 23900 (federal legal enforcement)

Bosk, Charles. 1979. Forgive and Remember. Chicago: University of Chicago. CASEID = 06900

Bosk, Charles. 1992. All God's Mistakes: Genetic Counseling in a Pediatric Hospital. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. CASEID = 14400

Bruckert, Chris. 2002. Taking It Off, Putting It On: Women Working in Strip Clubs. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press. CASEID = 24500

Burawoy, Michael. 1979. Manufacturing Consent. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. CASEID = 06500

Burris, Beverly H. 1983. No Room at the Top: Underemployment and Alienation in the Corporation. New York: Praeger. CASEID = 10500

Butcher, David. 1980. The Trawlermen. Reading, England: Tops'l Books. CASEID = 12400

Butcher, David. 1979. The Driftermen. Reading, England: Tops'l Books. CASEID = 12500

Cassell, Joan. 1991. Expected Miracles: Surgeons at Work. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. CASEID = 16200

Cavendish, Ruth. 1982. Women on the Line. Boston, MA: Routledge and Kegan Paul. CASEID = 00500

Chetkovich, Carol. 1997. Real Heat: Gender and Race in the Urban Fire Service. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press. CASEID = 23200

Cherry, Mike. 1974. On High Steel: The Education of an Ironworker. New York: Quadrangle. CASEID = 08600

Chinoy, Ely. 1955. Automobile Workers and the American Dream. Garden City, NY: Doubleday. CASEID = 09100

Clawson, Augusta. 1944. Shipyard Diary of a Woman Welder. New York: Penguin. CASEID = 19800

Cock, Jacklyn. 1989. Maids and Madams: Domestic Workers under Apartheid. London: Women's Press. CASEID = 06400

Cole, Robert E. 1971. Japanese Blue Collar: The Changing Tradition. Berkeley: University of California Press. CASEIDs = 16300 (skilled tool and die makers) and 24600 (semi- and unskilled helpers)

Constable, Nicole. 1997. Maid to Order in Hong Kong: Stories of Filipina Workers. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. CASEID = 15200

Cressey, Peter. 1985. Just Managing: Authority and Democracy in Industry. Philadelphia: Open University Press. CASEID's = 03600 (whiskey), 03700 (electronics), 03800 (fork lift mgt.), 03900 (foundry), 04000 (banking), 04100 (beer)

Crosset, Todd W. 1995. Outsiders in the Clubhouse: The World of Women's Professional Golf. Albany: State University of New York Press. CASEID = 19900

Crozier, Michel. 1971. The World of the Office Worker (translated by David Landau). Chicago: University of Chicago Press. CASEID = 02500

Dalton, Melville. 1959. Men Who Manage. New York: Wiley. CASEID = 09200

Devinatz, Victor G. 1999. High Tech Betrayal: Working and Organizing on the Shop Floor. East Lansing: Michigan University Press. CASEID = 14700

Diamond, Timothy. 1992. Making Gray Gold: Narratives of Nursing Home Care. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. CASEID = 20000

DiFazio, William. 1985. Longshoremen: Community and Resistance on the Brooklyn Waterfront. South Hadley, MA: Bergin & Garvey. CASEID = 02700

Ditton, Jason. 1977. Part-Time Crime: An Ethnography of Fiddling and Pilferage. Macmillan. CASEID = 20100

Drori, Israel. 2000. The Seam Line: Arab Workers and Jewish Managers in the Israeli Textile Industry. Stanford: Stanford University Press. CASEID = 17600

Edelman, Birgitta. 1997. Shutters at Work: Creating a World in a Railway Yard. Swedish railroad workers. CASEID = 14900

Fine, Gary Alan. 1996. Kitchens: The Culture of Restaurant Work. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. CASEID's = 16400 (la pomme de terre), 19100 (owl's nest), 19200 (stan's steakhouse) and 19300 (blakemore)

Fink, Deborah. 1998. Cutting into the Meatpacking Line: Workers and Change in the Rural Midwest. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. CASEID = 16500

Finlay, William. 1988. Work on the Waterfront: Worker Power and Technological Change in a West Coast Port. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. CASEID = 08300

Foster, Charles. 1969. Building with Men. London: Tavistock. CASEID = 09700

Friedland, William H. 1971. Migrant: Agricultural Workers in America's Northeast. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. CASEID = 07000

Foner, Nancy. 1994. The Caregiving Dilemma: Work in an American Nursing Home. Berkeley: University of California Press. CASEID = 14800

Fox, Renee C. 1959. Experiment Perilous: Physicians and Patients Facing the Unknown. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press. CASEID = 20200

Gamst, Frederick C. 1980. The Hoghead: An Industrial Ethnology of the Locomotive Engineer. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston. CASEID = 00200

Gatta, Mary Lizabeth. 2001. Juggling Food and Feelings: Emotional Balance in the Workplace. CASEID = 23300

Germain, Carol P. Hanley. 1979. The Cancer Unit: An Ethnography. Wakefield MA: Nursing Resources. CASEID's = 20300 (nurses) and 20400 (doctors)

Gouldner, Alwin. 1964. Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy. New York: Free Press. CASEID's = 09800 (miners) and 09900 (gypsum plant)

Graham, Laurie. 1995. On the Line at Subaru-Isuzu. Ithaca, NY: Industrial and Labor Relations Press. CASEID = 12800

Greenberg, Edward S. 1986. Workplace Democracy. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. CASEID = 02800

