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The Performance of Industry Culture: Assumptions, Sources and Evolutionary Patterns as Revealed in the Paradigmatic Interplay of Reporting Structures and Communicative Processes

Linda Lyle
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Linda Lyle entitled "The Performance of Industry Culture: Assumptions, Sources and Evolutionary Patterns as Revealed in the Paradigmatic Interplay of Reporting Structures and Communicative Processes." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Communication.

Dorothy A. Bowles, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Barbara Moore, Faye D. Julian, Herbert H. Howard

Accepted for the Council:
Dixie L. Thompson

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

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[illegible]

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THE PERFORMANCE OF INDUSTRY CULTURE:

Assumptions, Sources and Evolutionary Patterns as Revealed in the Paradigmatic Interplay of Reporting Structures and Communicative Processes

**A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville**

Linda Gayle Lyle
May 1998

Dedicated with love and appreciation to a master teacher

whose belief in me made me believe in myself

Dr. Bain Tate Stewart

A rarer spirit never did steer humanity.

-- William Shakespeare

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ABSTRACT

This study (1) describes cultural assumptions in the student travel industry, relying upon protocols previously established within the functionalist perspective and (2) explains how these assumptions may have evolved by examining the basic communicative processes (*performances*) wherein industry culture has been made manifest.

The study identifies eight members of the student travel industry and uses qualitative methods that consist of in-depth interviews with the industry's "elite" members, as well as content analysis of selected historical and contemporary documents. Data were analyzed, first by thematic coding and then by interpretive analysis of codes that emerged. To frame the analysis, Phillips' (1990) functional "reporting structure" (categories) for cultural assumptions was cross-referenced with Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo's (1983) heuristic listing of *Performances of Passion* -- e.g. storytelling and repartee (constructs, jargon, vocabulary, and metaphor). One result of adopting this "paradigm interplay" as a metatheoretical perspective has been to demonstrate that the functionalist perspective may serve as an heuristic frame for interpretation, while the rich description and depth of understanding generated by interpretive analysis may enhance the scope and understanding of the emerging frame. Not an original goal of the research, this phenomenon nonetheless materialized as the study progressed.

Beyond that, this study not only joins the growing body of empirical evidence suggesting that industry cultures underlie corporate cultures but also describes how an industry's culture has evolved by examining communicative "performances" of its cultural assumptions. In doing so, it uncovers a primary source of these assumptions, and provides insight, not only into existing theories of organizational and industry culture, but also into the relationship of communication and culture, *per se*.

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Introduction and Overview

There is no denying it: Some organizations are simply more successful than others. They adapt to the environment more easily; they have a more positive image; they perform better than their competitors. Why do some organizations prosper while others struggle? Although there is a virtual galaxy of potential answers to this question, some organizational communication scholars would argue that *culture* -- a metaphor that represents shared, symbolically constructed assumptions, values, and artifacts of particular organizations (Mohan 1993) -- underlies organizational effectiveness.

> *Culture serves both as a description of the organization of activities and meaning in organizations, its structure, and as a description of the activities by which these meanings come to be produced and shared in organizations . . . [A]n organization's culture consists of whatever a member must know or believe in order to operate in a manner understandable and acceptable to other members, and the means by which this knowledge is produced and transmitted (Deetz, 1982, 132-33).*

Moreover, "most researchers and practitioners agree that central to the notion of organizational culture are the complex communication processes in which organizational members engage" (Shockley-Zalabak and Morely, 1989, 484) -- or, as Hall wrote so succinctly, "Culture is communication, and communication is culture" (1959, 191).

Beyond the idea of culture as specific to organizations, however, a growing body of research confirms the phenomenon of identifiable *industry* cultures, suggesting that "industries exert influences that cause cultures to develop within defined perimeters [and that] within industries, certain cultural characteristics will be widespread among organizations, and these [are] different from [those] found in other industries" (Gordon, 1991). If this is the case, then it is vitally important to uncover, not only those assumptions that might be held in common by members of an industry grouping, but more importantly perhaps, to locate "the source of extant cultural assumptions in particular industries" (Phillips, 1994, 399).

To arrive at such an understanding, however, one must move beyond a functionalist perspective, wherein cultural assumptions are conceptualized as variables to be manipulated, and where organizations are examined mainly in terms of economic or material outcomes (even though it cannot be denied that the temper of organizational culture likely exerts a significant influence upon those outcomes). Instead, to more fully understand how culture evolves -- particularly across the time and space continuum of entire industries -- it is also necessary to examine organizational culture from the interpretivist perspective, wherein "organizations" are conceptualized as "subjective experience" and analyzed "in terms of their expressive, ideational, and symbolic aspects . . . [by investigating] the patterns that make organized action possible" (Smircich 1983, 347). In short, organizational researchers must be willing to set aside immediate utility as the prime justification for their investigations, and concede the value of describing the "generative processes that yield and shape meanings and that are fundamental to the very existence of organization" (353).

However, adopting one perspective need not exclude the use of another. In fact, the rich description and depth-of-understanding generated by interpretive research may serve to enhance functionalist studies, while the functionalist perspective may serve as a frame for interpretation.

> *The interpretive paradigm supplements the functionalist view, particularly in its conceptualization of communication as a process of organizing. Organizing, in turn, becomes a process of communicating. The two concepts merge not only in their perspective of communication, but also in the role that language and symbols play in constructing social reality (Putnam, 1982, 205).*

Thus, the goals of this study are (1) to uncover the cultural assumptions of the student travel industry, relying upon protocols previously established within the functionalist perspective; and (2) to examine basic communicative processes in an effort to explain how that culture was created and/or how it has evolved across a distinct time and space continuum. Communicative processess, "the unfolding of which are occasions when sense-making is accomplished" (Bormann, 124), comprise the manner in which the industry's culture is made manifest; thus, understanding these processes is endemic to any understanding of culture.

This study was initially guided by the question, "What is the culture of the student travel industry?" From the data generated, there emerged detailed descriptions, both of the industry culture and of communicative processes endemic to its creation and evolution. To chronicle this process is

> *as much a recounting of an 'odyssey' as a reporting of research. Decision points surface, positions are determined, and findings are reported . . .*

but the richness of the experience eludes the linear format. What of the experience can be captured is presented in the following sequence (Phillips, 1990, 3).

The remainder of Chapter One provides a background and overview of the topic, inlcuding a review of related research, and sets forth a rationale for this particular study as well as for the perspective(s) from which its is examined. Chapter Two describes the study's methodological protocols, and outlines the various processes though which data were gathered and analyzed. Chapter Three describes the culture of the student travel industry by examining communicative processes endemic to the creation and evolution of that culture. Finally, Chapter Four analyzes the study's findings in light of the research goals originally set forth, identifies limitations to the instant study, and suggests possible directions for future research.

Organizational Culture

The notion of *culture* as a phenomenon applicable to organizations arguably has its roots in what Eisenberg and Goodall (1993) have called "the end of empire" -- roughly the two decades following World War II, when the United States found itself the economic master of a world that was fast-gaining "an awareness of how dominant Western interests were accomplices in the political and economic subordination of a Third World" (123). As American business moved onto the global scene, roughly between 1945-1980, "economic and political concerns . . . dramatically influenced critical scrutiny of organizations"

(123). Indeed, William Ouchi's *Theory Z* (1981), which contrasted U.S. and Japanese organizational performance standards, was "the first book to popularize the concept of organizational culture [when it] announced that the survival and prosperity of organizations depended heavily on their ability to adapt to their surrounding cultures . . . [and suggested] incorporating new *cultural values* into the work environment" (Eisenberg & Goodall, 131).

During the 1980s, organizational communication scholars became increasingly interested in moving beyond quantitative, behaviorist-centered approaches to social science, and in returning to the more qualitative, interpretive modes of inquiry that had characterized the discipline's beginnings (Eisenberg & Goodall, 131). One such mode of inquiry, rooted in the symbolic interactionist perspective, is the study of *culture* -- an examination of *meaning* as it is created among and between societal groupings, including organizations. Although definitions of culture "range from abstract *webs of significance* to pragmatic *frames of reference*" (Mohan, 1993, 10), it is generally agreed that to study an organization's culture is to try to uncover

> *a pattern of basic assumptions -- invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration -- that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems* (Schein, 1985, 9).

Thus, an organization's culture shapes meaning for its members. As applied to business and industry, the study of culture is an attempt to understand "the meaning of work" (Eisenberg & Goodall, 131), which may, at least for some, lead to an understanding of "the workplace in its role as a mediator of behavior" (Deal & Kennedy, 1984, 6).

Initially, the metaphor of "culture" as a means of guiding research in organizational communication was offered as an alternative to the sputtering "systems" metaphor (Eisenberg & Goodall, 1993), whose chief weakness was identified as a lack of utility when applied to research in organizational communication (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983). Early research, primarily conducted from the functionalist perspective, tended "to focus on static, structural features of culture," and to "document the existence of such cultural features as organizational jargon, stories, ideologies, and strategic knowledge" (Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983, 126). Subsequently and in response, another group of scholars (see generally Putnam & Pacanowsky, 1983) offered a competing interpretivist perspective, one that "introduce[d] process notions into our understanding of organizational culture by looking at organizational communication as cultural performance" (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983,126).

During the past two decades, research in organizational culture has tended to crystallize around these two competing perspectives: culture as critical variable (the functionalist view) vs. culture as root metaphor (interpretivist view) (Smirich, 1983, 339). These labels are derived ultimately from Burrell and Morgan's (1979) depiction of the various approaches or "paradigms" that represent one's view of the nature of reality and affinity for change (Morgan, 1980). "Functionalists" view society as objective and orderly, assuming that behavior is concrete and tangible and that society has a real systematic existence" (Putnam, 1982, 194). From this perspective, "the external world shapes individual options for appropriate behaviors" (Putnam, 1983, 36). Interpretivists, on the other hand, assume that reality is created within the individual, is constructed socially through shared meanings, that behavior (individual or societal) is neither objective, orderly, concrete, or tangible, and that "social reality is constituted through words, symbols, and actions" (Putnam, 1983, 40). In other words, individuals "have a critical role in shaping environmental and organizational realities" (Putnam, 1983, 36). Thus, the "critical variable" approach to organizational culture is functional in nature, and may be differentiated from the interpretive, "root metaphor" approach; moreover, "these different conceptions give rise to different research questions and interests" (Smircich, 1983, 339).

The Functionalist Paradigm

Primarily, "the research agenda arising from the view that culture is an organizational variable is how to mold and shape internal culture in particular ways and how to change culture, consistent with managerial purposes" (Smircich, 346). In other words, the "critical variable" or "functionalist" view regards culture as something an organization *has*, suggesting that it may be manipulated to serve administrative ends. This perspective, which has dominated organizational theory and communication research from the beginning, tends to conceptualize the organization as either a "machine, an organism, or a cybernetic system" wherein communication "is primarily mechanistic, with an emphasis on transmission effects, selection of channels, and information processing" (Putnam, 1982, 195-198).

Not surprisingly, management strategists have flocked to this perspective, and it is primarily they -- not communication scholars -- who have published a lion's share of the research in organizational culture. Perhaps the most widely-known functionalist studies are two that enjoyed popularity throughout the 1980s: Deal and Kennedy's *Corporate Cultures The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life* (1982) and Peters and Waterman's *In Search of Excellence* (1985). In an extensive longitudinal investigation of Fortune-500 corporations, Deal & Kennedy found high correlations between "shared meaning" and "outstanding performance" while finding "no correlations of any relevance" among companies that did not articulate or share "qualitative beliefs and values" (1982, 7). The authors interpreted these findings to suggest that shared meaning or "strong culture" enables employees to "do their jobs a little better" by providing "informal rules" for behavior and by enabling workers to "feel better about what they do, so they are more likely to work a little harder," all presumably resulting in a more efficient, effective, and above all, productive workplace (15-16).

In a similar study, involving 62 companies identified as "excellent" by their employees and by external analysts, Peters and Waterman concluded that "the dominance and coherence of culture proved to be an essential quality of the excellent companies" (1985, 75). Going beyond Deal and Kennedy's findings, however, Peters and Waterman found that "poorer-performing companies often have strong cultures too, but dysfunctional ones" and that the difference in whether culture is positive or negative in its impact depends upon how well it shapes meaning for *everyone* in the organization, not just the top fifty who are in the bonus pool" (75).

As well, the nature and "effects" of culture have been investigated extensively by a plethora of other researchers (see generally Mohan, 1993) whose general orientation is that "shared understandings of a firm's culture enhance strategy implementation, organizational change, and positive images of the firm" (Chatman & Jehn, 1994). Functionalists' studies of culture have examined a wide range of issues within a variety of different frames. For example, within a "systemic" frame (Mohan, 1993), researchers have examined the effects of cultural patterns found in "variables" such as hierarchy, relationships, and decision making (to name but a few) and have tried to determine how these variables impact an organization's response to its environment (O'Toole, 1979; Pettigrew, 1979; Schein, 1990; Wilkins, 1983). In addition, from within a "cognitive" frame (Mohan, 1993), functionalists have examined the effects of congruent cultural value orientations within organizations (Cooke & Rosseau, 1988; Harris & Cronen, 1979; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991; Kilman & Saxton, 1983). Other researchers have linked cultural variables with the relative efficacy of socialization processes, corporate life cycles, management, strategy, leadership, and productivity.[1] Indeed, the functionalist view of culture and its significance is perhaps most pragmatically described as follows:

> *If values, beliefs, and exemplars are widely shared, formal [strategy] can be parsimonious. A well-developed organizational culture directs and coordinates activities. By contrast, if an organization is characterized by many different and conflicting values, beliefs, and exemplars . . . [then] considerable more direction and coordination will be required, [including] formalized plans, procedures, programs, budgets, and so forth* (Bresser and Bishop, 1990, 590-91).

<u>Levels of Culture</u>

Working within this perspective, and using qualitative methods to generate data, Edgar Schein (1985) conceptualized and described a notion, widely accepted among functionalists (and many interpretivists, for that matter), that culture is a multi-level construct containing three levels or "layers," ranging from the obvious and concrete to the more subtle and abstract: (1) *artifacts* and *creations* are manifestations of (2) *values*, which in turn are engendered by (3) basic *assumptions*. *Artifacts and creations* comprise the most "visible" level of culture and include the "constructed physical and social environment . . . physical space, technological output . . . written and spoken language, artistic productions, and . . . overt behavior" (Schein, 1985, 14). Of special interest to communications research are verbal artifacts, which include "language, stories,

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[1] Akin and Hopelain (1988); Atkinson (1990); Beck and Moore (1985); Bolman and Deal (1991); Denison (1990); Hofstede (1980); Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv & Sanders (1990); Kerr & Slocum (1987); Kopelman, Broef, & Guzzo (1990); Krefting & Frost (1985); Limerick (1990); Pettigrew(1979, 1990); Pfeffer (1981); Pondy (1983); Quinn & McGrath (1988); Sathe (1985); Schein (1985, 1990, 1991); Thompson and Luthans (1990); Wilkins and Ouchi (1983). For a more comprehensive summary of research in organizational communication from a cultural functionalist perspective, see generally Mohan (1993).

and myths" as well as behavioral artifacts such as "rituals and ceremonies" (Mohan, 1993, 16). The "middle" or *values* level is generally said to be both conscious and subconscious (Schein, 1983, 16-17) and "is distinguished by goals, ideals, and standards that represent members' preferred means of resolving everyday problems . . . socially shared rules and norms applicable to a specific context . . . as well as what 'natives" perceive as constituting boundaries of acceptable behavior" (Mohan, 1993, 16). While these concepts normally prompt certain behaviors, they may remain only "espoused" (Argyris & Schon, 1978), in which case there is a discrepancy between what the organization and/or its members claim to value and in how they actually behave.

The most abstract level, that of taken-for-granted reality, includes the group's basic *assumptions,* or "tacit beliefs members hold about themselves, their relationships to others, and the nature of the organization" (Mohan, 1993, 15). These assumptions underlie and determine "meaning systems" in the organization; moreover, unless we have some understanding of this "paradigm by which the members of a group perceive, think about, feel about, and judge situations and relationships, we cannot claim that we have described or understood the group's culture" (Schein, 1983, 111). It is upon this "layer" (e.g., these assumptions) that the cultural infrastructure rests (Deetz and Kersten, 1983).

Based on the work of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961), who outlined a typology of five questions "common to all human groups" (10), Schein (1985) proposed a typology for analyzing cultural assumptions in organizations whose utility is in being able to chart and thereby identify a culture's relative cohesion or "strength." Schein argues that "strong" cultures come to operate within a coherent "cultural paradigm" that is characterized by members' general adherence to "interlocking" or consistent assumptions (Schein, 1985, 109); moreover, Schein also argues that "unless we have searched for [this] pattern among the different underlying assumptions . . . and have attempted to identify [its] paradigm . . . we cannot claim that we have described or understood the group's culture" (Schein, 111). The typology's five categories as well as a brief topical description of each are listed in Table 1.

TABLE 1-1: SCHEIN'S TYPOLOGY OF CULTURAL ASSUMPTIONS

ASSUMPTION CATEGORY	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Humanity's Relationship to Nature	Nature and character of relationship to relevant environments; basic identity and role; strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, & threats
Nature of Reality & Truth	Includes perceptions of external physical reality, social reality, and individual reality, as well as criteria for verification; nature of time and space
Nature of Human Nature	Whether basic human nature is bad or good, mutable or immutable, proactive or reactive, complex or simple.
Nature of Human Activity	How to "act" -- ranging on a continuum from "action orientation" (humans can control and/or manipulate nature) to a "being orientation (humanity is subservient to nature), to a mid-range "being-in-becoming" stance, which "emphasizes...fulfilling one's potential" (102)
Nature of Human Relationships	How relationships should be managed to meet needs; basic rules for management of power/control/influence vs. intimacy/affection

Table adapted from E.H. Schein (1985) *Organizational culture and leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; and Margaret Phillips (1990) *Industry as a cultural grouping,* Doctoral dissertation, Anderson Graduate School of Management, University of California, Los Angeles. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, No 9017663.

Although Schein hails primarily from the functionalist perspective, the idea of an interrelatedness between "culture" and some type of "basic assumptions" -- whether they be called assumptions, "webs of significance" (Geertz, 1973, 124), "cultural structures" or "performances" (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983, 129), "psychic prisons" (Morgan, 1980, 618), "iron cages" (Weber, 1947), "unconscious processes" (Smircich, 1983, 355), or something else entirely -- is a notion that underlies any investigation of culture. As Smircich points out, regardless of the perspective assumed, "A cultural analysis moves us in the direction of questioning taken-for-granted assumptions, raising issues of context and meaning, and bringing to the surface underlying values" (355). This issue will be addressed in more detail, below.

The Interpretive Paradigm

Whereas the functionalist research agenda is concerned primarily with "managing" the culture an organization has or possesses, "culture as a root metaphor promotes a view of organizations as human forms, manifestations of human consciousness," whose research agenda "is to explore the phenomenon of organization as subjective experience and to investigate the patterns that make organized action possible" (Smircich, 1983, 348). This perspective regards culture, not as something an organization *has* and is able to manipulate, but as what the organization *is*. One way to illustrate the difference between "what a culture has" and "what it is" might be to examine how each perspective views the communicative processes endemic to culture (e.g. myths, legends, rites, rituals, stories, and the like). To the functionalist, these constructs are perceived of as cultural "artifacts" or "symbolic devices [that] can be used to mobilize and channel the energies of organization members" (346); however, to the interpretivist, these are instead the very

> *generative processes that yield and shape meanings and that are fundamental to the very existence of organization . . . .When culture is a root metaphor, the researcher's attention shifts from concerns about what do organizations accomplish and how may they accomplish it more efficiently, to how is organization accomplished and what does it mean to be organized? (353)*

Two early proponents of the interpretive (e.g. culture as "root metaphor") approach are Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1982) who have suggested that communication processes engaged in by an organization's members should be perceived of as "cultural performances" (1983) that "center on the study of meanings . . . [and on] the way individuals make sense of their world through communication behaviors" (Putnam, 1983, 31). Along these lines, Mohan (1993) describes the interpretivist perspective as a "symbolic frame" wherein "salient symbols emerge directly from the native point of view, rather than imposing a researchers' objectified scheme" (59), resulting in an understanding of the "shared meanings" attached to cultural (communicative) performances, and thereby of "cultural assumptions and patterns" (55). Also, an examination of various symbolic communicative processes (e.g. stories, rituals, and the like) reveal an organization's ideological underpinnings (Dandridge, 1983). Thus, the "root metaphor" is "an enacted symbolic process" -- e.g. a *performance of* *symbols,* the interpretation of which fosters an understanding of "how formal and informal behavior shapes cultural patterns" (Mohan, 1993, 57). More specifically, the root metaphor or " 'dominant myth' is the fundamental generator" (Mohan, 1993, 55) of a group's assumptions, and thereby of its characteristic behaviors, policies, and practices.

Research generated by this perspective has its roots in the Chicago School and more specifically in symbolic interactionism, as engendered by George Herbert Mead (1934) and later articulated by Blumer (1969). Blumer identified three "premises" of symbolic interactionism:

> *(1) that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them; (2) that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of . . . social interaction; (3) these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things [encountered] (1969, 2).*

Thus, the discovery of *meaning* is central to the interpretivist perspective, and meaning is unveiled by observing the social interaction (e.g. communication) that "forms human conduct instead of being merely a means or a setting for [its] expression or release" (Blumer, 8). Moreover, meaning is shaped through communicative processes.

The idea of communication as process is not new. Early in the 20th century, Whitehead wrote, "process is the becoming of experience" (1929, 252), an idea to which Berlo referred when he articulated *The Process of Communication* (1960):

> *Communication theory reflects a process point of view. . . . The basis for the concept of process is the belief that the structure of physical reality cannot be discovered by man; it must be created by man* (24).

Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo cite sociologists Berger and Luckmann (1967) in describing communication as that which "creates and constitutes the taken-for-granted reality of the world" (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1982, 121) -- in other words, communication creates and sustains cultural *assumptions*. This claim is well-founded. In fact, Berger & Luckmann (1967) portray reality as a world that is constructed and inhabited "with others . . . in [a] *dialectic* between nature and the socially-constructed world [wherein] the human organism itself is transformed . . . [and wherein] man produces reality and thereby produces himself" (168). Their use of the term *dialectic* implies, of course, an array of communicative processes, a "dialogue" as it were, wherein "man" communes with himself and others.

More recently, Carey (1989) has taken up the banner of communication as culture. Noting the influences of Dewey (1935) and Durkheim (1947), he espouses a "ritual" view of communication wherein "communication is...the basis of human fellowship [and] produces the social bonds . . . that tie men together and make associated life possible" (22) and where "reality" is "brought into existence, is produced by communication" (25).

If, as the foregoing discussion suggests, "the search for meaningful order . . . begins with what . . . persons say to each other about the meanings of . . . things " (Eisenberg & Goodall, 1993, 117), then it becomes obvious that organizational culture may indeed be construed as "a common frame of reference for interpreting and acting toward one another; a network of shared meanings" (Daniels & Spiker, 1994, 118). Moreover, this "network of shared meanings" is evidenced in "cultural performances" -- i.e., in communication that occurs within the organization (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983).

Noting that organizations (and their members) both act and talk about that action in unique ways, and citing Geertz (1973), Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1983) describe this phenomenon as "webs of significance that man himself has spun" (5) ; more to the point, they note that "spun webs imply some act of spinning" (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1982, 123). They further argue that the agenda for cultural research needs to include "not only the structures of cultural webs, but . . . the process of their spinning as well" (129). It is this "process of spinning" that the authors denote as "cultural performances" (1983).

As Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo point out, " the idea of *performance* has two somewhat different connotations" (129). One connotation "suggests theatricality and play-acting . . . and invites one to look at each organization as a stage and at the organizational members as . . . actors with varied parts, roles, masks, and scenes to play" (130). This notion of performance, popularized primarily by Goffman (1959), suggests (1) "that organizational members are choice-making individuals [and] do not 'conform' to behavioral laws but rather . . . *choose to act* . . . in ways which [sic] reflect (or flout) the social conventions of other organizational members" and (2) " that organizational communication is *situationally relative and variable"* (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983, 130, authors' emphases retained).

The other connotation, derived from Turner (1980), is culled from the French root, *parfournir,* loosely meaning to "accomplish" or "bring to completion" (160). Thus, and in a Burkean sense (Burke, 1968), it is in this "processual sense of 'bringing to completion' or 'accomplishing' that . . . performance brings the significance of meaning of some structural form -- be it symbol, story, metaphor, ideology, or saga -- into being" (Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983, 129). Put another way, communicative "performances are those very actions by which members constitute and reveal their culture to themselves and to others . . . reality is brought 'to life' in communicative performances" (131).

Based upon existing literature and empirical data, Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1983) created a typology or "heuristic list" of categories to help frame a study of cultural performances . Each category represents a specific type of performance wherein organizational culture is performed (see Table 1-2).

Beyond these "heuristic" delineations of performance types, Daniels and Spiker (1994) have identified three specific methods whereby interpretive scholars have examined communicative processes (e.g. "performances" of culture); these include fantasy theme analysis (Bormann 1981); metaphor analysis (Koch & Deetz, 1981; Smith & Eisenberg, 1987); and the analysis of "reflexive comments" or "account analysis" (Harre & Secord, 1972; Tompkins & Cheney, 1983; Geist and Chandler, 1984). Other researchers have examined cultural/communicative performance as "oral 'scripts' constructed by organizational actors" (Mohan, 1993, 57), thus emphasizing language use as a

TABLE 1-2: PACANOWSKY & O'DONNELL-TRUJILLO'S "HEURISTIC LIST" of PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES AND TYPES

PERFORMANCE CATEGORY	TYPES WITHIN CATEGORY
Performances of Ritual	personal ritual task ritual social ritual organizational ritual
Performances of Passion	storytelling repartee >metaphor >language * jargon, vocabulary, relevant constructs
Performances of Sociality	courtesies pleasantries sociability privacies
Performances of Politics	showing personal strength cementing allies bargaining > attacking, defending, regressing
Performances of Enculturation	learning and teaching the *ropes* > orientation, imitation learning and teaching the *roles* > metacommunication/other performances

Table adapted from Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo (1983). Organizational communication as cultural performance. *Communication Monographs, 50,* 126-47.

reflection of culture and/or as a means by which to "forge a collective vision" (Mohan, 1993, 58). Most common among these studies are analyses of narratives, "fantasies," sagas, and stories.[2] More to the point, both Evered (1983) and Frake (1972) argue that analyzing language use is key to understanding and interpreting organizational cultures. In fact, various language-based approaches to culture have been integrated under the aegis of *organizational communication culture (OCC)*, which denotes both a *perspective* -- e.g. "to label the symbolic entity that is an organization" -- and a *method*, that being "a strategy for understanding organizations founded on the analysis of messages" (Bantz, 1993, 1).[3]

In summary, Morely & Shockley-Zalabak (1997) have more recently noted that "the study of culturally based interpretative processes within organizations has generated a renewed interest in communication . . . [and in] important questions about communication processes" (253). Indeed, Daniels and Spiker (1994) have observed that "if the study of organizational culture is intended to . . . *understand the process by which culture is created . . . through communication*, then interpretivist methods are the most appropriate for this purpose" (120, emphasis added).

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[2] See generally Boje (1991); Brown & McMillan (1991); Browning (1992); Clark (1972); Fisher (1984, 1985); Hansen & Kahnweiler (1993); Kelley (1985); Martin, Feldman, Hatch, & Sitkin (1983); Martin & Powers (1983); Meyer, (1995); Mumby (1987).

[3] For a comprehensive summary of interpretive research, see generally Mohan (1993).

Paradigm Interplay

When Burrell and Morgan (1979) articulated their theory of paradigm diversity, they conceived of each paradigm as self-sufficient and self-contained, meaning that there could be no "crossover" in their application; research perspectives, in other words, would rely upon one paradigm or the other. Although their theory may have been heuristic (and perhaps even elegant) at the time it was articulated, this study rejects the notion of self-contained paradigms as being too simplistic to fully address the complexities of contemporary cultural inquiry. Along the same lines, Schultz and Hatch (1996) have found the notion of paradigm integrity unsatisfactory because it requires one to "ignore the multiplicity of perspectives that make up our field of study" (530). They argue in favor of a "new paradigm-crossing strategy [labeled] 'interplay' [and] defined as the simultaneous recognition of both contrasts and connections between" the functionalist and interpretive paradigms (530-31), between culture as a variable and culture as a root metaphor. Similarly, Sypher, Applegate & Sypher (1985) have argued that culture should be construed as integrative instead of divisive, not only with regard to paradigms, but also with regard to methodology. Even Schein (1990) has advocated combining the positivist/functionalist approach with an anthropological orientation to facilitate effective penetration of the various layers of culture, while Van Maanen and Barley (1985) have described the utility of the cultural approach in terms of its linking of competing paradigms.

More specifically, Schultz and Hatch (1996) have identified three connections between functionalism and interpretivism: (1) both perspectives "frame culture as underlying patterns of assumptions or meanings . . . [and] assume that culture binds the organization together"; (2) both construe culture as "an essence upon which surface or outer manifestations or forms are based"; and (3) both "offer more or less static representations" of culture, such as "maps, programs, metaphors, images, and themes" (540-542) -- which are especially static when contrasted with postmodernist recognition of more dynamic notions such as "disparity, difference, and indeterminacy" in contemporary organizations (Cooper & Burrell, 1988, 101). Thus, "paradigm interplay" may be visualized as somewhat of a "meta-paradigmatic" approach that works from within the common ground shared by otherwise competing paradigms.

Here, it should be noted that "paradigm interplay" is not analogous to the "integration of paradigms" view espoused by many postmodernists, who "either ignore paradigm boundaries . . . or decompose" them (Schultz & Hatch, 1996, 530); neither is it commensurate with the work of those organizational theorists who "practice integration by merging paradigms without respecting their differences" (530). Instead, Schultz & Hatch advocate paradigm interplay as a "third metatheoretical position that resists both incommensurability and integration [and operates as] the simultaneous recognition of both contrasts and connections between paradigms" (530). The utility of this metatheoretical stance should be obvious: it allows researchers to "transpose the findings from studies conducted in one paradigm into the theoretical frameworks offered by another [which in turn] allows the findings of one paradigm to be recontextualized and reinterpreted in such a way that they inform the research conducted within a different paradigm" (535). Put more simply, "the use of combined perspectives allows researchers to obtain a more holistic view" of the organization (or industry) and its contexts and to "discover aspects of . . . culture that may have been overlooked previously" (Mohan, 1993, 60). Indeed, one might argue that the "bedrock" assumption made by cultural researchers of every stripe (e.g. that observable cultural patterns exist and derive from commonly held assumptions) serves as *prima facie* evidence that paradigm-crossing is in fact endemic to cultural research. Therefore, this study adopts the metatheoretical perspective of "paradigm interplay," as described and advocated by Schultz and Hatch (1996), primarily because it seems to be a credible description and accurate labeling of the "paradigmatic reality" that cultural researchers have already "created" through the course of their collective study.

