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CULTURE AND SUBCULTURES IN THE DOMESTIC AUTO INDUSTRY: AN EMIC, ETHNOGRAPHIC AND CRITICAL THEORY APPLICATION

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN URBAN EDUCATION:

LEADERSHIP AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING

at the

CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY

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(Scanned signature sheet)

DEDICATION

To Lesley, my best friend and wife.

Thanks for the patience and encouragement.

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CULTURE AND SUBCULTURES IN THE DOMESTIC AUTO INDUSTRY: AN EMIC, ETHNOGRAPHIC, AND CRITICAL THEORY APPLICATION

GEORGE M. AMOLSCH

ABSTRACT

The domestic auto industry in the United States is struggling for survival. A steady loss of market share to foreign competitors resulted in the industry reevaluating their business and labor practices that have proven so successful over the years. The problem is that little research has been conducted regarding the impact that the interrelationship between separate management, union, and work force subcultures are having on the reorganization of the domestic auto industry. The purpose of this research was to examine the impact the past and present business and labor practices have had on the domestic automobile industry from the perspective of three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers. This critical qualitative study will augment the awareness of others interested in how the interrelationship between business and labor practices can lead to an entrenched bureaucratic system that impacts not only the total industry culture but also its existing subcultures.

To fulfill the purpose of the research ethnographic interviews of managers, union representatives, and line workers were conducted. An emic approach of the author was incorporated into the process in an attempt to further the thick descriptions of the participants as they tell their stories.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For nearly four decades after World War II the auto industry set the standard in American society for industrial workers wages, health care, and pension benefits (McCracken & Hawkins Jr. 2006). During this era of great economic expansion the domestic auto industry remained a tight oligarchy dominated by The Big Three, Chrysler, Ford, and General Motors. They controlled virtually 100% of the American auto market. The United Auto Workers union (UAW) also held a labor monopoly in its representation of the work force in the industry. The huge profits being realized due to the rising demand for cars and the lack of competition from other manufacturers after World War II allowed both the auto companies and union to solidify positions of power. The auto industry became so powerful that they were able to drive the decisions that created the interstate highway system, the development of suburbs, the atrophy of public transport, and the development of millions of jobs in related industries (Anderson & Cavanagh, 2005). The labor contracts negotiated between the companies and union permitted the workers to share in the windfall through higher wages and benefits. This was a testament to the American Dream that allowed people without higher education to

occupy a niche near the top of the blue collar work force with access to the trappings of a middle class existence.

The concept of class in the United States remains highly subjective**.** Marwick (1980) contends that forms of class differ from country to country determined by the historical evolution of that particular country. "Class is not fixed and unchanging…The nature and significance of class changes as society changes" (Marwick, 1980, p. 20). The patterns of social, ideological, and institutional changes that occurred after WW II in the United States provided the means of identifying different classes. Essentially, differing classes occur when individuals feel and articulate their interests as a result of a common experience between others whose interests are perceived as different from their own. In addition, what defines class is not only this sense of self-identification and / or the ability to own property, but a person's type of labor and the ability to control it (Vanneman & Cannon, 1987).

Times have changed. Globalization is changing the world. Globalization, as defined by David Rothkopf, a former senior Department of Commerce official in the Clinton administration, describes the changing relationship between governments and big business. Rothkopf in Friedman (2005) assents:

> But what is going on today is a much broader more profound phenomenon…It is not simply about how governments, business, and people communicate, not just about how organizations interact, but is about things that impact some of the deepest, most ingrained aspects of society right down to the nature of the social contract. (p. 45)

In the United States the employment relationship or social contract has been characterized by a mutual long-term commitment between companies and employees. In this case the term social contract implies an agreement between the auto companies and the union regarding the wages, benefits and future employment of the work force. The inability of the companies, union and work force to adapt to globalization has hindered their competitiveness thus jeopardizing these social contracts. As a result, the industry is now being confronted with layoffs, plant closings, and reductions in pay and benefits thus reneging on the social contract with their workers.

As the auto industry enters the 21st century it is fairly obvious that the business approach shaped and defined during the past decades in the domestic auto industry have proven ill suited to the present world situation. Global competition with other auto companies with different business models of production and different work cultures are proving successful in rendering the old production model obsolete. The consequences remain that the companies (and unions), through lack of leadership, flexibility and imagination, that remain slow to react and adapt to the changes necessary to compete will not survive (Friedman, 2005). Changing the established rules in the domestic auto industry in an effort to survive will not be easy.

The domestic automobile industry has half-heartedly attempted changes to their manufacturing techniques in the past to little or no avail. Their current strategy is to implement their own versions of the highly efficient management strategies pioneered by Toyota. This Toyota Production System (TPS) is a flexible system that presumes a competitive edge cannot be gained by treating workers like machines and that no one in

the manufacturing process with the exception of the assembly line worker adds value to the product (Nakane and Hall, 2002). In the book "The Machine That Changed the World" (1990), the authors, Womack, Jones, and Roos, coined the term "lean production" for this type of operating system. This system is designed to eliminate waste while still producing a high quality product. Lean production assumes that an assembly line worker with the proper training can perform most job functions better than management specialists. The intent is to develop the work force as direct action people that will have the ability and wherewithal to function autonomously, not only in the operational processes but also to provide an avenue for input for improving upon them. Total Quality Management (TQM), another aspect of lean production, where every step of the fabrication process can be conducted perfectly, will improve with operator input. Success in these areas will then provide the opportunity to implement the concept of "just in time delivery". This practice reduces the need for large amounts of extra (buffer) stock being kept on hand. In order to be successful this TPS/lean production culture must invest full faith and confidence in the people doing the direct work. The system is designed to stimulate the work force to develop their capabilities to the fullest while making maximum use of their individual talents (Nakane & Hall, 2002).

The auto companies both in the past and currently are supporting these efforts aimed at improvement but have been hobbled by a lack of firm, consistent leadership at the top and a divisive, feudalistic corporate culture that has grown up over the years (Oneal & Mateja, 2006). Unions have also been slow to react to changes occurring

within the auto industry. They too have histories, organizational cultures, ideologies, and programs for action just as the auto industry does (Kleiner, McLean & Dreher, 1986). The culture of both company and union has been passed on to the work force. Although all parties recognize the need for change, management, union officials, and workers have been trained and developed to operate within the same antiquated parameters that have proven successful in the past. These parameters include, but are not limited to, the notions of a greedy management versus exploited worker, seniority over flexibility, fixed benefits, and strike threats to keep their companies profitable and innovative in a world of growing competition (Editorial, 2005). The implementation of new rules in an attempt to create a new working culture will be hindered by the perceived power relations between the company, union, and work force. The changes will also affect the power relations of each faction internally. As a result, until the industry is capable of addressing the internal issues of management, union, and workers, in conjunction with the global external issues, they will continue to falter in regards to the implementation of their own suggested and agreed upon guidelines for change.

Problem Statement

Henry Ford believed that people worked for only two reasons: one is for wages, and the other is the fear of losing their jobs (Thompson, 2005). Without jobs there are no wages. The highly successful corporate and union operating strategies and philosophies that were once deemed acceptable to initiate unskilled auto workers into an upper stratum working class existence are now being questioned as the reality of

reduced wages, reduced benefits, and the loss of high paying manufacturing jobs occur. These changes occurring in the auto industry are impacting auto workers in such a way that they find themselves in a position of having virtually no input or control over their present situation (Freeman and Rogers, 1999). The problem is that little research has been conducted regarding the impact that the interrelationship between separate management, union, and work force subcultures are having on reorganizing the culture of the domestic auto industry. The purpose of this research was to examine the impact the past and present business and labor practices have had on the domestic automobile industry from the perspective of three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers. How the culture of the auto industry and union, while providing an upper working class lifestyle for all parties, has in actuality created a more legalistic corporate and union bureaucratic system that now excludes the average worker from participating in the decisions that ultimately affects him or her will be examined. The culmination of years of effort to control the work force by both the union and the companies has caught up with an apathetic work force intent on maintaining their upper stratum working class status. The expectations and personal experiences of individuals, including management, union, or workers in the domestic auto industry has molded and reinforced the existing culture to such an extent that it is now interfering with the perpetuation of the subcultures version of the American Dream.

Research Questions

Often in qualitative research the initial research inquiries begin as broad generalizations and may appear vague and unfocused. As the research proceeds new questions may arise while original questions no longer seem relevant. The literature review will help focus and guide the process. Initially the primary research questions for this project were broadly structured and directed at differing levels of management, both incumbent and past union officials at the local level, and assembly line workers. To assist in focusing attention on the purpose of this research the primary research questions were as follows:

1. What is the perception of management and union representatives within the auto industry regarding globalization serving as a catalyst to implement new human resource strategies?
2. What is the perception of the hourly work force regarding their role in the corporate / union culture that has developed in the domestic auto industry?
3. What is the perception of the hourly work force regarding the implementation of industry changes that could impact their livelihood and lifestyle?
4. What is the perception of management, union and hourly work force regarding the implementation of new personnel development strategies (for example, learning and motivation, etc.) designed to insure the survival of the domestic auto industry in a global environment?

These questions were generated from many different sources and all relate to my interest in the auto industry. Two previous pilot studies I conducted: "Toward a paradigm shift in Ford Motor Company leadership style: Identifying effective coaching practices and characteristics" (Amolsch, 2004) and "A shifting of unionized manufacturing workers perception of the auto industry: Identifying areas of disenfranchisement" (Amolsch, 2005) piqued my interest into further expanding research in these areas. My primary source of interest is the result of thirty plus years experience in the industry. As a corporate / union trainer for the past fifteen years, I had intimate contact with management, union representatives, and workers in a classroom environment as new training classes were introduced. I observed first hand the differing perspectives and viewpoints of all three parties to the perceived challenges regarding the implementation and sustainability of any new programs. A secondary, more selfish, reason for this research is an attempt to try and maintain the benefits and retirement gained over the years intact for not only me but for all others hoping to some day retire from the industry.

In order to discern answers to these research questions, I collected data from several sources and analyzed it in various ways. The major source of data was compiled by employing an ethnographic approach to the research. Ethnography, as defined by Hoey (2005), is a qualitative research method whose product is a cultural interpretation. A culture consists of certain values, practices, relationships, and identifications. For each work setting in the factory, from new training programs, contractual issues, line speed increases or favoritism, to name a few, there is prior cultural knowledge held by

each individual regarding not only the action but the expected results versus the actual results. This can also include unspoken understandings of particular events. The auto industry has its own particular culture but subcultures within the union, management and the workers also exist. This project is essentially a study of these subcultures. In order to comprehend behaviors, values, and meanings, whether a union official, salary employee, or line worker, a researcher must take into account each group's culture. To further enhance and bring to life the research in regards to understanding this culture I made use of my thirty plus years of experience in the auto industry from an emic perspective.

To accomplish the purpose of this research I strived to uncover the stories of management, union officials, and workers in the domestic auto industry. The stories related are told from a manager's, union officials, and workers' perspective. The data was collected at a Midwestern auto assembly plant where I was once employed. Incumbent and past union officials at the local level, middle management, and shop floor workers were interviewed. The employees were interviewed and their responses transcribed into a written dialogue and analyzed to develop common themes. As the policies and positions of the leaders of management, union, and workers were documented an opportunity to address areas of success as well as areas of opportunity for organizational change occurred. The ethnographic approach, in conjunction with an emic approach assisted me in focusing on these common themes as well as identifying divergent viewpoints of those interviewed.

Significance

This research examined the impact of past and present business and labor practices on the domestic automobile industry from the perspective of three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers. In their own words, representatives of these three subcultures provided their perceptions of the domestic auto industries union, company, and labor practices that have proved so successful in the past. The participants were also given the opportunity to provide their perceptions regarding potential future changes to union, company, and labor practices as the industry is faced with the impact of globalization. This research will raise awareness regarding the functioning of corporate and union leadership in a global environment and the conundrum they find themselves in as they battle for the hearts and minds of workers. In addition to enhancing one's understanding of the overall culture of the auto industry the narratives affords a further glimpse into three separate subcultures that exist within the industry. It also provides workers with increased comprehension regarding how the introduction to an upper stratum working class existence is obtainable but with strings attached.

From the thick descriptions obtained from the participants in conjunction with the authors emic approach others will be able to comprehend the trials and tribulations of people, including managers, union representatives, or workers, trying to maintain their perceived class status. The common themes and stories provide a greater understanding of those ultimately affected by globalization in an industry once deemed untouchable. It may be difficult to generalize completely with what has and is transpiring in the domestic auto industry but others in similar situations can gain a sense

of how three different subcultures present in a once dominant industry perceive their industries decline. The research findings can result in union/management mentoring programs, continuing education classes, and even college courses that can lead to a revitalized, more optimistic and profitable future for unions, workers, and the domestic auto industry.

Background and Overview

Researcher's Perspective

This research project in regards to the culture and subcultures in the auto industry was addressed from a critical theory perspective. Bogdan & Biklen (2003) define critical theory "as being critical of social organizations that privilege some at the expense of others …and that research is an ethical and political act that always benefits a specific group" (p. 21). Alvesson and Willmott (1996) contend that:

> "The intent of critical theory is to foster a rational, democratic development of modern institutions in which self-reflective, autonomous and responsible citizens become progressively less dependent upon received understandings of their needs, and are less entranced by the apparent naturalness or inevitability of the prevailing politico-economic order. To this end critical theory encourages the questioning of ends (e.g. growth, profitability, productivity) as well as the preferred means, such as dependence upon expert rule and bureaucratic

control, the contrivance of charismatic corporate leadership, gendered and deskilled work, marketing of lifestyles, etc." (p. 17).

