CALL FOR PAPERS
INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP:
TOWARDS A CULTURAL STUDIES OF ORGANIZATIONS

10-11\textsuperscript{th} November 2005, The Management Centre, University of Leicester

Coordinators:
Martin Parker
University of Leicester
Carl Rhodes
University of Technology, Sydney

Background
For more than 20 years now the field of organization studies has taken as one of its mainstays the study of culture. When culture is considered, however, it is almost exclusively done so in terms of corporate culture, organizational culture or cultural diversity at work. It seems that while the culture of 9 to 5 has been discussed exhaustively, relatively little thinking has gone in to the relationship between work and the culture of 5 to 9. Elsewhere, in cultural studies, organizations and industry have also received significant attention. There, much of the focus has been on the practices of the ‘culture industries’ and how they relate to the control of cultural production and consumption. Attention has also been paid to the relationship between the commodification of culture and the preservation of social and economic structures. What falls in the gap between these two important areas of study is the relationship between popular culture and the experience and organization of work. This workshop seeks papers that explore this relationship.

Although there is little currently in the way of a cultural studies of organizations, such a possibility does have some important antecedents – both established and recent. As far back as 1956 William H. Whyte bolstered his thesis on \textit{The Organizational Man} by devoting two chapters to an exploration of this ‘man’ in the cinema, novels and popular magazines. It has even been suggested that Max Weber might be best understood as “less a classical management theorist and rather more a student of culture, practicing what today we would call ‘cultural studies’” (Clegg, 2005). More recently popular culture has been implicated with organizations in relation to detective novels (Czarniawska, 1999), science fiction films (Smith et al, 2001), popular cinema (Hassard and Holliday, 1998), animated cartoons (Rhodes, 2000, 2002) and popular music (Rehn and Sköld, 2004; Rhodes, 2004).

Despite such developments, the creation of a ‘cultural studies of organization’ is still very much nascent. It is our hope that this workshop will serve to further such a form of study. We seek to go beyond the assumption that the production of mass culture is purely economic and/or exploitative so as to explore the potency of popular culture’s ambivalence and hostility to organizations (Parker, 2002). We also wish to explore the possibility that a materialist cultural studies might begin to transcend the disciplinary and intellectual boundaries between production and consumption, as was the case with some of the work from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham in the 1970s (Willis 1977).
We welcome papers that address the general issues outlined above. Specific topics could include, but are not limited to:

- The consumption of popular culture by people at work
- Critical representations of work and organizations in popular culture
- Popular culture as a site of resistance to management
- If or how popular culture offers an expression of the cultural meaning of work
- The relationship between the ‘critique of culture’ and the ‘critique in culture’
- Popular management texts as forms of popular culture
- Popular culture as a shaper of professional identity (e.g., police, lawyers, doctors)
- The creative use of popular culture at work (e.g., re-worked song lyrics, use of cartoon images to caricature management)

Abstracts
Abstracts of no more than 500 words should be sent to m.parker@le.ac.uk no later than Friday 1 July 2005. Please submit abstracts in MS Word or Rich Text Format. Acceptance will be notified by August 2005. This will be a small, single stream workshop with between eight and twelve papers, so we will be selective about acceptance. Please also note that we intend to approach a publisher with a proposal for an edited volume after the workshop, so are primarily interested in papers that have not been published elsewhere.

Conference Fee and Organization
The conference fee will be in the region of £160, including accommodation and dinner. Exact prices, further details and registration information will be available by late August 2005, but places will be limited. Please contact j.hern@le.ac.uk for details at that time.

References