Origins of Culture

Thus far, the literature review has suggested that to study organizational culture is to identify or bring to the surface "taken-for-granted assumptions" held by the organization's members. These cultural assumptions have also been described as "webs of significance," the existence of which "imply some act of spinning" (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1982, 5). Further, it is argued that this "spinning process" is in fact synonymous with communicative processes, for which the term "cultural performances" (5) is coined. Perhaps it is now appropriate to discuss the "spider" -- the architect of the "web," the promulgator of the "spinning" -- or as Phillips (1994) put it, "the source" of extant cultural assumptions.

One strand of research that has been of particular interest in this regard deals with founders and how they may create, embed, and/or promulgate the culture of the organizations they establish. From one general perspective, "whatever happens [in an organization] is credited in large part to the founder's unique personal attributes and actions" (Martin, Sitkin & Boehm, 1985, 100). Among the proponents of this viewpoint is Schein (1985), who argues that the most effective organizations remain true to their founders' original vision, even during times of growth and change -- a phenomenon primarily attributable to the founder's initial and positive " . . . impact on how the group defines and solves its external adaptation and internal integration problems" (210). Deal and Kennedy (1982) also describe the founder's role as central to the creation of a strong culture, citing IBM, Procter & Gamble, Johnson & Johnson, and other notable Fortune 500s, as organizations whose "cultures [their founders] were so careful to build and nourish [that they] have sustained their organizations through both fat and lean times" and, not incidentally, have also sustained their companies' positions as "leaders in the marketplace" (5). This "integration" perspective is perhaps best described by Kimberly (1979):

> *Whether one chooses to call [the founder] an entrepreneur, a leader, or a guru, the fact is that his personality, his dreams, his flaws, and his talents [are] largely responsible for ... structure and results (454).*

A second, divergent perspective accuses the first of painting a "rosy portrait" of founders' influence that tends to "gloss over the internal conflict and differentiation that are characteristic of complex institutions" (Martin, et.al., 102). These critics say that founders receive "undeserved credit for having created cultures" when in fact the founder is "cast into a system molded by forces beyond his or her individual control" (102). From this perspective, the founder's role is said to be relatively minor; instead, to use the language of cultural performance, webs of significance are spun, not by a "founding" individual, but instead by various elements in the organization's environment, often in conjunction with elites in the organization, only one of which is the founder (Gordon, 1985, 1991, Kimberly, 1979; Van Maanen & Barley, 1984).

Finally, some evidence suggests that "both the integration and the differentiation portrayals of the culture creation process may be simultaneously accurate" (Martin, et.al., 1985, 123) . Generally, this perspective argues that the influence of the founder upon an organization's culture, although significant, may be tempered to some degree by a plethora of other forces, which may serve in turn to narrow the leader's options and thereby constrain the eventual forms the culture will take (Martin, et.al., 1985). In sum, "one of the most mysterious aspects of organizational culture is how it originates" (Schein, 1985, 148).

Industry Culture

Whereas the phenomenon of *organizational* culture has been firmly established in the literature, can a similar phenomenon be observed with regard to entire *industries* -- that is to "the group of firms producing products that are close substitutes for each other" (Porter, 1980, 5)? Beyond that, would it be possible to locate origins of an industry's culture and/or describe its evolution?

The Phillips Study

In her landmark 1990 empirical study of industry culture, Phillips identified a good body of theoretical and empirical evidence (albeit of a somewhat preliminary nature), that, taken together, supports the notion that observable "industry culture" exists. Theoretical support was found to reside within "several streams of management literature, specifically, strategy, organization theory, and marketing" (26-27). However, previous to 1990, Phillips (1990) found only two empirical efforts to "uncover the existence of industry-based cultural groupings" (28) -- one by Ginyer and Spender (1979) and another by Gordon (1985). This dearth of empirical evidence was in large part remedied by Phillips' (1990) empirical investigation, *Industry as a Cultural Grouping*. Her study of some 96 informants across twelve different organizations comprising two industries (wineries and art museums in California) offered strong evidence of "discrete industry cultures" wherein the basic infrastructure of the "assumption set" common to each industry "transcends organizational, transorganizational, and suborganizational boundaries within its particular industry" (xv). Moreover, Phillips found that these cultural similarities or "industry mindsets" are observable, not only "with regard to strategic issues," as previous work in the field had seemed to indicate, but also with regard to "interpersonal work relationship issues, such as patterns of communication, . . . and to social issues, such as the purpose of work" (Phillips, 1994, 399).

Relying primarily upon data generated from informant interviews and corporate literature, Phillips (1990) "remodeled" Schein's typology for cultural assumptions in organizations to apply to industry settings:

> *Some of these needed adjustments were found to stem from general conceptual difficulties; some were found to emanate from [Schein's] focus on organization settings (120). . . [Modifications resulted in] a categorization scheme that is both theoretically driven and inductively derived (204).*

The alterations Phillips (1990) made in Schein's (1985) categories for cultural assumptions provide, according to Phillips' (1990) data, more relevance for examining assumptions held in common across an industry, as opposed to those held in common within discrete organizations. In fact, Phillips' (1990) data suggest three categorical changes in Schein's typology.

First, Phillips' (1990) data indicated that "Nature of Truth and Reality" could be more accurately labeled "Origins of Truth," primarily because "what is 'real' was the sum total of what was being investigated . . . therefore, what was 'real' to the informants was being captured in all categories [and] was not confinable to this single sub-category" (122). Consequently, Phillips discarded the sub-category, "reality" (122). As well, Phillips' data suggested that the constructs of "time" and "space" "were taking on separate and distinct meanings" (123) within each industry; thus, "because time and space are both . . . physical dimensions, these latter two subcategories of the original Schein classification were included together within one category" (123).

Next, themes emerging from Phillips' data suggested that "the grand scope of 'human activity' in general . . . seemed to be circumscribed by the work context in particular" (124); hence, the title was changed to "purpose of work" (124). Likewise, data suggested that "the nature of human relationships" category should be confined to "informants' assumptions about the narrower sphere of work relationships. Therefore, the title of this category, as well as the focus of the analysis with regard to it was changed to the 'nature of work relationships'" (126). These alterations are pictured in Table 1-3 below.

TABLE 1-3: A COMPARISON OF SCHEIN'S AND PHILLIPS' CATEGORIES

SCHEIN: Organizations Relationship between group and environment	PHILLIPS: Industries Relationship between group and environment
Nature of truth and reality	Origins of truth Nature of time and space
Nature of innate human nature	Nature of innate human nature
Nature of human activity	Purpose of work
Nature of human relationships	Nature of work relationships

Table adapted from E.H. Schein (1985) *Organizational culture and leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; and Margaret Phillips (1990) *Industry as a cultural grouping*, Doctoral dissertation, Anderson Graduate School of Management, University of California, Los Angeles. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, No 9017663.

Phillips (1990) also found that her data did not support some of Schein's specific foci *within* several categories; hence, she proposed several "internal" revisions to more accurately reflect her findings. A summary of the Phillips' (1990) typology follows, arranged and discussed by category.

Category 1: The relationship between the group and the environment

Phillips' (1990) data indicated that Schein's (1985) category was too simplistic for effective industry analysis, mainly because no single perception or position emerged with regard to the environment *en toto.*

> *Rather, there appeared to exist assumptions about the relative importance of different elements within the environment and about the need for different positions in relation to these different elements. In this regard, there was more . . . an awareness of coping with weaknesses, strengths, opportunities, and threats in the Steiner (1977) . . . modes of strategic thinking, than the all-powerful sense of domination, [or] the helpless sense of subjugation, or the peaceful sense of harmoniousness as implied in the Schein . . . typologies" (120-121).*

The result is that Phillips' *environment* category encompasses three issues: (1) identification of group boundaries -- e.g. criteria for membership, etc.; (2) "critical elements" in terms of what elements in the environment are "constraining," "empowering" or "harmonious"; and (3) any remaining issues relative to the competitive environment (Phillips, 1990, 233).

Category 2: The origins of truth

Phillips' (1990) "global" changes in the second/third categories have been discussed, above. Beyond these observations, however, Phillips' data was somewhat inconclusive. Her primary finding is that research is needed to "look beyond the means by which 'truth' is determined to the <u>origins</u> of those means in order to flesh out assumptions within this category" (216).

<u>Category 3: The nature of time and space</u>

First, Phillips notes that although Schein grouped them together, the "assumptions about . . . time and space are unrelated and do not overlap" -- at least, in the industries Phillips studied. With regard to time, two subcategories surfaced: one dealing with its "basic nature" (223) -- e.g., whether time is cyclical, linear, or something else -- and the other dealing with the industry's "orientation" to time, that is, to the past, present, or future (223).

Phillips' findings regarding "space" are sketchy at best, and in any case inadequate for delineating "special dimensions . . . for investigation" (218). However, Phillips does note that these two physical dimensions make a "unique contribution to . . . industries' assumptions" and thus "appear to warrant continued investigation in studies of industry culture" (218).

<u>Category 4: The nature of innate human nature</u>

Although she does not modify this category in Schein's (1985) original typology, Phillips (1990) did note that "the richness of assumptions in this category requires an investigation beyond that suggested by the authors of earlier typologies" (219); more specifically (1) that the "level of aggregation . . . needs to be considered" (219) as do (2) "assumptions regarding the immutable and/or potentially mutable aspects of their being" (219).

Category 5: The purpose of work

Several issues surfaced in Phillips' (1990) data with regard to the dimensions of this category, beyond those general changes outlined, above. Schein originally identified

> *three dimensions within which a cultural group's assumptions about human activity might fall: (1) oriented toward "doing" or actively pursuing goals; (2) oriented toward "being" or spontaneously expressing a predetermined or "given" personality; and (3) oriented toward "being-in-becoming", or seeking opportunities for personal development" (Schein, 1985, cited in Phillips, 1990, 124).*

Phillips' (1990) data, however, indicated that the "doing" dimension was further sub-divided with regard to the relative tangibility of rewards *for* doing. More specifically, these rewards ranged "from the physically tangible . . . through the less tangible . . . to the intangible . . . [and] themes were classified along this tangibility continuum" (125). As well, the data suggested a "fine line between the 'doing' and the 'being-in-becoming' dimensions" (125) and that the demarcation of this "line" depended upon what motivated informants' actions and/or expressions, which in turn were coded as themes and later assigned to this category (125). For example, if the thematic result appeared to belong in the "being-in-becoming" category, but was in fact motivated by the desire for tangible rewards, then it was classified as a "doing" result (125). Although these conclusions are somewhat complicated and admittedly debatable, the important thing to remember is that the dimensions of this category are not so clear cut when studying industries as they are when examining single organizations. Therefore, future research should closely attend data regarding "purpose of work," to more fully examine possibilities that may exist.

<u>Category 6: The nature of work relationships</u>

Phillips' (1990) reasons for revising the title of Schein's (1985) original category have been discussed above; however, in addition, Phillips also saw fit to alter dimensions *within* the category. Specifically, these were re-named "*hierarchical* and *collective/collaborative*, respectively, [in order to] better reflect the <u>organizational</u> nature of the themes . . . [and to] be more reflective of the concept of <u>working</u> with and/or together to achieve common goals" (126-26, author's emphasis retained). Phillips proposed no alterations in the "individualistic" category; thus, her model would classify work relationships as being either *hierarchical, collective-collaborative, individualistic* or some combination of same.

<u>Significance of Phillips' study</u>

Taken together, the findings in Phillips' (1990) study not only offer strong evidence of industry cultures, but also serve to modify Schein's (1985) typology for cultural assumptions in organizations into a new, albeit similar, typology to help "analy[ze] . . . the informant interviews" and to create a "reporting structure for the cultural assumption sets of the fine arts museum industry and the wine industry . . . and therefore to provide a valuable structure for surfacing industry cultural assumptions" (207).

Since Phillips' (1990) study was published, several researchers have continued to observe and examine the phenomenon of industry culture. Levsen (1992) analyzed the relationship between culture and performance in the computer industry and found evidence that an industry culture may be "underlying" corporate cultures. Levsen's choice of verb, *underlying,* is interesting because it implies that the industry is a potential influence and/or source of organizational culture. Along these lines, Gordon observed in 1991 that "organizational or corporate culture is strongly influenced by the characteristics of the industry in which the company operates" (396), and identified "competitive environment, customer requirements, and societal expectations [as] the driving force[s] behind industry-based assumptions [that] cause companies within an industry to have common elements to their cultures" (406). Likewise, Huff (1982) concluded that industry members tend to share the same onotological landscape, and Reynolds (1986) suggested that discrete industries produce unique "perceived work contexts" (343). More recently, Morley and Shockley-Zalabak (1997) identified several cultural "dimensions" related to "communication processes" common across ten Italian "high technology companies (253), while Chatam & Jehn (1994) compared "the cultures of 15 organizations within and across industries . . . [and] found that stable organizational culture dimensions existed and varied more across industries than within them" (522). Thus, the phenomenon of "industry culture" -- encompassing not only strategic or "external" but also relational or "internal" issues as well (Phillips, 1990, 1994) is established in the literature, both theoretically and, to a degree, empirically.

Rationale and Statement of Problem

Despite an emerging body of literature that examines the phenomenon of industry culture, much of what is known about culture *en toto* is confined to data gleaned from investigations of individual, Fortune 500 corporations. In addition to a paucity of empirical, multi-organizational research that examines the phenomenon of industry culture, *per se,* is an even more pronounced lack of empirical research into the culture of entrepreneurial-type industries.

Moreover, "the surfacing of industry-based cultural assumptions . . . should lead . . . scholars to pursue an ensuing set of questions: (1) what is the source of extant cultural assumptions in particular industries? and (2) what effect do [these shared] assumptions . . . have upon the evolution of that industry?" (Phillips, 1994, 399). Few, if any, studies have pursued either of these questions, which might be answered by "mov[ing] backwards in a historical analysis of the cultural evolution of industries" (Phillips, 1994, 399). The idea that "companies 'share' certain aspects of culture is an important and necessary starting point for understanding why and how cultures develop" (Gordon, 1988, 410). In sum, research is needed to determine how the industry "mindset" (Phillips, 1994) or "culture" is created, disseminated, and/or maintained, particularly in developing entrepreneurial industries, thereby expanding existing theories of organizational culture in general and industry culture in particular. To extrapolate from Schein (1985), understanding the industry culture may be "so central to understanding organizations . . . that we cannot afford to be complacent" (327).

Also, assuming that organizational culture is synonymous with cultural performance, an investigation of how an *industry's* culture evolves would expand current knowledge regarding the general role that *communication* plays in the "spinning" (Geertz, 1979) of these "performances" (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983). Moreover, if culture does indeed evolve within single organizations, primarily by means of certain communicative processes (e.g. cultural performances), as current literature suggests, then additional research is needed to ascertain whether these same kinds of processes (performances) are observable when cultural assumptions are "spread" across an entire industry. Research of this nature could also be expected to (1) "serve as a necessary, pre-quantitative description . . . for quantitative measures for further research;" (2) "provide . . . an overall picture" of the industry; (3) "reaffirm the centrality of communicative behaviors in organizational inquiry;" (4) assist in re-evaluating the "managerial constraints" of traditional organizational communication research; and (5) help "expand the universe of discourse" (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1982, 127-130).

In addition to enhancing theoretical knowledge, however, examining the processes through which culture evolves is significant on a practical level. For one thing, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial-based industries seem to be a wave of the present, as well as of the future:

> *Small time entrepreneurs have seized multibillion-dollar markets from well-heeled businesses. Individual entrepreneurs are playing larger roles in the world economy. Entrepreneurship is playing a stronger role in the arts . . . [and] technology is empowering the individual* (Naisbitt and Aburdene, 1990, 301-302).

Thus, an enhanced understanding of today's ever-more-entrepreneurial business environment does not appear to be optional. More to the point, understanding culture at the industry level of analysis may assist entrepreneurs and executives to better "think about parameters of what's possible, what the boundaries of likely action or possible success are" (Kantrow, 1986, 82). Put another way, " If the quality of executives' judgment is to improve and if executives are to be able to draw with confidence and intelligence on the experience of others, they must first know how to read the lessons embedded in that experience" (81). Thus, the study should prove significant for both theory and practice.

Here, it is prudent to remember that the theoretical benefits of examining industry culture need not be consigned to the perspective from which that examination is conducted, be it from a functionalist perspective, an interpretivist perspective, or from employing a *combination of one or more perspectives* -- e.g. via "paradigm interplay" (Schultz & Hatch, 1996). Returning to Schultz & Hatch (1996), it is hereby reaffirmed that a multi-paradigm study permits information gleaned from one perspective to inform and enrich that gleaned from another, without ultimately violating the tenets of either perspective.

Focus of the Study and Research Questions

The student travel industry provides an excellent lens through which to observe the phenomenon of industry culture. Virtually contained within a 100-mile radius of Boston, Massachusetts, the industry is anchored by three large corporations and is rounded out by a smattering several smaller entities. These organizations annually provide educational travel experiences (tours) for nearly 200,000 students and teachers, hailing from approximately 25,000 (mostly secondary) schools, and accounting for some $325 million in annual revenues (estimates are gleaned and averaged from various interview sources). It is a relatively young industry, having been founded in the early 1960s, and it is characterized by an entrepreneurial framework and spirit, which among other things, have (1) spawned a "genetic" growth pattern -- i.e. a splitting of older companies' executives to form newer companies -- and (2) sustained the entry of several "non-genetic" competitors to the field as well. Many of the industry's top executives not only remember first-hand but also participated in the founding and early formative years of student travel.

Moreover, this author has *access* to industry executives, having come up through the ranks from 1975 to1990 to a position in senior management at what was then the one of the industry's oldest institutions. It is self-evident that without access to the industry's major players and the companies with whom they are associated, a study of this nature would not be possible. Executives in this very competitive industry normally would not disclose the kind of information needed to conduct a fruitful industry-wide study; however, in this case, most were eager to cooperate. In sum, this industry may be studied without undue geographical, historical, logistical or political barriers.

Thus, the goals of this study are (1) to describe cultural assumptions held in common by companies in the student travel industry, and (2) to explain how these assumptions may have evolved across their distinct time and space continuum by examining basic communicative processes (i.e. "performances") wherein industry culture is made manifest. Corresponding research questions include:

1. What is the culture (e.g. what are the cultural assumptions) of the student travel industry?
2. What is/are the source(s) of the culture and/or how has it evolved?

A logical extension of existing literature, this study provides a unique opportunity for uncovering the cultural assumptions of an entrepreneurial industry, in part attributable to the fact that its membership includes both "genetically related" and "non-genetically related" entities. As well, this study provides a vehicle for describing communication processes that may have fostered the creation and/or evolution of this industry's cultural assumptions. Taken together, these results not only extend theoretical knowledge in organizational culture *and* in organizational communication, but may also lead to practical applications of that knowledge.

CHAPTER TWO
METHOD

Employing qualitative methods to study culture and communication in organizations "has produced a growing body of literature and . . . has proven to be one of the most fertile areas of research in [the] field" of organizational communication (Krepps, Herndon, & Arneson, 1993, 1). As Krippendorf (1970) notes, "communication research requires data that are rich enough to contain explicit evidence about *processes of communication"* (241, author's emphasis retained). To this end, the descriptive nature of qualitative data (1) "enables researchers to isolate critical elements" of organizational processes; (2) "reveals the variety of perspectives . . . regarding organizational process; and (3) "enables the researcher to become intimately acquainted with the details of the organization" (Arneson, 1993, 160). Therefore, this study employs a qualitative approach, in order to "go beyond the outward manifestations" of the organization and to offer "more in-depth information than can generally be gathered with [quantitative] methods" (Kreps, Herndon, and Arneson, 1993, 10).

To paraphrase Phillips (1990), empirical research on "emergent cultural groupings" (59) is relatively new, and despite several investigations of industry culture since 1990, this area of inquiry remains well within its early evolutionary stages. Thus, investigations of this type are " fated to be [somewhat] exploratory . . . in methodology" (59). Even so, existing literature suggests a number of guidelines.

To uncover cultural assumptions within organizations, Schein (1985) proposes "a series of encounters and joint explorations between the investigator and various motivated informants," noting that "only a *joint* (author's emphasis) effort between an insider and an outsider can decipher" the essence of culture (112). Schein (1985) explains that this "joint effort" is required, (1) "to avoid the subjectivity bias" -- that is, to "correct" misperceptions and miscategorizations that may be arrived at by the "outside" researcher (113); and (2) "to overcome internal invisibility" -- meaning that it "requires work on the part of the outsider and the insider" to bring to the surface those assumptions and meanings that have "dropped out of [the insider's] awareness" but that become "perfectly visible" once consciously realized (113). To accomplish these goals -- again, when conducting cultural studies *within organizations* -- Schein (1985) suggests that the appropriate methods include "formal interviews, analysis of artifacts, and group interviews" and most especially the "iterative 'clinical' interview" (112-113).

However, as Phillips (1990) points out, when investigating culture across an entire *industry,*

> *balance must be achieved between 1) the requirements of inductive methodology and 2) the logistical constraints of doing research of this scope, such as the need for a [larger] sample size, the desire to complete the study within a realistic time frame, and the importance of minimizing the intrusion upon the participating organizations (62).*

Thus, for her study, Phillips (1990) relied upon Spradley (1979) in designing a "modified form of the ethnographic interview procedure" (62) that contained three types of interview questions: "verbal grand tour . . . work history . . . and triggering . . . often followed up by native language questions" (63). These questions were then used "with a stratified sample of informants from selected companies within specified industries" (62-63). Moreover,

> *to increase the sample size, reduce the time frame, and minimize intrusion upon the participating companies, each informant was interviewed only once, rather than . . . repeated[ly]* (64).

Phillips' (1990) research goals were to discover evidence of industry cultures and to "produce a usable guide" for interviewing in the *industry* setting as opposed to within single organizations. Here, it should be noted that the instant study aims to replicate Phillips' (1990) study to the extent that cultural assumptions in only one industry, student travel, are examined.

A second goal of the instant study is to extend current literature by attempting to describe communicative processes (cultural performances) that had a hand in creating the industry's culture. To that end, Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo (1982) suggest that

> *In order to build a plausible interpretation of how organizational members communicatively make sense of their interlocked actions, it is necessary to have recourse to instances of members communicatively making sense, and recourse to the body of knowledge that members draw upon in order to make sense. What is required then are details -- detailed observations of organizational members "in action" and [or] detailed interviews (formal or informal) of organizational members accounting for their actions . . . [in other words], the kind of data . . . required for telling a good organizational story* (127).

Thus, in constructing a basic research design, this study drew heavily from Schein (1985), Phillips (1990, 1994), and Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-

Trujillo (1982, 1983); however, the instant study's particular foci required slight modifications of these protocols, resulting in a plan that is unique to this investigation.

Basic Design

This investigation was conducted as an historical, multi-site case study that relied upon in-depth interviewing as the primary method of data collection, supplemented by a thematic content analysis of selected corporate documents.

Yin (1994) defines the case study as

> *an empirical inquiry that . . . investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context [wherein] . . . the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident* (13).

Further, Yin suggests that case studies are appropriate when "you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions -- believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study" (13); when "there will be many more variables of interest than data points" (13) and when findings "rely upon multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion" (13).

At each case site, in-depth interviewing was the primary method of data collection for several reasons, beyond those noted above: (1) interviewing can "take us into the lifeworld of the individual, to see the content and pattern of daily experience" (McCracken 1988, 9); (2) interviewing is a powerful tool for surfacing "participant meanings for events and behaviors [which] . . . generates a typology of cultural classification schemes [and] highlights the nuances of culture" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, 83) and (3) interviewing is able to "accomplish ethnographic objectives in the face of the considerable difficulties and constraints that pertain" (McCracken, 1988, 66) to multi-site studies of competitive commercial entities.

Thus, a multi-site case study relying upon interviewing and document analysis as the means of data collection was deemed especially appropriate to the goals of this investigation.

Definition and Selection of Case Sites

Before data collection began, it was necessary to define the perimeters of the *student travel industry* -- at least for initial logistical purposes. Keeping in mind that one of the primary data points in the study was to ascertain the *informants'* definition of what the industry encompassed, it was nonetheless decided that the following definition would guide the early stages of research: *any entity who (1) identifies its primary purpose as engaging in "student" or "educational" travel, and including any organization that might also combine either of these terms with "cultural travel"* and *(2) whose primary market is identified as secondary school educators and/or their students.* This industry may be distinguished from the travel industry at-large, which is normally identified with travel agents and their functions, by these two qualities, as well as by this industry's "possession [and use] of every academic artifact imaginable, rom road commentary to walking tours" (Y, 1-6). Thus, the student travel industry is highly specialized, and is focused upon delivering educational experiences instead of "mere" travel.

Next, it was realized that in order to surface cultural assumptions across the time and space continuum of an entire industry, and more to the point, to uncover how these assumptions might have been created and/or might be disseminated and/or maintained, one must ascertain which companies fit the definition of *student travel industry* -- which companies, in other words, should be included in the industry grouping. Again, as an erstwhile elite member of the industry, the author initially relied upon her own knowledge. Admittedly, however, that knowledge was potentially dated or otherwise inaccurate, since her most recent formal association with the industry was in 1990. Thus, it was necessary to validate and/or update this knowledge to determine the current composition of the industry grouping.

To begin this process, web sites were located for three entities with which the researcher thought she was most familiar. While sites were located for all three, one of these contained links to "competitor" organizations, and these organizations were included in the roster of industry members, resulting in the following inventory (in alphabetical order): American Council for International Studies (ACIS); Cultural Heritage Alliance (CHA); EF Educational Tours (EF); Global Vistas; National Educational Travel Council (NETC); *passports;* and Voyageur.

Next, the researcher consulted the Federation of International Youth Travel Organizations (FIYTO) and the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE); it was discovered, however, that these sources were unreliable for two reasons: (1) the listings they provided were neither confined to entities whose primary mission was "educational" or "student" travel, and (2) at least three entities already known to the researcher were not included in either list. Returning to Phillips' (1990) typology of cultural assumptions for industries revealed that one set of assumptions was articulated in terms of group membership: i.e. who belongs? Thus, the researcher conducted an informal telephone survey of one elite (as identified by the entity's marketing literature), in five of the seven organizations listed above (n = 5), wherein an informant was asked to list who he/she considered to comprise a listing of "student travel organizations" or "competitors." While at this point such a list was acknowledged to be heuristic instead of definitive, it nonetheless served (1) to confirm the "membership list" previously identified; (2) to suggest that a perception of "levels" existed among industry elites, based primarily upon the perceived size of each entity, with "size" most likely determined by the number of travelers enrolled by each entity in any given academic year; and (3) to identify a "level" of smaller (or in the words of one informant, "boutique-type") entities whose existence as a group was somewhat transient and therefore difficult to determine at any given point in time, but many of whom were identified as "competitors" and therefore as "members" of the larger industry.

The "boutique" category initially posed somewhat of a dilemma, especially with regard to relative permanence, as well as to concerns about maintaining the "balance" between practical and theoretical issues previously discussed (Phillips, 1990, 62). Thus, it was decided to include a representative boutique entity in the membership list. Thus, previous to conducting on-site research, the list of industry membership included eight entities: American Council for International Studies (ACIS); Cultural Heritage Alliance (CHA); EF Educational Tours (EF); Global Vistas; National Educational Travel Commission (NETC); *passports;* Travel by Design; Voyageur.

Selection of Informants

Next, it was necessary to identify informants whose knowledge of and familiarity with their respective entities not only was sufficient for discovering cultural assumptions, but also whose *longevity* in the industry gave them sufficient knowledge with regard to the evolution of the industry's culture. From her previous association with the industry, as well as from documents found on contemporaneous web sites maintained by member entities, the researcher knew that the industry had its beginnings in the early 1960s, and moreover, that several potential informants had been associated with the industry at least since 1965. Thus, "longevity" was initially defined by the researcher (for logistical purposes) as anyone who had worked in the industry for 20 years or longer. This is not to say that potential informants were rejected if they did not meet longevity standard, but it does note the importance of longevity to surfacing how the culture might have evolved.

Not surprisingly, it appeared that the most qualified informants were to be found among the industry's "elite" members. Marshall & Rossman define elite individuals as those who are "considered to be the influential, the prominent, and the well-informed people in an organization or community" (1995, 83). A listing of the industry's elite members was initially determined (a) intuitively, based upon the researcher's knowledge as an erstwhile member of the industry, which was in turn confirmed and refined by (b) reference to listings of senior management that appeared in the comparable corporate literature of each entity. Relying upon these methods, an initial listing of 26 potential informants was compiled. However, this listing was modified as the project progressed; in some cases, other informants were identified on-site, either by researcher observation, self-selection, or identification by a previously selected informant; in other cases, the initially selected informant either was not available or did not have sufficient longevity in the industry.

Although it was acknowledged that non-elites might provide pertinent data, elites were initially chosen for the reasons noted above, plus several additional reasons, one being pragmatic. Through the participation of elites, access to the organization was gained and credibility was attached to the project. More to the point, all elites selected as potential informants (1) possessed "expertise in areas relevant to the research . . . provide[d] an overall view of [their] organization [and] its relationship to other organizations" (2) because they understood their "organization's policies [and] past histories" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, 85) -- the latter being particularly germane to the goals of the study -- and (3) because a number of "genetic" relationships existed between elites from different companies, by virtue of their having worked with each other previously within the industry. Finally, while the elites were themselves willing to be interviewed -- in part attributable to the fact that the researcher was formerly counted among their number -- they were in many cases less willing to allow subordinates to take time away from their immediate duties for interviewing. Hence, even if non-elites had been the preferred informants, access to them would no doubt have been problematic, at least for this study.

Once potential informants had been identified, a decision was made, in the interests of time and logistics (see Phillips 1990) to prioritize the interviewing of elites who (1) had been employed by more than one of the member entities, *or* (2) who currently served as the chief executives of their respective entities, regardless of their longevity in the industry -- although here it should be noted that *all* CEOs had worked in the industry for a significant amount of time, ranging from 10 years to more than 30 years. Beyond these primary guidelines for prioritizing interviews, several secondary guidelines were also established, as follows:

1. Each "member" entity identified on the initial list would be included in the data-gathering process and would be represented by at least one informant other than the CEO, where possible.
2. *All individuals* who were determined to possess "longevity" in the industry would be considered potential informants, regardless of their former or current positions of employment or status.
3. As data collection proceeded, the interview roster would remain flexible to allow the inclusion of non-elites or other informants who might be able to contribute important data to the study.

Thus, the first "round" of informants included the CEOs of each company listed (n= 7). Later "rounds" included as many additional elites in each company as it was feasible to interview, taking into consideration time and logistical constraints. (For further explication of these constraints, see *Limitations of Study,* below.)

While some might argue that a valid picture of culture is not possible to obtain by limiting informants to industry elites, two factors in this particular study tend to mitigate that concern: (1) The elites in this industry, perhaps unlike their counterparts in many Fortune 500 companies, remain very close to operations, ranging from hands-on management to occasionally performing relatively menial tasks, in the larger organizations, to virtually performing all operational functions, in the smaller organizations; (2) Elites in this industry are more likely than are non-elites to possess information germane to the study's focus, due to relative transience in non-elite positions.