The cultural and historical powers at work in the auto industry have the ability to influence an individual's view not only of themselves but also his or her perception of the world. Power, as defined by Weber (1978), is the ability to get others to do something they would otherwise not do. The existence of power in organizations and its resulting consequences operates at different levels and is capable of influencing views by controlling the development of employee knowledge. Power can also be employed to suppress issues to avoid decision making or in order to insure the ideas and practices of the dominant party is sustained (Schied, Carter & Howell, 2001). While the uses and consequences of power within conditions of conflict is easily recognizable there are also other operational levels attributed to power. In addition, Lukes (1974) argues for another prevalent form of power that he refers to as silent power. This silent power results in the inaction of the people to the point they become complicit in their role in the existing order.

A critical social theory is concerned with the issues of power and justice and the ways the economy, matters of race, gender, class, ideologies, discourses, education, religion, and other social institutions and cultural dynamics interact to construct a social system (Kincheloe & MacLaren, 2000). Habermas (1972), an influential critical theorist, describes three human interests for which one's knowledge is developed within that social system. First, technical knowledge is developed to control one's material environment by organizing and maintaining an economic and political system. Secondly,

this knowledge incorporates a shared meaning of every day life by developing the practical interests that come from the need to understand one another. Thirdly, emancipatory interests are developed from the desire to be free of oppression. Emancipatory oppression is an understanding of the contradictions between truth and reality. Qualitative research that frames its purpose in the context of critical theoretical concerns can produce potentially dangerous knowledge. This kind of information and insight has the potential to upset institutions and threaten to overturn existing sovereign regimes of truth (Kincheloe & MacLaren, 2000).

Critical theory has the potential to disrupt the status quo. While critical qualitative research remains one of several genres of inquiry into non-quantifiable pictures of social life (Carspecken, 1996), it does not comprise a single umbrella theory that answers all concerns raised. Assumptions reached through critical theory will constantly be questioned while providing an opportunity for disagreement in their perceived specifics. Researchers in critical theory must set aside their biases, prejudices, and personal concerns by objectively reviewing evidence both in favor as well as against a particular concern. The ultimate objective of critical theory is to empower people to change not only their social context but also themselves as individuals by providing the educational means necessary to free oneself from limiting constraints. This critical theory research in the auto industry will attempt to uncover, examine and critique the social, cultural, economic, and psychological assumptions that structure and limit the way auto workers think regarding the construction of their social system. The research questions will be framed in terms of how the present situation

has come to be. Whose interests are served by the arrangement between management and the union? Who has power? How was/is it obtained? What structures reinforce its distribution? What are the outcomes of the structure? Who has access? Who has the power to make changes? From where do the worker's frames of reference emerge (Merriam, 2002)?

Methods

The two research methods employed in this research were ethnographic and emic. An assumption of ethnographic research is that every human group eventually evolves a culture that guides its member's view of the world and the way they structure their experiences. With that being said, ethnography was employed as one of the instruments to analyze and interpret the culture within a Midwest unionized auto mobile assembly plant. The research expanded upon the definition of ethnography as a study of culture (Hoey, 2005) to include "an ongoing attempt to place specific encounters, events, and understandings into a more meaningful context" (Tedlock, 2000, p. 455). In addition to enhancing ones understanding of the overall culture of the auto industry the ethnographic narratives provided a further glimpse into three subcultures existing in the industry. Subculture, as defined by McCurdy, Spradley and Shandy (2005) is a term used to refer to a whole way of life culture found within a larger society. The ethnographic experiences of those interviewed are presented from three different perspectives, management, union, and workers, and provides various perceptions and meanings. This triangulation of data assisted in fulfilling the goal of

discovering and presenting the lived experiences not only of the participants but also the researcher.

A study of a culture and /or subculture, such as this research, requires a certain level of identification with the members of the group. It is for this reason I approached the research from an emic perspective. Emic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analysis of meaningful and appropriate responses to the conceptual schemes and categories expressed by those studied (Lett, 2006). An emic perspective essentially refers to the way that members of a given culture envision their world from an insider's viewpoint. I have been immersed in the same culture as those being studied for over thirty years so the views, perceptions, and understandings of what is real and meaningful to those interviewed were recognizable to me from an insider's perspective. The use of two methods, or triangulation, will also secure a more in-depth understanding of the leadership and culture of the auto industry.

My Story, Chapter II, will further solidify the reasons for providing an emic approach to this research. Chapter II will also enhance the critical reflections of my experiences and thoughts when I conducted the interviews. While conducting the interviews I tried to remain unbiased and let the participants reflect upon their experiences as they perceived them. Chapter 2 will also expand upon the understandings of the various contexts in which this research was conducted as a prerequisite of a qualitative research approach.

Validity

Critical ethnographic research never claims the ability find a final answer. Will the participants of this study in this particular facility be an enigma or will it serve as a blueprint for all manufacturing facilities? Is the plant culture different from others or does it represent the prevailing culture of the industry? In the quest for answers critical ethnographers must distinguish between truth claims and validity claims. Truth claims imply a different understanding than one finds in traditional logic and philosophy. Because truth itself depends upon consensus, validity issues are not simply limited to the logic of an argument. Validity issues extend into the premises of an argument such, as how the culture understands democracy, power, and leadership in their employment situation. To meet the validity demands of conducting this ethnographic research Carspecken's Five Step and McCracken's Four Stage methods of inquiry will serve as guidelines.

McCracken's (1988) four stage method of inquiry consists of: 1) review of analytical categories, 2) review of cultural categories, 3) discovery of cultural categories, and 4) discovery of analytical categories. Carspecken's (1996) Five Step method of inquiry consists of: 1) compiling a primary record, 2) conducting a preliminary reconstructive analysis, 3) dialogical data generation, 4) discovering system relations, and 5) using system relations to explain the findings. Both methods were employed simultaneously to reinforce my use of proper research techniques to insure the proper validity requirements for this project were met.

My literature review incorporated Carspecken's (1996) Stages One and Two with McCracken's (1988) Steps 1 and 2. As the primary record or literature review was

developed it was analyzed to determine any pattern development regarding the sequence of events, roles, power relations and any other recurring evidence of embodied meaning and then categorized accordingly. The comprehensive literature review allowed for the identification and investigation of any perceived problems. The process also served as an opportunity to continue identifying relationships and cultural parameters not considered in full by the literature review. My thirty years experience in the industry regarding emic observations and conversations proved helpful when compiling my analytical categories and interview design. My literature review met those requirements. It also served as an aid in the formulation of the participant interview questions.

Step 3 of McCracken's (1988) four step method of inquiry process revolves around the discovery of cultural categories. This stage involved the construction of the questionnaire and the planning of the interview process that I followed. It included the participant interview portion of the project. As this process was completed and the interview questions formulated Carspecken's (1996) Stage 3; dialogical data generation stage began. This consisted of interviewing participants for the project. This technique generated data directly from the people rather than the prior records information or literature review. Further triangulation was then employed at this stage as each individual was invited to review the transcription of their interview for clarification and accuracy. The data gleaned from each narrative consisted of two parts; a story and a discourse. The story is the chain of events or the "what" in each individual narration. The discourse became the "how" of the narrative or the plot or order of appearance of

events (Sarup, 1996). This stage was critical as it democratized the research process as the analysis of information had the potential to challenge any prior data obtained.

Step 4 of McCracken's (1988) four step method of inquiry is the discovery of analytical categories. This step was followed in conjunction with Carspecken's Stages 4 and 5. The objective was to effectively determine the categories, relationships and assumptions that influenced the participant's perception of the world in general terms and more specifically in regards to the topic. It is here that my findings are explained and reasons suggested for the reconstructed experiences and cultural(s) forms based upon class, race, gender, and the political structures of society. The employment of the ethnographic methods of inquiry guidelines of Carspecken and McCracken simultaneously assisted in meeting the validity demands for this research.

Limitations and Strengths

The limitations to this research are outweighed by the advantages. One of the limitations to this research is the small number of interviews conducted. I only interviewed twelve people, four hourly employees, four salary employees and four union representatives. In addition, all of the participants were employed at the same facility and by the same company. Also by predetermining the preliminary categories with the construction of my interview questions there remains the possibility that I may have inadvertently limited the participants input. Additional stories may have not been uncovered and the subsequent feelings and emotions of the participants lost. The opportunity to gain new knowledge and understanding may have been limited. Schratz and Schratz-Hadwich (1995) indicate that people construct a sense of self from their

memories. There is the possibility that the participant's responses do not represent the majority. Are the stories and memories the true experiences of the participants? Are the memories of these stories accurate reflections of events or has time provided an opportunity for a revisionist viewpoint?

This particular facility where the research was conducted combined production with another plant on January 3, 2006. This resulted in an influx to the present facility of over 1,000 experienced auto workers that I had no prior contact with. This influx provided a potential opportunity to gain an understanding and perception of the employee's cultural experiences from a different facility if I could include them in the interview process. Since I knew I would be retiring on April 1, 2006 I took the opportunity to line up individuals in advance for participation in this research. Those contacted were randomly selected from the "new" and "old" employees as I made trips through the facility during production ramp-up for the vehicle. At least fifteen individuals in each category, management, union, and worker were contacted and agreed to participate in the research. This over abundance of participants allowed for the possibility that some individuals could change their mind when the interviews were ultimately scheduled.

The forty-five people that agreed to possibly participate in the study broke down demographically as; three Hispanic males, one Hispanic female, four Afro-American males, two African American females, seven Caucasian females, twenty-eight Caucasian males. Nine of the participants were not classified as Baby Boomers. Eleven of the participants were among the 1,000 employees transferred in from other facilities. The

Human Resource Department would not release an EEOC demographics breakdown of the facility to me for this research to verify a true representation of the work force. I do belief this to be a fair demographic representation of the facility.

Differing genders, race, job status, and seniority allowed for a comparison and contrast of viewpoints based upon the prior criteria. This random selection of people to interview greatly reduced any possible bias on my part in selecting participants always ready and willing to talk about their case. Following the processes previously identified by Carspecken (1996) and McCracken (1988) also reduced the chances of biasing the research. To further insure credibility and transferability of the data, after applying any necessary pseudonyms, I enlisted the services of another individual, with a PhD in Leadership and Life Long Learning to review my categories, patterns of theme, and consistency. My doctoral committee also provided assistance in identifying factors that could influence my research and guided me in the right direction during my prospectus hearing.

The framework followed for this research has been provided. The problem statement has been defined and the appropriate primary research questions have been developed. The importance of the research and its significance has been provided. The background and overview has been presented along with the methods to be employed. The advantages and limitations of the process have also been identified. Chapter 2 will provide a further illustration of why an emic approach was chosen. The context of the situation and the qualifications of the researcher will also become clear in this chapter. A literature review illustrating the premise that the domestic automotive culture and

subsequent subcultures are hindering the change process underway in the auto industry will follow in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER II

MY STORY

Contemporary social research may be characterized by the increased willingness of ethnographers to affirm or develop a membership role in the community they study (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000). I lived through the layoffs of the 1970's, the boom years of the 1990's, and the current dismal showing of the domestic industry. By conducting this research I am afforded an opportunity to continue to take part in the social setting of the auto industry. By virtue of my history in the auto industry I have already established a relationship with the participants in this research. My ability to interact with the participants as an insider enhanced my ability to conduct proper interviews. I became not only an active participant in this research as the interviewer but also one empathetic to the context and situation in which the interviews took place.

On the recommendation of a salary labor relations representative, who just happened to be my brother-in-law, I was hired at a Midwest auto assembly plant on June 10, 1975. I was represented by the United Auto Workers (UAW) for the entire period of my employment with the exception of a six month period in 1976 when I became part of management as a shop floor supervisor. My first fifteen years of

employment experience consisted of working on the automotive assembly line. I gained hands on experience in the body shop, the paint department, the trim department, as well as the pre-trim area of vehicle production. My next fifteen years in the industry found me assigned to the facility Training Department in one capacity or another. I was initially assigned as an hourly trainer for this particular auto assembly plant employing over 2,000 employees. I eventually became the UAW Training Administrator, a title I had for my last ten years, sharing all facility training responsibilities with a salary counterpart. My experiences left me perplexed regarding the decisions made by both management and the union regarding events that contradicted the purposes of specific programs, regulations and contracts. While the policies and practices looked great on paper, I generally perceived a problem of implementation and sustainability due to company and / or union interference. My biggest concern arose when mandatory team building classes were begun for all employees. Getting upper management or union officials to attend the classes they themselves had negotiated as the lynch pin of progress was like pulling teeth. We set ourselves up for failure when the union deemed hourly employee attendance in these classes as mandatory but participation as voluntary and the company did not contradict the decision. While protesting this decision to a point, I did not strongly question other perceived company and union practices that I thought interfered with training because I was aware that I could and would be removed from my job for asking the wrong questions. I came to the realization that as a product of the developed system I was guilty of trying to protect my own status quo. Assembly line work is hard and monotonous, and I was not willing to

buck the system enough to where I would end up back on the line. With this research, I intend to uncover and identify some of the same characteristics in management, union, and workers that I recognize in myself as those that are impeding the cultural change in the industry.

