

style of subjective expression. Further, it is claimed that play is *consumatory* rather than *instrumental*. Play and work are considered rival forms of transformation, while ritual and *communitas* are conformative modes of orientation. This claim leads Henricks to a table in which “contestive” activities (work) are contrasted with “integrative” ones (ritual) and play too is put into the same contestive column and contrasted with integrative ones. These binarisms do not, in my opinion, work very well. Play is both transformative (it transforms the mundane into the sublime) and conformative (it has to conform to a very strict rule structure). Play is certainly “consumatory.” It is “self-contained and allows people to experience a sense of completion within the space-time frame of the activity itself” (p. 189). Yet, undeniably, it is also instrumental insofar as it uses various objects in a systematic and calculated way.

The logic of these categorizations and oppositions fail to make sense to me—though, perhaps, it will make sense to others. In any case, Henricks has produced an engaging meditation on play as expressive culture with excellent discussion of the work of many scholars. The last chapter contains a very parsimonious summary of Henricks’s main thesis and can be used with profit by all interested in the study of culture. The challenge posed by Huizinga, to take play seriously, has been given an appropriate response.

The New Old Economy: Networks, Institutions, and the Organizational Transformation of American Manufacturing. By Josh Whitford. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

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The New Old Economy begins with an intriguing statistic: more manufacturing jobs were lost in the economic recession of 2001–4 than in the downturns of 1979–82 or 1982–92. Yet, the political and academic lamentation over the recent losses was far more muted than either of the two previous downturns. The reason, Josh Whitford explains, is that the economic and social climate in which that manufacturing happens in America has shifted. Major companies no longer lay off massive numbers of workers because, for the most part, major companies no longer employ massive numbers of workers. Some jobs, of course, have gone overseas. But the flight of those jobs is best thought of as part of a larger and more significant development: the industrial model on which American manufacturing has been based since World War II has been overturned. What has replaced it is a new model in which smaller, leaner, specialized companies take center stage. Their travails have not—as of yet—captured the public’s attention. The book asserts that we need to start paying attention again.

Whitford is hardly the first person to point out the broader structural

shift in American manufacturing. But his are not the networks envisioned either in Piore and Sabel's (*The Second Industrial Divider* [Basic Books, 1984]) notion of flexible specialization or in Porter's ("Location, Competition and Economic Development," *Economic Development Quarterly* 14 [2000]: 15–34) idea of clusters. These are far-flung supplier-customer networks that cross the boundaries of traditional "industries" as easily as they do national borders. Consistent with the arguments of Bennett Harrison (*Lean and Mean* [Basic Books, 1994]), Gary Herrigel (*Industrial Constructions* [Cambridge University Press, 2000]), and Wolfgang Streeck ("On the Institutional Conditions for Diversified Quality Production," in *Beyond Keynesianism*, edited by W. Streeck and E. Matzner [Edward Elgar, 1991]), major companies remain central to these networks by structuring and coordinating supplier networks. Whitford's contribution is in illuminating how their complexity has increased over time. Where in the 1980s and 1990s, attention was focused on reforming production (through devices such as just-in-time and lean manufacturing methods), the focus now is on how to push as much of the design and innovation processes down into the chain as far as possible. Suppliers, in other words, are now expected to bring design capabilities to the table when bidding on work. Manufacturers that can play at this game survive. The rest are relegated to the ranks of the commoditized and await their fate.

But the key is not simply encouraging suppliers to bulk up on design capabilities; it is in how to achieve collaboration between customers and suppliers over product design. The book is at its best when it is unpacking exactly how those sorts of collaborations actually work in practice. Whitford has a keen eye for illuminating quotes and ethnographic detail that bring to life mundane topics like the "incremental target costing" that plays a central role in coordinating customer-supplier relationships. Fundamentally, this is a problem of balancing design advances while simultaneously driving down costs. That sounds on first glance like a lose-lose proposition for suppliers who must both take on greater risk and expense under conditions of restricted profit margins. But Whitford shows that it does happen, and indeed he goes further to show how suppliers can succeed under otherwise difficult circumstances.

Without completely dismissing network theorists' approach to embedded trust or the variety of capitalism's ideas on how national institutions facilitate long-term commitments, Whitford explains this surprising outcome by turning to the neopragmatist arguments of Sabel (see "Learning by Monitoring," in *Rethinking the Development Experience*, edited by L. Rodwin and D. Schon [Brookings Institution, 1994]; J. MacDuffie, S. Helper, and C. Sabel, "Pragmatic Collaborations: Advancing Knowledge While Controlling Opportuism" [*Industrial and Corporate Change* 9 (2000): 442–88], which dictate that long-term relationships emerge out of the coordinating rules that original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) impose within their supply chains and how these produce a sustainable mixture of hedging . Together, these rules result in a phenomenon Whit-

ford christens a “waltz’ of continuous mutual adjustment, in which suppliers and OEMs intermingle both competitive and collaborative interactions.” The waltz involves both cooperation (marked by the sharing of proprietary information) and hedging against opportunism (marked by the withholding of the same). So the “ideal” of fully collaborative cooperation is not achieved. But, this “incomplete” cooperation is nevertheless stable, and it forms the reality of manufacturing today. Whitford is telling us that it is okay to waltz at arms’ length; it might look a little stiff, but dancing does not necessarily require a full embrace.