The participation of each company was solicited by means of a personal letter from the researcher to the entity's CEO. The letter not only contained pertinent information about the study and its potential uses, but also included a statement of ethics and confidentiality, as well as a release/permission form for the potential informant to sign and return to the researcher, indicating willingness to participate in the project (see Appendix A). The initial letter was followed up by personal phone calls and/or e-mail, resulting in seven of eight CEO's agreeing to participate in the study. During these phone and/or e-mail exchanges, most of the CEOs identified named other potential informants (both within and without their own organizations) who could aid the study. Overall, the CEOs' reactions could be better described as *enthusiastic* -- a very encouraging development!

Pilot Study

A pilot study consisting of one face-to-face exploratory interview was conducted with four elites representing two member entities. One purpose for conducting the pilot was to ascertain whether the interview guide was sufficient for eliciting the kind of data needed to conduct the study; another was to determine whether the proposed research would be feasible and/or fruitful; a third was to predict the timing required for future interviews. Pilot interviews were conducted with the following informants:[1]

- **Dr. Gilbert Scott Markle**, *Founder of the **American Leadership Study Groups** (ALSG). One of the first companies to inhabit the industry, ALSG was established in 1965. Markle served as ALSG's Executive Director (CEO) from its inception until 1991, when ALSG was purchased by an insurance conglomerate. Following a brief hiatus, Markle returned to the circle of industry elite by founding a sister entity, **passports**, where he currently serves as president and CEO.*

- **Michael I. Eizenberg,** *Founder of the **American Council for International Studies (ACIS).** At the time of the interview, Mr. Eizenberg was ACIS president and CEO, a post he held from 1978-1997. Mr. Eizenberg began his career as an overseas "courier" (tour guide) for ALSG (above), for which he later served as an associate director before breaking away to form ACIS.*

- **Peter Jones.** *At the time of the pilot interview, Mr. Jones was Vice President in charge of operations for ACIS, where he had served in an executive capacity since the company's founding in 1978. In 1997, Jones was named president and CEO of ACIS. Jones also began his career as an ALSG courier, and served as an assistant director at ALSG for several years before joining Eizenberg to form ACIS.*

- **Dr. Theodore Voelkel** *currently serves as academic director for ACIS. More significant for this study, Voelkel co-founded ALSG with Markle in 1965, where he was employed variously as associate director of marketing and public relations and/or as associate executive director until ALSG's demise in 1993.*

It was recognized that these four informants were initially "enculturated" into the industry by the same entity (ALSG), and were thus more likely to share cultural assumptions than might other informants who may have been enculturated elsewhere. However, these informants were chosen for the pilot study for three primary reasons: (1) taken together, they represented more

[1] All informants gave written permission to be identified as participants in the pilot study.

longevity in the industry than any other combination of informants; (2) as a result, they possessed considerable depth and breadth of knowledge about the industry as a whole; and (3) all were accessible and willing to be interviewed not only for the pilot study, but also for the primary study.

To assure the informants' comfort level while they became acquainted with the nature of the project and to accommodate two informants' requests, pilot interviews were not taped. Instead, notes were taken as scrupulously and in as much detail as possible. Immediately following, these notes were transcribed via word processor into a format as closely resembling the actual interview as was possible for the researcher to reconstruct. Here, it should be noted that an adequate comfort level was apparently achieved; all informants indicated that taping subsequent interviews would be permissible.

Results of the pilot study indicated the following:

1. The original interview guide was determined to be too open-ended and flexible to yield a sufficient depth, breadth, and variety of data. As a result, it was here decided to adhere more closely to Phillips' original, more specific interview guide, rather than to the more loosely constructed one that was originally conceived. Appropriate modifications were made, the results of which may be seen in Appendix C.
2. It became readily apparent that the initial intention to conduct *repeated* face-to-face interviews, viz. Schein (1985), was not a reasonable expectation. Indeed, as Phillips points out, traditional qualitative protocols, when applied

to organizational research, present a "variety of problems . . . . [they are] time consuming, costly to and intrusive upon the organization, and costly to the researcher both financially and in terms of the normal progression of an academic career . . . . In a study of industry culture rather than a single organization's culture, these problems are multiplied by the number of participating companies" (1990, 61-62). In short, it was simply not possible to secure from elites the amount of time necessary to conduct repeated interviews, at least not within a reasonable period of time. Hence, it was determined that (1) each elite who participated in the pilot study would, if at all possible, be interviewed a second time, using the revised and better-focused guidelines; and (2) other informants would be interviewed only once. However, given the rich data gleaned from the pilot study itself, it seemed reasonable to assume that "redundancy" (sufficient data) could be achieved in this manner.

3. When coded for thematic content, a surprising number of common concepts emerged from the relatively small body of interview data, an indication that the study was potentially feasible and fruitful. In fact, cultural data that emerged from the pilot interviews were both plentiful and striking.
4. The researcher's familiarity with the industry -- albeit very dated familiarity -- was perceived to be somewhat a negative factor in the first two interviews conducted. Specifically, the researcher failed, in these instances, to follow up several of the "taken-for-granteds" (e.g. assumptions) that came up in the

interview, a situation that likely is attributable to assumptions (in common with informants or not) that the researcher herself made, as an erstwhile member of the culture. Once noted, this potential pitfall remained uppermost in the researcher's awareness, and every attempt was made to prevent its unduly biasing the research. In the end, given the continuity of results (discussed below), it was felt that this potential problem did not materialize, at least, not to the extent that it appeared to bias the study's findings.

5. Although most interviews were scheduled to last approximately one hour, most were extended by half an hour or more, which intuitively seemed to be a result of the participants' growing interest in the project, as the interview progressed. This tendency to "go overtime" was noted and future interview schedules for data collection were arranged accordingly.

Data Collection

Once the pilot study was completed, cooperation of additional informants was solicited by letter and personal contact and secured by the informant's written permission (Appendix A). Then, dates and times for face-to-face interviews were scheduled; in conjunction with the interviews, on-site visits were scheduled as well. In general, research was completed at one site before moving on to the next. Due to circumstances beyond the control of the researcher, three sites were not visited; therefore, data was gathered from these organizations via telephone interviewing. Only one organization of the eight members identified did not participate in the interviews.

Interview Protocol

Each informant was interviewed "in depth" -- defined by Kahn & Cannell (1957) as "a conversation with a purpose" (149). For purposes of qualitative research, in-depth interviewing occurs when "the researcher explores a few general topics to help uncover the participant's meaning perspective but otherwise respects how the participant frames and structures the responses" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, 80). This technique is consistent with uncovering "meaning" from a participant's point of view, a goal that is " fundamental to qualitative research -- [that] the participant's perspective . . . should unfold as the participant views it, not as the researcher views it" (80).

As Marshall & Rossman (1995) also note, in-depth interviewing enables the researcher to "get large amounts of data quickly" (80) as well as to "understand the meanings people hold for their everyday activities" (81). Indeed, McCracken (1988) declares the long interview to be "one of the most powerful methods in the qualitative armory" (9) primarily because it "gives us access to individuals without violating their privacy or testing their patience" (11) as would extended observation, thereby fostering the achievement of "crucial qualitative objectives within a manageable methodological context" (11).

Interviewing is widely regarded to be a key component of the case study (Yin, 1994; Marshall & Rossman, 1995; McCracken, 1988); indeed, Yin declares that interviews are "one of the most important sources of case study information" (84), and moreover, that "key informants are often critical to the success of a case study [because they] not only provide . . . insights . . . but also can suggest sources of corroboratory evidence -- and initiate access to such sources" (84).

Yin (1994) notes that the most common interview protocol is "open-ended" (84), although a more "focused" interview utilizing "a certain set of questions [albeit open-ended ones] derived from case study protocol" (85) may also be employed. It is this slightly more "focused" (85) yet flexible type of open-ended interview, based on the Phillips (1994) guide, that this study eventually employed. Originally, an even more open-ended guide was constructed; however, by the fourth interview of the pilot study (discussed above), it was determined that a guide more closely in line with Phillips' question set would prove more fruitful. Thus, a "fifth pilot" interview -- which also served as the first interview of the actual study -- tested and confirmed the modified interview guide. Here, it should be noted that as each interview progressed, most tended to gravitate naturally to areas that emerged as especially significant or cogent for each participant. As a result, it was not unusual for the "final" interview guide to be altered, *in medias res,* as each interview progressed. Generally, however, questions and answers/discussion centered around the topic are those indicated by the interview guide. Appendix B contains the interview guide for the pilot study; and Appendix C contains the "final" interview guide used for this study.

All interviews except two were audio taped, with the permission of the informants. Two informants preferred not to be taped, so copious notes of these informant's responses were taken by hand and transcribed on computer immediately following the interview, akin to procedures used in the pilot interviews.

In all, a total of 18 informants representing seven of the eight member companies identified participated in the study. Five of the seven participating companies were represented by a minimum of two informants; the other two were represented by the owner/CEO interview.

Each informant's identity was coded to indicate (a) personal identity, (b) number of interview (e.g. 1 of 1, 2 of 2, and the like) and (c) page of transcript. Although the key to the coding scheme shall remain unpublished and unknown to anyone but the researcher, this identification was deemed necessary for purposes of data analysis. In addition, it became necessary to abandon the anonymity rule in two cases. It became apparent that both Dr. Markle and Dr. Voelkel, because of their longevity in the industry and primary influences upon the culture, would need to be identified in the reporting of data. Thus, their permission to be identified was sought, granted, and verified in writing (Appendix D).

Once the interviewing process was completed, the primary data set comprised some 22 interviews. Although most informants were interviewed only once, for reasons discussed above, some were interviewed twice, including the pilot study participants, who were interviewed once during the pilot and once during the main investigation. Two pilot informants also corresponded regularly with the researcher via e-mail throughout the data-gathering stage of the study (in addition to having been interviewed), offering supplementary information that was pertinent to the study. Taken together, this correspondence was perceived to be tantamount to separate interviews because it was topically congruent with issues raised in/by the interview process. Thus, data gathered in this manner was transcribed and coded as additional interviews of these participants.

On the average, interviews lasted slightly over an hour. Taped interviews produced an average of 29 pages of transcribed text, whereas noted interviews produced only about half that, on the average. However, one informant was a particularly rich source of data whose two interviews resulted in some 108 pages of transcribed text.

Although time and financial constraints experienced by both the researcher and the participating entities precluded a more populous sample, the richness of the interview data was such that "redundancy" was clearly achieved, as will be discussed below. The "redundancy test" simply means that interviewing (data-gathering) should continue until such time that "no new information appears to be forthcoming . . . [which signals that] the researcher has finished the collection task" (Taylor, 1994, 269). As Taylor notes, "how long this takes depends . . . on the thoroughness of the research, the scope of the research study, and the shared patterns among the participants" (269). In this study, although "redundancy" was achieved fairly early in the process, the necessity of collecting data from as many member entities as possible altered the traditional conception of the redundancy test. That is to say, redundancy was perceived as attached to the entire set of informants, not to just the informants within each entity. Nevertheless, the important point to note is that although interview data may not have been totally *comprehensive* (no data ever are), sufficient redundancy was nonetheless achieved, and the data gathered was therefore sufficient to support the study's findings, and beyond.

Documents

Selected available documents were used as a secondary source of data, primarily to aid in corroboration and triangulation of interview data. Although several different types of documents (including memos, letters, position papers, historical data, financial records, and miscellaneous documents of historical interest) were available from two of the organizations, the only type of documentation available to the researcher in equal measure, representing all entities in the study, were standard marketing tools, including "early bird flyers," annual catalogues, teacher handbooks, and a variety of other related marketing pieces, which the researcher categorized as "miscellaneous promotionals." Of these, individual company catalogues proved the most helpful in corroborating interview data, as well as in providing additional insights and information.

Documents were secured in one of two ways. First, the researcher requested from each entity a standard information packet, one normally sent to potential customers/clients. All but one entity responded with packets that contained, *de minimus,* a company "catalogue" and some version of a "teacher handbook." In addition, if a company visit occurred, the researcher requested to see "any documents that might enhance the study" and suggested a list of possible inclusions. Responses to this request were mixed. Although the researcher asked to see the same set of documents in each case, some companies were more forthcoming than others, especially with historical documents and/or documents other than those published for public use.

Two notable exceptions to the tendency towards "closed files" proved to be a virtual treasure trove of historical documentation, however. For example, one informant provided the researcher with access to a near-complete set of industry catalogues dating as far back as 1971. Another informant with considerable longevity in the industry opened personal archives to the researcher. Taken together, these serendipitously acquired data enabled the researcher to "open a window to the past" (as it were) that might otherwise have remained closed.

Finally, the definition of "documentation" was extended to include member entities' web sites, which all but one of the companies maintained. Taken together, these sites provided a wealth of information not only about the industry itself, but about its perceived environment.

Yin notes that the purpose of document analysis is primarily "to corroborate and augment evidence" (Yin, 1995, 81) from the interviews -- indeed, that is the "most important use" of documents, which themselves "play an explicit role in any data collection in doing case studies" (81). Marshall & Rossman (1995) commend the review of documents as "an unobtrusive method [for gathering data] . . . one rich in portraying the values and beliefs of participants in the setting" (85). Documents analyzed for this study proved useful in both these areas. Transcripts and documents together comprised some 743 pages of text.

Methods of Analysis

All data (e.g. text), regardless of source, was analyzed, first by using a thematic coding, then by conducting an interpretive analysis of themes that emerged. "Although there are few descriptions of this process in the literature . . . [it generally] involves noting regularities in the [unit of analysis] chosen for study" (Marshall & Rossman, 1994, 114).

Interviews

First, the researcher transcribed and numbered all lines of interview text, using Microsoft Word, in order to facilitate the coding process.

The actual coding process was somewhat complicated, and perhaps may be most effectively visualized as a "2X2" procedure whereby interviews and then documents were each analyzed in two contexts: (1) Phillips' cultural assumption categories and (2) Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo's list of cultural performance types.

As suggested by and extrapolated from Mohan (1993, 171) and Strauss & Corbin (1990, 73), each interview was read holistically, to "grasp the dominant thematic content" (171). These holistic themes were recorded on notecards and set aside for possible use as categorical labels later in the process. Next, each interview was coded for "categories, relationships, and assumptions that inform the respondent's view of the world in general and the topic in particular" (McCracken, 1988, 42) -- a procedure that began with "open coding" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 61) of the data. "Open coding" is a process wherein "data are broken down into discrete parts, closely examined, compared for similarities and differences, and questions are asked about the phenomena as reflected in the data" (62). Open coding begins when phenomena are identified and labeled, which may result in "dozens, even hundreds of conceptual labels" (65). In this study, the initial unit of analysis was set as each disparate "idea" or "event" -- which usually required a line-by-line dissection of text. This initial coding step surfaced approximately 178 conceptually-labeled phenomena.

Following this step, the concepts were grouped into logical categories "that seem[ed] to pertain to the same phenomena" (65). In keeping with the study's first research question, categories were based generally on Phillips' (1990) categories of cultural assumptions in industries, and more specifically, on the subcategories previously found to exist within the assumptions -- in short, conceptual labels were grouped according to appropriate Phillips' subcategories. As this process continued, all data that did not seem to "fit" within this schemata (e.g. data that might eventually suggest modifications of the Phillips' categories) were highlighted and recorded in separate, additional, and descriptively labeled categories or subcategories. Moreover, and as suggested by Phillips (1990), "to assure that themes not directly categorizable within the typology were not overlooked . . . all issues emphasized during the course of each informant interview were recorded separately" (119). In other words, in addition to categorization, separate notations were made of the issues/codes deemed to be most salient within each interview. This was done primarily to mitigate the effects of any researcher or design bias.

Thus, even though some may argue that in using Phillips' categories and subcategories, the researcher effectively imposed her own reality on the data, the important points to note are these: (1) The study's attempt to partially replicate Phillips' study required at least an initial employment of her typology; however, (2) the special care taken to note and code any relevant data that fell outside the perimeters of the Phillips typology should tend to mitigate researcher or design bias.

Once the text was coded, categorized, and examined in light of the first research goal, interview transcripts were completely re-coded in the context of the second goal. This time, however, since specific communicative processes were sought, these processes were identified and classified (coded) as they occurred in the transcripts, relying upon the "heuristic listing" of performance categories and subcategories suggested by Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1983). For example, when a "metaphor" was discovered, its content was written down and coded under the category labeled *Performances of Passion;* then, it was further categorized in terms of its performance "type" (e.g. *metaphor, story, vocabulary, jargon, and construct*). Early in this process, it became apparent that, regardless of their content or theme, all performances relevant to this study were in fact *Performances of Passion* (e.g. storytelling and repartee) in that they were *enacted through the use of language.* Moreover, it became obvious that in order to arrive at a first-hand understanding of the performances of *Sociality, Politics,* and in most cases, *Enculturation,* one would need to become a participant-observer within each of the entity's various industries, and for a significant period of time, at that. This was not possible, given the limitations imposed by time, expense, and relative brevity of access. Likewise, although *Performances of Ritual* were discussed by each informant, data gathered within the interview format precluded the actual *observation* of that performance, relying instead upon the verbal *description* of that behavior. Thus, it was determined that *Performances of Passion* -- stories and repartee, including metaphor, jargon, vocabulary, and relevant constructs -- would alone comprise this study's analysis. Because it reveals informants' unique "way[s] of talking about" what they do (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983, 128), an analysis of the language-reliant performances in this category was adjudged to be sufficient for meeting the instant study's goals. In short, and to paraphrase Hall (1959), culture is manifested in informants' use of language, and their use of language *is* the culture -- at least, in the scope of this study's data.

After these "performances" were noted and categorized, each performance category (e.g. each metaphor, each use of specialized language, each story, and the like) was re-coded for thematic content, using the open coding process described above. During this stage of coding, it became apparent that the Phillips' (1990) typology of cultural assumptions might be overlapped with Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo's various *Performances of Passion.* Once completed, this grid presented a very interesting and arguably effective means of framing the discussion of how cultural assumptions are manifested in communicative performances. Thus, it was decided to proceed with cross-referencing, in hopes of illuminating more fully the thematic nature of the performances themselves, and thereby of describing more precisely the role that communicative processes play in the "spinning" of cultural assumptions. Figure 2-1 shows how the grid for cross-referencing was initially conceptualized and constructed.

Figure 2-1: Performance Categories Cross-Referenced with Assumptions

	STORIES	METAPHORS	JARGON	CONSTRUCTS
Environment				
Origins of Truth				
Nature of Time				
Nature of Space				
Human Nature				
Nature of Work Relationships				
Purpose of work				

Documents

Documents were photocopied and their lines were numbered by hand, line-by-line and page-by-page. Thereafter, document analysis was conducted along the same lines as analysis of interview transcripts; that is, each document was subjected to the open-coding, categorizing, and cross-referencing processes previously described. However, as explained above, because of marked dissimilarities of documents accessed across organizations, comparative text was limited primarily to the standard marketing materials published for public consumption by each entity (including those found on company websites). As a result, document analysis served the somewhat constrained -- albeit important -- purposes of corroborating and augmenting (Yin, 1995) data generated in the interviews.

Finally, historical documents gleaned from the two "serendipitous" archival searches were coded, using the open coding and categorization processes described above; however, this data set was kept separate from the "main" set of contemporary documents, so as to mitigate any historical bias that might have contaminated more current data.

Validity

Triangulation -- "the act of bringing more than one source of data to bear on a single point" -- (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, 144) has gained wide acceptance as a strategy to enhance the general validity of the qualitative study.

In the instant study, triangulation occurs in two ways. First of all, interviews of the informants triangulate each other. As well, document types common to each "entity participant" were analyzed, primarily to triangulate interview data. As Marshall & Rossman (1995) point out, "a study in which multiple cases, multiple informants, or more than one data-gathering method are used can greatly strengthen the study's usefulness for other settings" (144). Moreover, as Taylor (1995) notes, "good qualitative researchers always worry about . . . whether a pattern has been discovered or if one has been imposed" (276). To ensure discovery, as opposed to imposition, Taylor goes on to suggest that participants be allowed to "check" the researcher's interpretations (276). To that end, a brief summary of the cultural assumptions surfaced by the data was prepared and given to each participant (Appendix F). Participants were asked to comment on the summary as they saw fit, especially with regard to their general feelings about its accuracy and its applicability to their own company and/or situation. Feedback from these summaries indicated that although there was not complete agreement with the researcher's findings, the majority of responses did, in fact, confirm that common assumptions exist across this industry, and that the researcher's articulation of those assumptions is generally perceived to be accurate.

Findings will be presented in Chapter 3 and discussed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER THREE
THE PERFORMANCE OF CULTURAL ASSUMPTIONS IN THE STUDENT TRAVEL INDUSTRY

By cross-referencing Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo's (1983) "heuristic list" of cultural performance types -- specifically, storytelling and repartee, e.g., *Performances of Passion* -- with Phillips' (1990) typology of cultural assumptions (see Figure 2-1), this chapter (1) describes assumptions that are shared by members of the student travel industry; (2) notes the apparent source(s) of these assumptions, and (3) reveals how this industry's culture may have evolved through its unique continuum of time and space. In addition, discrepancies found in these data are noted and explicated.

It is perhaps helpful to recall that because "each organization has its own way of doing what it does, and its own way of talking about what it is doing" (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983, 128), analyzing this "talk" (e.g. storytelling and repartee) is one key to understanding the "meaning of work" (Eisenberg & Goodall, 1993, 131) -- a.k.a. the "webs of significance" (Geertz, 1973, 5) that are "spun" thereby. As the informants' "own ways of talking" came under scrutiny, several of Phillips' (1990) original categories and sub-categories seemed to realign themselves within and across their original categorical associations; as well, it became necessary to add an eighth category -- *The Practice of Work* -- to the Phillips' (1990) model. Thus, the discussion of categories will proceed in the following order:

Relationship between group and environment

- The practice of work (new category)
- The purpose of work
- The nature of work relationships
- The origins of truth
- The nature of innate human nature
- The nature of space
- The nature of time

Also, as common themes emerged from these revised categories, the industry's "root metaphor" was made manifest. Therefore, the report that follows will describe these assumptions by classifying them in terms of *both* the revised (Lyle) model *and* by types of performances enacted (e.g. story or repartee); moreover, manifestations of the root metaphor will be described as they appear throughout the categorical descriptions. Here, it is prudent to note that categories are not wholly discrete; instead, they frequently overlap each other:

> *The great amount of forward and backward referencing within each . . . description speaks to the fact that the linear format of the written word is an inadequate means of presenting the holistic nature -- the "gestalt -- of a group's set of cultural assumptions (Phillips, 1990, 142).*

The reader should therefore remain aware of the proverbial "big picture" as this discussion evolves and should consider that the various details and discussions thereof are meant to serve the end goal of painting an holistic portrait. Phillips predicted that future research would "flesh out [her] typology's subcategories and dimensions" (1990, 222); indeed, examining the informants' use of language in this context seems not only to have enriched this process, but also to have pointed towards "the source of extant cultural assumptions" (Phillips, 1994, 223).

To describe how this culture's web of significance has been spun (has evolved), as well as to "unearth" its cultural "spiders" -- e.g. those forces that are responsible for spinning the web -- this report will not only examine the language informants use to perform current assumptions, as recorded in 743 pages of transcribed text, but it will also juxtapose these contemporary performances against those gleaned (1) from informants' own accounts of the culture's formative years, and/or (2) from historical documents circa that same era. Five of the informants interviewed were "present at the creation" (Y, 1-1) of the culture -- and indeed, of the industry itself -- and therefore proved to be valuable sources of both contemporary and historical data.[1]

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[1] To preserve the anonymity of these five (historical) informants, citation codes will be omitted from their responses dealing with historical material. Likewise, citation codes will be omitted from *any* quotation whose identification is thought to pose even the slightest risk to its author. Otherwise, the coding scheme represents (1) identity of informant; (2) number of interview; and (3) page of transcript -- (e.g. "Y-1-1"). Here, it should be remembered that findings noted herein represent the majority of responses, unless otherwise noted. Finally, although there was no feasible way to include the plethora of data that support each observation, great care has been taken to include samples that are either the most representative of the data as a whole, the most insightful, the most eloquent, or some combination of these qualities. Thus, the author gratefully acknowledges the inestimable value of what was *not* included, and humbly begs the informants' indulgence of what *was*.

Brief History of the Student Travel Industry

To understand the industry's culture, it is necessary to have a sense of its history. Therefore, relying upon various members' web sites and their links, as well as upon interview data, contemporary documents, and data retrieved from the historical archives made available to the researcher, a brief history of the industry -- i.e. perceived facts that represent an important "strand" in the "web" of culture -- was constructed.

The American student travel industry has its roots in the Mormon tradition of sponsoring travel overseas for missionary purposes. In 1964, two Mormon businessmen, Hilton & Debry, took advantage of their connections in this regard and created "the progenitor of American student travel companies," the Foreign Language League, later to be re-named the Foreign Study League (FSL) (ALSG, 1989, 5). The FSL experiment was duplicated the following year in Cincinnati, Ohio, by three Proctor & Gamble breakaway executives who organized the American Institute for Foreign Study, AIFS. According to one source, "AIFS experienced "exponential growth" (Z, 4-3) taking students on six-week summer programs that located them in various university or quasi-university residence situations for a combination of travel and (mostly) academic/language studies. These two enterprises, FSL and AIFS, dominated the market throughout the remainder of the 1960s, until FSL was acquired by Transamerica, Inc., and later by Reader's Digest, which subsequently withdrew its interest and suspended operations of FSL in the late 1970s. During these early years, several companies came and went.

According to its founder, Dr. Gilbert Scott Markle, the company called American Leadership Study Groups (ALSG) was already in the offing by 1965, at which time he approached AIFS for "help and advice" in the endeavor. AIFS suggested that he "abandon his plans to organize a competitor company and sign on with AIFS instead" (Markle, 1995, 5). Markle declined, and his subsequent decision to forge ahead with the new company "helped solidify AIFS's competition" for the next quarter-century.

According to its *Company Profile,* the Cultural Heritage Alliance (CHA) entered the industry in 1969:

> *CHA's founder, a high school foreign language teacher, participated in an educational tour organized by one of the travel companies working with student groups at that time . . . he returned from this trip . . . and launched* ***The Italian Latin Studies Society Cultural Heritage Alliance*** *. . . [later] renamed CHA. Today, CHA is still owned and managed by the same teacher [Mr. Augustine Falcione] who founded it in 1969 (CHA, 1997, 1).*

The year 1970 proved nearly fatal for the fledgling industry, however, when an earlier entrant in the industry,

> *the World Academy folded and stranded students all over Europe. There was a media field day then, and the word "stranded" entered the industry vocabulary. The World Academy fiasco sent strong tremors throughout the industry for years to come. For a while, there were lots of regulations -- for escrow accounts and the like -- to make sure that didn't happen again, and the cloud of that event hung over all of us for a long time.*

Nonetheless, student travel "caught on" during the 1970s, culminating in 1975.

That year saw, in the words of one informant, " a watershed of Biblical proportions" when the ALSG entity

> *created the 'spring' travel market by offering inexpensive, one-week trips scheduled during Easter school vacation periods. Over 6800 students registered for [these trips with ALSG], breaking the dominance of AIFS within the high school market and ushering in a new era (ALSG, 1989).*

Three years later, in 1978, several of ALSG's core executives, led by Michael Eizenberg, bolted the parent company and formed the American Council for International Studies (ACIS). As one informant recalls:

> *We . . . recognized that the student travel industry was changing in a very fundamental way . . . teachers and their goals were changing too, at the same time, for many reasons . . . it was just the right set of elements converging all at the same time, and we had a handle on that. We thought, "Hey, this is something we can relate to, something we can do well!" So we created ACIS. It's pretty simple . . . we had the opportunity to build a new . . . organization . . . then too, we were just very, very lucky.*

This "defection" is described by yet another observer as an "event . . . that shaped the course of the industry for years to come."

Another company, now known as EF Educational Tours, entered the market in 1981. According to its current President, Olle Olsson, EF initially purchased a company called Interstudy, which formed the "nucleus for what today we call EF Educational Tours."

In the early 1980s the industry's expansion continued, notably in the form of American Educational Travel (AET) founded by Desmond Maguire, a former ACIS executive whose career in educational travel had begun at ALSG, and by

David Stitt, a former executive at ALSG and co-founder of ACIS. One informant described this event in familial terms: "ACIS itself became a 'parent' company, and ALSG became a 'grandparent.'"

The mid-eighties were said to have been "hugely successful" years for student travel, perhaps influenced by the dollar's strength and "media reports on 'Europe at bargain prices." In fact, by 1985 -- described by several informants as a particularly lucrative year -- at least one company "thought we had topped out . . . that we had captured the most [of the market] that we could capture." However, the boom was not to last.

With the American bombing of Libya in 1986, following on the heels of the 1985 Rome airport massacre, the student travel industry sustained "enormous" cancellations by students who had pre-paid for tours, raising concerns about "the industry and our [company's] future. We didn't know what would happen in 1987, what would happen to the industry as a whole" (B, 2-14). This event was described by another informant as "the biggest problem I've seen in all the years that I've been involved" (L, 1-10). Most of the cancellations came at a critical time, within 45 days of the summer tours' first departures, and were characterized by hysterical travelers (or more accurately, their parents) demanding that companies provide full refunds for canceled trips. One executive said that parents "seemed to think it was a suicide pact to let their kids travel." The industry limped into the 1987 travel year, to rebound somewhat once it became apparent that no major terrorist incidents had, in fact, marred the 1986 travel season. It was at this time that AIFS, who had "diversified, so they were able to weather the storm in that way" bought ACIS "as a growth company" that subsequently "became the 'student travel division' of AIFS -- but we [ACIS] kept our own identity, our own offices, and not much changed." Thus, AIFS ceased to be a nominal member of the industry, even though it actually owned ACIS from this time forward. EF, also diversified, was able to survive 1986, as did CHA and AET.

However, ALSG -- the company that had "engendered" several of the industry's other entities -- was not so fortunate. Dr. Gilbert Markle, founder and then-CEO of ALSG, explained:

> *Kaddafi's to blame . . . .In 1986, when the U.S. bombed Tripoli, thousands of students planning to travel that summer to Europe with ALSG canceled at the last minute, producing losses for ALSG in the millions of dollars. So, a year later, the company chose to insure its travelers . . . against any tuition losses due to terrorism cancellations, hoping to restore confidence and business volume. Only, the business didn't recover in 1987 . . . and ALSG was forced to consider the cancellation of its 1987 summer tours altogether.*

In the end, ALSG's assets were seized by its insurer and sold at auction in 1991 to an Englishman named Christopher du Mello Kenyon.