I admit I am not the greatest proponent of particular practices and policies of the union, nor am I partial to company policy. I will use a few examples in this section to illustrate my disenchantment with both company and union policies and practices. At one time a friend of mine in the paint department published a monthly newsletter in the facility. His newsletter was not associated with the official union or company bulletins. He felt the union and company were not communicating fully the information that people within the facility really wanted to hear. He used his own funds to print at least five-hundred copies of his newsletter, which usually consisted of at least six double sided pages, for distribution. I did not initially have anything to do with the paper. I did become guilty by association and was accused of writing certain articles for his paper by both the union and the company. Only after being accused did I occasionally write an article for the newsletter as well as assisting him in its distribution. The local union actually had people follow us around the plant to try and catch us distributing the papers in different production areas. It is against union policy to distribute what they considered unauthorized literature. The newsletter was pretty well received by all except the union officials. They resented a voice within their domain that did not always follow their party line.

The incident that galvanized my interest and concern about union activities was when I happened to have a Karl Marx book in my back pocket at work. I was working on my undergraduate degree in Political Science, so had a tendency to bring books to work and try and get some reading done on the assembly line. I was made aware by a member of the local union Executive Board that my having this book at work had caused such a concern among certain union officials that they had stopped one of their Executive Board meetings, turned off their tape recorder, and discussed my politics. The question under discussion was whether I was a communist or not based on the book I was reading. It turns out that the UAW constitution actually contains a clause barring a communist from holding a union office. It really piqued my interest as to why the local union took such an interest in me. Why would I be considered a threat to them? It was at this juncture that I began following the Mao Tse Tung mantra, "Know thy enemy".

I started using the unions own rules to protect myself and occasionally as an excuse to antagonize them. An example of when I was able to use their own rules to my advantage occurred when the official local union paper ran an article touting the unions past anti-Vietnam policy. I submitted a rebuttal article questioning the premise and time line of their claims. There was at this time an actual clause in the UAW Constitution saying nothing could be published in any local union paper without the local executive board approving both the content and meaning of the particular article. Needless to say, my article was rejected. I followed all the union mandated procedures to dispute their decision and eventually received an Executive Board hearing to plead

my case. After a three-month wait, the International Union overturned the local Executive Board's decision. It was decided my article could be published. Since the article dealt with Veterans Day, publishing it three months after the fact was pretty senseless, so I withdrew it from their publication. I did publish the article as well as the proceedings I was going through with the union in the underground newsletter. Obviously this did not endear me well with the powers to be but did provide me some sense of credibility to some workers that read the underground paper.

I was still pretty naive regarding union politics but I ran for Trustee in the next local election. I ran as an independent candidate and did not affiliate myself with either of the two political caucuses within the plant. To their surprise, and mine, I won. I actually entertained the notion that positive changes could be made by working from inside the system. During my three-year term in office I received an insider's education on the internal workings of the union. I was amazed by such things as the way the Executive Board of the local union divvied up who got what perks such as paid trips and off line assignments. Ability had nothing to do with who received these assignments. Who got these plum assignments and trips was based upon a reward system dependent only upon the individual's relationship to those in power.

It was during my term in office that the corporation entertained the notion that a new vehicle would be built at the facility. Production of the new vehicle at the site would only occur if the union contractually agreed to operate under a Modern Operating Agreement (MOA). An MOA is considered a version of lean production based upon the Toyota Production System (TPS). It was a very hot topic of discussion.

Corporate executives and International Union representatives made many trips to the plant to meet with the local Executive Board and espouse the benefits of working under this system. According to them there were no negative ramifications that could come out of working under an MOA. I and a few others felt we should have access to more information. We felt it was necessary that the people involved be afforded the opportunity to become aware of any possible pitfalls in the program. We were successful in having the local union fund attendance at an anti-team concept school being held in Detroit for myself and a few others. Plant management did not permit any salary personnel to attend. Regardless of my personal feelings towards the program, this was an opportunity to add almost 1,500 jobs to the surrounding communities, and I eventually voted in favor of the issue.

The union and company came to an agreement to build a new vehicle and the plant was the first assembly plant of this corporation to institute an MOA. The hiring process for the 1,500 new employees required them passing both a hands-on dexterity test and a written exam before a personal interview was to be scheduled. The hands-on dexterity test and a written exam did not apply to the existing work force, only those to be newly hired. The process became know as "Best-In-Class" hiring and was intended to have only those suited for manufacturing work gain employment. Imagine my surprise when I became aware of internal lists being circulated (J.N. Davis, personal communication, August 5, 1992) with the names of potential test candidates on them. The lists not only had the potential candidate's name on them but also the name of the individual sponsoring the person. These sponsors included members of management,

local and International union officials, the present work force, and even a local judge. Some people were identified as “minority” or noted as “important” in the sponsor space. In some cases certain individuals, depending upon the clout of their sponsor, who did not score high enough on the initial written or hands-on test were scheduled for a retest. I was approached regarding rescheduling my sister for a retest when her score was not deemed high enough to become an employee. I refused. One union official’s daughter actually began holding a coaching class for select individuals to prepare them for the written part of the test in the plant cafeteria. This was curtailed quickly by the company as they recognized the potential for lawsuits. Whether the classes continued off premise is unknown to me.

When the testing was completed the interview process began. Hourly employees, including myself, were trained along with management, to conduct the hiring interviews. Each candidate was subjected to a structured interview process with three different people. Upon completion the three interviewers would meet and a discussion would take place to determine if all agreed the person met or did not meet the set criteria. The first interview I participated in set in motion a prevailing environment I found repulsive. After completing my very first interview I was met by a union official who told me how important it was for this particular person I had just interviewed be hired. When I asked why, I was told who the individual’s father was. My response was that I did not like the individual’s father and if he wanted me to take that into consideration I would. I was never approached like that again although I witnessed many other interviewers being approached in this same way. Another instance had a

union representative meeting with only the hourly interviewers prior to beginning the days scheduled interviews and being read a list of people that needed to be passed from the total group scheduled.

In the many interviews I conducted I only recommended two people not be hired. One individual was particularly unimpressive. My other two colleagues and I agreed unanimously that this individual should not be hired. I was called by the local union President / Chairman on a Sunday at home and asked what I could change in order to have this individual hired. After meeting with my two salary colleagues, who participated in the interview process, we decided not to change anything and still recommended not hiring the individual. The individual was in the first forty-five people of the 1,500 people hired. It turned out the individual was the step-son of a union official. Again, I did not make points with ranking members of the union structure.

The area chosen for the initial MOA training began in the Paint Department where I was working on the sealer line. Although I was a Trustee in the union local this particular job was not a full time job off the assembly line. Since I was a member of the union local Executive Board, the local President asked me to participate as a class room instructor in the training of the work force. In addition I was to use this training position opportunity to serve as a union monitor of the companies' new process. I was happy to comply as it was an opportunity to work away from the assembly line. I remained in the Training Department in some capacity until my retirement, although I never ran for another term or union office again.

My job as the UAW Training Coordinator was a local union appointment. It is not a nationally appointed union job. There is a major difference. A nationally appointed job is one for life and is very difficult to be removed from. Ability has nothing to do with any appointment, only loyalty to the person offering the job. Appointed jobs, unlike mine, also come with built in overtime as well as travel perks. Sinecure reigns supreme in many of these appointed jobs. For example, in a meeting regarding an upcoming training program the plant manager asked the Human Resource manager what the duties of two certain individuals assigned to the training department were. After ignoring the question the first two times it was posed, his response to the third query was that they did nothing. When questioned further regarding why two people would be paid for doing nothing his response to the Plant Manager was, “that was the cost of labor peace.”

In my tenure I have seen many people come and go in locally appointed union jobs such as mine. The key to maintaining the job is the ability to keep out of the local political arena. Involvement in local politics is one sure way to lose an appointed job, both locally and nationally. In all honesty I enjoyed the training job and had no desire to return to the drudgery of assembly line work. As a matter of survival I had remained apolitical since my term as a Trustee as a way of protecting my job. My self imposed strategy for survival at work until my retirement remained: "Play by the rules, but play by them better." I stopped going out of my way to antagonize either management or the union. They both had their ways to retaliate, and I was acutely aware of what can happen to someone fighting them. I chose not to do battle on a major scale with either

one or the other or both and just did the job to which I was assigned to the best of my ability. I also returned to school and received a Master's Degree in Labor Relations and Human Resources to further not only my education but in a quest to "Know Thy Enemy". This strategy seemed to pay off for me as I was able to maintain my job while building positive relationships with management, most union officials, and most importantly, the hourly work force.

As stated earlier contemporary social research may be characterized by the increased willingness of ethnographers to affirm or develop a membership role in the community they study. The prior accounts and descriptions were related in terms that are regarded as meaningful and appropriate by me as a member of the culture under study and to affirm my membership role as an insider within the auto industry culture. The accounts and descriptions also provide a clearer insight and understanding of the inner workings of the leadership of the company and union. After all, the local union does not work in a vacuum. The International Union must approve all non-local appointments and the local appointments, off line jobs or travel perks can not be carried out without company approval. The company ultimately maintains the checkbook that funds many of the perks afforded local union officials.

In qualitative research such as this the understanding of reality is essentially the researcher's interpretation of the participants' interpretations of the phenomenon selected (Merriam, 2002). I have questioned myself and my ethics on many occasions regarding not speaking out more on issues that I perceived as unjust or unfair. I also question why I did not put forth an effort and run for a more meaningful union office

where there was a potential to rectify some of the concerns I have had over the years. Because I am a product of the system to be researched it was essential that the results not become biased. The internal validity of this research was strengthened by virtue of my extensive experiences in the auto industry making me an insider in the industry and more aware of the realities of the systems. Being the primary instrument for the data collection and the analysis also provided further internal validity to the research that an outsider may not have. As I provided an interpretation of the data, it was imperative that different forms of triangulation be employed to increase internal validity and reduce the chances of my personal biases. Since multiple data collections were used in this research, the interviews and observations can be checked or compared to both the literature review and my personal experiences.

To insure the validity of this research those interviewed were given the opportunity to peruse the transcript of their interviews for errors or interpretation questions. To further enhance credibility and transferability of the data, after applying any necessary pseudonyms, I enlisted the services of another individual, with a PhD in Leadership and Life Long Learning to review my categories, patterns of theme, and consistency. Peer review by my committee also increased the validity of this research. These techniques helped insure the consistency of results with the data collected and not my personal opinions and biases. I believe my background more than qualifies me to conduct this research in the context intended as I am a product of the system to be researched and have views, understandings, and perceptions of what is real and what is not.

CHAPTER III

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this research was to examine the impact the past and present business and labor practices have had on the domestic automobile industry from the perspective of three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers. The leadership of both the company and union, while proving successful in the past, appear to now be trapped in systems of their own making that stifled their ability to compete in the global market place. The leaders are aware of what must be done from a business perspective to remain competitive but the prevailing cultures developed over time are too entrenched, thus impeding progress towards any successful change processes. This indictment of the leadership of the auto companies and union is not to imply that the work force is innocent pawns in the demise of the auto industry. As income and benefits, including more leisure time, increased with the advances in the auto industry, the work force became complacent participants in the development of the domestic automobile culture. As long as their upper stratum working class existence was not jeopardized the work force was generally content with their state of affairs that permitted the union and companies to control their futures.

The result of this complacency is that the work force, products of the developed culture, now find they have little or no say in their futures as plants are jettisoned and jobs are lost.

The research questions will structure the literature review. These research questions are: (a) What is the perception of management and union representatives within the auto industry regarding globalization serving as a catalyst to implement new human resource strategies? (b) What is the perception of the hourly work force regarding their role in the corporate / union culture that has developed in the domestic auto industry? (c) What is the perception of the hourly work force regarding the implementation of industry changes that could impact their livelihood and lifestyle? (d) What is the perception of management, union and hourly work force regarding the implementation of new personnel development strategies (for example, learning and motivation, etc.) designed to insure the survival of the domestic auto industry in a global environment?

In order to address the purpose and questions raised in this research, this literature review will focus on the development of the culture and subcultures of the company, union, and workers and its impact upon the successes and failures of the domestic auto industry from a critical theory perspective. A brief overview of the development of the auto industries policies and practices that led to their rise and subsequent decline will be addressed in question one. Also addressed in question one will be the rise of unions in response to these policies and practices with behaviors of their own. The adaptation of the work force to these union / company policies will be

addressed in question two. The prevailing attitudes of the work force within a societal context outside of the auto industry will be addressed in question three. Management, union and hourly work force perceptions regarding the implementation of new personnel development strategies such as learning and motivation, etc will be addressed in question four. A short discussion of critical theory will follow the overview of the development industry policies and practices. The literature review will conclude by addressing the changing policies and practices under way in the auto industry from a critical theory perspective.

Development of the United States Domestic Automobile Industry Forward

Forty years ago the Big Three (Ford, Chrysler and General Motors) sold nearly all the cars and trucks purchased in the United States. General Motors alone held 51% of the market (Webster, 2005). The business approach of The Big Three successfully shaped and defined during the past decades has proven ill suited to the present world situation of globalization. Globalization can be defined as the flow of goods and services, capital, and people across national borders (Anderson & Cavanagh, 2005). Globalization did not occur overnight nor did it take place in a vacuum. The constant external changes affecting the domestic auto industry required constant internal changes. The inability to address internal change issues within the industry in order to meet the demands of the competition has resulted in the loss of thousands of domestic automotive jobs.