Greene, Anne-Marie. 2001. Voices from the Shopfloor: Dramas of the Employment Relationship. Burlington, VT: Ashgate. CASEID = 24400

Grenier, Guillermo J. 1988. Inhuman Relations: Quality Circles and Anti-Unionism in American Industry. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. CASEID = 05300

Gyllenhammar, Pehr G. 1977. People at Work. Reading, MA.: Addison-Wesley. CASEID's = 04200 (kalmar), 04300 (skovde), 04400 (torslanda),

Haas, J. 1987. Becoming Doctors: The Adoption of a Cloak of Competence. Greenwich, CN: JAI Press. CASEID = 04600

Halle, David. 1984. America's Working Man. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. CASEID = 08200

Hamper, Ben. 1991. Rivethead: Tales from the Assembly Line. New York: Warner. CASEID = 09500

Haraszti, Miklos. 1978. A Worker in a Worker's State. New York: Universe Books. CASEID = 10400

Harris, Rosemary. 1987. Power and Powerlessness in Industry. London: Tavistock. CASEID = 04500

Hill, Stephen. 1976. The Dockers: Class and Tradition in London. London: Heinemann. CASEID = 09600

Hodgson, Richard C., Daniel J. Levinson, and Abraham Zalenik. 1965. The Executive Role Constellation: An Analysis of Personality and Role Relations in Management. Boston: Harvard University Press. CASEID = 20500

House, J.D. 1977. Contemporary Entrepreneurs: The Sociology of Residential Real Estate Agents. Westport, CN: Greenwood Press. CASEID = 02900

Howarth, Glennys. 1996. Last Rites: The Work of the Modern Funeral Director. Amityville, N.Y.: Baywood. CASEID = 23400

Hsiung, Ping-Chun. 1996. Living Rooms as Factories: Class, Gender, and the Satellite Factory Industry in Taiwan. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. CASEID = 16800

Huws, Ursula. 1984. The Homeworkers' New Technology and the Changing Location of White-Collar Work. London: Low Pay Unit. CASEID = 05400

Jackall, Robert. 1978. Workers in a Labyrinth: Jobs and Survival in a Bank Bureaucracy. Montclair, NJ: Allanheld and Osmun. CASEID's = 03300 (functional mgt.), 03400 (authoritarian mgt.), and 03500 (enlightened mgt.)

Jackall, Robert. 1988. Moral Mazes: The World of Corporate Managers. New York: Oxford University. CASEID's = 17700 (Weft Textiles) and 17800 (Alchemy Chemicals)

Joffe, Carole. 1986. The Regulation of Sexuality: Experiences of Family Planning Workers. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. CASEID = 20600

Johnson, Paula J. (ed). 1988. Working the Water: The Commercial Fisheries of Maryland's Patuxent River. Charlottesville, VA: Calvert Marine Museum and the University Press of Virginia. (oyster shuckers) CASEID = 12200

Juravich, Tom. 1985. Chaos on the Shop Floor: A Worker's View of Quality, Productivity, and Management. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. CASEID = 00100

Kamata, Satoshi. 1982. Japan in the Passing Lane. New York: Pantheon Books. Translated by Tatsuru Akimoto. CASEID = 10200

Kanter, Rosabeth Moss. 1977. Men and Women of the Corporation. New York: Basic Books. CASEID's = 8700 (clerical) and 23600 (managers).

Kapferer, Bruce. 1972. Strategy and Transaction in an African Factory: African Workers and Indian Management in a Zambian Town. Manchester: Manchester University Press. CASEID = 08800

Katz, Pearl. 1999. The Scalpel's Edge: The Culture of Surgeons. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. CASEID = 14300

Kesselman, Amy. 1990. Fleeting Opportunities: Women Shipyard Workers in Portland and Vancouver During WWII and Reconversion. Albany, NY: SUNY Press. CASEID = 07100

Kidder, Tracy. 1981. The Soul of a New Machine. Boston: Little, Brown. CASEID = 20700

Kunda, Gideon. 1992. Engineering Culture: Control and Commitment in a High-Tech Corporation. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. CASEID = 12600

Kusterer, Kenneth. 1978. Know-How on the Job: The Important Working Knowledge of 'Unskilled' Workers. Boulder, CO: Westview. CASEID's = 07200 (bank tellers), and 07300 (container mgt.)

Lawson, Helene M. 2000. Ladies on the Lot: Women, Car Sales and the Pursuit of the American Dream. Rowman and Littlefield. CASEID = 20900

Latour, Bruno. and Steve Woolgar. 1986. Laboratory Life: The Construction of Scientific Facts. Princeton: Princeton University Press. CASEID = 20800

Lee, Ching Kwan. 1998. Gender and the South China Miracle: Two Worlds of Factory Women. Berkeley: University of California Press. CASEID's = 15300 (Shenzhen) and 15400 (Hong Kong)

Leidner, Robin. 1993. Fast Food, Fast Talk: Service Work and the Routinization of Everyday Life. Berkeley: University of California Press. CASEID's = 15000 (McDonald's) & 15100 (Combined Insurance)

Linhart, Robert. 1981. The Assembly Line. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press. CASEID = 00900

Lloyd, Timothy C. and Mullen, Patrick, B. 1990. Lake Erie Fishermen: Work Identity and Tradition. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press. CASEID = 11800

Lo, Jeannie. 1990. Office Ladies/Factory Women: Life and Work at a Japanese Factory. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc. CASEID's = 11900 (office) and 12000 (factory)

Lombard, George Francis Fabyan. 1955. Behavior in a Selling Group: A Case Study of Interpersonal Relations in a Department Store. Boston: Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration. CASEID = 21000

Lupton, Tom. 1963. On the Shop Floor: Two Studies of Workshop Organization and Output. New York: Pergamon Press. CASEID's = 10100 (garment mgt.) and 11200 (electrical mfg.)