Upon leaving ALSG in 1991, Markle founded another student travel company, **passports** -- whose existence put him in the rather unique position of having been his own father, insofar as the "genetics" of the student travel industry are concerned. However, ALSG, *which had been acquired . . . by the Englishman, Christopher Kenyon . . . ceased operations unexpectedly in June of 1993, due to a 'lack of operating funds,' stranding thousands of American travelers in this country and overseas.*

Here, it should be noted that Kenyon's ALSG/Milestone (as it was called) had also subsumed AET, which it purchased from founder Desmond Maguire and its other owners in 1991. Thus, both AET and ALSG disappeared from the industry with Kenyon's demise.

Throughout this relatively turbulent era -- roughly between the years 1986 and 1995 -- other members of today's industry came into existence. *Voyageur* was founded in 1992 by Paul Colella and Joseph Cancelmo, both former employees of ALSG and later of Kenyon/Milestone. In 1993, the National Educational Travel Council (NETC) was co-founded by Desmond Maguire, a former employee of ALSG and ACIS and president of AET; and by David Stitt, who had also been an executive with all three previous corporate entities. Thus, in terms of industry genealogy, Maguire and Stitt (like Markle before them) became their own fathers; as well, executives at ACIS became "grandfathers," and Markle (albeit not ALSG) became a "great-grandfather" -- as it were. Also in 1993, *Travel by Design* was founded by Elizabeth Lalos, who had worked for both ALSG and ACIS. Finally, *Global Vistas* was founded in 1995 by James Gibson, who had been employed by both ALSG and *passports*.

From the informants' individual viewpoints, several minor details regarding this industry's evolution are in some dispute, particularly regarding circumstances surrounding the "births" and "deaths" of current or former member entities. However, the story constructed here is accurate in both its chronology and in its depiction of the details *as described by the majority of participants most intimately involved in each event.* The industry's "genealogy" is pictured in Appendix E.

The Root Metaphor: Work as Religion

In their collective tendency to describe their work in spiritual terms, informants reveal the root metaphor of the industry's culture: they talk about work as if it were a religion. In fact, one informant actually said, "We really believe in the value of [what we do] . . . to the point of it being a religion" (A, 1-10).

In what do the informants believe? One reply was succinct: "It's education, stupid!" (B, 2-2). Another was more descriptive: "[Our mission] is to continue promoting international understanding amongst the world's people, and our modest contribution to that is to offer [educational] programs to high school students and teachers . . . it's a fantastic service . . . the impact . . . we have on young people's lives, the very positive impact" (C, 1-16).

More subtle, but perhaps more powerful than outright statements, are the metaphors informants used to characterize their work. One explained that it was the company's "mission" to "go the extra mile" -- allusions that hail from the

Christian faith, in particular. Other informants talked about how their work made "wonders happen" (C, 1-10) or "miracles" occur (A, 1-12). Still others spoke in terms of being "totally committed to the magic and wonder of it all" (B, 2-17). Along the same lines, and with striking consistency, informants described how their work (as manifested in the tours themselves) serves to "open" the travelers' "eyes" (P, 1-4, et.al) or to help them "see . . . other things" or to have more "foresight" (R-1-6) or even to "help realize dreams" (B, 2-1).

Likewise, informants describe a dedication to their work in terms that would suggest an "evangelistic" zeal: "we really, really believe . . . have dedicated our lives [to our work]" (B, 1-15); "you take it seriously, you take it to heart" (M, 1-12); "You just don't ever want to do anything else" (P, 1-4). Still others use Maslovian metaphors: "This kind of work connects you to the peak experiences people have. You help make those happen, and somehow they work for you too . . . a self-actualization that works in two ways" (A, 1-17), or "I am fortunate in my life that I have been able to make my vocation and avocation one" (Y-1-22).

Although the use of religious metaphor is not universal, the preponderance of evidence is compelling: Informants' stories and repartee (including their unique jargon, vocabulary, constructs, and metaphors) are characterized by transparent religious overtones and allusions; moreover, where references to religion are not made explicit, they are nonetheless implicitly present. Thus, the industry's culture is pervaded by religious symbolism and embodied in the root metaphor.

Historically, and as will be discussed further, these themes appear to have originated within the founding and early formative years of the entity founded by Markle, the American Leadership Study Groups (ALSG). For one thing, documents analyzed from entities that existed previous to ALSG did not employ this "language of religion" that is evident in ALSG's earliest documents. Moreover, when one compares contemporary performances of the religious metaphor with comparable performances that recall ALSG's early culture, the similarities are more than merely interesting; they are remarkable.

For example, one erstwhile member of ALSG's early culture describes its "mindset": "We were all in it together, like a mission of some kind. It wasn't like a job. We were in love with the whole scene." Similarly, there are claims that ALSG's early culture

> *gave [employees] a context in which they could perform and they did. Energetically. Heroically. They drew blood. They made a difference! They were making changes in the world with this educational travel they were involved in. Their work had visible effects.*

Still another striking description of that culture is metaphorically related to the ancient Greek religion, Epicureanism:

> *You'd have to say that most of us in that company were inner directed . . . those of us there at the founding . . . [thought that] you were having fun if you were doing something exciting . . . .This sounds terribly '60s but we were "into" it; we were into it the same way that Sophocles was into playwriting . . . [that's called] eudimonia, meaning good, dimon one of*

the many words for the soul -- a good soul in the sense of a soul that's doing well, that's functioning well. It's usually rendered as "the exercise of one's facilities along lines of excellence in a life affording them scope." . . . It was happiness in the Greek sense . . . Eudimonism . . . .It was the Epicureans, Epicures himself [who believed] that the highest form of happiness was pleasure in the mind. So Epicureans [we were, and] in the best sense, [Epicureanism] was indeed what we were doing.

And finally, one informant says very simply, "We were young gods."

At least one historical explanation for this phenomenon was offered:

[ALSG's contribution to the industry] was a style, a mode of presentation. ALSG took educational values, like austerity, international understanding, academic degrees, collegiality, all the rest of it, and painted the picture with those. We exploited the facts and bent them to our will. We created them in our image, if you will. ALSG was completely responsible for creating the ***mindset*** *of educational travel.*

Another agreed:

ALSG shifted the focus away from language to culture in the broader sense, to a larger, cultural focus. It was very . . . 60s. Take a theme and learn from it. Very much part of the "discover yourself" inward-looking kind of pattern. In short, ALSG stood for the romance of travel, and more to the point, the romance of learning.

It is also interesting to look at evidence from a somewhat different perspective. One informant from the early culture declared that the "idea of this industry as having something comparable to a religious mission is like blowing up a kernel of truth into a bag of popcorn;" nonetheless, the same informant described that "kernel of truth" in the following terms: "The truth is that you're exposing young people to the world and that does have some life-changing impact that accomplishes a social good . . . if you change 100 lives, no one life, that makes a difference." Thus, it seems that even those who might reject outright the conscious notion that the industry "is" a religion nonetheless use the language of religion to describe the industry's mission and purpose, both historical and contemporary. Furthermore, this same informant also declared: "I don't think the industry's changed much over the years [from the early ALSG days]. It's the same basic product as in the beginning, the same basic mode of delivery, the same reasons for doing things. That's remarkable."

In sum, informants' repartee, particularly, reveals religion to be the root metaphor of the student travel industry; moreover, performances of this theme seem to have been engendered within the early years of the ALSG/Markle culture.

Relationship between Group and Environment

In analyzing performances within this assumption set, it became apparent that two rather different sets of data emerged. Thus, what Phillips (1990) had subsumed under one category, this study splits in two. Her original category, *Relationship between Group and Environment,* seems to relate, in this data set at least, only to elements in the external environment. Creating another category, *The Practice of Work,* seems to be the more appropriate venue for framing performances of assumptions about the nature of product itself and/or of product delivery practices. Thus, the following discussion of *Relationship between Group and Environment* will be confined to data regarding (1) membership and group boundaries; (2) competitive environment; and (3) critical elements, while work practices will be discussed afterward, in the context of a distinct category.

Membership and Group (Industry) Boundaries

First and foremost, it should be remembered that at least six of the eight member entities share "genetic ties" to each other. That is to say, the founders of these companies can trace common roots to the same "mother" company, the American Leadership Study Groups (ALSG); another way to visualize this phenomenon is that ALSG essentially split and re-split, generationally as it were, forming newer companies in the process. This complicated state of affairs is summed up rather succinctly by an informant who explains:

> *There's a second tier . . . second generation . . . that has come about and you have the . . . phenomenon of . . . employees from the previous companies, and especially from ALSG . . . starting their own companies (L, 1-10).*

Thus, six of the eight companies included in the study (and deemed to comprise the industry) are "genetically related," while two are not.

Irrespective of these genetic relationships, there is evidence of an industry hierarchy: "You've basically got two big companies in the field . . . and a lot of smaller stuff" (Y, 2-45). On this point, there was near-total agreement, as there was in identifying which companies were the "big" ones and which comprised the "smaller stuff." At least two informants, however, identified three "anchors" but admitted to being uncertain as to whether the "third" (that is, the entity not labeled "big" by the other informants) was indeed as "big" as the other two. These data suggest that a hierarchical status is perceived among members of the industry, based upon size, as determined by number of participants enrolled in travel programs (loosely referred to as "apps" or "pax"). Interestingly enough, no one knows *exactly* how many participants any other company enrolls in any given year; as a result, even though there is near-universal agreement regarding the identity of two or three "big" companies, there is no consensus regarding the exact position in the hierarchy held by other entities.

There is also evidence of a perceived qualitative difference among the member entities, usually discussed in terms of providing "quality" products/services as opposed to those of a "budget" variety. One informant describes this phenomenon in terms of a "sociological divide:"

> *There are always going to be . . . budget related companies and . . . quality related companies . . . the better educated, more affluent communities and schools are going to go with quality companies and everybody else with budgets. That's an element of the culture that has really kind of crystallized over the last 5-10 years (Y, 2-42).*

In fact, each informant interviewed not only raised the issue of quality but also claimed his/her affiliate entity to be the "quality choice" (or language to that effect). In general terms, *quality* seems to be defined as "caring" about the client, which in turn prompts a concern for excellence in the product and services offered. Perhaps the most succinct explanation of this phenomenon occurred as follows:

> *we try to go above and beyond what you can get these days in the world . . . we go the extra mile, way beyond the extra mile, and we try to provide personalized service (N, 1-2).*

One interesting phenomenon that recurs throughout the data concerns a perceived correlation between an entity's *size* and the quality of its services:

> *when you get to be [the size of the "big" companies] you lose control over the product and that's something we see happening with some of our competitors and that's kinda scary . . . because once you start spreading yourself too thin in terms of personnel, in terms of quality personnel, you lose control of the product and the people (Q, 1-17).*

Another informant explained,

> *I don't want this company to become [a big one] in volume . . . I don't ever want this company to take more than say, 10,000 [people] because you just need more and more people to do more and more things, and I think you become more of a machine that way. I don't want us to become a machine. You know how you were with your reps? You knew their dog's names. I want us to stay like that (P, 1-27).*

As might be expected, these kinds of statements were made by the "smaller" companies, as a rule; however, the "larger" companies' informants acknowledged a potential problem in this area, but they discussed it in terms of how their companies successfully managed the issue. For example:

> *[E]ven if you're big . . . you may not forget the importance of the teachers' needs, the hand-holding from individuals . . . once you [assume] that role, you have enormous pressure on you so that you constantly have to keep in touch with the traveler and how they perceive you. You can easily outgrow yourself and the teachers say, "This company doesn't understand me any longer." Every day we are preaching [the same] philosophy: listen to the students, listen to the teachers, listen to the schools (C, 1-12).*

In sum, informants consistently identified entities included in this study as "competitors" or "members" of the industry. Both quantitative and qualitative hierarchies are perceived, and the common heritage shared by many of the companies is both acknowledged and discussed consistently. Moreover, and implicitly consistent with the root metaphor, the constructs and vocabulary informants use to rank each other are framed in terms of the *service ideal*; indeed, as one "historical" informant noted, "The personal touch has always been a factor in this industry. When you're a young teacher taking kids to Europe, you want . . . to feel that someone's holding your hand, as we say." The root metaphor, however, is more explicit with regard to "symbolic membership" in the industry, as discussed below.

Symbolic Membership

Beyond its historical and/or hierarchical groupings, and consistent with the root metaphor, membership in the industry is symbolically conferred upon those companies whose mission is both "educational" and, to a degree, apostolic in nature. Specifically, only those companies whose ultimate goal is something akin to "creat[ing] a better world" are most commonly perceived to be legitimate industry members -- as opposed to their "being in it only for the money" -- a generic paraphrasing of a sentiment echoed throughout the interviews. In fact, only one informant initially cited "making money" as the core corporate mission!

Industry members perceive themselves as being in the business of providing "educational" or "student" or "cultural" tours, terms that are used interchangeably throughout both the interviews and the documents. This distinction seems to be the essence of this industry's self-concept:

> *I think that everybody who works for us or with us, whether it's our vendors or our couriers or our staff here, we all know that we're dealing*

with students and we focus on that, we internalize it, that's how we breathe (O, 1-12).

The companies that are today in this market . . . have all learned how to work with the school communities and their teachers . . . it clearly is a different market and a different product and our teachers and our students have a different concern than a traditional traveler going on a package program to Europe. First, we are dealing with younger people and their parents . . . but further when it comes to making a trip educational, it is not only to just go to a destination. You need to prepare, you need to study, you need to get interested in your destination before you actually travel. (C, 1-8).

[A]cademic credentials are touted throughout. This industry is unique in its possession of every kind of academic artifact imaginable, from road commentary to walking tours. Undoubtedly, this has had an effect on, has "colored" the industry in ways other industries have no reason to consider (Y, 1-6).

Although a few entities do not adhere strictly to the teacher-student mix, either in terms of marketing or in terms of clientele, elites in even those companies do seem to recognize the "necessity" of preserving an education/academic *aura*, at the very least. As one of them explained:

It's more of a philosophical approach . . . travel being educational as by definition. Why use the phrase [educational travel]? Because it's part of the industry. The major focus is on high school travelers, and if you don't have the educational focus -- well, that's why we call it educational (Q, 1-5).

In fact, most informants tend to admit that members of the student travel industry have much in common, as this story illustrates:

We're all providing somewhat the same thing. [Our CEO] wrote a letter to one of the teachers the other day, a teacher who always traveled with us who left us two years ago and is now contemplating coming back . . . . [He] just asked her to take a little more time to make up her mind and he told her that we won't feel badly if you do choose the other company

> *because sometimes you buy a Cadillac and the next year you buy a Lincoln and that they're not really different. I've never seen that [verbalized] before, but . . . [the industry's members] are like apples and apples. Granny Smiths and Macintoshes, or whatever . . . all apples, but with distinctive tastes (M, 1-23).*

These responses, articulated more than 30 years after the industry was founded, are especially engaging when compared to how industry pioneers portray the manner in which this educational emphasis or "slant" was originally visualized:

> *[We envisioned] teachers huddling with their groups and having philosophical discussions of everything over a drink in the Latin Quarter, that kind of thing. A very European model;" [we] took educational values, like austerity, international understanding, academic degrees, collegiality, all the rest of it, and painted the picture with those.*
>
> *We all thought that if kids could be turned on to Western culture at an early age -- say, before they finished high school -- if they could <u>experience</u> Europe rather than just see it, then who knows what might happen? They might even strike a blow for world peace. What the hell. It was the 60s.*

Thus, members perceive themselves to be engaged, metaphorically, in the "apostolic calling" of "creating a better world" through educational travel, a notion that seems to have been present at the industry's creation, and certainly was an important concept in the early ALSG culture, based on data gleaned from contemporaneous documents. The *Purpose of Work* category notes additional variations on this theme.

<u>Competitive Environment</u>

When one considers the competitive environment of an entire *industry* as opposed to that of a single entity, a holistic approach is more conducive to addressing the different issues and perspectives that arise as a result. This study's informants perceive the industry's competitive environment as a continuum that may be described as ranging between the extremes of *hostility* and *collegiality.* Generally, and most consistently, informants describe the environment in terms of being "competitive" but "collegial":

> *I would say there is a healthy competitiveness amongst the companies. There's generally no blatant backstabbing . . . . On the whole . . . we tend to behave ourselves rather well and we don't engage in any kind of abhorrent behavior. Obviously, the larger companies are less bothered by the existence of the smaller companies because they see[them] as rather non-menacing or non-threatening, but I would say that even amongst the smaller companies, where you might expect there to be a bit more aggressiveness . . . that [they] tend to call each other up and compare notes and there isn't really that sense of "I'm afraid you might be working with my client." [T]he bigger companies . . . keep in touch. It's not a case of ignoring each other's existence. There's always a kind of friendly competition going on amongst them (L, 1-5).*

In articulating this idea, most informants tend to either contrast themselves to other, more hostile industries, (e.g. "We're not like Coke or Pepsi where they don't speak of one another" [M, 1-6]), or to compare themselves, generally, to a family:

> *The first word that comes to mind [to describe this industry] is* incestuous! *We all know [other people in other companies]. Basically, we all have good things to say about each other. I was just saying today . . . how wouldn't it be nice if . . . we were all working together . . . cause we all know each other. It's like an extended family . . . there's a little bit of nastiness out there, I won't name any names, but we deal with that (N, 1-4).*

> *We do have a good rapport with the other companies. If I went to an*

> *airline function and saw [someone from another company] it [would be] old home week. It's just that kind of an industry (M, 1-22).*

As well, collegiality was evidenced in other, we're-all-in-this-together type comments, particularly those surrounding the topic of the explosion of TWA's Flight 800 in July 1996:

> *When 800 went down last year, I felt for ACIS [who had a group of students on the flight], I felt awful . . . I felt so bad for them because Lord knows it could have been any of us. Any of us. It just happened to be them (P, 1-5).*

> *I was thinking about Flight 800 . . . I thought to myself, the courier [tour guide] for that group would have already left for the airport. What would it feel like to be there and see the "canceled" sign go up on the flight board and know that was your group? And then to have to meet the rest of the bus group and carry on the tour . . . . Every day, half the bus would be empty, and you'd know . . . the other half was at the bottom of Long Island Sound . . . .When you've been on those phones and know what it's like to take frantic calls from parents and from the media and to feel helpless when events happen that are out of your control . . . I guess you can't ever forget that (L, 1-16).*

Regardless of any perceived similarities and/or collegial behavior, however, a rigorous intra-industry competition does exist. One informant simply said, "We've been the recipient of a lot of nastiness, which I can't quite understand." Another shook his head and said, "I think it's extremely competitive out there . . . a lot of mudslinging" even as he acknowledged, in the same breath, "but we've got relationships . . . I think [other companies] kinda look at us and wish us well" (O, 1-8). Another described competition in terms of "bashing" other companies, but concluded that although "we started out very hostile and negative toward certain companies . . . we've mellowed with age and there are still some [companies] that practice [bashing, but] it just doesn't work" (Q, 1-12,13). Competitive language was most in evidence within several web sites, many of which regularly pointed obvious fingers at competitors. For example, one referred to a "formerly failed" competitor, while another cautioned clients against "falling for" a competitor's claims of "all-inclusive" pricing. Even so, the ties of their common "religion" seem to bind the companies together more often than not, as also evidenced by at least two additional "leitmotifs" in the language of this sub-category's data.

On the one hand, there appear several descriptions of something akin to the "family monitoring" of ethical practices. For example, several informants describe how elites in one company (CEOs in particular) may "pick up the phone and call" their counterparts in another, sometimes to discuss mutual problems or situations, but most especially to object when their company feels it has been "slandered" by the competition: "Sometimes we call them up and say, 'Hey, I heard you said this. ..and I don't like it,' and they'll usually respond, 'OK, we won't say it anymore' or 'No we didn't say it' or even 'Oops, you caught us' [likely] because we know each other" (N, 1-4).

On the other hand, some competitive practices are deemed to be so odious as to be "heretical," a phenomenon observed most often when a company "crosses the line" in terms of acceptable competitive behavior. In fact, this situation seems to have prompted the "symbolic ostracizing" of one member entity, whose sales practices are described in very negative terms by other industry members: "[They] sometimes just out-and-out lie. [They] will say that they've been in business [a certain number of] years but 'you'd better watch out for [informant's company] because they haven't been in business that long,' that type of thing . . . .We're not allowed to slam back, but sometimes I wonder about the wisdom of that policy" (P 1-17); "[Company Golf] is "quite ruthless . . . no real belief in the, you know, they lack that care, there's no belief in the education . . . they're quite aggressive on the telephones" (B, 1-9); "They lie, whereas our [telemarketers] are not allowed to lie [or] slam other companies" (S, 1-17).

Finally, the industry is widely regarded by its members as "mature" but dynamic, in the sense that there seems to be "room for everyone" (Z, 1-6): "We all probably realize that there are plenty of clients out there for each of us to make a very successful means of living" (L, 1-12).

In sum, the data suggest that a nearly universally acknowledged set of entities are perceived to "belong" to the industry, and that these "members" are bound together by the similarity of their "beliefs" even as they compete for clients -- a theme explicated more fully in the *Work Relationships* category.

Critical Elements

Overwhelmingly, a discussion of "critical elements" in this industry boils down to the concept of *control*. In every interview, without exception, the issue of "control" was a dominant theme and was manifested either in terms of *internal* control (e.g. the ability to govern practices and procedures in the workplace) or of *external* control (direction and/or regulation of product delivery and related issues). While religious motifs are more subtle here, they nonetheless exist. For example, a major theme of the performances regarding internal control may be compared to the desire for "religious freedom" -- or in this context, being *empowered* to practice the "faith" (educational travel) as one sees fit. One informant, in fact, admitted to being "a control freak. I like it when I can control everything!" (N, 1-12).

The desire for internal control most often emerged from descriptions of how/why new companies have been formed.

> *When this opportunity came up, to be a part of it on the ground floor as you build it up, not to join an existing company where things are in place already but to be able to bring it from the ground floor up . . . I had to have that opportunity . . . to do it not the way you were always taught to do it but the way you always wanted to try it.*

> *We had the opportunity to build a new and more efficient organization . . . when we left [Company Charlie] to form [Company Delta], those of us who made that move had begun to be burdened by the old infrastructure at [Company Charlie] -- it was getting in our way and getting in the way of things we knew needed to happen, that we knew we needed to do. We basically said, this is not helping us. This is not facilitating us being . . . decision-makers in educational travel. So we broke away and invested our lives in what* ***we*** *believed.*

The desire for control is also manifested on an individual level:

> *[In this company] we have a lot more flexibility and ownership of the product . . . than there was at [Company Charlie] and . . . there's more personal control over . . . decisions here than I've seen anywhere else in the industry. That makes me feel like I own the product and it makes me feel good about what I'm doing because I have control over it, there's*

more control over it here" (Q, 1-11).

> *What [my company] means to me is, it gives me the chance . . . to do it the way I wanna do it. To get the satisfaction when it's successful. Nobody tells me what to do. So I'm out there on a limb. When I fall, I fall, it's my own fault . . . and when I succeed, I succeed, I get the chance for professional satisfaction (P, 1-25).*

Inherent in these comments is a desire for control of the product:

> *I want my [suppliers] here on the spot. I want them going down and saying hello to my groups, if anything's wrong I want them right there (P, 1-12).*

> *[In the beginning] I chose to be a tour director . . . to make the trip great. I knew if I was physically there being tour director, at least I could oversee [what was going on] (R, 1-5).*

> *We always buy directly from the supplier. We do not rely upon other tour operators. We just schedule this on our own and that way we can keep our costs relatively low and the cost savings we pass on to teachers and students (citation omitted to preserve anonymity).*

Just as the language of "being in control" is that of empowerment, language used to describe loss of control is the language of *enslavement,* as rendered in the form of impotence or loss of power. To put it another way, being out of control means losing one's freedom -- and both are the consequences of *ignorance* (e.g. "not knowing"). This notion makes perfect sense when considered in the context of the industry's "religious" devotion to education. Thus, to be without knowledge in this culture is to be impotent, powerless, at Fate's mercy:

> *There are external influences that always affect this industry intensely, and that being political climates in other countries and, of course, the*

ever-present threat of terrorism which tends to have a very direct affect on the student travel industry . . . you may be planning to have a very successful year and all of a sudden something may go POP, literally, and that will change all the economics. It's not within your power to change that whatsoever. That is always something that is an unforeseen. [As well], you can't control the economy in this country -- if it's a poor economy, that is obviously going to affect travelers you would have . . . and who you market to (L, 1-13,14).

[What makes my job difficult] is the time difference in Europe (laughs)! Dealing with foreign currencies, where if Greenspan [sneezes] the pound takes a dive, you know? So the foreign currencies. Not knowing what's going on in the client's minds, you never know what the attitude is out there in the economy. Things over which I have no control, that's it (O, 1-10).

It's hard to deal with the unforeseen . . . unforeseen things that kill your budget. I try every year to . . . seal it up drum tight, but something always comes up. There are unforeseen things lurking out there (P, 1-19).

You have to rely on overseas suppliers, the people who do the air [too], and your hands are kinda tied until you get answers back from them . . . that's the hardest part, rely on so many other people . . . people you can't reach over and touch, and if they don't do their job there's nothing you can do about it. That's the hardest part, not having that little bit of control (M, 1-16).

Many of the industry's "loss of control" stories surround the events of May 1986, when the U.S. bombed Libya, resulting in fears of reprisal and subsequent massive cancellations throughout the industry, just prior to the summer travel season. The following passages are exemplars.

Then came the disaster of 1986, the terrorism. Our cancellations after the Libyan bombing were enormous, as were the rest of the industry's. We had been careful and had put a good deal of money back, so we weren't at total risk . . . but we worried about the industry and our future. We didn't know what would happen in 1987, what would happen to the industry as a whole (B,1-11).

> *In 1986 . . . we knew that's where we had to stay [high school travel] make or break. So 1986 was a very scary year for us. We went from 14-15 thousand pax (participants) down to 8000 pax almost overnight, with the cancellations. It was very scary (A, 1-9).*

In fact, the only way to deal with the unknown is to control it as much as possible, a theme central to this story:

> *It is obvious that what we are most vulnerable to is political instability . . . to war and terrorist attack. It is true that parents don't want to send their youngsters away if there is political unrest. What we have learned from [dealing with this situation] is that . . . you must find alternatives (C, 1-13).*

Thus, being in control is a critically empowering element, while being out of control may be critically disabling, and is at the very least constraining. Here, the root metaphor is implicit in the sub-metaphor of "religious freedom" and, as in most categories, is further suggested not only by the informants' use of language, but also in their apparent assumption that "it is neither right nor safe to go against conscience; here [they] stand" (Luther, quoted in Greene, 1967, 190).

Likewise, and to summarize *The Relationship between Group and Environment* category in its entirety, assumptions that emerge here are manifested in unique metaphors and constructs that in turn reveal and/or reflect the root metaphor (religion). Apart from the language surrounding symbolic membership, manifestations of the root metaphor are implicit more than they are explicit. Likewise, discovering the antecedents or sources of these assumptions in the early ALSG culture is an exercise in subtlety but definitely not in futility:

They most certainly exist -- further suggesting that this set of assumptions was engendered in that time and place.

The Practice of Work

To continue in the context of the root metaphor, every religion has its liturgy (practice), whose ritualistic ways of doing things are normally described in very singular language. In analyzing informants' descriptions of rituals common across the student travel industry, it became apparent that a number of them were not only strikingly similar, and in some cases identical, but were also denoted by very unique, often poetical language. In fact, one observer noted the significance of this industry's distinctive jargon: "It's the one thing we all have in common. . . . [I]n using language, you mess with the mind, you create a mindset" (Z, 1-22). To identify and explicate this unique language set, the discussion that follows first describes the language of sales and marketing and then describes operations-and-logistics-related language.

The Language of Sales and Marketing

Many of this industry's constructs are naturally attached to its common product. The most prominent example is the term *educational travel* itself, used profusely throughout both the interviews and the individual companies' marketing documents. In fact, when a non-identical term such as *cultural* travel is used, it is in tandem with *educational* travel. Likewise, clients are often referred to as *teachers,* regardless of their profession; in fact, one informant noted, "We call our clients teachers, whether they are or not," (Z, 1-15). Although there is almost an even split in the use of *teacher* and/or *group organizer/ leader,* even those entities whose public literature use the latter tend to actually *talk about* group organizers as "teachers." For example, one very revealing comment was, "We have a teacher handbook that we send to our group organizers -- we don't call them teacher-counselors" (P,1-12). The term *teacher-counselor* was used originally by ALSG, who "thought that [term] sounded more appropriate in the beginning, the picture of teachers huddling with their groups and having philosophical discussions of everything over a drink in the Latin Quarter . . . .The label just stuck, probably because it made so much sense, or maybe because "TC" just had a quick flip of the tongue. Anyway, it's part of the lexicon. Other companies use it, or something similar" (Z, 1-17). That, they do. In fact, an informant whose corporate literature uses the labels *group leader* or *group organizer* never actually used those terms in the interview itself, preferring instead the word *teacher*; moreover, that same informant referred to *teachers* nearly twice as much as any other informant.

Sales efforts are conducted primarily via telemarketing efforts by in-house *sales* or *admissions* staff . "In fact," surmises one informant, this industry "may be the country's first real telemarketers, who knows?" (Y, 1-15). Traditionally, sales and marketing efforts are directed primarily at high school teachers, using no intermediaries such as travel agents; in fact, teachers are the intermediaries or agents between the company and the end-user, who is the individual traveler, often described as a *student.* These sales efforts are initiated by mailing annual *catalogues* of tour selections to well-honed and well-targeted client mailing list. Most of the "boutique" companies do not consistently offer a catalogue, but instead design exclusive itineraries for each client. This exclusivity option is offered by the other companies as well, and is normally managed by a special department. At the very least, one employee is normally designated to coordinate *custom itinerary* design.

Finally, the *teachers travel free* ploy, offered universally across the industry, rests at the core of sales and marketing. In fact, all companies offer essentially the same *pro rate* to teachers; that is, teachers earn one free trip for every six students enrolled. Alternatively, teachers may choose to receive an *experience bonus* (essentially, commission payments) for each student over and above the six required to earn a free trip. One informant claims that although this incentive has been an essential motivator from the beginning, it was nonetheless "perfected within an academic context by ALSG" (Z, 3-1). Even so, today's 1:6 pro-rate did not originate with ALSG; this innovation may be laid at the feet of EF, one of whose informants opined that "this move helped us get ahead in the market, and the other companies followed suit the following year . . . a fantastic concept . . . for a teacher who has not done this before." Still another informant claims that this innovation ignited the "the pro-rate wars" and declares that "trip costs went through the roof after that." Regardless, free travel for teachers is a mainstay of the industry's sales and marketing efforts.

Regarding actual itineraries, European destinations are by far and away the most common, although most companies offer a smattering of tours to North America, the Pacific, Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa. Tours range generally from nine days' to four weeks' time, and those of fifteen or fewer days' length are the most popular choice (making up some 80 per cent of total travel, according to one of the "big" companies' informants). All tours are accompanied by full-time "couriers" or "tour directors," terms used interchangeably to denote roles that are an integral element of the industry's educational focus (or, in terms of the root metaphor, its religion). One very interesting remark revealed the synonymy of these labels when an informant declared, "We call our couriers 'tour directors'" (P, 1-16). Interestingly enough, historical documents suggest that ALSG's early culture used the terms interchangeably, at least by the early 1980s when something called a *Tour Director/Courier Manual* was published. In older documents, *courier* was used almost exclusively.