While The Big Three's fortunes have plummeted since the 1980's another segment of the auto industry has risen substantially. The other auto industry in the

United States consists mainly of the “transplant” Japanese dominated sector (Honda, Nissan and Toyota). These transplant auto companies are generally located in the South and produce vehicles in mostly non union facilities. Since the 1980’s these transplants have been adding non union blue collar jobs and increasing their production and market share while The Big Three continue to decline in both categories. Today The Big Three cling to a combined total of 57% of the United States market with analysts predicting a future dip to 45% (Webster, 2005). The United Auto Workers (UAW), while at one time holding a virtual monopoly over representation in the industry, now represents less than half of all American autoworkers (Lichtenstein, 2004). These transplant auto companies illustrate that American auto workers are capable of competing in a global environment while still making excellent wages and benefits without belonging to a union.

The motor of capitalism, including the auto industry, remains competition. Each business must have the capabilities to undercut their competitors if they are to survive. The best way to sell automobiles cheaper is maintain the ability to produce cheaper vehicles. All aspects of production, including labor, are under constant scrutiny by management to reduce costs and increase profits. Labor costs currently represent twelve to seventeen percent of a vehicle cost (McCracken, 2006). There are other mitigating circumstances that provide cost advantages to the transplants such as limited legacy costs, relatively new facilities, and non-unionized employees. An example of union versus non-union worker costs becomes evident when comparing auto industry health care costs. Health care alone accounts for $930 of the price of a General Motors

vehicle, $560 of a Ford vehicle but only $100 of a Toyota vehicle (Elliott & Szczesny, 2006).

The operating methods and human resource practices employed by the transplants have shown that their processes can be effective in other countries and cultures. The adoption by the Big Three of the competitions operating methods and human resource practices will not automatically insure success for the domestic auto industry. To ensure this strategy is successful certain conditions must be met, including a will to implement any agreed upon plans (Vaghefi, 2002). The key is that the company, and in this case the union, needs to have an effective work plan in place, as well as the wherewithal to implement it. There must be a focused determination and resolve by the leadership of the auto companies and the union when implementing these unfamiliar operational plans with the work force. These plans include but are not limited to easing restrictive job classifications, empowering the workers to make decisions (Nakane & Hall, 2002), and implementing a new management style (Ingebretsen, 2003), to name a few.

The Big Three understand the need for more flexible operating methods in this global environment yet they continue to struggle in adjusting or changing the way they conduct business. In order to achieve success they must recognize that all employees are stakeholders in the company, they must commit to a team approach, they must commit the time and resources for the entire designated period, they must have an agreed upon plan for implementation of problem solutions, and individuals must receive the support of both their peers and bosses (Ingebretsen, 2003). Successful

implementation of the plan will result in an increase in employee morale and job satisfaction. Employee job satisfaction and high morale are then more likely to produce the desired results of a high quality product at a lower price.

These changes being attempted in the domestic auto industry are monumental. Years of entrenched business, union, and worker practices must be altered. Historically, The Big Three's only competition had been each other. The standard operating procedure developed by The Big Three consisted of designing, producing, marketing, and distributing their vehicles in the same way (Pearlstein, 2006). In the process they have developed into large complex organizations with their own individual bureaucracies. Bureaucracy is considered a social function that legitimizes control of the many by the few (Perrow, 1986). The degree of bureaucracy may vary slightly between the companies but essentially the bureaucratic model employed so successfully in the past by both the domestic auto companies and the union has left them ill equipped in their ability to address their antiquated operating methods including their labor practices. The bureaucratic malaise associated with the industries top down decision making policies, in conjunction with a management by numbers philosophy, are interfering with production of the high quality vehicles necessary to meet the demands of competition.

In the auto industry it was the advent of the Asian auto industries flexible production system, in particular the Toyota Production System (TPS), that rendered successful past labor practices obsolete. This flexible production system presumed that a competitive edge cannot be gained by treating workers like machines and that no one

in the manufacturing process, with the exception of the assembly line worker, adds value to the product. In the book "The Machine That Changed the World" (1990), the authors, Womack, Jones, and Roos, coined the term "lean production" for this type of operating system designed to eliminate waste while still producing a higher quality product. Lean production assumes that the assembly line worker can perform most job functions better than specialists. In this sense the intent is to develop the work force as direct action people that have the ability and wherewithal to function autonomously, in not only the operational processes but also to provide an avenue for input for improving upon them. Total quality management, another part of lean production, where every step of the fabrication process is conducted perfectly, can be improved with operator input. This will then provide the opportunity to implement the concept of "just in time delivery". This practice reduces the need for large amounts of buffer stock being kept on hand. In order to be successful, this TPS / lean production culture invests full faith and confidence in people doing direct work. It stimulates the workers to develop their capabilities to the fullest while making maximum use of their individual talents (Nakane & Hall, 2002). This change to a TPS / lean production type process by the Big Three, UAW and workers is contrary to the culture that has been developed over time within the industry.

Culture Development

To understand the development of the culture of the auto industry, one must return to the advent of the Second Industrial Revolution (1890s to 1960s) in the United

States. It was during this era that the initial strategies regarding the reorganization of work in large corporations began. Prior to the introduction of the assembly line process to the auto industry vehicles were essentially hand built. Skilled mechanics and / or craftsmen installed the component parts on the vehicle in a designated area. The parts were delivered to the skilled mechanics for installation by unskilled labor. Due to the inefficiencies built into the process, in 1910 it took twelve hours and twenty-eight minutes to assemble a complete automobile at the Highland Park, Michigan Model-T plant at a cost per vehicle of $780 (Bak, 2003). In an effort to improve profits, new production methods were implemented that called for a reorganization of the labor processes.

The Second Industrial Revolution

The Second Industrial Revolution successfully integrated the advances of science and technology by shifting the industry away from craft production to one of mass production. This initial shift from craft production to mass production helped create a market based on economies of scale and scope and gave rise to giant organizations built upon functional specializations and minute divisions of labor (Thompson, 2005). Economies of scale are produced by spreading fixed expenses, especially investments in plants and equipment, and the organization of production lines to run larger volumes of output in order to reduce costs. Economies of scope are produced by exploiting the division of labor by sequentially combining specialized functional units, especially overheads such as reporting, accounting, personnel, purchasing, quality assurance, in

ways that made it less expensive to produce several products rather than single specialized ones (Thompson, 2005).

The Second Industrial Revolution's scientific labor processes propelling mass production ultimately resulted in the expansion of factory production. The economies of scope also provided the opportunity for businesses to develop their labor force as it would any other cost of production. The Ford Motor Company led the charge in the auto industry regarding product standardization, interchangeable parts, mechanization, assembly lines and high wages while perfecting the deskilling of the work force. In this new mass production environment MacDuffie and Frits (1997) identified worker guidelines considered essential for success. They were: (a) a specialization of resources requiring operators to indulge in narrowly defined tasks, (b) a standardized product design resulting in large batches, buffers, and large repair spaces, (c) a centralized hierarchy where the bosses coordinated and controlled all tasks of the employees, and (d) a separation of concept and execution where thinking on the job was separate from the work conducted. This new concept of mass production simplified jobs to the point that skilled craftsmen were replaced by an unskilled poorly educated work force. The higher pay compared to other blue collar jobs insured that the unskilled workers would be willing to perform the same minute task over and over again at a pace dictated by the boss. This influx of new labor and the reorganization of their workloads provided businesses the opportunity to shape the human side of work for their own economic and political advantage. The resulting labor processes became independent of the workers ability, knowledge, craft, and tradition, and instead became dependent upon

the practices of management (Braverman, 1974; Womack, Jones and Roos, 1990). Automobile assemblers literally became a cog in the machine. They were now relegated to the lowest status in the plant and considered an interchangeable part in vehicle production just like a bolt or screw.

These newly developed labor processes rendered the past labor practices of craftsmanship, tradition, and worker's knowledge obsolete. All aspects of production were controlled by management, while engineering and administrative functions were delegated to staff specialists. Employing the new labor processes successfully reduced the inefficiencies to assemble a complete automobile at the Highland Park, Michigan Model-T plant. The vehicle production time went from twelve hours and twenty-eight minutes and a cost of $780 in 1910 to one hour and thirty-three minutes at a cost of $360 in 1914 at the same plant (Bak, 2003). In four years time the cost to produce a complete vehicle was cut in half while the time to produce a vehicle was reduced by almost eleven hours. How can one argue against the successes of the processes in terms of cost and efficiency?

While proving successful, these new methods masked a strategy to stabilize or legitimatize managerial authority and domination. The resulting labor relation's processes insured control over the non-union work force. This strategy proved effective until the late 1930s and the growth of unions within the advancement of Fordism. Mead (2005) describes Fordism as a system where a few national companies preside over a stable market, distributing the rents of oligopoly to unionized workers and shareholders while docile, slow moving banks made low risk loans to captive customers.

Babson (1995) describes Fordism as being shaped by four separate transformations in its rise to predominance. First, to insure markets were present for the mass produced items a conformist consumer-focused society was cultivated by increasing advertising and promotion. Secondly, the growth of social programs and public spending, such as road development, kept mass consumption in the forefront while stabilizing the system during economic downturns. Thirdly, Fordism led to the growth of unions. Lastly, big businesses grew increasingly top heavy. Corporate bureaucracy grew as financial managers, marketing specialists, and personnel mangers began making decisions once relegated to engineers and those actually involved with the construction of a vehicle. From the late 1930s to the late 1960s the mass production system and its interaction with the consumption characteristics of the United States continued to bring about a variety of public policies, institutions, and governance mechanisms. These practices were also intended to soften any failures in the stock market while the industrial arrangements and labor practices continued their reformation.

Rise of Unions

It was not wages or working hour complaints that led to the rise of the union in the auto industry in 1939. The worker's major issues revolved around management's indiscriminate assembly line speed-ups. These line speed increases added more pressure to a worker doing an already repetitive monotonous job to the point the job became unbearable. Labor unions came into existence as a direct response to these corporate productivity processes and the domination exerted over the work force by management. The workers, already organized by the companies, were successfully

mobilized by the union on behalf of their own interests. The union's intent was to give workers a voice with accompanying power in a society where the bulk of the economic and political power was currently being held by the men controlling the corporations (Parker & Gruelle, 1999). Regardless of one's viewpoint regarding unions they became a valuable check on the excessive corporate power and the mischief and abuse they are able to create (Bonior, 2003).

The United Auto Workers union (UAW) was granted a charter by the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1935 to organize the automobile industry workers. The model for industrial unionism and the UAW was based upon the United Mine Workers (UMW) (Cary, 1972). This union model provided for tight central control and limited local autonomy while minimizing rank and file participation. It also banned those considered radicals. Radical in a union environment is a term used to describe both a hot head and a political dissident (Howe & Widdick, 1949). Yet, the militant sit down strikes in the auto industry, so instrumental in furthering the union cause, were often initiated by local leaders not directly under the control of any national leadership (Davis, 1990). These militant actions interfered with corporate production and income. As a direct result of these militant actions interfering with production and income, Chrysler and General Motors recognized the UAW as the sole bargaining agent for its hourly employees in 1939. The Ford Motor Company followed suit in 1941. In return for recognition as the sole bargaining agent for all autoworkers, when National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) certification was won, the UAW agreed to a curtailment of its power. The International UAW developed a process for monitoring local union

grievance procedures that standardized employment conditions from plant to plant. The standardized grievance procedure provided a means of eliminating work stoppages at the local plant levels and shifted political power from the plant shop steward system to the UAW International offices.

This grievance system proved efficient enough to appeal to most workers, yet at the same time control the radicals and dissidents responsible for their initial organizational success. Henry Ford must have liked what he saw because he again led the auto industry charge when in 1946 he announced: "We of the Ford Motor Company have no desire to 'break the unions' or to turn back the clock. Instead we must look to an improved and increasingly responsible leadership for help in solving the human equation in mass production. Industrial relations should be conducted with the same technical skill and determination that the engineer brings to mechanical problems" (Davis, 1990, p. 102). This mindset in the industry allowed the company to experiment with one labor technique after another in an effort to increase production. After all, management strategies are designed to meet the objectives of maximizing returns on investment (Blum, 1998).

Weber (1946) states that only in a private economy with a modern society in the most advanced institutions of capitalism will the bureaucracies that accompany the new labor processes fully develop. The leadership characteristics and determination involved in establishing the bureaucracy that would solve the human equation for the company were not lacking in the union either. When it comes to the goals and policies of the UAW, it is no different than any other political organization or company regarding

controlling their members. Unions have histories, organizational cultures, ideologies, and programs for action just as firms do (Kleiner, McLean & Dreher, 1986). Unions also demand allegiance and commitment from the membership towards meeting their goals and priorities (Lawler, 1996). The UMW union model adhered to by the UAW leadership resulted in the union adopting the concepts and practices of a business union. A business union is an organization that operates as though its members are customers and they in turn are providing services to them. As the UAW continued to grow so did the number of staff professionals needed to provide services, thus causing the union organization to become more bureaucratic in nature. In the transformation to a business union an organization is characterized by well defined hierarchies, concrete rules, and a centralization of power (Clark, 1989). Just like The Big Three, this type of business union operating system developed its own bureaucratic baggage. As mentioned earlier, bureaucracy is a social function that legitimizes control of the many by the few (Perrow, 1986). The business model employed by the UAW, just like the companies, precluded democracy by denying knowledge to all but the experts.

Aristotle defined democracy as "rule of the few watched by the many" (Watson, 1981, p. 7). A union is considered a democratic organization if it holds conventions, votes on contracts, and holds elections. The UAW proudly stresses the fact that it is a democratic union because its constitution states, "…the UAW has the duty and responsibility to promote real and meaningful participatory democracy through its members and their families" (Constitution, 2002, p. 4). Yet for a democracy to be effective the party in control must allow the opposition to criticize what the leaders are

doing and propose alternate courses of action without fear of retaliating measures. This has not been the case.