Mannon, James M. 1991. Emergency Encounters: EMTs and Their Work. Boston: Jones and Bartlett. CASEID's = 21100 (EMT's) and 21200 (paramedics)

Mansbridge, Jane. 1980. Beyond Adversary Democracy. New York: Basic. CASEID = 21300

Mars, Gerald and Michael Nicod. 1984. The World of Waiters. London: George Allen and Unwin. CASEID = 07400 (53 employees), 10800 (35 employees), 10900 (48 employees, 0% female), 11000 (0% female), and 11100 (40 employees, 40% female)

Martin, Susan Ehrlich. 1980. Breaking and Entering: Policewomen on Patrol. Berkeley: University of California Press. CASEID = 05500

McCarl, Robert. 1985. The District of Columbia's Fire Fighters' Project: A Case Study in Occupational Folklife. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press. CASEID = 12300

McNally, Fiona. 1979. Women for Hire. New York: St. Martin. CASEID = 03000

Mers, Gilbert. 1988. Working the Waterfront: The Ups and Downs of A Rebel Longshoreman. Austin: University of Texas Press. CASEID = 04800

Metz, Donald L. 1981. Running Hot: Structure and Stress in Ambulance Work. Cambridge, MA: ABT Books. CASEID = 21400

Milkman, Ruth 1997. Farewell to the Factory: Auto Workers in the Late Twentieth Century. Berkeley: University of California Press. CASEID = 21500

Miller, Gale. 1991. Enforcing the Work Ethic: Rhetoric and Everyday Lie in a Work Incentive Program. Albany: State University of New York Press. CASEID = 21600

Millman, Marcia. 1976. The Unkindest Cut: Life in the Backrooms of Medicine. New York: William Morrow. CASEID = 01500

Morrill, Calvin. 1995. The Executive Way: Conflict Management in Corporations. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. CASEID's = 17000 (old financial), 19400 (independent accounting) and 19500 (toy mfg.)

Newman, Katherine S. 1999. No Shame in My Game: The Working Poor in the Inner City. New York: Russell Sage. CASEID = 24000

Nichols, Theo. 1977. Living with Capitalism: Class Relations and the Modern Factory. London: Routledge. CASEID = 06200

Ogasawara, Yuko. 1998. Office Ladies and Salaried Men: Power, Gender, and Work in Japanese Companies. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. CASEID = 21700

Orbach, Michael. 1977. Hunters, Seamen and Entrepreneurs. Berkeley: University of California Press. CASEID = 01600

Orr, Julian. 1996. Talking about Machines: An Ethnography of a Modern Job. New York: Cornell University Press. CASEID = 21800

Ospina, Sonia. 1996. Illusions of Opportunity: Employee Expectations and Workplace Inequality. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press. CASEIDs = 24800 (analysts), 24900 (clerical), 25000 (operators)

Ouellet, Lawrence J. 1994. Pedal to the Metal: The Work Lives of Truckers. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. CASEID's = 17100 (agrihaul), 18800 (sandhaul) and 18900 (and petrohaul)

Palm, Goran. 1977. The Flight from Work. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press. CASEID = 10600

Paules, Greta Foff. 1991. Dishing it Out: Power and Resistance among Waitresses in a New Jersey Restaurant. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. CASEID's = 07500 (waitresses) and 11500 (managers)

Perry, Stewart E. 1978. San Francisco Scavengers: Dirty Work and the Pride of Ownership. Berkeley: University of California Press. CASEID = 01400

Pfeffer, Richard M. 1979. Working for Capitalism. New York: Columbia University Press. CASEID = 08400

Pierce, Jennifer. 1995. Gender Trials: Emotional Lives in Contemporary Law Firms. Berkeley: University of California Press. CASEID's = 18000 (paralegals) and 18100 (lawyers)

Pilcher, William W. 1972. The Portland Longshoremen: A Dispersed Urban Community. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. CASEID = 08900

Pine, Vanderlyn R. 1965. Caretaker of the Dead: The American Funeral Director. New York: Irvington. CASEID = 10000

Pollert, Anna. 1981. Girls, Wives, Factory Lives. London: MacMillan. CASEID = 01000

Powell, Walter W. 1985. Getting Into Print: The Decision-Making Process in Scholarly Publishing. Chicago: University of Chicago. CASEID's = 21900 (apple, small firm) and 22000 (plum, large firm)

Power-Waters, Brian. 1980. Margin for Error? None. Chestertown, MD: Pierce. CASEID = 06600

Reiter, Ester. 1992. Making Fast Food: From the Frying Pan into the Fryer. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. CASEID = 22100

Rinehart, James W., Christopher Huxley and David Robertson. 1997. Just Another Car Factory? Lean Production and Its Discontents. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press. CASEID = 17200

Roberson, James. 1998. Japanese Working Class Lives: An Ethnographic Study of Factory Workers. London: Routledge. CASEID = 22200

Roberts, Glenda. 1994. Staying on the Line: Blue-Collar Women in Contemporary Japan. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. CASEID = 14500