That point is well taken, but the forcefulness with which it is argued generates some confusion when the book turns to policy implications. In the end, Whitford *does* want closer relationships. What is standing in the way is not a lack of ability or willingness on the part of suppliers to dance; it is the inability and unwillingness of OEM customers to make long(-ish) term commitments. Indeed, even when OEMs do ostensibly make such commitments, changes in personnel, business strategy, or market conditions can lead them to break whatever commitments they might have made. Without the reasonable expectation of such commitments, suppliers will not invest in the engineers, designers, and specialized equipment that participating in the waltz requires.

Put differently, if American OEMs only knew how to dance better, our manufacturing woes could be eliminated. It is not entirely clear theoretically why one *needs* the threat of opportunism to generate sustainable arms’-length ties. But Whitford’s inclination and training is (appropriately) to go empirical in order to find a way to overcome the barriers to closer collaboration as he has identified them. Drawing on a case study of the Center on Wisconsin Strategy, he argues that the local and regional government can and should play a role and that role is to be the chaperone that gently guides the awkward dancers to select a partner waiting along the side wall.

It is an attractive image. But in the end, the case for the locality of these processes is a little bit strained. While there is ample evidence that locally proximate networks are vital in creative industries and at the early stages of an industry’s life cycle, the mature industries with which the book is concerned are far more spread out. It is sufficient to note simply that state-level intervention is needed because of the utter lack of attention federal-level policy makers have paid to these issues. (Otherwise, one wonders why suppliers would not simply bypass backward, unreliable, or overly controlling OEMs in their home localities for better ones elsewhere when, in fact, they do.) Moreover, the conceptualization of “networks” that he has in mind is remarkably dyadic, while what evidence there is on, say, Japanese production networks suggests that cross-fertilization of ideas and capabilities *among* suppliers is vital to the kinds of upgrading Whitford is interested in achieving.

Nonetheless, Whitford does a great service by explaining in intricate detail how American manufacturing has changed in the last 15 years, and

his findings do provide intriguing implications for policy. If nothing else, simply going well beyond empty discussions of off-shoring and the “knowledge economy” to examine the concrete nature of relationships between suppliers and customers is worth the price of admission. The argument is all the more important because in doing so, it tackles many of the less glamorous—but ultimately more vexing and more important—questions concerning American economic competitiveness. While it is in vogue to highlight the brave new worlds of electronics, software, pharmaceuticals, and biotechnology, Whitford insists that we remain a country with a significant manufacturing base. This base has gone through radical changes to become more flexible and more innovative. Yet concerns for its viability persist. Addressing those concerns requires a new vocabulary, and that means delving into the fine detail of how the social interaction of actors in the market unfolds. Whitford’s efforts toward developing such a vocabulary—while in some ways frustratingly circumspect—are nevertheless considered, timely, and important.

Contemporary Organization Theory. Edited by Campbell Jones and Rolland Munro. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2005. Pp. 308.

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The editors’ introduction to *Contemporary Organization Theory* starts with challenging readers to examine some of the complexities unfolded in the book—such as the pervasive effects of language, culture, and science: “Questions also arise over what all this organization is for. Who benefits when community is eschewed for markets, when institutions are rendered into bureaucracies, and when sociability is altered in favor of friendship? . . . Or, are our ideas of organization incapable of being emancipated from the impetuous calls of efficiency and subordination? What place is there today for ‘ultimate values’ like dignity and happiness?” (p. 1). These questions lead to the declared aim of the monograph—advancing thought while drawing attention to what the editors refer to as the quality of writing that is going on today in organization and theory.

The collection focuses on the work of 18 theorists and aims to describe the distinctness in each one of them. These theorists were selected as making a significant contribution to organization theory in the past 20 years. The editors’ basic assumptions are that new theories are always a threat to the community from which they emerge; thus, there is no need to look for structural coherence or unity of theories. Rather, the advantages in paying attention to these theories lies in the introduction of fresh concepts that open thinking and action into different directions. The Western tendency is perceived as focusing on “seeing” matters such as organization as things-in-themselves and so obviating the perspective of “organizing.”