Until Walter Reuther successfully consolidated power in 1946 the UAW consisted of several feuding political factions. Reuther became president of UAW Local 174 in 1936 and used this position to become a senior organizer with the UAW and helped in various strikes with General Motors and Ford Motor over the company's failure to recognize the union. He initially allied himself with the left-wing Unity Caucus, which included Communist groups, to defeat conservative president Homer Martin, but after being elected president of the UAW in 1946 he purged the UAW of all communist elements. (Reuther remained President of the UAW until he was killed in a plane crash in 1970.) His leadership characteristics and innovative negotiating tactics, such as picking only one of The Big Three to strike, led to pensions, medical insurance, and vacation time for UAW members.

Davis (1990) claims that it was the protracted struggle between the UAW and General Motors in 1950 that cast the model of labor relations in America after World War II. The editors of Fortune Magazine referred to this contract, known as the Treaty of Detroit, as a basic 'affirmation… of the free enterprise system': First, the autoworkers accepted 'the existing distribution of income between wages and profits as "normal" if not as "fair"'. Second, by explicitly accepting 'objective economic facts – costs of living and productivity – as determining wages,' the contract threw 'overboard all theories of wages as determined by political power and of profit "as surplus value"'. Finally, 'it is one of the very few union contracts that expressly recognize{s} both the importance of

the management function and the fact that management operates directly in the interest of labor'(Fortune, 1950, p. 94).

The UAW contractual successes against The Big Three, attributed in part to Reuther's leadership skills, also provided the opportunity for him to consolidate his power base. The Reuther regime instituted the practice of only promoting supporters loyal to the International Union bureaucracy. It made it perfectly clear that the only way to get off the shop floor and advance in the UAW hierarchy was to become part of the existing political machine. As the UAW began to develop its own oligarchic system, it began a drift away from the principles of unionism and democracy. For example, Reuther had a favorite maxim, "given all the facts, the average man can be depended upon to make a wise decision" (Gould, & Hickok, 1972, p. 147). In reality he initiated a two tier system for the dissemination of information to the membership. In certain situations, the rank and file was told one thing while the secondary leadership, local union officials and shop committeemen were told something different. These secondary officials obtaining privileged information were mainly Reuther supporters. Steve Yokich, President of the UAW in the 1990's, continued the policy by stating that he would decide what the members would hear and when they would hear it (Howes, 2003).

The attack on factionalism and consolidation of power continued with the revision of the UAW convention rules for the benefit of those holding office. Conventions became rubber stamps for the top union officials. It became exceedingly more difficult for policies not presented by the administration to be raised let alone

discussed. Any opposing viewpoints were unlikely to be brought before various committees. The handpicked International officers screened all issues and approval by committees was needed to introduce a viewpoint on the convention floor. Since no opposition members were appointed to any committees there was little chance of successfully including any matter contrary to the views of the International UAW. These well defined hierarchies, concrete rules, and the centralization of power identified by Clark (1989) made it extremely difficult for any local rank and file members to challenge the policies of the International UAW. As his power base expanded Reuther unwittingly, perhaps unavoidably, took on some of the characteristics and outlooks of the managerial caste of The Big Three (Edsforth, 1987).

The consolidation of power within the upper echelons of the UAW continued when in 1963 the International representatives and national staff formed a union to represent themselves in dealing with their employer, the UAW. This professional staff union was formed to deal with the UAW regarding grievances, pay, benefits and especially, job security. Traditionally these staff appointments went to those politically loyal to the person doing the appointing (Clark, 1989). In return for an appointed staff job, the appointer expected his or her appointee to owe formal allegiance and political loyalty to him or her while serving as the individual's political emissary. The drawback was that if an appointee's benefactor lost an election or retired, he or she could be replaced. The acceptance of this staff union system by the International UAW granted extended job security to those appointments. It prevented the removal of any International union representative on a political whim. The job security issue resulted in

the further entrenchment of the union bureaucracy as all International officers could now be handpicked as politically loyal to those in power. This process supported the claim of Magrath (2000) that once in power; leaders are unlikely to be displaced. Advancement to these International staff jobs is the equivalent of finding the Holy Grail. Succession to these most desirable staff positions has been compared to a feudal dynasty where jockeying for power at both the UAW local and International level would became a full time activity for many union leaders (Tyler, 1973). Now, just as an engineer in the company would stress his or her expertise in production matters to the work force, so could UAW staff members flout their expertise in union affairs by virtue of their appointment. This protection for the "experienced" staff from union politics and their possible removal from office provided the justification for the staff union system.

The bureaucracy and some of the same characteristics of business unionism created at the International level also exist at the local plant level. Local union positions, like International positions, of power hold what is known as hidden privilege (Lawler, 1996). According to their positional status they are accorded privileges that they may or may not even recognize. For example, union officials have better working conditions and more flexibility in their schedules than line workers. While an elected or appointed union job is time consuming and comes with certain responsibilities, it is not physically exhausting. The jobs remain desirable because they are one of the few avenues of upward mobility open to production workers, who typically have little formal education and whose present work on the assembly line offers few intrinsic rewards

(Milkman, 1997). Within this scenario union officials are not always the best educated for the jobs they undertake. In battling management while trying to maintain their elected and appointed positions, the art of making deals has become a time honored tradition. As far back as 1946, in his book *Spotlight on Labor Unions*, William Smith voiced the concern that the means used to gain a desired end by a union official may be influenced by hidden privilege.

Union Representatives Benefits

Union representatives, both National and local, enjoy a different, more socially important status and inevitably their outlook differentiates them from that of the hourly line worker (Magrath, 2000). A union official's income can be significantly higher than the members he or she represents. Moody (2001) complains that full-time local union representatives can increase their yearly income by $50,000 for performing non existent company paid overtime. According to Unionfacts (2006), the top 700 International UAW representatives each receive monetary compensation in excess of $100,000 plus benefits not afforded to other UAW members. Once elected or appointed, some unionists became enamored by the perquisites tied to their position. The position becomes a means to enrich not only themselves, but through nepotism and favoritism, a way of rewarding family and friends (Milkman, 1997).

Just like at the International UAW level the power in the local union remains the power to appoint, the power to punish, and the power of one's machine. Elected officials control appointments to local patronage jobs, paid time off for union business, grievance handling for friends, the control of union communications as well as the hiring

practices. While local elections determine the union offices, there does exist political appointments for both International and local plant level jobs. Candidates for International staff jobs at the local plant level are selected by the local union Chairperson or equivalent, but they still must be approved at the International level before assuming their duties. In addition, there are also other jobs appointed at the local union level that do not require International approval. These local job appointments do not fall under the protection of the International UAW regarding removal from the job. Recipients of these local appointments, both full time and part time off the assembly line jobs, are described by Austin (2001) as individual's whose only job requirement is to show up at union meetings and support the officer who appointed him or her. There are not many that will buck the established system of formal allegiance and political loyalty implied by opposing their political emissary. Not only do they not want to lose privileges not offered to everyone but they also want to solidify their positions for the future.

It was and still is a common arrangement or unwritten rule in the auto industry that men or women working in the plant themselves can help get their sons, daughters, nieces, nephews, or other relatives and friends jobs there. Workers with the proper connections could sometimes get many relatives and friends hired while others with less clout were ignored. These connected individuals could sometimes even succeed in getting a newly hired relative or friend assigned to a highly desirable job over a more senior worker from the outset. Ultimately, these newly hired people were expected to remember to whom they were indebted for their job. These unwritten rules limit

communication and serve to reinforce present defensive behaviors within the existing culture. As some people are favored over others any notion of trust between all parties disappears thus increasing the patterns of functional allegiance and minimal cross-functional co-operation (Schein, 1996). The fear of real or perceived threats to those questioning these unwritten rules and assumptions will impact employee behavior in a negative way (Emiliani, 1998).

In 2005 a case involving the firing of a labor relations supervisor at one of The Big Three regarding their hiring practices was settled in court in favor of the individual. The case revolved around the unwritten rule or practice of letting the UAW choose ten percent of all hourly employees hired. This supposed side deal gave jobs to criminals, union officials' relatives and people of marginal skills (McNair, 2005). The Human Resources individual involved fought the unwritten rule regarding giving the union the ability to reward unworthy people with desirable jobs and won five million dollars in a jury trial. If this practice is true (I believe the ten percent number to be a low figure.) and preferential hiring tactics are open to both management and union the quality of the new employees hired can be determined by the incumbent members (Krishnan, 1994). Having the ability to control who enters the work force also implies that the union indirectly controls hiring.

It is also possible for management to set up systems that disguise legal payoffs, joint junkets, and ease of getting overtime, to keep officials addicted to their position. Having the right union leadership in office can offer a more cooperative relationship with the company. The union leadership can assist the company in not only running the

workplace but also in disciplining the work force. In exchange for cooperation the company offers its power to help the union leaders keep their positions by rewarding friends, punishing enemies, and occasionally making the officials look good (Parker & Gruelle, 1999). Leaders can now base their power on the company's power rather than the rank and file. In using the political science terms of Chomsky (2005), this process would equate to a country developing a group of elitists that would administer and control the population while enriching themselves through their relationship with the imperial power.

The leadership of the UAW has continued to maintain its power by adhering to the guidelines instituted by the Reuther regime that focused on limiting competition while keeping the membership quiescent with material gains. Mass production in conjunction with mass consumption was able to produce not only sustained economic growth but also widespread material advancement for the workers (Thompson, 2005). Davis (1990) believes the mass organization of the workers and their incorporation into the generalized norms of mass consumption became more important to the union rather than individual worker's skill differentials. This corporate / union arrangement provided autoworkers the opportunity to enter the upper echelons of the working class. To make up for the monotonous, degrading, and life draining assembly line work, the unskilled work force benefited from their membership in the UAW by high pay, a reduction in working hours, health care coverage, pension plans, educational programs, cost of living adjustments and supplemental unemployment benefits, to name a few.

The Technological Age

The 1970s ushered in a new era and the end of Fordism. This transformation identified by Womack, Jones and Roos (1990) is referred to as the Technological Age or Post Fordism. They consider this new shift in policy as a natural outgrowth of Fordism. The economic practices and institutions once seen as pillars of a successful economy were now increasingly seen as obstacles to progress. Unions, key companies, and the investment strategies once considered the foundations of Fordism now came under attack in the guise of globalization. Global capitalism began affecting everyone but in particular impacted the blue collar steel and auto industries by over-accumulation, overinvestment, overcapacity, overproduction, and new developments in financing. This era resulted in a shift in the composition of the labor force away from blue-collar production work to a more service oriented economy. This transformation extended beyond process engineering and reflected the decline of the importance of scale and scope in the new economy.

Davis (1990) identifies four trends responsible for the restructuring of the American economy away from the Fordist model. First, in the 1970s the market was opened up to foreign imports, including autos. Even with the advent of auto competition in the 1970s the domestic auto industry was able to maintain their status quo into the 1990s by not moving in any new directions, by not taking any unnecessary risks, and being content to play it safe. Second, the primary concern became one of reducing the work force through globalization and global subcontracting. This included the reduction in communication, logistics, and information processing costs. Computer usage brought about shrinking staffs and removed layers of bureaucracy while still

concentrating on the core business. The power of the companies to transfer operations from one facility to another or even country to country could now be employed as a weapon against labor (Scanlon, 1969). A reduction in the work force diminished the union base, thus reducing worker power. Third, the deregulation of industry laws and the expansion of non-union auto facilities based in the Southwest and Southeast contributed to the decline of Fordism. One result was that overall union membership in the United States has now declined to 8.2 % of the private work force (Zoeckler, 2005). Finally companies used this as an opportunity to restructure internally.

As the auto competition and other industries conformed to the restructuring in the global world, the domestic auto industry remained complacent, and the union remained demanding. Occasionally the company would face a short work stoppage with the union but The Big Three and the UAW routinely renewed their labor contracts. The contracts were publicly heralded but in private the companies bemoaned the contracts as ruinously expensive and restrictive (Levin, 2006). With no confidence that management knew what it was doing, the union tried to obtain immediate gratification, pay increases, benefits, and time off for its members rather than plan for the future of the industry (Womack, 2006). The successful negotiation of a labor contract with The Big Three that would actually pay people not to work if there was a decline in production orders is a prime example. Starting in 1984 a jobs bank was contractually created that actually kept UAW employees pay and benefits intact even if they were laid off. This has cost the industry millions of dollars each year since 1984, but raised the stature of the UAW in the eyes of its members.

It should not be misconstrued that there was no change efforts attempted in the industry prior to the 1990s. The Big Three, faced with chronic resistance from the union, the work force and even members of management to their past efforts to increase production and lower costs, attempted to resolve matters by continually reorganizing the labor process itself (Edwards, 1978). Programs such as Total Quality Management, Modern Operating Agreements, and 6-Sigma were initiated with great fanfare and expense until the next financial crisis. The only constant present in the past programs was cutting costs with little emphasis put on human development. Even the current re-organization underway in the domestic auto industries decision-making process that includes an empowered hourly work force is not a new revelation. As far back as 1972 the Chrysler Corporation requested the management of its production facilities to consult individual assembly line workers regarding what they perceived could or would improve their individual jobs. This early attempt to improve overall plant performance through empowering the work force with the opportunity to make their jobs less strenuous, run more smoothly and safer, was guided by four key principles: (1) Fix responsibility as far down as possible. (2) Give enough authority to go with it. (3) Let workers know the concrete results of their suggestions and improvements. (4) Create a climate that encourages change (Life, 1972. p. 38). These are the basic components of the Toyota Production System.