Roger, Sidney. 1983. "American Seamen on the Hoegh Mallard." Pp. 1-113 in Robert Schrank (ed.), Industrial Democracy at Sea: Authority and Democracy on a Norwegian Freighter. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. CASEID = 00400

Rollins, Judith. 1985. Between Women: Domestics and Their Employers. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. CASEID = 01700

Rubinstein, Jonathan. 1973. City Police. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. CASEID = 01800

Rutten, Rosanne. 1982. Women Workers of Hacienda Milagros. Amsterdam: Universiteit van Amsterdam. CASEID = 05100

Santino, Jack. 1989. Miles of Smiles, Years of Struggle: Stories of Black Pullman Porters. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press. CASEID = 00300

Savage, C. H. and George F. F. Lombard. 1986. Sons of the Machine. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. CASEID's = 05600 (tableware, la blanca), 05700 (tableware, santuario), and 05800 (men's suits)

Scott, Andrew. 1994. Willing Slaves? British Workers under Human Resource Management. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. CASEIDs = 24100 (food factory), 24200 (cookie factory), 24300 (chocolate factory)

Seider, Maynard, 1984. A Year in the Life of a Factory. San Pedro, CA: Singlejack Books. CASEID = 07600

Simonds, Wendy. 1996. Abortion at Work: Ideology and Practice in a Feminist Clinic. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. CASEID = 14200

Smigel, Erwin O. 1969. The Wall Street Lawyer: Professional Organizational Man? New York: Free Press. CASEID = 10700

Smith, Vicki. 1990. Managing in the Corporate Interest: Control and Resistance in an American Bank. Berkeley: University of California Press. CASEID's = 05900 (branch banking), 06000 (systems mgt.), and 06100 (credit card)

Spencer, Charles. 1977. Blue Collar: An Internal Examination of the Workplace. Chicago: Lakeside Press. CASEID = 03100

Spradley, James P. and Brenda J. Mann. 1975. The Cocktail Waitress: Woman's Work in a Man's World. New York: Wiley. CASEID = 07700

Street, Annette Fay. 1992. Inside Nursing: A Critical Ethnography of Clinical Nursing Practice. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. CASEID = 22300

Stross, Randall E. 2001. eBoys: The First Inside Account of Venture Capitalists at Work. New York: Ballantine. CASEID = 23700

Swerdlow, Marian. 1998. Underground Women: My Four Years as a New York City Subway Conductor. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. CASEID = 18200

Theberge, Nancy. 2000. Higher Goals: Women's Ice Hockey and the Politics of Gender. Albany: State University of New York Press. CASEID = 23100

Traweek, Sharon. 1988. Beamtimes and Lifetimes: The World of High Energy Physics. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. CASEID = 18300 (U.S. composite case)

Tucker, James. 1999. The Therapeutic Corporation. New York: Oxford University Press. CASEID = 12700

Turner, Steve. 1980. Night Shift in a Pickle Factory. San Pedro, CA: Singlejack Books. CASEID = 02400

Vecsey, George. 1974. One Sunset a Week: The Story of a Coal Miner. New York: E.P. Dutton. CASEID = 08500

Vincent, Claude L. 1979. Policeman. Toronto: Gage. CASEID = 22400

Wah, Wong Heung. 1999. Japanese Bosses, Chinese Workers: Power and Control in a Hong Kong Megastore. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. CASEID's = 17400 (Chinese workers) and 19000 (Japanese bosses)

Wajcman, Judy. 1983. Women in Control: Dilemmas of a Workers' Co-operative. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press. CASEID = 01300

Walker, Charles R. [1977] 1957. Toward the Automatic Factory: A Case Study of Men and Machines. New Haven, CN: Yale University Press. CASEID = 09400

Walker, Charles R., Robert H. Guest and Arthur N. Turner. [1987] 1956. The Foreman on the Assembly Line. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. CASEID = 10300

Walker, Charles R., and Robert H. Guest. 1952. The Man on the Assembly Line. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. CASEID = 09300

Watson, Tony. 1994. In Search of Management. London: Routledge. CASEID = 22500

Wedderburn, Dorothy. 1972. Workers' Attitudes and Technology. London: Cambridge University Press. CASEID = 07800 (process workers A), 07900 (process workers B & C), 08000 (machine operators C), and 11400 (boilmakers)

Westwood, Sallie. 1982. All Day, Every Day: Factory and Family in the Making of Women's Lives. London: Pluto Press. CASEID = 02100

Whyte, William Foote. 1948. Human Relations in the Restaurant Industry. New York: McGraw Hill. CASEID = 17500

Williams, Bruce B. 1987. Black Workers in an Industrial Suburb: The Struggle Against Discrimination. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. CASEID = 11700

Williams, Claire. 1981. Open Cut: The Working Class in an Australian Mining Town. Boston, MA: Allen and Unwin. CASEID = 09000

Wilkinson-Weber, Clare M. 1999. Embroidering Lives: Women's Work in the Lucknow Embroidery Industry. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. CASEID = 22600

Wolcott, Harry F. 1973. The Man in the Principal's Office. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. CASEID = 08100

Zell, Deone. 1997. Changing by Design: Organizational Innovation at Hewlett-Packard. Ithaca, NY: Industrial and Labor Relations Press. CASEID= 22800 (engineers in Santa Clara)

Zimmer, Lynn. 1986. Women Guarding Men. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Caseid = 25100

Zussman, Robert. 1992. Intensive Care: Medical Ethics and the Medical Profession. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. CASEID = 18700

Zussman, Robert. 1985. Mechanics of the Middle Class: Work and Politics among American Engineers. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press. CASEID's = 22900 (Precision Metals) and 23000 (Contronics)

Appendix 2

BDC
Banque de développement du Canada
Business Development Bank of Canada

Entrepreneurial self assessment

Are you the entrepreneurial type?