Yet another of these term-sets is *hometown group* or *hometown counselor*, used commonly to denote the definitive group of students or participants traveling with individual teachers/group leaders. Participants themselves are most often referred to either as that, or as "students," sometimes interchangeably, although the current trend seems to be toward the former. Historical documents show that ALSG's early culture used these terms interchangeably, and in fact shortened *participants* to the word "pax," as will be discussed in the section below.

Another group of common constructs -- and these are merely a subset of the whole set -- are used to denote specific charges incurred by travelers. The *membership fee* is probably the most antique of these, having had its origins in the days when charter flights required that passengers be members of a discrete group. From the documents available, it was not clear whether ALSG's predecessors (e.g. AIFS, FSL, or the World Academy) charged a membership fee; however, it is certain that ALSG did so (ALSG, 1970). Today, most companies do charge membership fees but a few do not. Likewise, an *adult supplement* is often charged adults who travel on these tours, presumably because they are designed as *student* tours. Again, it is not clear who originated this term; however, it is used throughout the industry today, as is the term *surcharge,* which one company explains as follows: "NETC's published program fees are based on exchange rates, prevailing rates for trip services and administrative costs . . . and are subject to increase" (NETC, 1998, 111). Companies who levy surcharges -- and that includes most of them -- nonetheless offer "plans which enable you to avoid possible increases in your program fee" (111). These "surety" plans, also known as *Guaranteed Price Plans, Early Bird Payment Plans,* and the like are said to have originated with ALSG, as described in the following story:

> *[Every year], before spring trips began, as well as long after, teachers waited in fear, cringing at the thought of the surcharge. Just before the summer trips ran -- normally spring trips didn't incur surcharges, at least not in the beginning -- ALSG and later [most of the] industry levied a surcharge, ostensibly to account for inflation and whatnot, which in the late 1970s was running in the double figures. Then, Mike Eizenberg [who was an ALSG executive at the time] thought of the price guarantee, which basically meant that if you paid by a pre-determined deadline called the Early Bird Deadline, which usually fell about March 15 for summer trips . . . you could escape the surcharge. That was a brilliant innovation, with especially serendipitous timing due to the Carternomics of those days. This came to be known as the "pre reg[istration] deal.*

In this context, the "bonus trip" was conceived, a perk that most companies offer today.

> *Gil came up with the idea of the "bonus trip" -- that being that if their students signed up early, teachers could have an extra free trip in addition to the "official" trip that they would be taking with students -- or more accurately, with participants, since by that time we were starting to see a number of adults on all the tours. The bonus trip . . . started out as . . . the "Thanksgiving in London" pitch. It has been through several incarnations, but basically began as a way for Gil to get money into the coffers early . . . . For whatever reasons it was engendered, the bonus trip idea, combined with the [surcharge-avoidance deadline], was a brilliant marketing strategy. Not only do the students lock in a price, but more importantly to the marketing effort, [the bonus trip deal] removes the [teacher] from the competitive marketplace early on. So it wasn't long until we had [an early registration] market, over and above the traditional market.*

Here, it should be emphasized that except for the bonus trip, none of these practices is universal; however, those who employ these practices describe them in similar language, most of which had its origins in the early ALSG culture. As well, of special linguistic interest is one company whose corporate literature declares that participants will *not* be charged " fees for membership or adult surcharges" (Voyageur, 1998, 1).

Another subset of common language includes references to what one informant calls "academic artifacts" (Y, 1-6). Those artifacts mentioned most often and commonly, in both the interviews and the documents, are unique to this industry. Three of the most representative are detailed below.

Teacher handbook/group organizer's guide

Although a variety of titles is used to denote this document, the topics and the language used *within* the various "guides" is very similar. Basically, this handbook is a soup-to-nuts instruction manual that walks teachers/organizers through the organizing process. In fact, on the front of one company's handbook was once printed, "Whether you're on your first trip or your twenty-first, this handbook has all you need to get you started!" (ACIS, 1996).

Historical documents indicate that the first such handbook was published by ALSG in 1978 and addressed the following topics: (1) how to organize for success; (2) the ten-day [recruiting] plan; (3) sample announcements and letters, including an invitation to a parent meeting; (4) sample questions and answers about overseas travel; (5) an outline of the teacher's role overseas; (6) hints for preparing the group; (7) fund-raising ideas; (8) suggestions for obtaining school approval for the trip; and (9) a guide for obtaining academic credit for the students (ALSG, 1978). Today, all but two of the industry members publish a similar guide, and with the exception of point (9), above, their contents cover, to a greater or lesser degree, virtually the same material. Perhaps the most striking inclusion is the "sample letter" inviting parents to an orientation meeting; this particular artifact appears in virtually every handbook. One informant described this "cross-pollination effect" in these terms:

> *I do know that things have been picked up [from the ALSG Teacher Handbook], absolutely . . . .All you have to do is [look at] their teacher handbook, or whatever they call it . . . and you'll see [ALSG's] prose . . . and topics all over that thing . . . the sample letter inviting parents to come to a meeting to discuss organizing a trip overseas, the letter written to a skittish schoolboard that's a little uncertain about letting the kids, giving kids permission . . . all the things that [ALSG] put into the . . . handbook [are there] . . . .[ALSG's] was the first time in the industry that anybody had taken all the stuff and put it between two covers, all the way from a bibliography to these sample letters and even a sample agenda for these meetings that the teacher conducts. What do you start with? What topics do you cover? Don't say too much at the first meeting; let suspense build up, and all that. THAT was in the teacher handbook. [Other companies] didn't have anything like that, so I know that they pillaged all that from [ALSG's] various editions of that over the years. And I've even found phraseology of [ALSG's] in theirs.*

A thematic content analysis of the original ALSG Teacher-Counselor Handbook (1977) compared with several current guides/handbooks, supports these claims.

Walking tours and/or city factsheets

Another common use of specialized language is used to denote the planned, on-foot sightseeing, mostly of inner-city areas; these are commonly known as "walking tours." One catalogue describes its walking tours thusly: "Because we know that most students don't like to sit still, our Tour Directors will frequently show you around on foot. Take in the sights and sounds, aromas and flavors as you stroll -- EF walking tours provide a close-up view!" (EF, 1998b).

Most companies publish a written guide to accompany these "walks," and these usually contain directions (how to proceed on the walk) in addition to commentary about the sites encountered along the way. At least one company, in fact, maintains a 3-inch binder of very artfully written and elaborately illustrated walking-tour guides. Walking tours are often supplemented by, and in some cases replaced by, "City Facts" or "City Factsheets" that contain a quick overview of important things to know about particular destinations (e.g. Paris, London, Rome, for example). Again, historical documents indicate that the first walking tour was a product of the ALSG culture, which devised both the practice and its name, circa 1970 (ALSG, 1970b).

<u>Classroom motif</u>

Yet another interesting and common use of academized language may be found in the "classroom" motif, still in use today. One of its earliest appearances may be traced to 1973, where ALSG's General Catalogue describes its European experiences as "not a 'tour' . . . or just a 'summer school' . . . but a truly open classroom" (ALSG, 1972, 5). This motif is woven throughout the history of the industry, has enjoyed various incarnations, and remains prominent in contemporary literature. Most conspicuous of these references is perhaps EF's full-page treatment of the concept -- titled "Opening the door to the Global Classroom" -- in its most recent *General Catalogue:*

> *For over 30 years,[2] EF has pursued a vital mission: to introduce students worldwide to other cultures and lands. We believe that every student should have the opportunity to broaden personal and academic horizons through international travel. EF Educational Tours makes your entrance into the Global Classroom simple, affordable, and unforgettable -- providing you and your students with the learning opportunity of a lifetime (EF, 1998, 2).*

Moreover, this is simply the way many informants often *talk about* the tours:

> *Our courier's job is to transmit this education to kids in a sort of moving classroom (B, 1-2).*
>
> *Travel in itself is a very, very powerful tool for conveying so much . . . you're there, you can feel it, you touch it. Global classroom -- I think it's a global classroom. I can argue that the world is a classroom and we're all students in this classroom, but traveling is definitely a way of learning while you're moving around (C, 1-5).*

These passages offer interesting comparisons to how one informant described one of ALSG's "bedrock" contributions to the industry:

> *Within the high school market [c. 1965], it was expected that the tours would be about a month long and the reason for that is that the only competition was campus-based language instruction programs, and these are going to be at least a month long. So [ALSG] took the concept of studying a month in Europe and instead of limiting it to a campus site or location, put it on wheels. Took the classroom, cut the ties to a particular institution or city, put the whole concept on wheels, and made it a traveling program.*

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[2] According to its current President, EF was founded in 1965: "The beginning of the product was the language travel concept, coming from the founder of EF, Mr. (Bertl) Hult." Thus, EF began by taking Swedish students abroad to English-speaking countries, and later expanded to include students of other (mostly European) nationalities. Today, in fact, "the majority of [their] products are still focused around language teaching and language learning." However, it was not until 1981 that EF entered the North American student travel industry *per se*.

Operations and Logistics-Related Language

Although examples of commonly-used operations and logistics-related language are fewer than in the language of sales and marketing, what does exist is very distinctive -- so much so that as one informant noted, the jargon would never be understood except in the context of this industry's culture (Z, 1-9).

One example is the term *wave,* which is used to denote all the groups traveling on a certain date, as well as a group's date of travel (e.g. "The Jones group is in the 6/13 wave). In fact, an informant in a "newer" company uses the term to train *new* employees, but reportedly not otherwise:

> *We don't use [the word] wave except when I'm having to explain something to someone who's come in here new. I find myself using that term . . . I don't know what else you'd call it. What else would you call it? (P, 1-15).*

Found to be in wide (albeit not universal) use across the industry, the term is said to have originated in the ALSG/Markle culture, c. 1968:

> *We[at ALSG] came up with [the term] as we visualized onslaughts of students descending on targets in Europe. Kind of like the D-Day landing. Waves of students. One or more groups moving in tandem.*

Likewise, the term *pax* -- meaning "peace" in Latin, of course -- is also used extensively, and most especially in casual conversation, as an acronym for "participants." Although no one described (or indeed seemed to remember) the origin of this term, when informants who used it (some 80 per cent of the informants did so) were asked to define it, they articulated similar denotations. Moreover, one erstwhile executive noted that the term was "in use when I got there, and that was about 1974." Yet another example of operational jargon is the word *fit,* a term that to one informant

> *absolutely . . . makes sense. You are fitting groups together. . [if we have] .one group of 10 on June 1 and one group of 20 on June 5, we're going to fit those two groups together for a common departure date* (S, 1-9).

A rather fascinating characteristic of the industry's operational jargon is that a number of terms denote in the student travel industry just the opposite of what they connote in "real life." Even so, a good bit of this "counter-intuitive" jargon has made its way across the industry, when in fact newer expressions would no doubt be easier to communicate, especially to employees in newly forming companies. For example, the term *broken* is used almost universally in the genetically related companies to label those teachers/group organizers who have sent in applications and are therefore assumed to be actually traveling, as opposed to their being in the planning or "talking" stages. From a logistics point of view, the "broken" point is when the sales department relinquishes the teacher's file to the operations department. Obviously, the word *broken* normally has a negative connotation, but in student travel jargon, it is one of the most positive denotations that can be attached to a client. One informant acknowledged,

> *Broken, we still use that word. Why? It's a very funny word. I remember [hearing it for the first time when] somebody said, 'You know, they broke," and I thought, 'What the heck does that mean?' Old term, but yes, we still use it. To us in the industry, and at [our company], it means that a group actually sent in an application, that group has now broken, it means*

they're in-house with money (S, 1-10).

Another example of this counter-intuitive operations language is the word *dole,* a word normally used to denote "money or food given in charity" (Websters, 1993, 182). In the student travel industry, however, the definition of *dole* was summarized by one informant as "what we refer to in this industry as the money that is given to the courier at the outset of the trip, which is basically an approximation on a per day basis of what they will need to run the operation of the trip" (L, 1-16). Thus, it might be argued that the *dole* represents a conferring of *power* (in the form of money) upon the courier or tour guide, just the opposite of a need for charity. When describing the use of this term, another informant exclaimed:

> *Now there's an expression that will transcend [cultural] boundaries! [A courier] calls up her boss and says 'Dole me!' What other explanation could you find for her to use that term, in that way, other than an overreaching industry identity . . . evidence of [our] irrefutable common threads . . . .Just think about how many people -- and more to the point, how few -- know or use that term in [this] connotation* (Z, 1-25).

Finally, exclusively designed itineraries that do not appear in the catalogue are commonly known as "specials" or SPITS ("SP-ecial IT-inerary," explained one informant).

Apparently, the continued use of the "old ALSG terminology" is common across the industry: " . . . a lot of the internal terms, it doesn't make sense to change because they're only used in-house and we all understand them. You use whatever terms you're comfortable with" (Q, 1-8), explained one informant, who also noted, "It's like calling a custom itinerary a SPIT."

The language described above, as might be expected, is most commonly used in the industry's "genetically related" companies. This study surfaced little, if any, evidence to suggest that these particular terms are used in the "non-genetic" companies, and in fact, they are not used universally in the "genetic" companies. Still, they are used widely enough to suggest that their performance is common to much of the industry-at-large. Moreover, among the informants who continue to use the terms, they are universally acknowledged to have originated in the ALSG/Markle culture.

Although it may be a cognitive "stretch" to argue that the root metaphor (work as religion) emerges from this category's data in any explicit sense, it is implicitly observed. In fact, it is plausible to parallel the industry's common language, e.g. the "core" of its "common mindset," with similar linguistic "cores" that exist within any "common mindset," including that of the church. Moreover, *arguendo,* it would be no more implausible to extend the metaphor by saying that linguistic variances across the industry are merely *denominational* differences rather than *doctrinal* ones -- i.e. using slightly different language to perform virtually identical rituals, such as exist in the terms "baptism" and "christening" or "Lord's Supper" and "communion," for example. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the industry's rituals and practices are "performed" in universally comparable fashion, and more to the point, they are described in very similar, if not virtually identical terms, not only in the genetically-related companies, but in all the member entities. Finally, and as one informant noted, language use is a "window to the mind" that not only "creates a mindset" but is also reflective of same; thus, this industry's unique jargon provides the framework, the *liturgy* as it were, for performing its "religion," for practicing its work.

The Purpose of Work

Upon close examination , it becomes readily apparent that in the student travel industry, assumptions about the purpose of work are performed in the wider context of the corporate and/or industry mission. Thus, descriptions of the corporate mission do not here appear to be a subset of *The Relationship between the Group and the Environment,* as Phillips (1990) originally proposed. In fact, in the student travel industry, work is perceived to *be* a mission -- a quasi-religious, perhaps even evangelistic mandate to "educate" and thereby to "change the world." Although this metaphor emerges in performances describing the competitive environment, it is most evident and apropos to a discussion of why people in this industry do what they do -- i.e., the purpose of work.

Responses were awash with phrases such as *to foster the romance of learning* or *to promote international understanding* or *to make the world a better place* -- to list just three examples. Although each entity publishes a formally articulated mission statement in its publicly circulated literature, more pithy expressions were gleaned from the interviews:

> *Ultimately it's trying to get across in a very, very short time an interest in . . . Beethoven and Berlioz rather than Beavis and Butthead (B, 2-4).*
>
> *Widening horizons. I think if you don't go out of your own back yard, you're not gonna be able to have any foresight. It helps you with every decision for the rest of your life, and you can make an impact on somebody to [help them] see that there're other things out there besides television. (R, 1-6)*
>
> *I think it is to continue promoting international understanding amongst the world's people. And our modest contribution to that is by offering our programs to high school teachers and students . . . . each of these programs are [sic] little contributions to making people understand each other better, to overcome ethnocentricity (C, 1-14).*
>
> *What I enjoy most is . . . shar[ing] a very important experience with students . . . being able to contribute to a young person's future (L, 1-31).*
>
> *We help realize dreams. There was a great quote from a teacher who said to us that what you do is hold fast to your dreams as you help us realize ours. I think that really sort of sums up very nicely what [we do] (B, 1-1).*

In addition to the repartee they employed, informants told numerous corporate stories that revealed a reverence for their work, or more accurately perhaps, their company's *raison d'être:*

> *We ran a nice London-Paris [trip] for 15 little Southern ladies from Atlanta. They came back and said, "OH! We had such a marvelous time!" A week later, God bless her, one of the women on the trip was driving down the freeway with a truck in front of her and something fell off the truck and decapitated the woman. The group organizer called us after the fact and said, "I can't tell you what a difference you made with that trip to that woman. She had never been happier or had such a thrill in her life." (P, 1-24).*

Several personal stories addressed this theme as well:

> *To do what we do in this business, and especially looking at it the way we do, feeling about it the way we do, you have to have faith. You have to have faith in a lot of people. You have to have faith in a lot of things going right. You have to have faith that underneath the surface, there's something that connects us all. You can't be cynical about any of that. That's what my greatest pleasure in this enterprise has been, in fact: having my faith rewarded. I've never been disappointed by having faith in people. If you do, they'll usually come through for you, and this whole enterprise has proven that, at least to me. Just feeling that connected-ness that comes from faith, and it being returned to you in kind, is an indescribable pleasure (A, 1-18).*

Similar stories, both corporate and personal, were framed in terms of the company's *responsibility* to its clients:

> *Our Ambassador Scholarship program is out way of giving back to the community, giving back to the types of people who do not have the financial means of going on a trip . . . and these young people have their ideas and their enthusiasm and their drive. Listen to them! You know that . . . they are going to go far in life!*
>
> *[We] are a company that cares for you. Here's an example. I worked the past six days on one tour . . . where we were faced with a pretty much impossible situation and were told by three vendors that there's no way were going to get a hotel in Florence . . . so I sent out 90 faxes on Thursday and we came up with a four-star property [that] exceeds the location we promised . . . .That kind of [work is done] by all the people that come into this company. I don't know what client out there that we don't actually try to fulfill [their special needs].*
>
> *[Our company's] original image was "we care" and that was it for years . . . .We did everything possible to be the company that cared for its teachers, the ones who would do things the right way, the ones you could always count on.*

Taken together, these descriptions are remarkably reminiscent of those found in quondam ALSG literature:

> *Most educators are convinced that a period of study overseas can be the turning point in the personal and intellectual development of the student . . . [I]t is the rare student who does not return from abroad with (a) an increased awareness of himself, and (b) a heightened interest in one or more fields of study (ALSG, 1970, 8).*

> *The main goals of the ALSG are: to introduce American young people to the sights, sounds, and moods of the European scene; to provide a framework of ideas which will hold and unify the many impressions gathered along the way; to offer American teachers professional advancement within their fields (ALSG, 1974, 3).*

> *Whenever you need us, we're just a toll-free phone call away . . . [and] we're eager to talk over all the phases of your program. You'll be speaking personally to the people who plan (and run) the programs overseas (ALSG, c. 1975).*

In sum, the root metaphor is both linked to the organization's mission and is clearly manifest in what informants perceive to be the *Purpose of Work.* Both the root metaphor and the rudiments of "industry mission" are traceable to the ALSG/Markle culture.

Nature of Work Relationships

Every religion is theoretically manifested in a "family of believers" -- and it is this allegorical connotation that characterizes *Performances of Passion* as they relate to the nature of work relationships. Although this metaphor also appears in descriptions of the competitive environment, its richest expression is manifested in performances that describe work relationships, particularly within one's own company.

Using Phillips' (1990) original descriptors, the nature of work relationships in the student travel industry may generally be classified as a "collaboration within a hierarchy" -- where the extent and relevance of the hierarchy correlates noticeably with the size and/or age of the entity. That is to say, the larger companies (who are now the oldest), tend to have more hierarchical layering (not surprisingly) and thus a more pronounced tendency toward "vertical" relationships than do smaller companies, who tend more toward collaborative, "horizontal" relationships. Granted, all companies are *somewhat* hierarchical, by sheer virtue of the fact that someone owns and/or founded the enterprise and thus assumes a leadership role. However, as a generalization, and even within the more "vertical" companies, informants tend to describe relationships as more collaborative than not. For example, an informant from one of the larger, more hierarchical companies explained, in what is perhaps the best articulation of this assumption:

> *You sometimes have to have a star for a day, especially when there's a stressful event . . . but people don't want that. People want to feel more ownership and more emotion for the product and the trip . . . .Probably because of that . . . we're always a team. First and foremost we're a team. There are not stars. We're all good at what we do, and we have different talents, and that is part of our strength. The teamwork, the trust, the faith [in each other] (A, 1-18).*

These sentiments are echoed throughout the smaller companies:

> *[Relationships] in the workplace . . . that's what it's all built on. I think we're extremely fortunate here because . . . we see more of each other than we do of anybody else, even the ones who are married. [W]e are together more than [we] are with our spouses . . . .It's a partnership. We do have titles but they're really only found on our business cards because nobody . . . really enjoys having titles (S, 1-10,18).*

When you run into a rough time, everybody pitches in. I think that's typical in this industry. I mean, in the smaller companies, everybody has *to pitch in at different times to help each other out, and I don't think anybody is opposed to that at all . . . and everybody knows what everybody else does . . . there's none of this left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing (M, 1-4,9).*

Another informant described the forming of these relationships initially, and noted how the relationships tend to continue onward through time:

I often forged very strong relationships within the company, with others who worked in the same company. And those are still relationships that I continue to this day, even though it's a good decade or more later, because they were [initially] very strong . . . .I would say that even today that I do . . . keep in touch with old colleagues [and that] there are certain cooperations that date back over the whole decade (L, 1-5).

Performances regarding work relationships extend the religious metaphor in the sense that those who "believe" (in the industry's "religion") are deemed to be part of the "family":

The most important part of my job is that I'm to [make certain that my] colleagues . . . share the same values, share the same belief in our product . . . having ideally experienced it themselves, either in travel or in study overseas (C, 1-10).

I guess what I enjoy most is dealing with people who enjoy [educational travel] as much as I do (L, 1-31).

I was very fortunate in that I was able to put together a team of people committed to the product and committed to people in general . . . who understood educational travel, really understood what it was all about (A, 1-5). What we had and have going for us is that everyone believes the same thing about this business (A, 1-10).

This notion of family-as-fellow-believers is also prominent in the historical data, i.e., in performances that recall the ALSG culture:

> *The original recruits were . . . attracted by a highly integrated core of people which were bonded, absolutely bonded, by personal loyalty . . . It was a monastic zeal that we had for whatever it was we were doing . . . [although a monastery] would be the wrong image! . . . At ALSG, it was almost . . . socialistic in the sense that there was less of a divide between the personal and the business, the inside and the outside, which is again characteristic of a family . . . a closeness, there [was] a nuzzling together . . . a warmth, sometimes too much warmth, generated because people nuzzle, as in a family . . . so there was that kind of nuzzling relationship at ALSG.*

> *The original ALSG and its employees were a reflection of the 60s mentality and sensibilities and social behaviors. It was a company made up of young people who were part of a social revolution, and they incorporated strands of that revolution into the day-to-day functions of the company . . . into relationships with each other.*

> *Gil thought that he could literally create whatever he wanted, and we all started believing the same thing.*

As noted above, this "family of believers" is said to include both "teachers" (clients) and suppliers.

> *One of my ground handlers [suppliers] and I talk about this all the time. He's been in the business for about 30 years, and he . . . feels exactly the same way I do . . . and it's very hard to put into words. You just don't ever want to do anything else (P, 1-4).*

As well, some of the companies' catalogues refer to their suppliers in terms of a mutually focused relationship. For example, "We work closely with the airlines . . . [and] are proud of the strong relationships we have developed" (CHA, 1998, 142); "Our network of EF professionals . . . means that wherever in the world you choose to travel, a helping hand is always nearby" (EF, 1998b, 1); "Overseas, the company is aided by travel professionals . . . who have been known to us, in some cases, for nearly thirty years" (passports, 1998, 97).

Teacher "testimonials" are a traditional feature of annual company catalogues, and many of these support the notion of beliefs-in-common. Likewise, one informant talked about the company's teacher/clients as "partners" and noted that "we talk to teachers every day on the phone [to find out] what do they want, what are they listening to, what are they seeing" (B, 1-5). Another spoke of teachers in nearly every breath, as it were, using phrases such as "we ask teachers," "listen to your teachers," "maintain personal rapport with your teachers," "don't forget the importance of the teacher's needs" and the like (C, 1-8). Indeed, one company's literature notes, with obvious pride, that it is "still owned and operated by the same teacher who founded it, assuring a continual commitment to the company's original goals" (CHA, 1998, 145).

The notion of teachers and/or suppliers as part of the family is not addressed, *per se,* in the historical performances recorded, although there is some language to suggest that ALSG's "teacher-counselors" (as they were known) were motivated by values such as "extending their students' education . . . enhancing teaching: teachers wanted to take their students abroad."

Likewise, there is no mention of supplier relationships in the historical data. However, a "non-founding" informant offered this description of early ALSG-*supplier* relationships:

> *I would say the obvious reason for the [suppliers] we use in common is just because of a good relationship, a proven product, a proven quality and service . . . . In Spain, for example, there is one tour operator who has grown considerably over the years and whom most of us use . . . it*

dates back to the beginning of the industry . . . .[Other] suppliers owed their initial existence to the student travel industry. I'm not certain of the details, but from what I recall, for example, the company known as [Supplier A] initially started [via] a shot in the arm from one of the [CEO's] of the student travel companies, meaning a great deal of financial aid came from [this company]. So, some of these [supplier] relationships are more closely linked than they appear to be, most definitely. They are not just random relationships, but instead have an historical basis.

In sum, these performances suggest that "work relationships" are not only described in familial clauses, but that "family" is perceived of in terms of a "family of believers" -- or at the very least, of "family members" as being those individuals those who are attuned to and/or participate in pursing the industry's "mission." Moreover, historical evidence suggests that this notion was very much a part of the early ALSG/Markle culture.

The Origins of Truth

In general -- and although there are a couple of notable exceptions -- this industry is characterized by its striking reliance upon "improvisation, brilliant improvisation, and fast footwork . . . a ballet act right as the meat cleaver [comes] down" (Y, 2-32), a "management by high wire" (Y, 2-38), that implies a premium upon individual intuition and self-reliance: "You have to be close to the heart beat, to the pulse of the organization and its clients; otherwise, you'll miss something important. Things can change quickly" (A, 1-4). There is a collective sense that "you don't create an excellent organization, no matter what you do, without knowing *in your heart* . . . the basic ingredients" (A, 1-5, emphasis added). In terms of enculturation for newer employees or members, this emphasis on self-reliance, improvisation, and "knowing in your heart" was described as follows:

> *When I first started here, I was told many times, sink or swim . . . there's not a lot of time to be telling anybody what to do . . . and by the time you need help and you hire somebody, you're in the middle of things and you don't have time to say do this do this. People who succeed in this business, the people who are valuable, are the ones who do swim . . . your mind's gotta go all the time and ya gotta think for yourself and make decisions . . . they all told me, make your own mistakes and you'll learn from them (M, 1-18).*

This characteristic was also observed in descriptions of how companies were founded. For example:

> *We all got together and formed [Company Delta] with everyone trying to remember names and phone numbers of folks who'd traveled because nobody had any kind of list. It was all from memory . . . and we didn't really have any distinguished roles, everybody was just doing everything (S, 1-13).*

> *None of us had so much as a single course in business methods. I could try and balance my own checkbook if I really worked at it, but that was the extent of [our knowledge of] financing, airline deals, rates, hotel bookings . . . .[but] it doesn't take too much to call up the airlines and say "What can you give us 30 seats to Europe for and how much do we have to pay up front?" and this that and the other. So the rudiments of it were quickly acquired (Y, 2-3).*

As mentioned above, this quality is not universal throughout the industry, but instead seems to be attached, to a greater or in some cases lesser degree, to companies that are "genetically" related to each other. Indeed, nothing in the data supported the existence of "high-wire-ism" management in the non-genetic companies, which were described by one informant as “formal, conventional, white-collar, stiff-pressed-shirt type” (Y, 2-20), who are “very much the planning company; they would have a strategy . . . study the terrain, study the marketplace . . . a very conventional businessman’s way of [doing] business” (Y, 2-34).

Even so, the value of learning-as-you-go, or of “improvisation” as a “source of truth” was acknowledged even in the non-genetic companies. For example, one informant explained that when his/her company started out, “Did we know at the time this would be such a success? No, I think we saw it as a test.” As well, a major innovation for which this same company takes credit is described in terms of its being “an in-house idea [that] came from one of our staff members . . . probably in response to some kind of teacher request” (15). Still, the tendency to rely upon “pure improvisation” as a source of truth/knowledge best describes the genetically related companies in the industry.

More heuristic, perhaps, is the observation that throughout the industry, *truth* -- perhaps a better term would be *reality* -- seems to be a dual construct, that may be labeled as “historical” truth versus “contemporary” truth; these themes may be defined, respectively, as *those truths that endure* versus *truths that change*, either as the environment changes or when some other variable (for lack of a better word) fosters a “sea change” (Y, 1-15), such as the formation of a new company. Likewise, perceived *sources* of truth vary, and these variances are usually linked to the temporal constitution of truth, as noted above.

"Historical" truth was one of the more interesting concepts uncovered and was described by one informant as those values, modes of operation, and ways of thinking and behaving that were "present at the creation." That "creation" -- whether informants view it as largely positive, largely negative, or relatively neutral -- is consistently identified as having occurred in the company ALSG and more specifically, is "credited" to ALSG's founder, Dr. Gilbert Markle (and in part to its co-founder, Dr. Theodore Voelkel). This is somewhat a curious phenomenon, especially considering the fact that ALSG was not the first or even second company to engage in "student" travel. Nonetheless, with few exceptions, informants refer to ALSG when they talk about their own history, and few make reference to the companies who came before ALSG. Typical descriptions of the ALSG/Markle-Voelkel culture include the following:

> *[Gil and Ted] worked miracles in the beginning. We still do some things the way they originally envisioned them, or at least go in that direction. They taught me most of what I started out knowing about this business, maybe all of it.*

> *[H]ere you had this infant industry, nobody was doing it the way Gil did it. It emerged in these strange midwestern pockets of principals and superintendents sending kids and teachers to study language in Europe in long programs. There was an early period of these long programs [before ALSG] where students spent 4-5-6 weeks abroad, not traveling much, just being there. Then Gil . . . took this groovy approach to travel, you know? I mean, he had some campus stays like AIFS and FSL, but there was a lot of travel as well, between the campuses. And there were lectures that were right on, contemporary kinds of things, plus the art and all the rest. And the cassettes and the book that Ted wrote . . . they were brilliant . . . really, really brilliant.*

I think that what Gil did at the beginning stages, when he created the industry, was a breakthrough. He established an industry that was, that could have been this small niche but turned out to be a viable 120,000-plus-passenger-a-year industry . . . which is tremendous for all parties involved. . . . He created the [industry] really, and he created it pretty much in his own image. And it works.