Management Functions

In 1980, Donald Peterson, CEO of Ford Motor Company, became the first high-level auto executive to embrace the Team Concept ideas of Edward Deming (Ingrassia &

White, 1994). The new motto became People, Product and Profits. People before profits were unheard of in the automobile industry. Peterson espoused the idea that employee involvement in production should be a way of life. Working as a team should include treating everyone with trust and respect (Ingrassia & White, 1994). Working as a team would allow for discovering new and innovative ways to work together for a common goal and a shared future (Feldman & Betzhold, 1988). The industry would be committed to creating an environment that provide the opportunity for every member of the company to become actively involved and to participate in the decision making process (Peterson & Tracey, 1985). Regardless of the positive rhetoric none of the programs has proven successful over time.

Historically, the bureaucracy of the industry consisted of many middle managers whose responsibility was to gather data for top management so they could coordinate activities, allocate resources, and set strategy for the company. It was felt that a manager did not have to know the details of the business because they were evaluated in terms of return on an assets target. If the numbers were poor it was time to change the manager. If the numbers were good the possibility of a promotion existed. Wright and Smye (1996) claim that the result of this bureaucratic management approach in mature, age declining companies, such as the domestic auto industry, is the development of individual characteristics that are actually detrimental to progress. These detrimental management characteristics include: (a) Personal success stems from avoiding taking risks, (b) management emphasis is on form over function, (c) everything is forbidden, unless expressly permitted, (d) management authority is not matched with

their responsibilities, (e) opportunities are seen as problems, (f) management is driven by inertia, and (g) political gamesmanship becomes the order of the day.

Samuelson (2005) believes part of the problem regarding unsuccessful change programs revolves around these inherited self defeating management styles formed in their respective companies' successful past. The management habits are composed of the attitudes, beliefs, and expressions of those that inhabit their social world (Macleod, 1987). Even though the change ideas were being introduced from the upper echelons of management, many of the old management bureaucratic styles of delegate organize, and control were still emphasized at the lower levels. O'Neal and Mateja (2006), when comparing Ford Motor's latest troubles with General Motors problems, further cited Ford as being hindered by a lack of firm, consistent leadership at the top and a divisive, feudalistic, cautious, cliquish corporate culture developed over time.

The announcements of the latest change program to be undertaken by the auto companies became a regular occurrence at the plant level. The inability to successfully implement the many past attempts to make production or human resource changes at the plant level showed the union and the workers that they could just wait out the latest change until the plan fizzled and the next plan was unveiled. After so many false starts not even the entire management work force saw or felt a need to change the way they conducted business. For example, floor supervisors, used to their sphere of influence, had no use for any program that would adversely impact their jobs over the long term. The only measurement that meant anything to management was the number of completed jobs that came off the end of the assembly line. A floor supervisor's ultimate

goal was to get the production units out of their area and into another production area regardless of any quality issues. An existing quality problem for one supervisor was not considered a problem to someone else if the blame could be placed elsewhere. The notion of chimney thinking was reinforced by this attitude. Chimney thinking is a term coined to describe the actions where one plant, department, production area or person is concerned strictly with his or her own success and not the success of the entire organization. The underlying attitude was that individual managers did what they had to do to meet daily production quotas. They rarely shared information, even with other management personnel, as they attempted to protect their private fiefdom. To this day many management employees remain fearful of speaking up. They not only fear the possibility of ridicule for making an incorrect decision but they also fear the repercussions of possibly upstaging their boss if their suggestion is recognized as a good idea (Walsh, 2006).

Prior change programs appeared to only consist of management playing the role of boss while telling the work force what they wanted done in the name of teams. A reluctance to participate in any change processes was natural considering past experiences. Some members of management were willing to try the latest change attempt but gave up when they realized that no one would follow through on their efforts (Katzenbach, 1996). Managers were still ultimately responsible for production by the numbers, even if the hourly workers were attempting to buy into the latest process by empowering themselves to stop the assembly line for quality issues. If workers were being asked to make decisions that historically had been in the realm of

front-line supervisors would there be a need for managers in the future of the auto industry? Managers though did not miss the underlying message in some of the short-lived change procedures. It was acceptable to implement change if it meant co-opting the union but it was another matter to attempt a reorganization of the plant (Parker & Slaughter, 1988). The result was that members of management ended up functioning in a survival mode. It has become apparent that although this management style had worked successfully in the past it was no longer effective.

Current Practices

It is now 2007, and The Big Three are again reevaluating and redesigning their human resource processes in order to meet the new global competitive demands. The Big Three are introducing yet another change process as they attempt to adopt the management styles of the industry benchmark, Toyota. The corporations are now placing an emphasis on new labor processes that are expected to focus on the expansion of employee responsibility and team work while improving product quality, operating efficiency, and work relationships. What makes these extensive work place innovation processes so significant is that there is now a management and union contractual commitment to changing the traditional employer-employee relationship at the factory level. The UAW is cooperating with the company in an attempt to increase competitiveness as a matter of survival. UAW membership has plummeted from 1.5 million members in 1980 to less than 500,000 in 2007 (Will, 2007).

Currently the union and the auto companies are working as active partners in creating an environment that will provide every worker the opportunity to become

involved by participating in the company decision-making processes. These organizational changes are designed to facilitate the standardization of corporate guidelines worldwide. These corporate changes are fully supported by the union leadership and are intended to empower the work force by providing a new (leaner) means of running the business by reducing the demand for unskilled labor while requiring more numerate and literate workers capable of self-direction. While all lean systems techniques are designed to eliminate waste, they are also intended to develop direct action people to function autonomously, in both the operational processes as well as improving upon them. This new way of conducting business and the success or failure of these changes in the auto industry will result in a cultural change that will impact the auto industry, unions, the work force and ultimately society. These changes will ultimately affect society because The Big Three have larger gross domestic sales than many nations. Of the top two-hundred gross domestic sales rankings of corporate versus country clout General Motors ranks 24th, Ford 32nd and Chrysler 34th (Anderson & Cavanagh, 2005). In the United States auto sales alone typically account for 4.3 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Thomas, 2004). The Center for Automotive Research also conducted a study that showed the auto industry provides one out of every ten jobs in the United States and generates jobs in each of the fifty states. Overall, the study concluded that 13.3 million jobs are related to motor vehicles (Plungis, 2003). Any changes in the status of The Big Three, either positive or negative, will severely impact many other jobs in the United States.

Corporate goals have and always will be profits. Management may be spending money on programs to make things appear easier for the worker, but their ultimate goal is more productivity from the worker. To achieve these production gains, The Big Three are attempting to standardize their production processes within their facilities. About twenty-five to thirty-five percent of production gains can typically come from a reconfiguration of the assembly line (Welbes, 2005). All facilities will adhere to their corporate guidelines and be judged by the same standards. The company and the UAW intend to accomplish this feat by establishing hourly work groups that allow the people closest to the jobs, the line workers, to have the authority to make every day production decisions regarding their individual jobs. Additionally, these organizational change efforts under way in the auto industry are designed to alter management and union styles of control in an attempt to increase employee job satisfaction by bringing the decision making process to the lowest level, the shop floor worker.

What exactly will the new auto industry processes consist of? The processes may be called by different names and will vary slightly from company to company, but ultimately they have the same objectives. The Ford Motor program, the Ford Production System (FPS), will be used as an example here to generalize what the industry and union are undertaking. Ford defines FPS as a worldwide, cohesive system that encompasses and integrates their manufacturing processes and interrelated Ford product development system, order-to-delivery, supply and management processes. Its purpose is to develop and institute best practices in the methods used to work with people, equipment and materials so that their customers receive the greatest value.

The FPS vision is to have a lean, flexible and disciplined common production system that is defined by a set of principles and processes that employs groups of capable and empowered people who are learning and working safely together to produce and deliver products that consistently exceed customer expectations in quality, cost and time (Ford, 1995). The four means of expediting an impending culture change identified by MacDuffie and Frits (1997) are included in the Ford Motor model example. They are: (1) Supplying general resources—multi-skilled workers-general purpose machines, (2) Reducing buffers—quick responses-niche markets, (3) Decentralizing authority—improved lateral communications, (4) Providing a high degree of activity of execution and production tasks.

The union and company agreed in principle to these latest strategies designed to include the work force in the production decision making processes. The emerging new labor practices of a lean production system in the domestic auto industry appear to fit better than the traditional antagonistic employment practices in a global environment. Union and management cooperation reflects a concerted effort in which the hourly work force and the union representatives will share some of the responsibilities and decision making within the organization. By allowing the every day decision making in vehicle production to be made by the people closest to the jobs, the line worker, will now require a work force that is willing to become involved, committed, flexible, and multi-skilled. These change policies focusing on meeting the demands of global competition are also being touted by both union and company leaders as a means of reducing employee dissatisfaction by humanizing assembly line work. Progress toward

the implementation of these processes that will supposedly insure the survival of the domestic auto industry are threatened by the economy, the legal system, and the values and strategies of both business and labor (Adler, Kochan, MacDuffie, Fritz, & Rubenstein, 1997).

The question that now begs asking is whether the leadership of the union, in conjunction with the leadership of management, is capable of changing the industry culture. The work force will reflect the actions and attitudes of the leadership of both the union and companies in the speed of their acceptance or amount of resistance to the proposed cultural changes. Worker reaction to what is occurring will depend upon the discrepancy between what they expect versus what is actually happening. Workers have responded with enthusiasm to past programs regarding some form of restructuring until management failed to deliver on their promises. Ultimately, for the latest cooperative efforts to last it must be demonstrated that the gains to cooperation are greater than the costs to all parties. The net gains to all involved must at least match those derivable from the more traditional relationships of the past.

A major hurdle to the implementation of the process is in regards to both management and union being asked or told to cede some of their power to the employees. Power is a particular problem as managers (or union) do not want to give it up (Kanter, 1983). As an organization flexes and flattens in an attempt to become lean, territorial infighting among upper and middle management becomes increasingly visible and contemptible to employees in the plant and further, discourages trust and respect (Chesterton, 1995). This pattern also appears to be manifesting itself within the UAW.

The centralized hierarchy requiring management coordination and control of work force tasks has to be relinquished. This is not something the work force is familiar with doing. Workers familiar with only narrowly defined tasks under mass production practices are now being asked/told that they will now participate in the decision making process.

Another major roadblock to success occurs when management's corporate job descriptions do not reflect their new responsibilities, and managers are not rewarded or recognized for their efforts (Caffaralla, 1994). In turn, salary employees that may have been good general managers under the old system may not be needed when their skills and mindsets do not fit the pattern of change (Katzenbach, 1996). As these new processes shift responsibilities, managers with intractable attitudes and mismatched skill sets can be identified. Dr. Trevino, professor of ethics and chairwoman of the Department of Management and Organization at Smeal College, Pennsylvania State University, says there is a small window of opportunity to get rid of people who do not agree with the new direction or do not have the required skill sets (Jennings, 2002). She feels a new executive has no more than six months to weed out people who need to be replaced and to assemble a new team. Sometimes the established bureaucracy stands in the way of this happening but regardless, the salary work force, like the hourly ranks, are in steady decline.

Rank and File

Autoworkers, like society in general, are facing the same monumental issues regarding change in this present era of global competition. Even though assembly line work is monotonous, physically demanding, and requires high levels of concentration,

the benefits and high pay made a union job highly desirable as a ticket to the middle class. They were once viewed as the aristocrats of labor, the supposed millionaire's of the working class (Milkman, 1997). Company tactics involving the threat of or actual plant closings and massive wage and benefit concessions have turned back the clock for auto workers. They now see themselves as victims, having no power, fewer economic resources and little education to survive if their livelihood is taken away.

Trust between the workers and the company has never been high but as workers have been integrated into the American capitalist system through their consumption habits, labor's political disorganization and trade union bureaucracies, a sense of urgency to cooperate or perish permeates the work force. These new human resource strategies implemented with the assistance of the union are met with little or no resistance from the work force. As plants are shuttered and jobs lost it appears that workers now want a work place relations system quite different from what they currently have (Freeman & Rogers, 1999). While new company/union programs do not necessarily guarantee job security, workers appear willing to participate in any new strategy presented to them in order to keep their jobs secure.

Yet, there remains concerns that while the newly developed processes operate on the same proven TPS principles; the domestic industry has been slow to develop the intended culture for the process to succeed. Nakane and Hall (2002) find that many of the issues that stymie cultural change in industry arise because the human work culture has failed to develop. Bourdieu' defines culture capital as the general cultural background, knowledge, disposition, and skills that are passed from one generation to

the next (Macleod, 1987). Is it possible that change in the domestic auto industry is not occurring as quickly and successfully as expected because the leadership is not capable of developing the work force? The leaders of management and union are consistently saddled with a culture capital resistant to change as they attempt to implement these new strategies. This entire process of cooperation and team work appear to be in direct conflict with the past culture capital maintained in the domestic auto industry.