Here is a tool to help better measure your entrepreneurial potential. This questionnaire includes 50 statements, and will take about 15 minutes to complete. There are no right or wrong answers. Your honest rating is what counts.

You can choose a number, on a scale of 1 to 4, to represent how strongly you agree with each statement. Use the entire scale as much as possible, as always answering "2" or "3" will not allow you to fully benefit from this tool.

Once completed, your answers will be compiled according to 3 criteria: motivations, aptitudes and attitudes. Your overall score describes your profile compared to other entrepreneurs.

Rest assured that your responses will remain strictly confidential.

To what degree do the statements below correspond to you?

1: Totally disagree, 2: Somewhat disagree, 3: Somewhat agree, 4:

1 : I like to give myself challenges when I take on a new project

2 : I am fairly at ease in difficult situations

3 : Where others see problems, I see possibilities

4 : I always worry about what others will think before doing something important

5 : I am fairly curious and I am continually in search of discovery

6 : I am a lot less effective in stressful situations

7 : I want to build something that will be recognised publicly

8 : When faced with difficulties, I look for alternative solutions

9 : For me, what counts is action

10 : For me, it is possible to influence ones destiny

NEXT

To what degree do the statements below correspond to you?

1: Totally disagree, 2: Somewhat disagree, 3: Somewhat agree, 4

BDC

11 : I am capable of imagining how we can make things work

12 : When I take on a project I have confidence that I will carry it out successfully

13 : I shoot for excellence in everything I do

14 : According to me, we somehow make our own luck

15 : In general, I distrust my instinct

16 : I have no problem working for someone else

17 : I try to be the first or the best in my area of competency

18 : For me, taking risks is like buying a lottery ticket, it's a question of chance

19 : I am capable of seeing many solutions to a problem

20 : I prefer having the final decision

PREVIOUS   NEXT

To what degree do the statements below correspond to you?
1: Totally disagree, 2: Somewhat disagree, 3: Somewhat agree, 4:

BDC·

21 : I always try to learn lessons from my failures

22 : For me, everything is possible if I believe I can do it

23 : I prefer using the good old ways of doing things

24 : Success is mostly luck

25 : A good level of stress stimulates me

26 : It is easy for me to motivate others to work with me

27 : I often feel stuck by the difficulty of situations

28 : I can easily imagine many ways to satisfy a need

29 : After a failure, I am able to pick myself up and start over

30 : I am not always ready to make sacrifices in order to succeed

PREVIOUS   NEXT

To what degree do the statements below correspond to you?

1: Totally disagree, 2: Somewhat disagree, 3: Somewhat agree, 4:

BDC

31 : I don't like to influence others

32 : To be satisfied with myself, I take on easy projects

33 : When I take on a project, I am not always convinced that I can carry it out successfully

34 : I like to lead others

35 : I always try to take calculated risks

36 : I have a hard time functioning in uncertain or ambiguous situations

37 : I am always in the mist of launching new projects

38 : I have a hard time anticipating events, trends

39 : I really enjoy situations where there are rules to respect

40 : Today, without a lot of money we can not take on a whole lot

Sec

To what degree do the statements below correspond to you?

1: Totally disagree, 2: Somewhat disagree, 3: Somewhat agree, 4: Tota

1

41 : Being too ambitious is often perceived badly

42 : I have a tendency to put off difficult tasks until later

43 : I am the kind of person to see the glass as half empty instead of half full

44 : There is a time for thought but there is especially a time for action

45 : I am not afraid to take on initiatives

46 : No matter what we do, it doesn't depend on us

47 : I prefer being my own boss

48 : I don't consider myself more ambitious than others

49 : I always give the best of myself in everything I do

50 : I manage my stress well in ambiguous and uncertain situations

PREVIOUS   NEXT

-153

Answer the following questions by checking the applicable boxes or provic information.

51 : Age :   years

52 : Gender :   Man   Woman

53 : Experience :

Have you ever worked for yourself?   Yes

54 : What is your occupation and/or profession?

Company owner-senior executive	Professional
Self-employed	Agricultural worker
Upper management	Mid-level managem
Salaried position – Full-time	Student
Salaried position – Part-time	Unemployed
Other	

PREVIOUS   NEXT

Appendix 3

This questionnaire was sent to each designer at CREATIVE MEDIA via email. It

was meant to get a general idea of who was working at CREATIVE MEDIA and why.

Age:

Birth date:

How long lived in Montreal.

Languages spoken/written

Educational Background:

Norman has given me a copy of your profiles, so I know what educational

background you have, but I also need the following:

The start and stop dates of your studies

Briefly explain the program you studied.

What kind of job did you expect to get when you started in the program?

What kind of job did you expect to get when you finished the program?

What did you learn in school that is most applicable to your job today?

Current and Previous Work Experience:

Company name, location, years of service and function/responsibility

At each of these companies, what did you learn the most? What have you been able

to apply to your current position?

Please explain your current job.

Why did you want to "work" at CREATIVE MEDIA?

Where do you get your ideas for your current job? (For example, magazines, friends, the Internet)

What do you like the most about your current job?

Misc.

What music are you listening to when you work?

What are your work hours?

Do you ever work from home?