[The industry] is generally based, rooted if you will, in the academy, and that's directly attributable, at least in my estimation, to ALSG's contributions. ALSG's unique niche in the industry was to spread out the concept of learning, of educational travel, the academic trappings . . . over the . . . whirlwind package tour. That was beginning . . . . ALSG shifted the focus away from language to culture in a broader sense to a larger, cultural focus . . . .In short, ALSG stood for the romance of travel and more to the point, the romance of learning.

Gil . . . was the star everyone and everything revolved around . . . . The star system is really an artifact of the academy, it seems to me. We've all known star professors who have their retinue, their entourage. ALSG was much the same. What this . . . does is to make for a zeal other companies couldn't emulate . . . .the founder or founders knew no other way of doing it. They were academics, for heavens' sake. And [the] model . . . was Gil.

Discussions of "historical truth" are layered in complexity, however, as a result of most informants' strong feelings with regard to Markle himself: some talk about him as if he were a god-like figure and some as if he were just the opposite. The most striking performances are those that describe both extremes, within specific temporal frames (e.g. "historical" vs. "contemporary" or "then" vs. "now").

ALSG was nothing if not a personality cult. By that, I mean to say that a few key personalities had a positive impact when the company was first starting. Gil, of course, was the shaman [who] . . . attracted postulates. Postulates! No one could accurately have called them employees! They were attracted by the sheer magnetism of Gil's vision . . . . Gil was the *god-like presence, a shaman behind it all. He was the star that everyone and everything revolved around.*

However, the same informant also opined that

> *Gil Markle was a very demanding, very temperamental individual. He could be explosive, he could be intolerant, he could be sarcastic. He was always devious. And that to me was a negative factor. He was also charming, charismatic . . . so there was a plus and a minus there, and the minus could really take its toll.*

To extend the root metaphor, these performances -- and others like them -- describe Markle in language that suggest the eternal paradox, the embodiment of both truth *and* apostasy, a Miltonian view of good and evil, as it were. In fact, the very existence of these antithetical performances is reminiscent of Nietzsche's *circulus vitiosus deus,* of the buddic and astral planes, of heaven and hell, and of similar embodiments of the "eternal struggle" between opposing forces.[3]

> *I never think of Abraham as one of the children of Israel; he was the font; [likewise Gil] was the fountain of it all . . . . Now, there's a minus to that . . . in transcending his progeny, he kind of climbed up to a status that was between sort of human and whatever the next one is up, you know? . . . And we've seen there are plenty of plusses and minuses to that.*

Other informants describe ALSG/Markle as the source and/or scourge of truth in somewhat more pragmatic language, that nonetheless retains religious overtones of the root metaphor:

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[3] In light of the industry's history, Boehm's commentary juxtaposing good and evil in the religious sense is especially interesting: *That which is evil . . . must be the cause of the manifestation of the good, for it occasions the will to press upward to its original condition. In this way, evil has a special relation to construction and movement . . . for a thing that is only good and has no suffering desires nothing, for it knows nothing better than itself . . . after which it can long (Gaskell, 1981, 20).*

> *Gil created a miracle in the beginning, a real miracle and he knew it. I guess it was hard not to rest on your laurels or whatever, or maybe let go of the vision you originally had.*
>
> *You know, I learned a lot from Gil. I'm a big admirer of Gil's - and of Ted's . . . they are incredibly talented people, incredibly gifted by the gods. They started this industry moving in the right direction . . . and they worked miracles in the beginning . . . .But the industry, the people, the entire process . . . became deeper than any one person. I guess you could say that the child Gil created just grew up and left him . . . or perhaps he didn't adjust. Sometimes that's hard, as any parent knows.*

Another informant is more explicit in using the deity-image:

> *Remember Gil in those days? . . . He was untouchable, like a god. . . . Gil had this charisma that was just uncanny . . . and it was great while it lasted, but then things started to change . . . . The original ALSG identity . . . just didn't work . . . and Gil wouldn't really face it.*

Perhaps not surprisingly, "younger" informants (in terms of their companies' ages) tend to dwell upon the "dark side" of ALSG/Markle. Moreover, informants from all companies tend to describe their own "truths" and practices as exemplary of the "new testament" to truth or "new covenant" (as opposed to ALSG/Markle's "old covenant") with the client, using language that suggests a "redemption" motif, i.e., that they have "redeemed" themselves from ALSG's shortcomings.

> *You know how at ALSG you were afraid to break the rules? Gil might get mad and there'd be hell to pay. And I'm not picking on Gil, just whoever. But you couldn't break the rules. Instead, here we have a flexible attitude. [When we left ALSG], we almost wanted to right a wrong.*

Our company's first assumptions were anti-ALSG . . . we just didn't want everything to be done the way it had always been done.

Something we all learned at ALSG [was that] something was always looming around the corner, that we [ALSG] were gonna getcha [the client]. So I think [clients] absolutely appreciate that in contrast, we shoot straight from the hip.

At [ALSG] I had no control over . . . the registration procedures . . . and the payment procedures were just crazily complicated, needlessly complicated, and were just purposely set up to bilk the poor old client so that they would miss out on this deadline or the other deadline [and] that would allow the company to swoop in and impose some kind of surcharge. So [we] don't have any deadlines of the sort where you're penalized . . . [we] just did away with all that because it just made for bad feelings.

Gil had built a good organization at ALSG, but we had the opportunity to build a new and more efficient organization.

Thus, each company tends to see itself as the most valid source of truth, *per se,* or to put it another way, as a model of contemporary business practice in this industry.

One observer has labeled this attitude as illustrative of a tendency towards "self-delusion" on the part of industry executives; regardless, it is a theme that occurs throughout the data.

Finally, in addition to those who acknowledge Markle/ALSG as having been critical factors in the industry's creation, there are those who simply dismiss Markle's influence altogether:

Gil Markle likes to say that he's the "father" of the industry, but I can assure you that he has nothing to do with the companies that have not evolved from ALSG.

While this perception is valid for those who hold it, the fact is that at least one of the non-genetic companies hired one of ALSG's former executives to -- in the executive's words -- "show them [the non-genetic company] how to market this student travel concept." Thus, bedrock cultural assumptions endemic to the ALSG culture may have been "adopted" by a non-genetic entity. At the very least, it is clear that the former ALSG executive had an *opportunity* to transmit ALSG's "special way of doing things," along with its "special way of talking about" (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983, 124) what it did, to a non-genetic entrant into the industry. A content analysis of this entity's early marketing documents suggests that if this is not the case, then another explanation must be found for the obvious and striking similarities found in the language used by this entity and by the rest of the industry at that time -- all of which reflect the language used in contemporaneous ALSG documents.

In any case, the concept of historical truth leads inevitably to the concept of "contemporary truth" -- commencing with the founding of any post-ALSG entity. In examining the data surrounding this issue, one is confronted once again with the notion of "improvisation" or "management by high-wire-ism" as a bedrock source of truth for most industry informants. In fact, one informant remarked, "I've always felt that there were those who *went* to Harvard Business School and then there are those of us who actually *do* what those guys sit around talking about" (X, 1-3).

More specifically, this improvisational motif may be articulated in terms of *current* truth's being engendered by collective corporate ingenuity, emanating principally from each company's circle of elites, but with welcome contributions from "worker bees" (N, 1-25) as well; thus, for most informants, truth is procreated by individual inventiveness, as opposed to its being reposit in "experts" or "theory" or even in "traditional practices" -- which is an interesting paradox, in and of itself. In this regard, one informant described the *early* (ALSG) culture in virtually the same kind of language that most informants used to describe *contemporary* practice:

> *There was [in the early culture at ALSG] a kind of rank informality, the good side of which meant that it was a very libertarian business environment . . . that made for a kind of creative thing. It was easy to innovate, lots of different ideas, people would express themselves and come up with different angles on what might be done.*

Note the juxtaposition to descriptions of "current" origins of truth:

> *There's no cut and dried answer to this business. Everything is a judgment call. We'll sit down . . . and discuss [issues] and . . . just because you talk about it you may just come up with something . . . we all have new ideas . . . and we keep those ideas in our head and then after the season we start to work on them and next year we'll be ahead of the game again (M, 1-18, 20).*
>
> *We're grassroots, we get in there and get our hands dirty and we're not going by any formula, we're going by personalities. (O, 1-5).*
>
> *I had no one to learn from . . . operationally, and doing the ground. . I had no one to learn from, no one to tell me. Know what I did? I took these old guys I had, these old foreign guys who've been in the business I don't know how many years . . . and get a little knowledge from this one and that one . . . and just from seeing how things work and figuring out most of it myself, by the seat of my pants (P, 1-20).*

Thus, "current truth" emanates from "improvisation," which is a *modus operandi* that seems to be rooted in ALSG's early culture. Moreover, and more to the point, it should be noted that with striking consistency, comments about contemporary truth are normally made to contrast the younger company with ALSG/Markle, to demonstrate that the new entity is "better" than its predecessor. Thus, it may be argued that the *very fact of reference itself* – of using ALSG/Markle as an "anti-benchmark" – is a *de facto* acknowledgment of ALSG/Markle as a source of truth, both historical *and* contemporary, whether that truth be perceived to be valid or invalid. Indeed, when taken together, the language of these performances suggests that the "dark side" (synonymous to some with "historical truth") is in fact a Phoenix-like *source* of *contemporary* truth, regardless of the form in which the latter is manifested.[4]

Finally, in discussing the application of these "contemporary truths," a few informants acknowledge the "gravity" of industry culture; that is to say, in their own company's "search for the truth," they have found it impossible to be *too* innovative, to stray too far from "home," because previously established industry assumptions and practices (e.g. historical truth) exert a compelling force on their own company's actions. This phenomenon implies, among other things, that

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[4] As the theologian Bruno might argue, *On the one hand, evil is necessary for good, for were the imperfections not felt, there would be no striving after perfection; all defect . . . consists merely in privation, in the non-realization of possible qualities* (Gaskell, 1990, 314).

some "truths" may be eternal, and that bedrock assumptions may remain basically unchanged, regardless of fluctuating perceptions, and perhaps regardless of the manner in which contemporary truth is made manifest. For example, one company tried to be very different from the rest of the industry, but it just didn't work:

> *When we started here . . . we tried something that in hindsight didn't work . . . we tried to[let] everyone just do everything. Whatever it took to handle that client, everyone did, and it didn't work. . .we didn't want any of the horseplay we'd seen at ALSG, and that was another reason [our company] was formed . . . we didn't want everything to be done the way it had always been done. [But we found out, for example] that the sales person cannot be involved in the pricing . . . or bing goes your profit . . . you can't be doing that . . . so we went back to the industry model . . . .I think we had in our minds . . . that everything was wrong there [at ALSG], which it wasn't (P, 1-8).*

While discussions of this nature may well be expected to take place within genetically related companies, even non-genetic companies acknowledged antecedent origins of at least *some* truths, especially with regard to assumptions about the external environment, marketing, and product-related issues. Unfortunately, these companies' informants cannot be quoted here, to preserve their anonymity. However, "industry gravity" is also evident when one compares the descriptive prose in current non-genetic catalogues, not only to that of "genetic" entities, but most interestingly, to similar prose gleaned from quondam ALSG catalogues. To repeat one informant's description of these similarities:

> *They [the non-genetic companies] picked up a good deal of the . . . academic conventions [ALSG] introduced into the industry. All you have to do is pick up their teacher handbook or whatever they call it . . . you'll*

see [ALSG's] prose and . . . topics all over the thing: the sample press release . . . the sample letter inviting parents to come to a meeting to discuss organizing a trip overseas, the letter written to a skittish school board that 's a little uncertain about . . . giving the kids permission. . . . All the things [ALSG] put into the teacher-counselor handbook . . . [the non-genetic companies] didn't have anything like that, so I know they pillaged all that from [ALSG's] various editions over the years . . . even [down to exact] phraseology.

In sum, it seems clear that ALSG/Markle (and to some extent, Voelkel, who in fact is the author of a significant amount of ALSG's prose) are widely assumed to have originated what the industry today accepts as "truth" -- even though in many cases they are not *consciously* credited with having done so. Moreover, the root metaphor is continued throughout these performances, in language that suggests (1) an "eternal struggle" between the "evil" of history and the "good" of the present time and place, as well as (2) "redemption" from the industry's historical transgressions, as evidenced in the younger companies' "new covenant" with their clients.

The Innate Nature of Human Nature

The language of redemption also plays a prominent role as informants perform their assumptions with regard to *The Nature of Innate Human Nature.* In fact, the industry's *raison d'etre* is itself redemptive in nature, in the sense that it aims to "make a difference . . . [to make] changes in the world" (Z, 1-27). This being the case, human nature must be assumed to be "mutable" or "educable" -- that is, "redeemable" from ignorance and unknowing. Phrases used consistently and frequently include *changing lives, enhancing understanding, making a positive impact,* and *changing the world.* More unique but in the same vein are those informants who said, for example : "We help realize dreams . . . and ignite the kids' interest in learning . . . we also develop teachers to . . . travel with us, then they become high!" (B, 2-various); "Teachers come back and say to us that their kids learned more the 10 days we were in Europe than I managed to teach them over the last year of school" (C, 1-5); "Each of these programs are little contributions to making people understand each other better, to overcome ethnocentricity" (C, 1-14); "I . . . contribute to that young person's future" (L, 1-31); "I'm most proud of the kids when they come back and tell you how [the trip] changed something for them, how it opened their eyes . . . it gets them to look at life in a different way" (P, 1-4); "The kids turn into a whole new person" (R, 1-6).

Additional and compelling evidence of this "mutability" motif -- more specifically, of the possibility that one may learn and grow and thus change for the better (or even for the worse) -- is bountiful; it is an ever-flowing stream that winds its way throughout transcripts and documents alike, including performances gleaned from various companies' *General Catalogue* statements:

> *The most important ingredient [in your tour's success] is your belief in the educational benefit of travel for your students . . . above all, we are an educational travel organization (ACIS, 1997, 5, 7).*
>
> *Our student participants are our motivational force . . . we love to see the sparkle of discovery and appreciation in the eyes of our young travelers -- it is our reward, our reason to exist and our goal (CHA, 1998, 5).*

We believe that every student should have the opportunity to broaden personal and academic horizons through international travel (EF, 1998, 3).

Educators . . . find immeasurable value in . . . enhancing their students' understanding of course material, while broadening their personal perspectives and enriching their lives (NETC, 1998, 3).

Travel by the young (of all ages) to foreign destinations is an education in itself, and serves the cause of international understanding between peoples (passports, 1997, ii).

We are dedicated to building bridges of understanding between the USA and other nations of the world through travel programs that allow participants to understand and experience firsthand the cultural diversity of the "Global Village" that we all inhabit (Voyageur, 1998, 96).

But as poetic as these statements might be, perhaps no better description of "mutability" exists than in the following story:

A moment I'll always remember is when about 10 years ago I was leading a group consisting of high school age kids and I was on a vaporetto in Venice next to one of these All-American 16-year-old boys . . . .I took a quick look at him as his voice broke . . . and I was noticing that there were tears running from his eyes and he said "This place is just unbelievable and I want more than anything in the world to be able to bring my Mom here to see this. And I knew that at that moment, something clicked in him . . . that had he never been able to leave Seattle

to actually be in Venice . . . it may not have had the same impact on him . . . .the fact that he was actually there that that effect on him, and his world was no doubt never the same after that.

Certainly, this perception of human nature as being "mutable" or "teachable" is directly traceable to the industry's founding. It will be remembered that "student" travel as a distinct industry "is traceable to the Mormons [whose] missionary zeal required their young to travel overseas for mission work" and who eventually "turned their experience with missionary work into a company called FSL, in the early sixties."[5] Also, the company known as AIFS, founded in 1964, made its mark in "campus programs" and "hit upon the idea of teachers as group organizers" (Z, 1-15). Thus, the assumption of "human nature" as being "mutable" may be described as the proverbial "ground zero" in terms of assumptions held in common across the industry. However, according to one informant, the ALSG culture put a slightly different spin on this notion, and hence upon the concept of mutability, as perceived by this industry's members:

> *ALSG shifted the focus . . . to culture in a broader sense . . . it was a very contemporary shift, very 60s. Take a theme and learn from it. Very much a part of the "discover yourself" inward-looking kind of universal cultural pattern that the 60s . . . represent. In short, ALSG stood for the romance of travel, the romance of learning. In doing this, in effecting this cultural shift, as it were . . . ALSG [created] this core idea, the discovery of "foreign cultures" through travel.*

This notion of a "baptism" (as it were) into a "new world" resulting in self-discovery would have been unique to the ALSG culture; moreover, this language is still relevant to (and is reflected in the performances of) informants' perceptions of human nature *today.* Thus, it may be argued that ALSG's "version" of the mutability of human nature -- "redemption" of self through education, as it were -- undergirds contemporary assumptions.

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[5] This study, however, neither found evidence of nor makes any suggestion that the FSL culture was "transmitted" to ALSG. Although that is possible, it seems highly improbable, given the differences in language found in existing documents from that era.

Another very interesting incarnation of the assumption that human nature is "mutable" is reflected in informants' stories about their own "baptism" or initiation into the "family of believers" (e.g. the industry). To a person, informants described their initial "ignorance" of the industry, and explained how their association with it resulted from, as one informant put it, "a totally serendipitous falling-into" (L, 1-4):

> *I had . . . plans to be a teacher; however, during the summer of 1974, the founder and owner of [Company Foxtrot] offered me a job. And I thought, "Why not? I'll try it for a semester" and that semester is still going on 23 years later!*
>
> *In 1983 I got out of Berklee College of Music, and a former girlfriend worked for Gil . . . [so I went to work for] Long View Farm [recording studio] . . . [later on], Gil said . . . why don't you come in and negotiate airline contracts for ALSG? So I started doing that . . . and then one thing led to another and I went full time with ALSG, and that's how I got started.*
>
> *About 11 years now I've been in this business and like most of the people . . . I fell into it. Really. From a business point of view, so many of the [industry's executives] were never trained in travel in any way, shape or form and kind of fell into it, and I as well just fell into it.*
>
> *I got into the travel business by a fluke.*

Indeed, one informant observed,

> *[Many] companies . . . are improvisational because none of those people has a business school background. They founded the companies with their heart and their kidneys, and that's . . . how they run it . . . .So it starts as a kind of gospel-rally . . . like ALSG did.*

Of special interest are stories the historical informants tell about their own "redemption."

The original recruits were getting in on the ground floor of an industry [but] . . . there was no idea that anyone was a professional, let alone a marketer or salesman. God forbid! All of us were graduate students in the very early days. Some are still graduate students nearly 30 years later, if you consider the fact that they gave up seeking their degrees and followed the Pied Pipership of Gil Markle . . . .And this travel enterprise, this ALSG, was only supposed to be a diversion until we all settled down as professors. Well, you can see what happened to ***that*** *notion! . . . But that's how I got into it, and learned something about business, as we all did by doing it . . . .[and] since we were entering at the ground level of what was to prove a very high growth industry . . . our business bloomed and blossomed and very quickly took on a life of its own to the extent that we quickly found it to be a lot more exciting and challenging and stimulating and indeed more of a teaching venue for us than our originally-intended work as professors.*

I was working as a stockbroker and bartender while attending Holy Cross College, and I happened to be . . . talking about Saturn Airways' stock and up walks this person who turned out to be Gil who said, "I flew on that airline last summer!" This was in the fall of 1967 . . . .Then in April of 1969 Gil called me and asked me to come aboard and to run [his travel] company because it had grown so much . . . I'd never even been to Europe and here I was . . . hired as managing director of ALSG.

Most striking of these "redemption" stories, however, may be Markle's own:

I did it [ALSG] because it was there. There was no prior intellectual commitment to something called "educational travel" or anything like that . . . . It was a time when Timothy Leary, this brilliant Harvard professor, invited a whole generation to . . . tune in, turn on, and drop out. Our way of dropping out was in a sense this travel agency, this creation of a reality we called "educational travel" but which was no more than a lark, than a way . . . to put raw materials at our . . . disposal into some kind of enterprise. . . . Anyway, this is the situation in which ALSG was conceived . . . and what we did, what ALSG did, was put the best spin on what was already happening [at the other companies in existence] . . . . It was logical to capitalize on the academic origins. Ted and I were both Ph.D.'s [and] the others were in various graduate programs, mostly in philosophy, so that is where ALSG focused attention . . . . So here we were, all these young men with useless degrees ending up in a travel agency and saying we were the "educator's choice" -- that made it real, and it sounded plausible, still. The fact is that . . . ALSG's tours were no

> *different than anyone else's in the beginning; we just said they were. So as I said, the reality was already there, we just put a spin on it. But then, we had to believe our own spin, of course, and to a large extent, that dictated where we went from there. [Our overseas campuses, for example] were part of the academic gig, part of the fantasy, even the romance if you will. Part of the frame . . . . It was a style, a mode of presentation (emphases added).*

In sum, the root metaphor is enacted by and reflected in the informants' use of the "language of redemption" in describing their collective assumption that human nature is basically "mutable' -- and the assumption of mutability, present from the industry's beginnings, was "spun" by ALSG/Markle as a self-redemption through cultural awareness. Indeed, these performances recall Underhill, who wrote in *Mysticism:*

> *the self, abruptly made aware of Reality, comes forth from the cave of illusion . . . and feels in her inmost part a new presence, a new consciousness -- it were hardly an exaggeration to say a new Person (Underhill, quoted in Gaskell, 1981, 147).*

Nature of Space

Assumptions regarding the nature of space seemed to fall into two distinct categories: those issues that may be classified as relating to "internal" space versus those that relate to the concepts surrounding "external" space.

Although there was not a great deal of discussion about internal space, on-site visits enabled the researcher to observe the working proxemics of entities visited. In general, internal space could perhaps best be described as *communal* in nature. For example, the smaller entities tended to be housed in wide-open spaces, characterized by large and/or connecting rooms, most within "talking" distance of one another, unseparated by an abundance of doors or other partitions. What partitions existed were more likely to be portable, and these were noted especially in the "sales areas" (where telemarketers were located), where they were used to separate one sales person from another -- "so they can hear what they are saying over the phone" explained one informant (N, 2-25). One entity's space gave the *impression* of being communal, when it was in fact more strictly partitioned than those described above, because its walls were made mostly of glass. Thus, even if it were impossible to hear what was going on, everyone in the company could see what virtually everyone else was doing. The entity whose space was the least open seemed to be merely a "product" of the four-story, brownstone walk-up in which they are housed. Even so, in this company the *feel* was communal, as employees tended to move a great deal between spaces, to use intercoms frequently, and even to "yell" or converse between floors as they stood on or leaned over the prominent central stairwell. From these observations, one might suggest that the industry's general orientation to communal space reflects assumptions regarding the importance of teamwork -- or metaphorically, the importance of "family."

"External" space encompasses another set of issues entirely, and is an important factor in this industry. In student travel, the concept of external space is related to perceptions regarding distance and logistics, and how each entity deals with these factors in delivering its product. More specifically, the industry must overcome the potential constraints of delivering a product to a client who is, at the time of delivery, virtually halfway around the world (or farther); moreover, in most cases, the product has been sold to clients whom the "entity" has never actually met and who live at a marked distance from the entity. Thus, "external space" affects everything from sales to operations to marketing strategy, and is generally addressed in terms of how best to overcome these circumstances.

For example, use of computer technology is widely perceived as a way to overcome the limitations of space, as a way to "be there" in terms of virtual reality. Also, telephone technology has been relied-upon from the beginning to "shorten the spaces" between client and company; one informant, for example, explains that "you have to establish some kind of relationship . . . all via the phone . . . your voice sells them or it doesn't" (S, 1-4). Likewise, another says, that "you have to have a great voice . . . you can't be dull . . . you're on the phone . . . and who you are reflects how you're talking to someone. You have to send your happiness in the voice on the phone" (R, 1-10).

Product delivery practices are also significantly affected by the nature of external space in this industry. In this respect, the "courier" or "tour director" -- e.g. the company representative who accompanies each tour -- is widely perceived as the most important "bridge through space" as it were, between the company and its clients, between sales and delivery. Because of their critical role, couriers are perhaps the subject of more discussion and the object of more passion than any other topic, except for company mission. Thus, the tour guide or "courier" becomes the "redeemer" -- a messiah-like figure, as it were, whose role it is to "represent the organization's [truth] in a very personal way" (A, 1-13), or, in more evangelistic terms, to "go therefore and teach all (Acts of the Apostles, 1:8). Indeed, with few exceptions, informants consistently employed what might be called "evangelistic language" to describe the courier/tour guide's essential mission.

> *Our courier's role is to transmit this education to kids in a sort of moving classroom . . . and even when we forgot, our couriers never forgot it . . . . [they] are our educators (B, 2-2).*
>
> *Our tour directors are told that it's an educational-culturally-oriented kind of company so they know that the emphasis is going to be on information they give to the travelers as opposed to getting them to purchase their stuff in certain shops (Q, 1-8).*
>
> *[The courier's] mission is to give . . . students the best possible experience while traveling in a foreign land. They are our messengers, providing cultural and historical links along the great timeline of civilization. The ACIS courier is the ingredient that makes your trip magical as well as memorable (ACIS, 1998, 6).*
>
> Likewise, many informants who are former couriers describe their erstwhile roles in similar terms:
>
> > *[I was] selling the idea of Europe . . . self-discovery through European travel . . . we were selling ideas that have stirred European life and culture in recent decades . . . giving lectures en route, talking to the teachers, the students; we were reflecting on the day's observations and activities . . . . When you're in touch with a busload of 40-50 kids every day . . . you really do get to know them . . . a very involving, interpersonal, intensifying experience that goes beyond the teacher and the classroom. I*

> *mean, it's more like a summer camp . . . a familial type of tie we had with them . . . counseling-prep-school perhaps is a better analogy.*

Historical documents from ALSG that pre-date all companies now in existence suggest that the contemporary connotations of the courier/tour director's role are not dissimilar to those described in 1977:

> *The Tour Director/Courier is one of the most important individuals in the ALSG organization and the responsibilities inherent in that role are more varied than in any other position in the company . . . .Because the Courier is, in most cases, the only ALSG staff member whom participants will have the opportunity to encounter on a personal level, for ALSG teachers and students the Courier* ***is*** *ALSG . . . . Apart from the educational materials prepared and provided by ALSG, the Tour Director is largely responsible for the educational content of the tour . . . .You are the person who must now make the trip come alive! (ALSG, 1977, 1-7).*

Finally, and in addition to the couriers, aside from their perceived roles as "family members" or "part of the team," teachers are also spoken of as part of the "bridging" process – as well they should be. In fact, the entire industry has from its beginnings been predicated on the assumption that, as one informant put it, "teachers [can] be motivated to bring students abroad . . . extending their students' education . . . enhancing teaching" (A, 1-1).

In sum, it does not require an outsized stretch of the imagination to see allegorical connections between informants' concepts of space, their collective discussions with regard to bridging that space, and the industry's root metaphor. Throughout religious thought, the "bridge motif" is a universal "symbol of the higher mind leading to spiritual illumination of the consciousness" (Gaskell, 1981, 127). The industry's various attempts to bridge the "knowledge gaps" assumed to exist in relevant space are reminiscent of St. Catherine of Sienna's *Revelations:* "I wish thee to look at the bridge . . . and see the greatness thereof; for it reaches from Heaven to earth . . . and observe that it is not enough . . . unless you walk thereon" (Sienna, quoted in Gaskell, 1981, 127).

Nature of Time

Closely akin to the redemption motif is that of the "life cycle" -- the idea that "the progression and return of things form a circular activity" (Gaskell, 1981, 811). Certainly, this metaphor is present, not only in the informants' apparent orientation to time, but also in the circular nature of the industry's "seasons." First, it is self-evident from the various corporate catalogues that in general, the industry operates in conjunction with the traditional academic year -- from autumn to autumn -- and that each new "fall sales season" (Q, 1-12) brings with it the opportunity to quite literally "reinvent" the company. In fact, one informant used just those terms to describe recent and successive fall seasons: "Lately, it's gotten easy because we're not making a lot of changes, so it's not like we're re-inventing the wheel. Last year it was. We totally re-designed the whole catalog" (M, 1-6).

Here, it should be understood that although tours actually operate all year round, the bulk of them operate in the spring and summer, and more to the point, informants seem to think in terms of fall as "starting over again" (S, 1-5), an indea that is manifested most clearly, perhaps, in the traditional fall publication of newly revised catalogues (containing newly revised pricing, among other changes) and other marketing materials. As well, most companies' *pax* or *app* counts begin at zero with the advent of the "fall sales season" and sales staff start "calling our lists . . . asking folks if they are thinking about maybe organizing a trip for next year" (S, 1-4). Summer, then, is not only a time when trips operate, but also when "we re-vamp everything we have here in house that we send off to people: city fact sheets, luggage tags, evaluation forms, city maps, anything like that, we try to evaluate it for the next year, update it, go through all the evaluations, and see what we can do to improve" (S, 1-5). Indeed, one informant describes this process as "going through the cycle" with the teachers/clients (B, 2-8).

There is some evidence of a tendency away from identifiable beginning and ending points, however. For example, one informant explained that an emerging trend is "registering [for tours] all year round as opposed to just in the fall" (B, 2-9); however, in the main, the industry is still very much in synch with the cyclical academic calendar -- which is to be expected, given the fact that the industry's client base is composed primarily of high school teachers.

In addition to its assumptions regarding the *nature* of time, assumptions the industry makes about *orientation* to and within time are in evidence. These are somewhat complicated and are perhaps best described, collectively, as a pragmatic orientation to whatever dimension (past, present, future) best serves the issue in question.

An orientation to the past is observed in two different respects. First, one of the industry's most compelling *raisons d'être* is to acquaint students with Western Culture, historical and contemporary, but with an emphasis on the past:

> *Kids come back and say that now they realize what history is all about and I can see and touch the history (C, 1-5).*

> *[Y]ou've got that Italian person in Italy telling you about it . . . [you're] getting it from someone who's lived the history, and the better ones are giving your the background and the knowledge [whereas before] you've opened up your textbook in your Latin class and you've looked at it [but on the tour] that person is bringing you right there to it . . . .your textbook's coming to life . . . there you are. You're standing on the spot. (P, 1-14).*

As well, and as discussed at length above, truth has a temporal quality in that many of the industry's values, practices, logistics, structure, and other observable artifacts are rooted in the industry's own history -- a phenomenon that is widely acknowledged, regardless of whether informants perceive this situation to be for better or for worse.