The most effective way to meet the demands of the competition require the domestic auto industry to change the behavior of its work force by putting people into a new organizational context that imposes new rules, new roles, responsibilities and relationships for them (Beer, Eisenstal & Spector, 1990). This whole organizational change system is constructed on the premise that the line worker is the most important component of auto production. Knowles (1984) makes it clear that for a program to be successful the workers must become self-directed and accept responsibility on the job. The corporate and union leadership will be the primary vehicle for fostering this organizational change. Northouse (2001) defines the purpose of leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. Under the new system, the line managers and union officials will be expected to serve as developers of the work force. Through such mechanisms as the supervisory process, coaching and mentoring, leaders will be expected to educate the work force in these new operating methods.

Capitalism assumes an individual is not all that rational and that his or her behavior, within limits, can be deliberately controlled (Perrow, 1986). To alter individual

behavior one does not need to change their personality or even amend their human resource skills. Instead, people's responses to individual decision making situations can be adjusted by changing the premise of the worker's decision making process. For example, as goals and objectives are established and broken down into sub goals at each level of the organization, the company and union have the power and tools to structure the workers environment and perceptions in such a way that they see the desired outcomes in the proper light. As the employee's work towards these corporate / union objectives they are only provided the information necessary to make a correct organizational decision (Perrow, 1986). The two-tired system for dissemination of the flow of information by the leadership to the workers regarding individual decision making is controlled to the point that the basis of the workers decisions are predisposed. Each team or individual can then be measured against the predetermined goals and objectives set by management and union as an indicator of progress. All three parties, management, union, and workers, will be expected to successfully implement these unfamiliar processes.

The bureaucracy of both the management and union organizations are now capable of implementing the changes they feel necessary with little or no opposition from the workers. While not all workers will accept the goals established by the company and union, both the company and union have in place mechanisms to insure working towards the pre-established goals meets the individual's needs. The company and union bureaucracies have organized production in such a way as to minimize workers' opportunities for resistance and to even alter workers' perceptions of the

desirability of opposition. Workers can now be subjected to new forms of control in the guise of a cultural change while they continually press for their needs to be met based on what they experience, what they perceive, and what they think possible (Edwards, 1978). Worker dissention to the new production methods is not widespread, although there have been a few groups seeking union reforms. Worker resistance has been minimized or squelched through the established dominant UAW practices. Parker & Gruelle (1999) contend that the main barrier to rank and file control of the union appears to be elected and appointed officials who continue to employ undemocratic rules, goon squads, and make deals with management to ward off any threats to their perquisites.

Unions have been so successful in the past that most auto workers reached an accommodation with capitalism (Ransom, 2001). They became content with their work and union situation as long as they maintained their upper working class standard of living. A majority of UAW members regard the union only as a service organization that aids them in attaining economic benefits (Magrath, 2000). They are not concerned with its day-to-day operations. Now, as plants are closing and jobs are being lost the actions of the union leadership are being scrutinized more closely by its members. The bureaucratic, non-aggressive, and conservative actions of the union leadership (Goldfield, 1987) accepted by the membership in the past is now being called into question by these same members as a general dissatisfaction with the union leadership grows. The leadership mentality that espoused such attitudes as, “Members aren’t interested in democracy: they’re interested in results. We’ll get good results if we the

leaders just come up with the right plan" (Parker & Gruelle, 1999, p. 13) while successfully excluding the workers from the decision making process in the past appear to no longer work.

The leadership of the union appears to be strong when its members are willing to follow their directives. The ability to maintain the high wages and benefits of the work force is dependent upon the political power of the union. There is political strength in numbers. Lower membership numbers will manifest itself in less political power. The deterioration or lack of competent leadership has led to a lowering of the total strength of the union organization (Parker & Gruelle, 1999). The union has become weak without the input of its members while officials now seek to preserve their job and comfortable life style. The problem is compounded further when the workers are not part of any union/company discussions. The agreed upon results (contracts) do not include what the workers necessarily want but what the company and union see them needing. When this occurs members begin to act as individuals and look out only for themselves leading to the union no longer being capable of guaranteeing a bloc labor vote for political candidate or national issues they have endorsed. Traditionally, the UAW leadership has almost invariably supported Democrats candidates for office yet only one-third of union members on the Worker Representation and Participation Survey (WRPS) now consider themselves Democrats (Freeman & Rogers, 1999). Other union members in large numbers simply fail to vote in any election, be it union, local or national issues. The typical autoworker no longer

wants to be part of a bloc (union), nor is he or she prepared to delegate control over political and social decisions to a handful of leaders (Mead, 2004).

The archaic leadership styles of the present union oligarchy already discussed is not conducive to the newly conceived worker environment of cooperation. The work force no longer maintains the same attitudes and convictions towards union solidarity as in the past. Worker attitude towards the union now depends upon personal attributes such as age, sex, ethnicity, income, working conditions, and experience (Freeman & Rogers, 1999). The restrictive policies and favoritism of the leadership of the UAW continues to further disenfranchise the work force. The rank and file members may now consider their union association to be just as distasteful as their job situation (Kolchin & Hyclak, 1984). Some members view the union as a necessary evil that exists mainly to protect incompetence and to keep jobs for deadweights (Milkman, 1997). The reality of globalization is causing the membership to lose faith in the capabilities of the union as solidarity is continually eroded through the enactment of two or even three tier wage scales, benefit cuts, and plant closings. Yet, the membership remains relatively quiescent to their predicament as they continue to accumulate not only material things but also enjoy the increased leisure time afforded them. Their only concern seems to be that they maintain their current income in dollars and benefits.

Kahneman, Knetsch, & Thaler, (1991) speak of the endowment effect in regards to why there is such little opposition to union policies. The endowment effect involves people placing a higher value on what they have than something else of identical value that they do not possess simply because they have the former. Assuming that a union is

doing a reasonable job, if workers with neutral feelings regarding unions are placed in a union environment, they will be more favorably inclined to unions. Even if a worker is unhappy with the union, he or she will probably stay in that job anyway as it will generally offer better pay and benefits than a non union job. For example, The Center for Automotive Research reported that between 1960 and 2002 auto workers consistently earned more than the average American factory worker (McCracken & Hawkins Jr. 2006). Most union members find that the majority of the time a union can and does valuable things for them. Again, for example, while nearly eighteen percent of all American workers report they were laid off from full or part-time jobs during the 2000-2003 recession (Heldrich, 2003) laid off UAW represented workers maintained their income and benefits through their union negotiated contracts.

Yet a major paradox exists regarding the opportunity to elect and vote for different people and policies at the local plant level. While it may not be worth the time, effort, or potential harassment to an individual with change on their mind to run for a union office, their personal relationships with those in office can play an important role in their willingness to take an active part in administering the local union activities. This could include attending union meetings and voting in line with the incumbent's request in return for a real or perceived perquisite in the future. Parker & Gruelle (1999) attribute these relationships that result in an individual getting more power on their job as an explanation to why union members prefer to elect those that deny them overall power in the union. Thus we often see corrupt and bureaucratic officials repeatedly elected because they talk tough against the employer while maintaining the

ability to disperse perquisites such as trips and time off the assembly line to those supporting them. If this system of ideology is accepted as natural even though some are favored over others, any notion of resistance evaporates.

Workplace Change

The Big Three and the UAW have created a partnership that is designed to improve their production, their quality, and overall worker morale while increasing the job satisfaction level of its employees and members. Freeman & Rogers (1999) indicate that there are certain employment opportunities that are more likely to produce job satisfaction. Workers would like a participative voice in matters that will directly impact their quality of work life. In working with management, they would like to establish a more positive relation through increasing trust levels and a willingness to share power. They welcome employee involvement programs that allow them to interact with their peers and are willing to work with management to make the firm more productive if it means protecting the security of their job. They want the independence to deal with management as individuals regarding various duties, including off-line job opportunities, and control over work methods and pace. If it came down to a choice for workers between labor management committees, unions, or other employee organizations that would collectively bargain with management, 25% want a union, 15% want more government regulations, and 60% prefer labor management committees where disagreements are taken to an outside arbitrator (Goldfield, 1987).

A management and structure capable of delivering this kind of work force will be required to successfully implement these changes (Parker & Slaughter, 1988). In this

cultural environment leadership becomes synonymous with the development of people (Nakane & Hall, 2002). Yet, workers believe management resistance is the primary reason progress has been slow in their ability to achieve the desired level of influence. With the trust level continuing to lag as the workers seek more independence they also continue to look for union protection from management. They want the option to deal with management as a group for benefits, medical, and safety issues through their union. Many workers resent managements failure to implement fully promised changes. Enthusiasm wanes when the daily reality of life on the shop floor does not meet what was promised.

The continuous adaptation and growth in a changing business environment will depend on institutional learning (Senge, 1993). A central aim of education is to take the knowledge that has been acquired by one generation and create conditions such that their knowledge can be reacquired and extended by the next (Case, 1996). Until now the line worker has been afforded little opportunity for input or growth within the factory. The monotony of assembly line work did not lend itself to individual learning. This is not to imply that an assembly line worker cannot learn. They are in fact intelligent people with aptitudes and conceptual abilities unacknowledged or smothered by family, school and the traditional manufacturing environment (Chesterton, 1995). These individual aptitudes and abilities are the untapped resources intended for development. Workers must now be afforded the training and education that allow them the ability to participate fully in the system. It is the view of Senge (1993) that the only organizations that will excel in the future will be those capable of discovering how

to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels of the organization. With over 50% of the present domestic auto industry work force eligible to retire within the next five years (Butters, 2003); the industry intent is to create a new culture that will last for years to come.

Those involved in organizational change agree that it is easier to facilitate a change if the people participating in the change believe those instituting the change have their best interests at heart (Hollens, 1994). The common belief in this change process is that it starts with the knowledge and attitudes of individuals. People, including autoworkers, have a readiness to learn (Knowles, 1984). Knowles (1984) indicates one of the first steps to implementing change is to insure that employees know why they have to learn. In this case it does not take a rocket scientist to see that the global economy is shifting the emphasis of adult learning needs in the work place. The change process must therefore include an agreed upon plan to prepare the work force for what is essentially survival in the industry. In this instance the concept of team learning will guide the vision, focus and energy required to implement the industry changes. Team learning is vital because teams, not individuals, are now considered the fundamental learning unit in modern organizations (Senge, 1993).

What needs to be explained to the work force is why the changes will be conducted in the way they are, and how this process will be different than those in the past. Bruner's (1973) learning principles are being employed to expedite the work force acceptance of the changes. The learning processes are: (a) A predisposition of learning where the instructor(s) must be concerned with the experiences and contexts that make

the employee willing and able to learn, (b) the ways in which a body of knowledge can be constructed so that it can be readily grasped by the learner, (c) the most effective sequences in which to present the material where the class can be designed to facilitate extrapolation and or fill in the gaps or go beyond the information given, and (d) the nature and pacing of rewards and punishment should include methods for structuring knowledge while generating new propositions, and increasing the manipulation of information.

People are motivated to learn for self-satisfaction and self-esteem reasons with real life benefits rather than qualifications (extrinsic) (Knowles, 1984). There are many individual training classes offered on and off site to develop the abilities of an employee. The rewards associated with motivation could be self-satisfying, but they can also include money, prestige, and job titles. People are improving themselves individually through the guided learning techniques within the plant plus have the opportunity to improve their lot in life by enrolling in classes, paid for by the company and union, outside the facility. The company and union can then capitalize on this individual development to improve production, quality, and morale. It becomes a win-win situation for all three parties. There also exists an ulterior motive for all parties. The Big Three are assuming that a by-product of increased employee job satisfaction will result in a productivity increase and improved quality of the vehicles built. The UAW is confident that the improved relationship with the company and the workers will increase the likelihood of unionizing additional automotive facilities in the United States.

The relationship between production and the material conditions of society are a determining factor in the development of a people's consciousness. Capitalism successfully expanded into the autoworker's life when he or she realized they now had access to the American Dream of a more affluent and more secure way of life. They became part of the working class which successfully escaped from poverty and attained both industrial and political citizenship (Bottomore, 1966). Workers aspirations became generally bourgeois as they judged their successes, failures, and fun according to middle class values (Magrath, 2000). The workers became motivated by the desire to maintain their relative position with critical reference groups (Katz, 1985), in this case the upper working class. Access to upper working class luxuries has convinced auto workers that all the material extras they are capable of obtaining are worth the stress and pressures of the assembly line system.

Critical Theory

In terms of intellectual traditions that have had a significant impact on research and theorizing in the past two decades it is critical theory that is arguably the most influential (Brookfield, 2001). In today's global market place capitalism is perceived as a natural and common sense reality. As competition remains the motor of capitalism it is clear that businesses must be capable of undercutting their rivals if they expect to survive. This market competition sets in motion a continuing search for new methods of production, new sources of labor, and new ways of organizing the processes that will reduce costs and increase profits. Marx and Engle often emphasized that democracy was the ideal form of capitalist rule because it enabled the capitalists to sort out their

differences while giving the working class a semblance of a say in running society (Brooks, 2002).

Forward

Critical Theory has its origins in German philosophical framework developed after World War I at the Institute of Social Research at the University of Frankfurt, Germany. The economic depression, inflation, unemployment, strikes, and protests in the aftermath of World War I greatly influenced the political views of Max Horkheimer, Theodore Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse. They perceived the injustice and domination in post World War I Germany as providing a semblance of order in the world. In 1937 Horkheimer published an essay entitled "Traditional and Critical Theory" where he acknowledged not only the similarities between traditional positivist theory and critical theory but also noted the differences. Critical theory defies total Marxist thought by denying the absolute evils of capitalism. In this respect critical theory approaches capitalism as a common sense reality where men and women can at least partly determine his or her existence while keeping in mind that they, the workers, have no input into what product is made, how the job is done, how the product is produced, how it is priced, or how it is distributed. Shortly after publication of the essay Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse were forced to flee Nazi Germany to escape Jewish persecution and settled in the United States.