Appendix 4

Interview 1, with Michelle. Purpose of this interview was to discuss the reasons for selecting to set up offices in the NEW ARTS building. This interview was recorded.

- Why did you choose this building?

- How long have you been here? How long do you have a lease for?

- How long were you in the [other] building?

- Was it a similar concept?

- You talked about sharing the space with Magazine Inc for financial reasons; did you have any other reasons for doing it?

- Have you ever explored the art galleries in the building?

- What other types of businesses are there in the building?

- Is there is anything that goes on in the building that displeases you?

- Do you ever see other people in the building?

- Have the owners of the building made any promises in terms of the condition of the building?

- In terms of this space, who decided where everybody gets to sit?

- How did you decide what is on each workstation?

- How did you choose the furniture?

- Who chose the artwork that is on the walls?

- Could you have run your company from home?

- How do you go about sharing the conference room with Magazine Inc.? When do you use your conference room?

- I looked at the magazines I was given to browse at. How do they influence your workspace?

Appendix 5

Interview 2, with Norman, on location. The objective of this interview was to understand why Norman selected to set up the office space in the NEW ARTS building. This interview was recorded.

- Why did you choose this building?

- You appear to have repeated the same style here as in your previous building, why?

- What is it that you like the best about this location/building/space?

- I was looking at my notes, and I find that the computers are like dividers, because you have to look above them. ... Is that something you customized for?

- Do you need to create a distance between work and home? Why would you need a distance from home? Do you think that has something to do with the fact that you are working on a creative environment? Could you run this company from home? In terms of creativity, or productivity would it change anything?

- Have you ever visited any of the art galleries in the building?

- When you left the [other] building, what did you intentionally change when you came here?

- In terms of how the office looks is there something you want to improve?

- How much does the location impact your productivity/creativity?

- Yesterday Michelle mentioned that you could go work at home if you needed to. When would you choose to do that?

- What are the distractions?

- When you were a freelance designer and worked for [name], did you work from home as well?

- You talked a couple of days ago about how you tried to keep this workspace as 'ours' and that you try to go to the customers workspace in order to keep this one personal. So that people can wear what they want to wear, and swear if they want to swear. Why is that important?

- What do you wear when you go to a customer? What do you think the suit represents ?

- How did you come up with the name of your company?

Appendix 6

Interview 3 – with one of the longest tenants in the building.[49] I met this individual while conducting an inventory of the building. We briefly chatted, and then he allowed me to formally interview him. This interview was not recorded.

- How did you end up in this building?

- Do you know the other tenants in the building?

- Tell me about the history of the building.

- What was the building like in the past?

- Who were the previous owners?

- When did you notice the previous changes happening?

- Have the current tenants changed the mood of the building?

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[49] He does not want the type of business he works in mentioned, in order to keep his confidentiality.

Appendix 7

Interview 5 – with Mark. This interview was not recorded, as per Mark's request. This interview lasted only fifteen minutes.

- Please explain your previous work experience – especially the freelancer part.

- Please explain the physical layout, when you were a freelancer.

- How was the adaptation of moving from freelancer to employee at CREATIVE MEDIA?

- Tell me a little about the previous building you worked in.

- Please elaborate on the notion of "bouncing ideas off of[50]" that makes working at CREATIVE MEDIA easier.

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[50] I had heard this expression used as a reason for working in an office environment, rather than working at home, and wanted to know what it meant to Mark.

Appendix 8

Interview 5 – with Fran, the bookkeeper. I met Fran at the coffee shop, which is located in the lobby of the building. I had invited her to coffee and she made certain that I was treating her. I had hoped to tape this interview but realized when I got to the coffee shop that there was too much noise and that the taping would not work. So I took notes. The objective of my interview was to hopefully get some pointers about CREATIVE MEDIA from an "outsider" perspective, as it was obvious to me through my conversations with Norman, that Fran was not considered one of the team members. She was an outsider.

- You started at [name] and then moved onto to CREATIVE MEDIA. How did you go about getting your first job at [name]?

- What are your present responsibilities? How did you go about deciding your responsibilities?

- Please explain why you call the bookkeeping job "boring."

- Why do you like working for CREATIVE MEDIA?

- What is creativity?[51]

- What is a technology company?[52]

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[51] I asked this questions to Fran because I wanted to know how she viewed this value, considering how important to owners of CREATIVE MEDIA it was.
[52] I asked her this questions as I had heard this word used a lot by the designers, and wanted to know how she understood this terminology

Appendix 9

Interview 6 – with Michelle. The objective of this interview was to better understand the company origins. This interview was recorded.

- How did you and Norman come to decide to leave Techno. and start your own company?

- What was the easiest thing about starting your company? What's the hardest?

- In terms of starting your own company what are you the happiest with? Are you disappointed with anything? What is there left for you to accomplish?

- When you decided to start your own company, what did your family and friends – your entourage - think?

- What is the difference between design and technology?

- In the first questionnaire you mentioned that you had a different way of doing things. You mentioned that you wanted more control. What kind of things did you do differently?

- You also mentioned that you could do a better job than other companies - you don't think they care about the end result. How are you are succeeding here?

- When you started the company what were your personal objectives?

- What are your long-term objectives with the company?

- You have owned the company for three years now. Have your objectives changed over the three years?

- I was in the office when you and Norman were talking about the difference in being a freelancer and owning your own company. I got the impression that it was

important for you that your customers recognize this difference. Why is this

important for you?

Appendix 10

Interview 7, with Norman – The objective of this interview was to understand the company origins. This interview was recorded.