In addition, orientation to the present is a "given" in the sense that it is imperative to deal in "real time," with the many complications inherent in operating travel programs -- and to anticipate problems before they occur, if at all possible. This issue recurred throughout the interviews, but an especially vivid description was offered by the following:

> *[You have to] adapt to constant changes . . . because the travel industry is so crazy. Flight gets canceled because of snow, then the hotels all have to back up after that . . . it takes a lot of maintenance and you're looking carefully at every step of the way because if you turn your head for a second, everything's changed. It's incredibly dynamic . . . you gotta be on your toes and watching because there might be a figurative sniper out there (O, 1-12,13).*

Or more succinctly stated,

> *It's all a very, very serious responsibility and we're aware of that every day, in every way (A, 1-11).*

However important immediate problems and concerns might be, and however important it is to be oriented to the past, this industry also finds it necessary to be oriented to the future as well, and where possible, to be on the "cutting edge" of the future, at that. This orientation is discussed most often in terms of keeping current with the teaching profession, with the needs/values of the customer/client base, and with changes in "product delivery" (for lack of a better term), especially as technological advances come to bear upon the environment. For example:

> *The key for us is to . . . stay fresh and innovative and in line with what's going on in education . . . our challenge is to recognize the challenges and changes in education and try to move along with it [sic] while giving it [sic] ome of our own flavor. I think that there are changes afoot in teaching and there are changes afoot in the way people organize trips . . . so we have to shift our emphasis into these areas [as they arise] (B, 2-7,8).*

This orientation is observed in the industry's forays into computer technology, and primarily in its use of the Interment for marketing and/or (most especially) for "educational" purposes. Seven of the eight companies included in this study have extensive web sites, and the eighth is under construction. All are "on-line" via e-mail and utilize various access providers for those and other services. Notes one informant, "The Internet phenomenon happened two years ago; we just concluded that we have to be a part of it . . . I think we were first on the net." In addition to web sites, at least one company is currently experimenting with electronic newsletters and other computer-generated marketing: "[We] have links with high schools where if you go into their home page, you can see us . . . [and] we have e-mail addresses [that we use for] bulk e-mail solicitation to clients." Attention to the future does not end with computers, however; this same informant noted that "before the [chunnel] was even scheduled, we had it in our itineraries [and] the chunnel wasn't even finished yet." Even more futuristic is the comment in one company's literature that

> *There is no doubt that during the second century of institutional student travel, there will be groups of American students peering down . . . from the surface of the moon (passports, 1996a, 1).*

Thus, the informants as a group describe time as cyclical in nature, and they identify the necessity of a concurrent orientation to each temporal dimension (past, present, and future), using metaphors, constructs, and jargon that bring to mind the life cycle motif, an implicitly religious notion. Moreover, and once again, these assumptions regarding the nature of time have been in place since the industry's beginnings, or at the most recent, since ALSG/Markle imposed the academic calendar upon its fledgling venture into student travel. To paraphrase

Disney's *The Lion King,* in this industry's circle of life is a wheel of fortune, indeed.

Summary of Assumptions Categories

The results of cross-referencing (1) Lyle's modifications to the Phillips model with (2) performances of passon -- notably stories, metaphor, jargon, and constructs -- are pictured graphically in Figure 3-1. This procedure has (1) fostered the description of assumptions shared by members of the student travel industry; (2) helped identify the apparent source(s) of these assumptions; and (3) in doing so, has suggested how this industry's culture may have evolved through time and space. It has also enabled the root metaphor, religion, to emerge clearly from the data set. Finally, it has suggested a secondary analysis of anomalies found in the data, leading to the concept of *Corporate Orientation.* This concept will now be discussed.

Corporate Orientation

So far, this industry has been described as if its members were somewhat monolithic in nature; however, that is simply not the case. Certainly, the *assumption set* that emerged from this study does appear to undergird this industry's unique reality. However, each company also has its own very distinct

ASSUMPTION CATEGORIES	PERFORMANCES OF PASSION Stories	Metaphor	Jargon	Constructs
Group & environment > membership > competition > critical elements	size/service CEO/sameness control ALSG origins	apostolic calling incest family heresy religious freedom empowerment enslavement	quality v. budget	heirarchy size educational tours collegial v. hostile control/no control (ALSG origins)
Practice of work > sales, marketing, customer service > operations, logistics	"cross pollination" classroom motif ALSG origin	liturgy mindset	educational travel teacher/group leader student/participant sales/admission staff courier/tour director hometown group membership fee adult supplement surcharge guarantee price plan bonus trip walking tours cityfacts/fact sheets broken; wave; fit pax dole SPITS (ALSG origin)	(overlaps w/jargon) + catalogues teachers travel free destinations teacher handbook classroom motif global classroom (ALSG origin)
Purpose of work > nature > mission	corporate mission; personal mission	religion/mission change the world	educational travel cultural exchange cultural travel	romance of learning romance of travel (ALSG origins)
Work relationships > type > boundaries	collegial , academic family ALSG origins	family of believers	teacher testimonials	colleagues teachers suppliers
Origins of truth > historical > contemporary	self-reliance improvisation redemption adoption ALSG origin	redemption (reject history/ignorance); good & evil industry gravity cross-pollination		historical (evil) current (good) ALSG itself
Nature of innate human nature > mutabiliy continuum	corporate & individual redemption; impact; ALSG origin	redemption (from ignorance); bridges of understanding		mutability, in terms of education; educational travel self-discovery cutural awareness
Nature of space > internal > external	courier role	bridge motif redeemer motif	courier/tour director PR	communal distance/logistics
Nature of time > description >orientation	past, present & future orientation	life cycle	related operations language;	academic year

Figure 3-1: ***Performances of Passion*** **cross-referenced with Phillips-Lyle categories**

orientation to those assumptions -- some would call it a *culture* -- quite apart from those of its sister companies in the industry.

It will be remembered that in addition to the data's having been coded for categories and themes, "all issues emphasized during the course of each informant's interview were recorded separately" (Phillips, 1990, 119). Although these "issues emphasized" initially appeared to be, and are in fact, subsumed under existing functional categories, an interesting thing happened when the data were re-examined in the context of *Performances of Passion* (e.g. stories and repartee): *distinct corporate orientations emerged, in addition to and not in conflict with the basic set of industry assumptions.* These orientations may perhaps be best described by using the words of one informant: they are distinct "spins" that each company brings to bear on its "set of facts," or more accurately, upon the cultural assumption set shared by the industry.

Moreover, and to continue the religion metaphor, it appears that these corporate orientations, although extremely significant, are nonetheless akin to linguistic differences discussed earlier in that they seem to be more "denominational" than they are "doctrinal." Granted, inter-denominational differences (as well as those of the intra-denominational variety!) can be both extreme and even noxious; in fact, some who hold those differences may not admit that they are even part of the same "family of believers" -- as witnessed historically, for example, in the Protestants and Catholics of Northern Ireland. Even there, however, both sides would have to concede to their being "Christian" as opposed to, say, Jewish or Hindu. Therefore, it is in this context -- and once again, not to de-emphasize company differences but to emphasize their similarities, "hidden" and subtle though they may be at times -- that the category here identified *Corporate Orientation* has emerged. Put another way, even though common industry *assumptions* may exist, and even though these assumptions may be "spun out" in the language/performance of stories and repartee, each company appears to *emphasize* slightly different aspects of these assumptions and thereby to uniquely "color" its distinct "picture." In the discussions that follow, three companies' *orientations* are described. Different companies will be marked by an alphabetical denotation, unrelated to the informant coding used throughout; specific citation codes will be omitted to preserve anonymity.

The Rebel Orientation

As performed in their stories and language, Company A's informants see themselves as "rebels" or "revolutionaries," even as they acknowledge the "gravity" (as it were) of the industry's culture. For example, they talk about being "the new kid on the block . . . having to prove yourself." In fact, the very founding of their company, in their collective view, is perhaps best exemplified by the following statement: "Remember, this company came about as a result of our working with a company that [we perceived to be] not client-centered at all, but profit-centered." Other informants' stories illustrated this sentiment:

> *I was in London doing work for [another company], doing the PR gig and getting beat up like a little punching bag. "This trip is the worst thing I've ever done! How can you people do this?!" That kind of thing. Of course, we were just telling them next year will be so much better and we'll have everything together and really believing it. And then I got a phone call saying "Thanks for your services but you don't need to come back to [Company Lima] with the rest of the crew." That was in June . . . and then in July I got a phone call . . . saying that [former colleagues] were gonna start up a new company and did I want to jump in and I said, "Sure!"*

> *You know the stress we all went through at [another company]; I mean, it was tremendous. You never knew from one day to the next if you were gonna have a job . . . .[So] I thought, I'm gonna leave this behind and go on to something else now. But when this opportunity came up, to be a part of it on the ground floor as you build it up, not to join an existing company, where things are in place already but to be able to bring it from the ground floor up . . . [it's] something I couldn't turn down.*

> *This is going to sound . . . self-righteous, and I don't mean [that] . . . but we decided to be an honest company . . . and that was the reason [our company] was formed . . . the opportunity to do it not the way you were always taught to do it, but the way you always wanted to try it . . . .I almost wanted to right a wrong.*

As well, phraseology scattered throughout the informants' interviews supports the notion of a "rebel" orientation:

- *Didn't want it to be strictly compartmentalized*
- *We didn't want everything to be done the way it had always been done*
- *I don't believe in titles, don't like 'em!*
- *This isn't a title kind of place.*
- *I came up with it for me, the way I wanted it.*

- *There's a lot more personal control over ... decisions here than I've seen anywhere else in the industry*
- *We were the first company to* ____________ (several examples)

Informants in Company A also relayed narratives that illustrated their "rebellion" against the industry model, as well as acknowledged the "gravity" of the industry's culture:

> *I don't think any educational travel company can be an educational establishment for all different groups of people [and we all] have folks who are senior citizens who are traveling with us, [along with] college students and middle school [in addition to our high school business]. And to devise a curriculum packet that goes with this is kinda absurd. But [education] is part of the industry ... and if you don't have the educational focus ... you can't thrive .... Our tour directors are told that it's an educational-culturally-oriented kind of company.*
>
> *We don't always want to be like the Joneses, but we can't deviate too far [from the industry model] without being completely different. I don't think that would be bad, but it would be different and that's another change. People are really adverse [sic] to change ... so change is good, but it comes slowly.*

Granted, one might argue that these sentiments are merely manifestations of the contemporary-truth assumption, "squared" (as it were). Perhaps. But the clear impression is that, to this company's informants at least, being "rebellious" is the particular "spin" they put on their set of facts, which in turn influences their actions, decisions, and most especially, *their* unique language -- *even as they espouse and perform* the industry's basic assumption set.

The Value Orientation

Company B also performs the industry's basic assumptions; however, its informants' language contain more references to financial success than do most of the other companies' informants. One of Company B's informants verbalized its success formula in these terms: "Keep your costs down so that you can offer your services and product as economically as possible, but still maintain a good rapport with your teachers . . . listen to your teachers . . . !" This tendency to articulate the tangible, hand-in-hand with the intangible, characterized the entire interview set for Company B. Other examples include the following:

- *Most important, keep your costs down, so that the programs are available to as many as possible. And the costs . . . [are kept down] by buying in volumes and [with good] buying power . . . negotiate good rates, good quality, good vendors.*
- *[This company] offers the best value for the money.*
- *Each of these programs are [sic] little contributions to making people understand each other better, to overcome ethnocentricity . . . . Couple that with financial growth and offering travel opportunities for more people . . . [and you have] a fantastic type of service!*
- *Everything is pre-arranged, where we take care of [all travel] arrangements. I'd like to say that we do it extremely cost-efficiently in our way of operating, which is that we always buy direct from the supplier. We do not rely upon tour operators. That way, we can keep our costs relatively low and the cost savings we pass on to teachers and students.*

One interesting thing about this language is that *all* informants in the industry mention value, *all* informants want as many people to travel as possible, and *most* companies "buy directly from the supplier." However, other companies' informants don't talk about these issues in the same way as does Company B. Certainly, Company B's informants speak convincingly and fervently of the value of travel, of it's "educational mission," and of its strong relationships with teachers; however, they also emphasize "cost effectiveness" more than any other group of informants and in doing so reveal/perform the "value" orientation that is so uniquely their own.

The Romantic Orientation

Company C visualizes itself as being "fresh and innovative," and the language of its informants suggests that they intend to stay that way. Elites in Company C seem motivated by a "complete lack of cynicism;" as one of their informants put it: "We still feel like kids in a candy store! How can we be lucky enough to have been doing this all our lives?"

In a more temperate mode, another informant said that Company C's most urgent and immediate task, at any given time, is "to recognize the challenges and changes in education and try to move along with it [sic] while giving it [sic] some of our own flavor." More to the point, this company's informants describe that "flavor" as the "romance of travel" (used synonymously with "romance of learning"), and they claim to be "totally committed to the magic and wonder of it all." "It's just the romance of it all that carries the whole thing forward," enthuses one informant. "You have to feel that very, very strongly to be successful in this business."

Informants describe Company C's daily objectives as "taking chances, being out there, having fun, keeping it fresh, and staying very close with teachers." Without exception, Company C's informants identify "travel" as one of the most satisfying components of their jobs: "Just being there. You know, just really corny stuff. Being out there in piazzas and everywhere . . . if I can get energized by traveling . . . then for me that's great, that's enough." Other, similar phrases include:

- *We help realize dreams.*
- *We need to re-think this whole industry.*
- *It's exciting people, it's connecting them with things.*
- *It's sort of a mushroom cloud that gets bigger and bigger!*
- *The good couriers are the ones that . . . have all sorts of tricks.*
- *Re-market, re-package, bring back again*
- *Be proactive and . . . anticipate what they[the teachers] are gonna need*
- *Move fast, resolve situations quickly.*

Again, it might be argued that this language merely reflects an especially pronounced affinity for the industry's espoused mission. However, as is true for both Company A and Company B, Company C's distinctive and repeated use of specialized, thematic language -- in this case, resulting in a "romance" motif -- nonetheless reveals the company's singular orientation, its individualized "spin" on the industry's common cultural assumptions. In fact, talking to informants at

Company C was a bit like being at Disneyland: Remember the magic. It's a small world, after all.

These three companies exemplify a phenomenon that was noticed, to a greater or lesser degree, in every company interviewed. In short, each company performs its own distinctive orientation to assumptions held in common across the industry. Among others, the implications of this phenomenon will be discussed in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR
DISCUSSION

The purposes of this study were (1) to describe cultural assumptions in the student travel industry, relying upon protocols previously established within the functionalist perspective and (2) to explain how these assumptions may have evolved by examining the basic communicative processes (*performances*) wherein industry culture has been made manifest. The study identified eight members of the student travel industry and used qualitative methods that consisted of in-depth interviews with the industry's "elite" members, as well as content analysis of selected historical and contemporary documents. Data were analyzed, first by thematic coding and then by interpretive analysis of codes that emerged. To frame the analysis, Phillips' (1990) functional "reporting structure" (categories) for cultural assumptions was cross-referenced with Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo's (1983) heuristic listing of *Performances of Passion* -- e.g. storytelling and repartee (constructs, jargon, vocabulary, and metaphor). One result of adopting this "paradigm interplay" as a metatheoretical perspective has been to demonstrate that the functionalist "side of the aisle" may serve as an heuristic frame for interpretation, while the rich description and depth of understanding generated by interpretive analysis may enhance the scope and understanding of the emerging frame. Not an original goal of the research, this phenomenon nonetheless materialized as the study progressed.

Beyond that, this study joins the growing body of empirical evidence suggesting that industry cultures underlie corporate cultures (Chatam & Jehn, 1994; Gordon, 1985, 1991; Huff, 1982; Levsen, 1992; Moreley and Shockley-Zalabak, 1997; Phillips, 1990, 1994; Reynolds, 1986). Moreover, this study describes how an industry's culture has evolved by examining communicative "performances" of its cultural assumptions; in doing so, it uncovers a primary source of these assumptions, and provides insight, not only into existing theories of organizational and industry culture, but also into the relationship of communication and culture, *per se.* Because of its qualitative nature, this study can make no claim as to the generalizability of its findings. Even so, it seems reasonable to assume that findings generated by this research may at least suggest the existence of comparable phenomena in industries both similar and dissimilar, and perhaps especially within emerging, entrepreneurial industries resembling the student travel industry.

Limitations of the Study

Despite its abundance of findings and implications, this study was not immune to limitations.

First, the informant pool was necessarily limited in size and composition, having included only elite members of the industry. However, this study has set the stage for future inquiries to include non-elites and to thereby gauge (among other things) the depth and breadth to which common assumptions are held.

Moreover, a few of the elites identified were unable to participate, mostly for logistical reasons, and one member entity did not participate other than by virtue of its publicly circulated marketing documents and its website. Even so, the data gathered were cohesive enough to suggest that had these informants been included, the findings would not have been significantly different.

A similar limitation concerned the fact that some interviews had to be conducted via telephone rather than face-to-face. Interviews conducted face-to-face tended to produce considerably more, and in fact richer, *text* than did phone interviews, even when both types were taped. Two informants preferred not to be taped, thus limiting the richness, and in fact the actual quantity, of text in their interviews. Nonetheless, all but two interviews *were* taped, and only four were conducted by telephone; thus, it may be safely assumed that these limitations did not bias the study in any significant manner.

In addition, geographic distance between the researcher and the industry's members proved to be somewhat delimiting. Certainly, the fact that the industry itself is contained within relatively close geographic quarters was both convenient and conducive to the research. However, logistical "bridges" of the space between the researcher, who lived in Tennessee, and the industry, located in Massachusetts, were troublesome, and expenses incurred were formidable.

Yet another limitation, more intangible perhaps, may have been the researcher's position as an erstwhile member of the industry herself. However, had she not been in that position, it is safe to assume that she would not have enjoyed the access to elites that was necessary to conduct the study. Thus, "familiarity" may be the trade-off for entry, in which case the researcher must make every effort to mitigate any potential bias that might result.

Finally, the reporting process may have been somewhat limited by the necessity to preserve informants' anonymity. If indeed a limitation, it is one that that would likely beset any similar study. Like most industries, this one is very competitive (albeit somewhat collegial); thus, to honor the near-sacred trust accorded the researcher, it is imperative that the eventual reporting of data *do no harm*, either to individual informants or to the entities they represent. To this end, the researcher chose not to report a good portion of data that was thought to be potentially injurious (and in some cases even explosive). This is not to suggest that the withholding of this data biased either the findings or the reporting thereof; it did not. It is merely to point out that the researcher must be both scrupulous and careful in balancing the interests of academic research and reporting against the best interests of the informants and their companies.

Despite these limitations, it is thought that that the data were sufficient to meet the goals of the instant study, and more besides.

Describing Industry Culture

By uncovering an identifiable culture in the student travel industry, this study provides empirical support for the notion that "industry culture" is a real and observable phenomenon, and that it applies to emerging, entrepreneurial industries as well as to Fortune 500 type industries. To a significant degree, the instant study was able to replicate Phillips' (1990) general structure (typology) for reporting cultural assumptions common across an industry, suggesting that this categorical mode of description continues to be an effective way to frame investigations of industry culture. Moreover, as Phillips (1990) predicted of future research, this study has "fleshed out" several of the categories suggested by her original investigation and has suggested several modifications thereof. This process was fostered largely by the "value added" as a result of going beyond traditional thematic coding and examining how the culture is *performed*. Put another way, only when Phillips' (1990) categories were cross-referenced with performance types, and *language* was thereby scrutinized, did any significant "fleshing out" occur. For example, a whole new category (*The Practice of Work*) emerged as a result of examining language that informants used to describe environmental issues endemic to the industry.

Modifications to the Phillips Typology

To begin with, Phillips' (1990) original category titled *The Relationship between the Group and the Environment* did not adequately frame this study's findings, because it did not seem to provide for a discussion of assumptions about the industry's product and/or its product delivery practices In this study, data on these points were very explicit and therefore seemed to warrant a category of their own. Thus, *The Relationship between the Group and the Environment* retains the original subcategorical distinctions that Phillips (1990) originally assigned:

(1) membership and group boundaries; (2) the competitive environment; and (3) critical elements in the environment, while *The Practice of Work* has been created to frame the discussion of assumptions about (1) sales and marketing practices and (2) operational and/or logistical norms.

The Relationship between the Group and the Environment

This study suggests that additional dimensions may exist within Phillips' (1990) original subcategories. For example, subsumed in the subcategory of "identification of group boundaries," are not only those dimensions that indicate "why" and "where" the group is circumscribed, but also *how* membership is conferred. In this industry, *actual* membership includes all educational travel organizations whereas *symbolic* membership is linked to each entity's perceived affinity for and adherence to the industry's mission to "educate" and thereby to "change the world." At the time of this study, all "student travel" organizations included are accorded symbolic membership by their peer institutions. However, given the relatively dynamic nature of the industry, that situation bears monitoring; symbolic membership does not appear to be something that is automatically conferred. In addition, this study found evidence of a commonly perceived industry hierarchy, largely based upon the size of an entity and/or upon the perceived quality of its product and services. Thus, data suggest that these dimensions -- *how* membership is conferred and perceived industry hierarchies -- should be included in the reporting structure.

In addition, Phillips' (1990) study of California wineries and art museums found that different industries exhibit "substantially different approaches to the conceptualization of the competitive environment" (215). However, the instant study suggests that a more holistic approach to the competitive environment may foster a more universal coding scheme. In the student travel industry, informants' perceptions of the competitive environment ranged along a continuum from *hostile* to *collegial* -- which may also be described by using the more generalized polarities of *threatening* and *non-threatening* or *empowering* and *constraining.* However labeled, a similar continuum seems apropos to a discussion of Phillips' (1990) findings as well . Thus, the competitive environment of an *industry* may perhaps be described as resembling a perceptual continuum between extremes of empowerment on the one hand, constraint on the other, and harmony the middle.

Indeed, Phillips used this language to describe *critical elements* in the environment, which were said to be classifiable as either *empowering, constraining,* or *harmonious.* The instant study generally supports this notion which, taken together with the competitive continuum (above), may further suggest a parallel between assumptions regarding the *competitive* environment and those regarding the larger business environment, *per se.* Moreover, the instant study also suggests that critical elements in the environment may be classified either as being *internally driven* or *externally driven* -- further suggesting that separate continua may describe the internal environment as opposed to the external environment. On the other hand, environmental performances of both types are, in this industry, embodied in the construct of *control*; command of internal and/or external practices and events is perceived to be empowering while loss of command is disabling. In and of itself, this insight is not rare. What it may suggest, however, is that the degree to which the *industry as a whole* is fundamentally in control of its environment(s) may shape its members' assumptions regarding which environmental elements are "critical" and which are not. Thus, *critical elements* may be subsumed in assumptions regarding the environmental continuum and may therefore not warrant treatment as a separate dimension thereof. In short, assumptions about the environment, competitive or otherwise, seem to arrange themselves within a common perceptual continuum.

The Practice of Work

As previously mentioned, two subcategories emerged with regard to assumptions surrounding the practice of work; moreover, these assumptions are so intimately associated with *performances* (e.g. with the specialized language endemic to their existence) that they may be described in just those terms: (1) the language of sales and marketing; and (2) the language of operations and logistics. Indeed, it is doubtful that this category would have emerged at all, had it not been for the study's "paradigm interplay" that allowed the interpretive analysis of performances to enhance previously conceived categorical distinctions. More than anything else, the emergence of this category, with its particular dependence upon the "surfacing" and analysis of common jargon and constructs, emphasizes the key role that language plays in "spinning" an industry's common mindset (or a single organization's, for that matter). In fact, this author would argue that unless one analyzes communicative processes (performances) *per se,* an important (if not critical) "window" to the "mind" of the entity will remain closed. As one informant recognized,

> *It's the one thing we all have in common . . . the lexicon of language . . . . In using language, you mess with the mind, you create a mindset. Some call that culture. It's an irrefutable core or what goes on within any common mindset. Use of language as a window of the mind. What else is there? (Z, 1-22).*

What this means, among other things, is that much of the "glue" that holds industry culture together may be found in its common vocabulary, especially that used to denote work practices.

<u>The Purpose of Work</u>

Closely related to the *Practice of Work* is the *Purpose of Work*, and in the student travel industry, assumptions regarding the latter are performed in the wider context of the corporate (or in this case, the industry's) mission. In fact, in the student travel industry, work is perceived to *be* a mission. An analysis of metaphors used to perform this assumption indicate that this industry has a common mission, perceived to be a quasi-religious, perhaps even evangelistic mandate to "educate" and thereby to "change the world." From this category emerged the study's *root metaphor,* that is to say, its "enacted symbolic process" that ultimately "shapes [its] cultural patterns" (Mohan, 1993, 57). Thus, this study suggests that an entity's root metaphor may reside within -- or at least be understood in terms of -- previously existing *functional* categories! Why would this finding be significant, were it confirmed by future research? For one thing, if it is determined that the shaping of cultural patterns occurs "within" a specific assumption category -- be it *Purpose of Work* or otherwise -- then that finding would no doubt have implications for the way in which founders and/or managers *attend* performances relative to specific assumption sets. Moreover, such a finding would also have implications for identifying the "driver" of the industry's (or the organization's) cultural assumption set, which in turn could enhance strategic planning.

Beyond that, this study's findings are consistent with Phillips' (1990) suggestion that the *Purpose of Work* may be described in terms of a continuum between extremes of doing and being, and in terms of whether tangible or intangible rewards are sought and/or accrued. However, whereas Phillips originally indicated that assumptions about the industry's "mission" (e.g. the "why" of membership) are implicit in assumptions regarding the identification of group boundaries, this study's data places "mission assumptions" squarely within the context of *Purpose of Work.* Intuitively, in fact, that would seem to be the case. For example, if one perceived the company's (or industry's) mission to be that of "making money" first and foremost, then assumptions about the purpose of work should follow along similar lines. This finding may have implications for the strategic and philosophical alignment of the corporate mission statement with rewards or incentive systems, among other things. Regardless, this study's data suggest that a strong relationship exists between performances of "mission" and performances of the purpose of work.

Nature of Work Relationships

Data in this category were consistent with Phillips'(1990) finding that work relationships may be described as either *hierarchical, collective/collaborative,* or *individualistic*. Members of the student travel industry were found generally to engage in collaboration, but within somewhat of a hierarchical structure; "teamwork" was regularly touted as crucial to effective functioning, for example. However, the instant study also implies that the relative prominence of *internal* hierarchies may be linked in some way to an individual entity's position within the perceived *industry* hierarchy. For example, and as might be expected, the larger companies tended to be more hierarchical than the smaller ones, even though all companies were notably collaborative in nature. This may suggest that some industries naturally lend themselves to collaboration more than others; it may also offer an industry-level perspective of the "widening gyre"[1] of managerial layering that occurs when companies grow and/or age. In sum, Phillips' (1990) original dimensions seem sufficient to describe assumptions in this category, the instant study having simply extended these notions somewhat.

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[1] This term is used in the Yeatsian sense and alludes to the upward and outward sweep of events as they move away from their origin, font, or source of control.

The Origins of Truth

Phillips (1990) noted that it would be "necessary to look beyond the means by which 'truth' is determined to the origins of those means, in order to flesh out assumptions within this category" (216). The instant study's data does just that. First, it suggests that "truth" is subject to temporal dimensions. That is to say, truth may be perceived as being "historical" or "contemporary," implying among other things that some truths may endure while others do not. Moreover, and in keeping with the root metaphor that emerged from the interpretive analysis (work as religion), contemporary truth is widely perceived to be redemptive in nature because it corrects erroneous notions advanced in the past (e.g. by historical truth). Intuitively, this notion seems to apply to most industries (and to their member entities), as evidenced in the promulgation of the "new and improved model" syndrome -- i.e., what used to be "good" is no longer even acceptable. Data in this study also suggest that locating the source of historical truth may in fact be synonymous with locating the source of cultural assumptions. Data further suggests that *historical* truth may be a phoenix-like forerunner (if not actual source) of *contemporary* truth. Finally, from this category's data emerged the notion of truth as being engendered by individual improvisation and/or collective corporate ingenuity. In other words, truth does not emanate from "experts" but instead from the application of individual inventiveness in an "improvisational" manner -- an interesting paradox, especially when considered in the context of *historical truth.* Taken together, these findings suggest that the

Origins of Truth may be described as ranging along a continuum between *improvisation* versus *planning* -- or perhaps between *theoretical* versus *practical.*

Innate Nature of Human Nature

Although this study's data did not address Phillips' (1990) "level of aggregation" dimension, it did provide strong support for the notion that human beings are "mutable" -- i.e. that "consumers can learn and therefore can change" (219). Whereas Phillips' data suggested, however, that some qualities cannot be "learned," the instant study uncovered a difference between the *qualities* or *inherent talents* one might possess and his/her *innate* human nature, the latter being inherently educable or *mutable* while the former may or may not be. Indeed, implicit in this industry's *raison d'être* is the notion of mutable human beings. Beyond these comments, Phillips' (1990) categories remain unchanged by the instant study.

Nature of Time

Although they proved to be unrelated in her study, Phillips (1990) classified assumptions regarding the "physical dimensions" of time and space within the same general category. However, this study's data suggest that both of these assumption sets also possess a spiritual dimension, and that these are even more unrelated to each other than are assumptions about their physical dimensions. Thus, this study separates these assumption sets into two disparate categories, beginning with assumptions regarding the nature of time.

Data support Phillips' (1990) subcategories, as originally conceived: Assumptions about time have to do with its basic nature as well as with the organization's/industry's temporal orientation (past, present, future). The student travel industry perceives time in terms of cyclical activity; moreover, and perhaps somewhat uniquely, it is oriented at once to all three temporal dimensions: past, present, and future. Intuitively, it seems that these assumptions would be unique to different industries. Some -- for example the computer industry -- might perceive time in a more linear fashion and might be more oriented to the future -- further suggesting that this assumption set may be key to characterizing the distinctive assumption set of discrete industries. Moreover, in the "redemption" motif of their performances, the student travel industry's assumptions regarding the nature of time exhibit a spiritual dimension as well as a physical one: The basic nature of time (cyclical) symbolizes the life cycle, as manifested in opportunity to "start over," to begin anew, and in fact to re-invent the entity (if not the industry). Thus, assumptions about the *Nature of Time* may be performed in both physical and spiritual terms.

<u>Nature of Space</u>

Whereas Phillips' (1990) data did not produce cohesive sub-categories that could be compared across industries, the instant study surfaced two: assumptions regarding *internal* space as opposed those regarding *external* space. Almost universally, the proximity of internal space provide and promote opportunities to commune with fellow workers, further underscoring the importance of "teamwork" across the industry as a whole.

Assumptions about external space encompassed another set of issues entirely; as with *The Nature of Time,* these assumptions also exhibited both physical and spiritual dimensions.

Physically, assumptions about the nature of external space are performed in terms of a concern with geographical distance and logistics. More specifically, this industry must overcome the potential restraints of marketing *and* delivering products to clients that may literally be half a world away. Attempts to "bridge" the space in part reveal the spiritual dimension of these assumptions: couriers/tour guides, in particular, are described in redeemer-like terms, for it is they who metaphorically hold the key to the bridge. Here again, assumptions in this category are likely quite distinctive in different industries.

Thus, as revised and expanded herein, the Phillips (1990) model remains a viable framework for examining industry culture. Although the nature and limitations of the current investigation advance this framework but a figurative step beyond its original exploratory stages, this study nonetheless provides continuing empirical evidence of the model's utility. Figure 4-1 outlines the differences between Phillips' original typology and Lyle's modifications of same.

PHILLIPS TYPOLOGY	LYLE MODIFICATIONS
Relationship between group and environment a. identification of group boundaries (1) circumscription of group -- why, where (2) criteria for membership b. critical elements (with modifiability) -- constraining, empowering, harmonizing c. competitive environment	Relationship between group and environment a. identification of group boundaries (1) circumscription of group -- why, where, ***how*** (2) criteria for membership -- **actual, symbolic** b. **external environment** **(1) competitive environment** -- **empowering, constraining, harmonious** (2) critical elements -- **internally driven** -- **externally driven**
	The practice of work **a. sales and marketing** **b. operations/logistics**
The origins of truth	The origins of truth **a. historical** **b. contemporary**
The nature of time and space a. time (1) basic nature (2) orientation -- past, present, future	**The nature of time** a. basic nature -- **physical and spiritual** b. orientation -- past, present, future
b. space	**The nature of space** **a. basic nature** -- **physical, spiritual** **b. orientation** **– internal, external**
The nature of innate human nature a. level of aggregation b. aspects -- mutable or immutable	The nature of innate human nature a. level of aggregation b. aspects -- mutable or immutable
The purpose of work -- "doing" continuum of tangible rewards -- being -- being-in-becoming	The purpose of work -- **relationship to mission** -- "doing" continuum of tangible rewards -- being -- being-in-becoming
Nature of work relationships -- hierarchical -- collective/collaborative -- individualistic	Nature of work relationships – hierarchical -- collective/collaborative -- individualistic

Figure 4-1: Lyle's Suggested Modifications to Phillips' Cultural Assumption Typology

Table adapted from *Industry as a Cultural Grouping* (p. 223) by M.E. Phillips, 1990, Doctoral dissertation, Los Angeles: Anderson Graduate School of Management, University of California, Los Angeles. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, No. 9017663. Alphanumeric levels of the outline indicate categories and subcategories of the typologies while dimensions of these categories and subcategories are preceded by a hyphen. Modifications are highlighted in boldface type.

Describing How the Culture Has Evolved

As mentioned earlier, the study's most heuristic and provocative findings surfaced only when *performances* came under interpretive scrutiny. In this context emerged a description of how the culture has likely evolved.

To begin with, data suggest that cultural assumptions are propelled through the industry's time and space continuum by communicative performances. More specifically, similar stories and repartee (*Performances of Passion)* imply common mindsets; thus, understanding the way language is used is key to understanding cultural assumptions, and more to the point, to interpreting the significance of these "enacted symbolic process ... [that shape] cultural patterns" (Mohan, 1993, 57).

To this end, the industry's root metaphor emerged: work is perceived, metaphorically, to be a *religion* that may be described as a singular devotion to the transformative value of educational travel. Unearthing the root metaphor was critical to the study, because "this 'dominant myth' is the fundamental generator" (Mohan, 1993, 55) of a group's assumptions, and thereby of its characteristic behaviors, policies, and practices. Indeed, the notion of work-as-religion seemed to "generate" or at least contextualize most of the other assumptions that emerged. For example, membership in the industry is "legitimized" by member entities' symbolic allegiance to the industry's mission. Metaphorically, member entities are thus part of the "family of believers" (albeit distant relatives, at times!); alternatively, some competitors are perceived to have "crossed the line" into heretical behavior. The language of redemption was endemic to performances regarding the origins of truth, the nature of human nature, and the nature of space, while the "bridge motif" -- a universal symbol of spiritual illumination (Gaskell, 1981) -- and the "life cycle" motif characterized performances about the natures of space and time, respectively. Throughout the data, the root metaphor was performed both explicitly and implicitly, suggesting that this "dominant myth" exerts a gravitational-like force upon industry's assumption set and thereby upon its "way of doing things." In fact, one informant actually described the industry as "motion around the sun of learning, or more accurately, [around] the romance of learning" (Y, 2-15). Likewise, the notion of "industry gravity" not only emerged during interpretive analysis, but was also explicitly acknowledged by several informants. Although little more than heuristic in this regard, this study nonetheless implies that the "force" of "cultural gravity" within an industry may be formidable.

Another finding concerns the "creation" or "source" of the industry's culture. Extant cultural assumptions, and in fact the earliest manifestations of the root metaphor, are primarily traceable to ALSG, to its founder, Dr. Gilbert Markle, and/or to his co-founder, Dr. Theodore Voelkel. Some informants may not agree with this conclusion, and indeed may be offended by it, particularly those who think that the "paradigms have shifted," (A, 1-15) that the ALSG/Markle/Voelkel culture is at best no longer relevant or that it represents sheer apostasy, at worst. Here, however, one must remember that the bedrock of culture, its proverbial "ground zero," resides within that most abstract level of taken-for-granted reality (Schein 1985), i.e, within the "group's basic assumptions . . . tacit beliefs members hold about themselves, their relationships to others, and the nature of the organization" (Mohan, 1983, 15) -- or to use the interpretivist's language, within the *root metaphor* or the *dominant myth.* That being the case, evidence accrued from informants' stories, jargon, vocabulary, and constructs is irrefutable: Assumptions generated within the ALSG/Markle culture are, *at the most abstract level of taken-for-granted reality*, widely shared across the industry today, whether or not informants consciously perceive that to be the case, and/or whether they reject the ALSG/Markle culture as being in any way relevant to the present time.

This finding suggests that the "founder phenomenon" is as relevant to industry culture as it is to individual organizations, and even more so. As well, this study suggests that the "integration" perspective -- wherein the founder's "personality, his dreams, his <u>flaws,</u> and his <u>talents"</u> are largely responsible for what occurs (Kimberly, 1979, emphasis added) -- may be most descriptive of the founder's role in shaping *industry* culture. Data also suggest that the *cultural* founder(s) of an industry may not be synonymous with its *actual* founder(s). In other words, the "spider" or the "webmaster" (here used in an organic sense) may not be the person who actually establishes the enterprise; instead, it is the *cultural founder(s)* who set the stage (as it were), who "create the mindset" (Z, 1-19), who spin the web of significance.

Yet another finding suggests that common cultural assumptions seem to have evolved "organically" in this industry's genetically related companies. That is to say, cultural assumptions were "carried" to newly forming companies by their founders and other elites who had previously been exposed to (and likely employed by) the ALSG/Markle culture. In fact, one informant described the industry's history as

> *a molding. I think of wine stock as a possible analogy. You keep a bit of the wine from last year's vintage, you blend it with the new crop, you keep some of that, so forth and so on.*

More specifically, this informant claims:

> *[Gil] developed a business culture that lasted and it pervaded ACIS, and you could say that elements of it have founded NETC because all the people who founded NETC have been at ACIS [and] . . . ALSG. Voyageur, Global Vistas, passports, it all comes out of the same . . . 60s corporation.*

Thus, a "genetic" model of cultural evolution seems to account for cultural assumptions held in common across genetically related companies in the industry. However, this explanation does not account for the existence of analogous assumptions that emerged from non-genetically related entities' data. Although at least one of this industry's non-genetic entities may have "adopted" assumptions engendered within the ALSG/Markle culture (by virtue of hiring an erstwhile ALSG executive to guide the newer entity's formative stage), this study found no evidence to suggest that former ALSG personnel were involved in forming other non-genetic entities. This finding is curious. For one thing, it may focus attention upon the "cultural performances" of corporate documents as potential conduits of cultural assumptions. After all, what better way for a newly forming entity to "adopt" a special "way of doing things" and/or a special way of talking about what is done, than to use as models the documents that come out of existing, accepted members of the industry? In any case, this study's support for an identifiable industry culture that includes both genetically and non-genetically related companies is perhaps best described as an "ancestral" model of culture, rather than as a "genetic" one. This "ancestral" model is pictured in Appendix E.

Taken together, the foregoing conclusions lead to a compelling question: In the preoccupation with *industry* culture, whatever happened to *corporate* culture -- that is, to the idea that successful, effective companies not only have singular, identifiable cultures, but "strong" ones, at that? Posing an answer reveals what may be the instant study's most provocative finding: the concept of *entity orientation.*

It will be remembered that when the actual language of each performance was examined, the concept of *entity orientation* emerged. In this study, *entity orientation* has been defined as an individual company's "spin" of, its peculiar emphasis upon, or its affinity for one (or more) of the industry's commonly held assumptions. For example, Company A's "rebel orientation" may be explained as its distinctive "spin" or emphasis upon assumptions about the origins of truth. Likewise, Company B's "value orientation" and Company C's "romantic orientation" may be explained as two distinctive "spins" or emphases upon common assumptions regarding the purpose of work. Moreover, this study implies that *culture* may be what an *industry* *is* whereas *orientation* may be what an individual *entity* *has* -- further insinuating that *culture* may be comparatively static, enduring, descriptive of the industry as a whole, and influenced most profoundly by founding individuals and/or organizations whereas an entity's *orientation to that culture* may be more dynamic, "manageable," and thereby more susceptible to administrative and environmental influences.

In review, this study's conclusions may be summarized as follows:

1. A "root metaphor" shapes meaning across the entire industry, as opposed to the notion of each individual entity's having a "dominant myth" of its own. Put another way, the industry's root metaphor/dominant myth exerts a "gravitational force" upon the beliefs, behaviors and practices of an industry's member entities; further, data suggest that this "force" may be compelling.
2. Extant cultural assumptions (e.g., the industry culture) may be traced to a "cultural founder," who may be either an individual, an organization, or both, and who may not be synonymous with the actual founder(s).
3. An "ancestral model" of cultural evolution not only provides for genetically related "carriers" of culture but also for the "adoption" of culture. One "conduit" through which the adoption process takes place may be documents and other texts.

4. *Culture* is an industry-level construct whereas *orientation* to that culture is an individual-organization-level construct. Visible differences among entities are attributable to their distinctive "spin" or *orientation* to the industry's basic assumption set.

Implications for Future Research

To begin with, additional research is needed to further modify, describe, and "test" the revised categories and subcategories of the extant model -- in short, to pick up where this study leaves off. For example, future investigators may, among other things,

- assess whether assumptions about the industry's holistic environment shape perceptions about which environmental elements are most critical for success;
- investigate whether the relative prominence of internal hierarchies may be linked to an individual entity's assumed position within a perceived industry hierarchy (such as size or age) -- or to its actual position within a quantifiable hierarchy;
- ask whether some industries naturally lend themselves to maintaining certain types of relationships (e.g. hierarchical, collective, or individualistic);
- determine whether industry assumptions regarding the *Purpose of Work* are -- or more to the point, should be -- linked to member entities' mission statements;

- assess whether or not the "spiritual dimensions" of industry assumptions regarding the *Nature of Time* (however they are "spun" by an individual entity) have implications for strategic outcomes, including productivity;
- examine whether industry assumptions about *The Nature of Space*, either physical or spiritual in nature, may drive either the industry's or individual entities' product delivery practices. This area of research might be of particular interest, given the advent of the world wide web's virtual marketplace.

Furthermore, if it is determined that the shaping of an industry's cultural patterns occurs "within" a specific assumption category -- be it *Purpose of Work* (as in this study) or otherwise -- then that finding would no doubt have implications, not only for the way in which companies' founders and/or managers *attend* performances relative to specific assumption sets, but also for their identifying the "driver" or "generator" of the industry's cultural assumption set, which in turn could enhance strategic planning in individual organizations. Along these lines, the model and its precepts might also be used to design quantitative instruments that would gauge the "depth" and "breadth" of cultural assumptions held within and across industries.

In addition to testing the revised categories and subcategories, future research is needed to "flesh out" the description of how culture evolves across time and space. In its suggestion that culture evolves "ancestrally," in part by the "adoption" of common assumptions, and in its pursuit of these "cultural conduits," this study has focused attention upon cultural performances inherent in an entity's (or collectively, in the industry's) public documents. Thus, the use of documents -- or perhaps, of text analysis -- as an entrée into industry culture is a topic for future research. As well, researchers might also try to determine whether the nature of a particular business itself fosters (or even requires) operating from within a set of assumptions that are generally shared by all entities engaged in a similar line of work.

Along the same lines, research is needed to investigate more fully the phenomenon of *industry* founder (or more precisely, the industry's cultural founder). Is this a valid construct? If so, who or what most likely serves in this role? What, if any, assumptions are most and/or least affected by the cultural founder's vision? Do the founders of new entrants into the industry tend to emulate or reject the cultural founder's influence, and with what effects? Would the concept of cultural founder of an entire industry have implications for entrepreneurs? These questions, and more besides, are ripe for examination as a result of this study's implications.

Finally, research is needed to validate the notion of *entity orientation.* If this phenomenon were verified, then it would provide strong support for the notion that *culture* is endemic to an *industry*, rather than to individual organizations. Moreover, defining *entity orientation* as a distinctive "spin" of the industry's culture would no doubt serve to enhance theoretical consistency in the field, not least by addressing the definition chaos that has plagued research in this area to date. As Frost (1989) noted, organizational culture researchers rarely agree upon what it is that they study or why. Perhaps that is because they have not asked the right questions -- e.g., they have not investigated whether it is the industry, and not the individual company, that plays the "starring role" in cultural performances, including their creation and evolution. At least one question ensuing from these investigations might be to ask whether an organization's success may be linked to its singular orientation to the industry's assumption set and/or to individual assumptions.

In conclusion, this study has provided empirical support, not only for the phenomenon of industry culture and a plethora of attendant issues, but also for the potential benefits of "paradigm interplay" as a metatheoretical perspective for cultural research. These findings imply that a virtual galaxy of research into the phenomenon, indeed, the *metaphor*, of industry culture remains as yet unexplored.

It remains the task of future investigators to continue the odyssey.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INITIAL LETTER & STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT

Linda G. Lyle

5903 Magazine Road
Knoxville, Tennessee 37920
(423) 577-4416 or (423) 974-3849
e-mail: llyle@utk.edu

date

[address]

[salutation]

[Your company's] well-established prominence in the student travel industry has attracted the attention of my academic research interests.

I am a doctoral candidate in the College of Communications at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where I am involved in a project to examine cultural values within discrete industries, using the student travel industry as a data source. Purely academic in nature, this study is of value both to business and communications scholars, who are interested in analyzing processes of cultural growth and change. More specifically, previous research in organizational culture has been largely confined to the study of individual Fortune 500 companies. There is a paucity of empirical, multi-organizational research that examines the notion of culture shared across an industry, and few-to-no studies have examined culture in developing and/or entrepreneurial industries such as the student travel industry. This study thus offers potential benefits for extending theory regarding the source of extant cultural assumptions in emerging industries. It is also potentially beneficial on a practical level; enhancing our understanding of emerging industries, and/or enhancing the understanding of how culture is formed and transmitted across an industry may enable executives to plan and execute corporate strategy more efficiently -- to name only one practical outcome. When completed, the study may be reviewed by academics and researchers, among others, whose interests lie within this field of inquiry.

I would very much appreciate being able to conduct an audio-taped interview with you for approximately one hour's time (during the week of ***). Interview questions will be general in nature and will attempt to uncover your perceptions regarding the evolvement of your company and of the industry in general. Any risk of your remarks being identified in the final product is minimal, and in any case will be controlled as follows: (1) tapes will be coded with a number rather than a name; (2) I will personally transcribe all tapes, and transcriptions will be coded in the same manner; (3) a copy of the transcription will be forwarded to you, for your information and corroboration; (4) material quoted in the research report will be edited to eliminate identifying phrases, if/when necessary; (5) tapes and transcriptions will be stored at my home, in a locked file; (6) only myself and the chair of my committee will have access to names of participants and identifying codes for same; (7) acknowledgment of your or your company's participation in the study will require your written permission; (8) you will be given the opportunity to request a copy of the final report/results.

An informed consent form is attached. If you are willing to participate, and if you understand and agree with the conditions stated herein and/or on the form, I ask that you sign the form and return it to me at your convenience, via fax (423-579-6963) or via mail, at the address above. Upon receiving your form, I will contact you to schedule the interview.

(Name), I do hope that you will be able to assist my research efforts. Your participation will not only strengthen the study, but will also make it complete. I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Linda G. Lyle
55 Glocker Building
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN 37996

enclosure: consent form

STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS
COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION
UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE KNOXVILLE

This is to certify that Linda Lyle is the principal investigator of the research project entitled *("Industry Culture" -- a working title only)*. She may be contacted at the *University of Tennessee, 55 Glocker, Knoxville, TN 373996, 423-974-3849,* should you have any questions. This project is being sponsored by the *College of Communication, University of Tennessee Knoxville.* Please note that as a participant in this project, you have several very definite rights:

- Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary.
- You are free to refuse any answer at any time.
- You are free to withdraw from the interview at any time.
- This interview will be kept strictly confidential and will be available only to members of the research team (see details below).
- Excerpts of this interview may be made part of the final research report, but under no circumstances will your name or identifying characteristics be included in that report or in any other report.
- Only with your permission will you and/or your company be acknowledged as having cooperated.
- Your participation in the study poses little-to-no risk to either your person or your company.
  Once transcribed, interview tapes will be erased. Transcriptions and other materials will be kept in a secured, locked file and only the researchers will have access to names and data.
- Although every effort will be made to eliminate any means of identifying quotations or other material that may be used in the report, please understand that complete anonymity cannot be fully guaranteed, since implicit means of identification within quotations and/or other information used may be unknown to or unrecognizable by the researcher.
- Although there may be no direct benefits to you as a participant, your cooperation will aid in advancing theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of organizational culture and communication.

To indicate your willingness to participate in the study, and to acknowledge your informed consent thereto, please sign below.

(signed)____

(printed)____

(dated)____

Do you grant permission for your company to be acknowledged as participants in the research study? YES NO

Do you grant permission for the research study to acknowledge your personal participation? YES NO

Would you like to have a report on the results of this research project? YES NO

PLEASE FAX THE COMPLETED FORM TO LINDA LYLE AT 423-974-4879

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

APPENDIX B
PILOT STUDY INTERVIEW GUIDE

APPENDIX B: Pilot Study Interview Guide

Tell me about the student travel industry.

How did you initially become involved in the industry?

Describe the industry's early years.

How has the industry changed over the years?

What things are common across the industry?

What are your own contributions to the industry?

APPENDIX C
FINAL INTERVIEW GUIDE

APPENDIX C: Final Interview Guide

Please describe what it is you do here.

Please tell me about how you became involved in student travel and give me a synopsis of your career to date.

How would you describe the nature of your own work?

Is this typical of what goes on in the industry?

How would you describe this industry at present?

How would you describe the industry when you started?

How would you describe the relationship between companies in the industry?

What kinds of things make your work easy or difficult or otherwise have the greatest impact on what you do?

What are the most important decisions that you make on a regular basis?

To whom do you feel a sense of responsibility when you make these decisions?

What kinds of problems need resolving on a regular basis and how are solutions arrived at?

What is the biggest problem the industry as a whole has faced?

How would you describe an ideal employee? A "bad" employee?

What do you like best about your work?

Would anything make you want to move on from this job or industry?

Is there anything else you would like to say?

APPENDIX D
PERMISSION TO BE IDENTIFIED (FORM)

APPENDIX D: Permission to be Identified in the Study

RELEASE FORM FOR IDENTIFICATION IN DISSERTATION RESEARCH
COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATIONS
UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE KNOXVILLE

I the undersigned do hereby grant permission to be personally identified, without compensation, in the research project entitled and authored as follows:

An Evolution of Industry Culture as Revealed in Communicative Performance
Author: Linda G. Lyle
Committee Chairperson: Dr. Dorothy Bowles

Specifically, I agree to the following terms of identification:

The dissertation chapter wherein identification appears (Chapter 3) was submitted to me for reading and approval. By signing this form, I grant permission to be identified, as represented and submitted to me in the manuscript (Chapter 3) that I have read. To ensure that these specific identifications are approved, and that no other will be added, I agree to return the manuscript submitted to me in the enclosed postage-paid envelope, and to return this form in a second enclosed, postage-paid envelope.

Permission is granted, as stated above, but with the following changes and/or limitations:

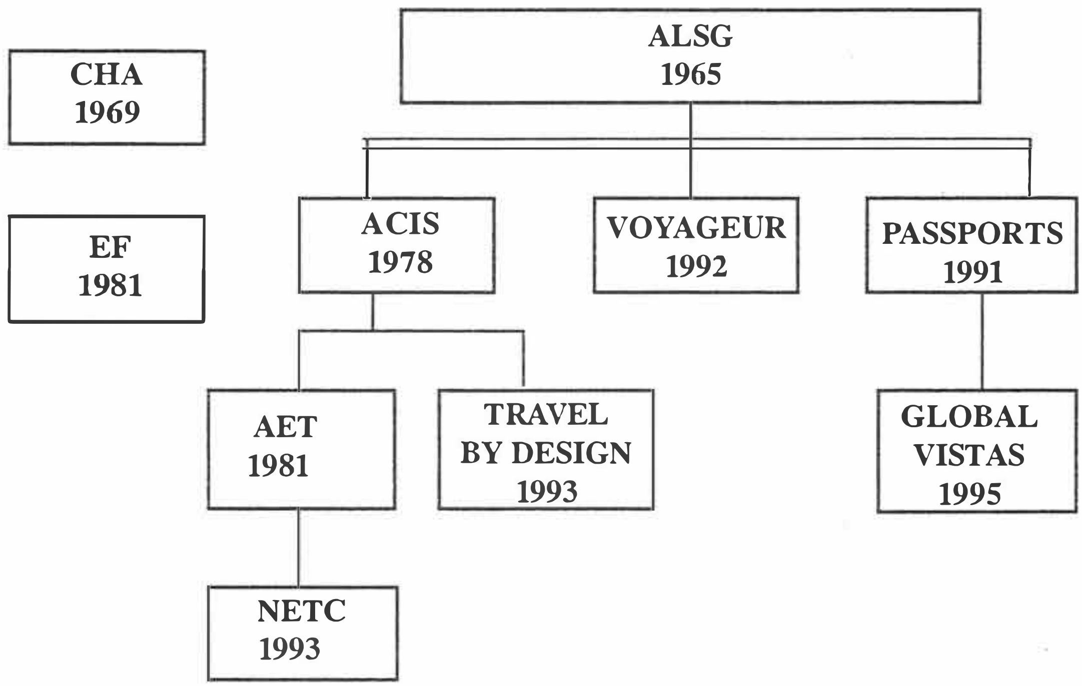
Signed____

Printed name____

Date ____

APPENDIX E
GENEALOGY OF THE STUDENT TRAVEL INDUSTRY

APPENDIX E: Genealogy of the Student Travel Industry



APPENDIX F
GENERAL SUMMARY OF ASSUMPTIONS

Appendix F: General Summary of Assumptions

Working in this industry was not a career goal; you rather "fell into" it by chance.

You often describe work as if it were a religion.

Sometimes, working at this job *feels* like a religion.

Your company's mission may be described as: to "educate" via student travel and thereby perhaps to "change the world."

You are very committed to your company's mission.

Students are "mutable" -- meaning that there is a good chance that your travel programs will make a difference in their lives.

Most of your co-workers may also be described as "committed" to the company's mission.

Co-workers are perceived to be like part of your extended family.

Your co-workers -- at least the "good" ones -- generally believe the same thing you do about the value of educational travel.

Some teachers are also like part of this extended family; at the very least, they are partners in fulfilling our mission.

To a degree, some of your suppliers are also part of your extended family; at the very least, they too are partners in fulfilling your company's mission.

This industry exposes young people to the world in a way that has a life-changing impact.

There are various sizes of companies in the industry; generally, it may be said that there are 2-3 "big" companies and several other "smaller" companies.

There are "quality" companies and "budget" companies.

Quality is important to my company.

Quality is reflected in "caring" about the client, which in turn prompts a concern for excellence in the product and services offered.

Symbolically, "membership" in the industry is "extended" only to those companies whose mission is educational in nature; in other words, only educational travel companies are part of this industry.

There is at least one "renegade" company in the industry, who is "not like the rest of us" in terms of its commitment to education and/or to the "romance" of learning.

The environment is very competitive.

The members of this industry are nonetheless relatively collegial, especially when compared to other industries.

"Bashing" competitors is not a good strategy.

There is some contact between members of various companies in the industry.

There is contact between your company and/or its CEO and other companies in the industry.

One of the most critical elements in this industry is *control*: having control over the product and services is important and empowering.

Things that are out of one's control are the hardest things to deal with.

Ignorance (lack of knowledge) generally results in being out of control.

The industry as a whole is not in control of its political environment.

The industry as a whole is not in control of its economic environment.

To be successful in this business, you have to "know in your heart" its basic ingredients.

In general, you and your colleagues do not rely upon "experts" because you have become the experts.

In general, your own expertise is a result of your first-hand experience in the business.

Unfamiliar situations are handled improvisationally.

When this company was founded, it was a seat-of-the-pants proposition.

Some "truths" in this industry endure while some change.

Many of the "basics" of practicing this business are similar in each company.

There is an historical basis for the way many things are done in this industry.

It is difficult to depart very markedly from traditional industry practices.

Even if it is difficult to do so, our company tries to do things differently, where possible.

Our company has the best "slant" on the way this business is practiced.

Basic work practices include the following:

- Most tours are to European destinations.
- Sales efforts are conducted primarily by telemarketing.
- Traditionally, sales efforts are initiated by mailing annual catalogues or other treatments.
- Teachers travel free for 5/6 student enrollments.
- Teachers earn bonuses or stipends for additional enrollments.
- Clients are primarily high school teachers and their students.
- Tour directors or couriers are different from those used in non-educational travel.

Basic "treatments" include the following:

- teacher or group organizer handbooks
- use of specially-educated tour guides or couriers overseas
- visits to traveling teachers by home office staff
- road commentary by tour guides or couriers
- membership fees are charged
- adult supplements are charged
- weekend supplements are charged
- surcharges are imposed
- surcharges may be avoided via "surety" or other pre-payment plans
- bonus trips are offered to teachers who sign up students early
- walking tours and/or city fact sheets
- General Catalogues w/itinerary choices

Jargon includes the following:

- waves
- pax
- fit
- broken
- dole
- SPIT

You have to find ways to "bridge" the geographic space between yourselves (and/or your home office) and your clients, and between yourselves and your product delivery (tours).

Couriers are one way to bridge this "space" effectively.

Overseas "PR" also bridges this space, as does technology (web sites, e-mail, phones).

It is a fair statement to say that your company is concerned with the past, the present, *and* the future: the past in terms of the history you hope students will learn; the present, in terms of your imperative to deal in "real time" with your business; and the future, in terms of remaining on the "cutting edge" of our profession.

Your company's yearly routine is more cyclical in nature than not.

The year traditionally "begins" with the fall sales season and "ends" when the trips occur.

AFTERWORD

AFTERWORD

This study is not about the student travel industry. Rather, it is about culture and communication -- and more specifically, about how industry culture is revealed in and perpetuated by communicative processes. It simply uses the student travel industry as a data set. Even so, it is prudent to further comment upon this industry, whose various members and informants have contributed so much to this study, as well as to clarify the researcher's relationship to this industry and its members.

While teaching high school in 1974, I received a brochure from American Leadership Study Groups (ALSG) that advertised summer European study tours for high school students. Already an avid Europhile, I was familiar with previously exisiting programs, most of which catered to college students. However, it seemed to me that the ALSG flyer was unique. Not only did its programs offer students a chance to study, but to do so while traveling and "experiencing" various cultures. Here, I thought, was a sensible pedagogy, one that enabled students to transform vicarious learning into first-hand knowledge. Thus, in 1974 I took the first of my eventual twelve groups to Europe with the American Leadership Study Groups (ALSG), for whom I subsequently became a part-time Area Representative in Tennessee, then Regional Representative for the Southeast Region, and finally the full-time Director of Regional Marketing and Public Relations (1986-1990).

As it turned out, the years of my association with this industry were its formative years, during which time I forged close relationships with its originators. As the industry grew, and particularly as it evolved "genetically," many of the people with whom I had worked at ALSG branched out to establish enterprises of their own. Most of these have been successful, and all have seemed committed to doing what this industry has done best since its outset: travel as pedagogy. Thus, although I was employed solely by ALSG, I nonetheless knew and respected most of the founding members of the other companies. In fact, when this study began, I counted as personal friends a good majority of the industry's current elites -- all of whom I both admire and respect for their collective illustration of how commitment and creativity can transform lives in the service of an ideal, as manifested in the conducting of this business.

Even so, I have neither traveled nor otherwise been closely associated with this industry since I left it in 1990, since which time its membership -- and, to a degree, its practices -- have changed somewhat dramatically. Thus, when I began this study, I assumed *tabla rasa*: that I would have to start from scratch in learning about the industry, even as I acknowledged that it would be impossible to *completely* erase my former experiences from my perceptive field. More importantly, I understood that there was an inherent risk in undertaking a study of this nature, in the sense that some of my eventual conclusions, regardless of their nature, were bound to rankle someone. Thus, every effort has been made to let the data -- which was derived from in-depth interviewing and document analysis -

- speak for itself. My intention is not, nor has it ever been, to glorify and/or apologize for any individual entity or personality in this industry. Nor has it been to imply any other normative or valuative judgments of any kind. As is true with any group of individuals, each member entity has its own peculiar strengths and weaknesses, and each experiences its own set of opportunities and threats -- regardless of the nature or the *sources* of same, be they confirmed or presumed.

Thus, the reader is asked to remain cognizant of the fact that this study represents one researcher's interpretation of the phenomena described, and that even though the conclusions reached herein are well-supported, it is also true that neither this nor any other study could account for every possible contingency. Finally, the reader is asked to acknowledge, as does the researcher, that even though this study implies that past is prologue, it neither suggests that the present is monolithic nor that the future is preordained.

Linda Lyle

May 1998

VITA

VITA

Linda Lyle is a native of Knoxville, Tennessee where she graduated in 1970 from Young High School. Following her graduation with high honors in English Education from the University of Tennessee in 1974 , she taught for nine years at Knoxville's Doyle High School, where her competitive drama teams earned national recognition. During the summer terms from 1975 - 1983, she studied and traveled extensively abroad, attending the University of Cambridge, England; The Sorbonne, Paris, France; the University of Innsbruck, Austria; and the Collegio Messicano, Rome, Italy. In 1979, she received her Master of Science degree in Speech & Theatre Education, also from UTK. From 1983 - 1986, she taught English, drama, and debate at Memphis Preparatory School in Memphis, Tennessee, was instrumental in reviving competitive debate in the Memphis district (District 6) of the Tennessee High School Speech & Drama League, and received the National Forensics League Ruby Award in 1985. From 1986 - 1990, her career took a different turn when she served as Director of Regional Marketing and Public Relations for the American Leadership Study Groups of Worcester, Massachusetts. In 1990, she returned to Tennessee and was employed for a time as an Assistant Professor of Communications for Walters State Community College in Morristown, Tennessee. In 1992, she began working part-time as Communications Specialist for the MBA program at the University of Tennessee; in 1994, she came to UT full time and added to her

MBA duties those of Lecturer in the Department of Speech Communication, in which capacity she is currently employed. In addition to teaching at UT, she also teaches Management Communication at Tusculum College in Knoxville, and does private communications consulting.

She received the Ph.D. in Communications from the University of Tennessee Knoxville in May 1998.