- How did you and Michelle decide to leave [name] and start your own companies?

- How long had you been thinking in your head that you wanted your own company?

- What was the easiest thing for you to do when you were starting your company? What was the hardest?

- What is it about working for someone else that you didn't like? Or wanted to change?

- If you take a look at CREATIVE MEDIA now, what are you the proudest with, the happiest with? What in terms of how you decided how this was to work three years ago are you still left working towards?

- Lets talk about the "recognition" you were talking about at SXSW.

- When you initially decided you were going to do this, what did your family and friends think?

- In the first questionnaire that I sent you mentioned that you had a different way of doing things, that you had a different approach. You also mentioned in this questionnaire that you thought you could do a better job than the other companies were doing. What do you mean by doing a better job?

- In terms of your personal objectives, what were they when you decided to start your company? Have your objectives changed in the last three years?

- I was in the office when you and Michelle were talking about the difference in being a freelancer and owing your own company. I got the impression that it was

important for you that your customers recognize this difference. Why is that

important for you?

Appendix 11

Interview 8, with Norman – The subject was creativity. This interview was recorded.

- Creativity is important to CREATIVE MEDIA, obviously. In fact, if I am not mistaken this is how you are trying to distinguish yourselves from the other companies. How do you define creativity?

- Can you give some examples where you have been happy with something because you have found a creative answer to a problem?

- Is it difficult for you to sell creativity to a client?

- When you say a technology what do you mean?

- What kinds of things would encourage the creativity? What would you need to know to be creative?

- Do you think having different types of customer's helps?

- What stifles creativity?

- I ask Norman to talk about specific customer web sites currently being worked on.

- Does creativity come at any cost?

- Can you be considered creative and appreciated by the population at large[53]?

- In conversations it is clear that you want Samantha and Mark to continue developing themselves on a creative basis. Do you think that is different from other web design companies? Is this process formalized? Everybody is given time for personal development. How do you ensure that you are going in the right direction? Are there things that you don't want to look at?

- You mentioned in that first questionnaire that you get your ideas from other Internet, digital, films and television. What kind of ideas do you get?

- Is web design a form of expression?

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[53] I asked this question because in discussions on what was considered creative, the examples given for non-creative artists, related to successful singers, who were consumed by the masses.

Appendix 12

Interview 9 – This was my first formal interview with Samantha. I wanted to know more about why she had wanted to work at CREATIVE MEDIA and how she defined creativity herself. We also discussed some of the projects she had worked on. This interview was recorded.

- Why did you want to work at CREATIVE MEDIA? How did you know that?

- What is play[54]?

- What are your personal objectives when it comes to working at CREATIVE MEDIA?

- Did you use the Internet when you were a student?

- Is there a difference between being an artist and a designer?

- What is creativity to you? What would be technology?

- When we talk about corporate websites, do you think it is creative or technology?

- Where does the creative process begin and end?

- Do you think there is a creative process to meeting the client as well?

- Is CREATIVE MEDIA different from other companies in terms of design?

- I know Michelle and Norman want you to continue developing on a person level. How do you decide what you want to concentrate on?

- Why did (a particular project) work so well? Did you have a lot from the customer when you started off with? I notice that some customers are reluctant to give information at the beginning and wonder how this will affect the production.

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[54] Samantha brought up the notion of "play" in this interview. I wanted to know what she meant.

- I ask about web design courses she taught[55].

Appendix 13

Interview 10 - Interview with Michelle about creativity. We met in the conference room and the furniture had been turned around because there was a condensation leak on the pipes above the original location of the couch. Michelle mopped the floor a little before we sat down. This interview was recorded.

- Creativity is important to CREATIVE MEDIA; in fact I think it is how you distinguish yourselves from other companies. How do you define creativity?

- When you talk about a technology company how do you define technology? What is it that they don't have that you have?

- What kind of things do you think improve creativity? What kind of things would stifle creativity?

- I ask about specific projects that are being worked on.

- What do you do to ensure that you are creative?

- Why do you find it frustrating to have all of that admin stuff?

- Can you be creative and consumed by the population at large?

- In conversations it is clear that you want Samantha and Mark to continue developing. How do you want them to develop? Is there anything that you have decided Mark and Samantha should not look at?

- When you are working on a web site, and you divide up tasks, like I see when you are working in production meetings, is there a difference between working on a small website and a big one?

- What are you objectives with the American Documentary Filmmaker project?

- When it comes to Local Stories what are you objectives?

- What about the (other) projects?

Appendix 14

Interview 11 - I interview Mark on the subject of creativity. This interview was
recorded.

- How do you define creativity?

- You mentioned that you did pottery right? When you do pottery, do you consider
that technical or do you consider that creative? If you are learning about a program,
do you consider that technical or creative?

- How is CREATIVE MEDIA different from other companies in terms of design?

- What are you personal objectives when it comes to working at CREATIVE
MEDIA? In terms of long-term objectives?

- I know that Michelle and Norman have certain ideas when it comes to your
personal development. How is this negotiated? Do you ever do some of that
development stuff at home?

- How do you evaluate the success of the project?

- Do you find you are getting more demanding with yourselves as time goes by?

- What is it that motivates you to work – money, benefits professional
development?

- Do you have to be close (proximity) to your customers?

- Did (laying off of employees) affect the morale?

- What kinds of things do you share on-line? What do you chat about?

- How and why did you get into programming for the Internet? How did you get
into it? Would you be able to be self-taught now? Do you think you need a formal
learning process now?

Appendix 15

Interview 12 – with Samantha. In this interview I was attempting to get further information into creativity and her past working experience, based on previous conversations. This interview was recorded.

- Regarding Local Stories is CREATIVE MEDIA in the beginning stages of this project? There will be a survey for Local Stories, how do you do the demo-ing. Do you have a specific group of people that you are going to approach? Do you think that this Local Stories project is a reflection of CREATIVE MEDIA?

- Do you think a web site is a form of self-expression? Do you think that working on a website for a client is a form of self-expression?

- What are the objectives of the production meetings? Do you have any personal objectives when it comes to production meetings?

- If I look at the type of client you have, versus companies that are building corporate web sites, I see that you are developing web sites for individuals. For example, the Filmmaker is a person, he is not a corporation, and the same can be said about The Singer or a web site that you create for a photographer or an artist. Please explain this process.

- If you were to develop a web site for a corporation would you be able to define its character?

- You talked in our previous interview about CREATIVE MEDIA not being into fads. I wonder if you can tell me more about being a company based out of Montreal.

How does that affect what you produce? How does this affect who your clients are? How does that affect how your work?

- From what I can see CREATIVE MEDIA specializes mostly with customers in the arts and entertainment industry, based in Montreal, although they do take contracts from other areas and other cities. How does that affect what you produce? How does that affect the climate at CREATIVE MEDIA? How do you think the climate at CREATIVE MEDIA would change if you were producing something for a corporate web site, or for a company based out of another city?

- Let's pretend you are drinking with friends or whatever. And you are talking with this person, a potential client. And you discuss CREATIVE MEDIA, how do you describe your company and your role in it?

- Finally, in the last interview you talked about how your fine arts program was like a big happy family and that (the other company she worked for) was not like that, and that CREATIVE MEDIA was more like that. Can you talk a little bit more about what you meant by a big happy family?

Appendix 16

Interview 13 - An interview with both Norman and Michelle. I had intended on interviewing them separately, but I was asked if I could interview both at the same time, to save time. This interview was recorded.

- Why did you hire specifically Samantha, Mark and Fran? If you were looking to hire someone, what kind of thing would you look for on a CV?

- I know that for Samantha and Mark the office environment is important. How would you go about describing that office environment? How do you foster that unique CREATIVE MEDIA?

- Why did you decide to cut down on the number of employees?

- I am interested in learning more about Carol[56] and the ICQ. Did you start doing a lot of ICQ-ing when she came into the office? Are there any other things you implemented in the office because of Carol?

- In the first questionnaire I sent out you mentioned that you had recently separated your tasks somewhat with Michelle taking on more of the designing and creating while Norman taking one more of the business development, promotions, marketing and project management. Why was this decision made? How did you both go about coming up with the decision?

- From what I see you are trying to specialise with works within the entertainment industry, based in Montreal, right? How does this (choosing customers based in Montreal) affect your climate? Do you think working with customers outside of Montreal, or outside of the entertainment industry change your climate? Do you think

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[56] She was deaf. Mark had informed me that the ICQ-ing had started in order to accommodate Carol and make communication easier.

having customers outside of the Montreal would change the climate at work? Would it change the production process?

- Do you think working within the arts and entertainment industry allows you to experiment more with certain software or techniques? Because you like to play, play with technology, does working within the arts and entertainment industry allow you to play more with technology?

- Why did you decide that you wanted to focus more on the arts and entertainment industry?

Appendix 17

Interview 14 - This was my final interview with Norman. It was an interview where we mainly discussed the financial woes of CREATIVE MEDIA, but this portion of the conversation was not part of the formal interview process. I let him explain what had happened and asked him a few questions about how this was affecting CREATIVE MEDIA. The recorded part of our interview was a discussion of the progress of certain web sites.

- How is Local Stories progressing? Tell me the progress of your funding request for Local Stories. You work closely with Monica for the research part, how did that come about? What are your personal objectives with this project?

- You have mentioned that your grandfather has a lot of ideas and historical information that you would like to tap into. Are you going to give him a part in Local Stories?

-

Appendix 18

Interview 15 – returned to Creative Media in February 2004, and spoke with both

Norman and Michelle. I had wanted to learn about the changes since letting

Samantha and Mark go, as well as ask questions to answer missing information from

previous interviews. This interview was recorded.

- How would you explain how you managed the transition after Samantha and Mark left? What did you do?

- What would have been your priorities at that time?

- (Speaking to Norman) When we had originally met, you didn't want to call this a company – remember? What kind of changes have you made in the last year?

- What are the things that surprised you the most?

- Did you change your salaries in the last year?

- I ask about your family background…. When you grew up did you hear about opening your own business?

- In the last year how has your idea about creativity changed? How have your ideas about the workplace changed? Are you still focusing on the creative?

- I ask about the status of the Documentary Filmmaker project and Local Stories.

Appendix 19

Interview 16

Returned to CREATIVE MEDIA in February 2004. This interview was with Mark[57].

This interview was recorded.

- You left CREATIVE MEDIA and now you are back.... Worked for another company in the same building. What were the differences between the two companies?

- How long have you been back here?

- Did you notice a change here?

- How have your jobs changed?

- Do you still have the time for learning?

- Are your hours the same?

- Salaries?

- What were the differences between the other company and CREATIVE MEDIA?

- Tell me a little about your upbringing?

- How have you views on creativity changed in the last year?

- How have your work values changed in the last year?

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[57] Mark had been hired back.

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