The contradiction between the rhetoric of progressive America while the reality of racial and class discrimination existed led Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse to conduct an analysis of what they considered the mutating forms of domination that

accompanied the changing nature of capitalism (Agger, 1998). Horkheimer and Adorno eventually returned to Germany in 1953 while Marcuse remained in the United States and became the philosophical voice of the New Left in the 1960's. The New Left became the voice for political emancipation and the vanguard of the 1960's Cultural Revolution.

Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse's analysis of domination within the capitalist system incorporated the philosophical and social thoughts of Marx, Kant, Hegel, and Weber. Habermas, an influential critical theorist, has consistently drawn attention to critical theories Marxist influences and its most important analytical categories, false consciousness, commodification, alienation, praxis and emancipation, (Brookfield, 2001) in his learning theory. Habermas's (1972) learning theory describes three human interests for which knowledge is developed. First, technical knowledge is developed to control one's material environment by organizing and maintaining an economic and political system. Secondly, this knowledge incorporates a shared meaning of every day life by developing the practical interests that come from the need to understand one another. Thirdly, emancipatory interests are developed from the desire to be free of oppression.

False Consciousness

Understanding and challenging the dominant ideology, either in society or the domestic auto industry, is a major premise of critical theory. Habermas's (1972) first human interest is that knowledge is developed as technical knowledge in order to control one's material environment by organizing and maintaining an economic and

political system. As a process of adult learning, even in the work place, one must analyze the concept of hegemony. Hegemony describes the way that people learn to accept as natural in his or her own best interest an unjust social order (Gramsci, 1995). Gramsci stated that, "Every relationship of hegemony is necessarily a learning experience" (p.157). Hegemony is powerful yet adaptable, able to reconfigure itself, skillfully incorporate resistance and give just enough away to its opponents while remaining more or less intact (Brookfield, 2001). The irony of hegemony is as adults take the initiative to learn they act upon the beliefs and assumptions that are actually holding them back.

Critical theory perceives this ideology as inherently duplicitous. Critical theory views ideology as broadly accepted sets of values, beliefs, myths, explanations, and justifications, that appear self-evidently true, empirically accurate, personally relevant, and morally desirable to a majority of the populace, but that actually work to maintain an unjust social and political order (Brookfield, 2001). This system of artificial beliefs that justify practices and structures that keep people unknowingly in servitude is defined as false consciousness (Brookfield, 2001).

Habermas's (1972) second point in his learning theory is that as knowledge develops it incorporates a shared meaning of every day life by expanding the practical interests that come from the need to understand one another. This shared meaning in the established system results in an established custom or praxis. This ideology has convinced people that the existing social arrangements are naturally ordained and work for the good of all (Brookfield, 2001). As a worker's knowledge is developed through

perpetuation of the dominant ideology the continued existence of the system can then be maintained with little or no opposition from the workers. It is this false consciousness that prevents people from perceiving their actual situations while assisting in perpetuating repression in society and the work place. If this system of ideology is accepted as natural even though the workers realize some people are favored over others any notion of resistance to the system will evaporates.

How is it possible that the majority of workers can accept as natural this unfair ideology? As the work force gained a penchant for mass consumer commodities they knowingly or unknowingly gave up aspects of control in their every day lives. This desire to maintain a standard of living equal to or above their peers has produced a work force not willing to object to the status quo. Althusser (1971) indicates there are two types of socialization agencies that ensure the predominance of the ruling ideology. The first, repressive state apparatus includes the legal system, the police and armed forces that ensure that the state has some control over these aspects of an individual's life. This would include the corporations and union as a repressive force. The second, ideological state apparatus includes the church, mass media, community, and the education system. Education as an ideological state apparatus works to ensure the perpetuation of the dominant ideology not so much by teaching values that support the ideology but by immersing learners in ideologically determined practices.

It is possible to interpret adult learning through the lens of objectification. In corporate mandatory training, developed jointly with the union, one can see how learning undertaken to satisfy external authorities ceases to become the adult learner's

intellectual project (Brookfield, 2002). The measurements of learning, test scores, or increased production do not measure the adults engagement in creative work but instead exerts a pressure requiring the learner to improve his or her performance according to a criteria he or she has no chance of affecting. This process of objectification supports Althusser's (1971) concept of ideological state apparatus mentioned earlier. Critical theory questions these power relations that advance one group over another, the nature of truth, and how ones knowledge has been constructed (Merriam, 2002).

Commodification

Brookfield (2002) uses the term automaton conformity to describe the process of social manipulation that results in people striving to be exactly the same as he or she imagines the majority of the population. This notion of automaton conformity has affected freedom of thought, speech, and actions even in the work place. Original thinking and decision making in the auto industry has never been a high priority so in turn there is even less opportunities for critical thinking. Workers have become objectified, that is, they are now separated from their creativity and identity. Individual qualities such as energy, skill, personality, and creativity have become objectified to the point they are just another asset to be sold on the market (Brookfield, 2002). This is one of critical theories most important analytical categories referred to as commodification. Commodification is a process by which a human quality or relationship becomes regarded as a product, good, or commodity to be bought and sold on the open market (Brookfield, 2001). Hegemony emphasizes how the logic of capitalism and

commodification permeate all aspects of everyday life, culture, and education. It is this false consciousness and acceptance of commodification that prevents people from perceiving their actual situations while assisting in perpetuating repression in society and the work place. Employment in an automobile factory in a mass production environment was no exception to the process of commodification as workers are now separated from their creativity and identity and have literally become a cog in the machine.

Alienation

As false consciousness and commodification increase so too does alienation. People become alienated politically, for example, when the existing systems, whether political or economic have the capability of limiting individual involvement. This becomes a major concern when organizations have the ability to silence dissenting voices. With the UAW as a willing partner working with the companies there is no longer any opportunity in the process for dissention. The perpetuation of this process results in the development of cynicism not only in politics but in the system itself.

Emancipation

Habermas's (1972) third point of his learning theory revolves around how emancipatory interests are developed from the desire to be free of oppression. Emancipatory oppression is an understanding of the contradictions between what is truth and what is reality. The cultural and historical forces at work in the auto industry have influenced the worker's view of not only themselves but also his or her perception of the world. People have become accustomed and comfortable in relations of

domination and subjugation instead of equality and independence, even in the workplace. One would think that the social and technological changes taking place in the auto industry and world would result in major changes in the status quo and dominant ideology, but they have not.

Resistance to Critical Theory

Conspicuous in its absence is the lack of research available dealing specifically with the auto industry from a critical perspective, especially in the United States. While a plethora of research exists regarding, unions, management, the working class and society in general (Charlesworth, 2000, Foster, 1974, Rose, 2001& Willis, 1977) in both Europe and the United States, little of it reflects a critical perspective. Proponents of critical management theory such as Welton (1995) and Spencer (1977), for example, argue that the workplace has the potential to provide the emancipatory educational setting deemed necessary for individual change to occur. At educational conferences and in adult education research journals critical theory is an important topic. Yet, despite making steady progress in Europe and Canada critical management theory in the field has generally produced little change in society, schools, or business. Within industry both the application of critical management theory and the subsequent academic research exist as a poorly understood enigma keeping it out of the industry mainstream and on the periphery (Smallman, 2006).

An exception to lack of change production is the critical management study conducted on the Canadian Autoworkers Union (CAW) (Livingston & Ross, 1998). While small in the grand scheme of things it can well serve as an excellent example of how a

labor movement can mobilize its members through critical education programs and positively impact the transformation of existing social programs. In Europe and Canada where unions hold a different stature with more complex social goals than those in the United States a union movement can position itself as an economic and political weapon that can be yielded on behalf of all workers and not just a special interest group (CAW Canada Education Department, 1996). Unions have the capability to exploit their existence as social organizations based on shared territory, economic life and language and a common culture (Newman, 1993, Martin, 1995). The Livingston and Ross (1998) study has shown that successful transformational and informal learning opportunities can take place within a workplace community. Transformational learning calls for education to be liberating. Freire (1970) refers to this process as conscientization, "in which men, not as recipients, but as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness both of the sociocultural reality which shapes their lives and of the capacity to transform that reality" (p. 27). Evidence of the study indicates a growing involvement of workers as they take advantage of organized labor courses, political education programs and informal learning classes. This has assisted in the development of a grassroots working class social movement.

There are a few different factors that contribute to the lack of research available in the domestic auto industry from a critical theory perspective. In American society critical theory remains haunted by the stigma of Karl Marx. The Marx association remains a definite disadvantage for any proponents of critical theory. Especially in the United States Marx is associated with communist repression and atrocities and

perceived as someone to be detested. American educators, in both academia and the work place setting, fearful of being labeled subversive or communists in the present culture, do not readily draw on his works. Marx can rarely even be mentioned in an adult education setting without creating an uproar. Favorably mentioning Marx is perceived by many Americans as tantamount to treason and can be construed as engaging in un-American activities.

The intent of a critical perspective is to stimulate questioning the social, organizational and political processes within an organization. In the domestic auto industry the reinforcement of past successful educational paradigms severely limits the opportunities to deliver the critical theory message. Most managers want information and ideas that can be applied easily and will show immediate results and have little or no use for a theory or idea that could possibly interfere or hinder their everyday operations. They become intent upon maintaining their own status quo rather than trying to change the present system because it represents a path of least resistance. These practicing managers have little or no interest in academic research (Smallman, 2006). There is also convincing evidence that indicates managers do not use available conventional academic research (Armstrong & Pagell, 2003; Crowther & Carter, 2002) even if it is available.

While relationships between managers and academics matter they do not necessarily share the same research objectives thus hindering any successful execution of ideas. Critical theorists also have a tendency to use esoteric language and difficult writing styles when promoting the theory. The language alone is enough to turn people

away. It is this ability of academics to successfully communicate with each other in regards to critical theory through journals and conferences while maintaining the inability to relate to the common person that is most perplexing. New arguments are lost in an academic hegemony that reinforces the requirements for a strictly scientific approach to the study of management (Smallman, 2006). Because verification of the theory is impossible until the vision it inspires is realized limits the education/training programs to continuing to stress an apolitical emphasis on personal development programs or on the incorporation of human capital perspectives into learning at the workplace that allows the androgogical paradigm to reign supreme (Brookfield, 2002).

Advantages of Critical Theory

There is not a single umbrella theory, though, that answers all concerns regarding critical theory because it, like world assumptions, are in constant turmoil and the resulting changes provide opportunity for disagreement in its specifics. An essential element of critical theory in society is its ability to critique its ideology (Guess, 1981). In critiquing its ideology critical theory can not only addresses the issues of power and justice but also the economy, matters of race, gender, class, ideologies, discourses, education, religion, social institutions and how these cultural dynamics interact to construct a social system (Kincheloe & MacLaren, 2000). The ability to critique its ideology allows critical theory to offer additional insights into the functions of power at a range of levels; at the macro level of policy and economic structures; at the cultural level through language, texts, and curriculum; and at the micro level in the immediate experiences of freedom, possibility, control, and repression in educational settings

(Heilman, 2003). The ultimate objective of critical theory is to free people from the constraints limiting themselves through education and in doing so empower them to change not only their social context but also themselves. Reaching this objective has the potential to disrupt the status quo. Qualitative research that frames its purpose in the context of critical theoretical concerns can produce potentially dangerous knowledge by providing the kind of information and insight that can upset institutions and can threaten to overturn sovereign regimes of truth (Kincheloe & MacLaren, 2000). These same characteristics that spur postmodern research into critical theory can be identified in the auto industry.

In the present global capitalist system of constant change critical theory is capable of providing people with the knowledge and understanding that will allow them to at least partly determine his or her existence. The advantages of employing critical theory in this instance far outweigh the disadvantages. For example, critical theory is not grounded in one particular political analysis and may also be incorporated within other theories such as feminist and postmodern in other research. Critical theories primary unit of analysis is the conflicting relationship between social classes within the economy. Its basis is in trying to create democratic socialistic values and processes that will create a world where the common good is the foundation of individual adult development. Critical theory has the capability to revisit the questions of race, gender, and class and how the power relations of one group advance over another, the nature of truth, and the construction of knowledge (Merriam, 2002). This postmodern research does require the world to be reconstructed anew. It is imperative that the

reconstructed world is done in such a way that undermines all that appears natural and anything may be questioned.

There are a few different schools of thought regarding these participative policies that purport to give workers' a measure of control over their work environment. One perspective regarding instituting the TPS process is seen as an opportunity for the capitalist system to undermine the solidarity and power of a union. It is the belief of Lamphere and Grenier (1988) that beneath the mantel of participation there often lays a clear anti-union stance. Closer ties to management are actuality being created by virtue of worker involvement in the processes. Parker and Slaughter (1988) look at the tactic of getting workers involved in the production process as a form of super Taylorism where the workers are taught to time study themselves or coworkers on the job. (The term Taylorism derives from Frederick Taylor considered the father of time studying jobs for unnecessary movements and the deskilling of the assembly line.) Fischer (1984) believes the goal of participation is to get workers to think and act like managers without sharing managerial power. Others, like Piore and Sabel (1985) think the intended production process changes will present an opportunity to humanize and democratize the work for those working on the line. Fenwick (2004) actually challenges the subjugation of human knowledge, skills, and relationships to organizational or shareholder gains and focuses on transforming the workplace and human resource development toward justice, fairness and equity

Welton (1995) argues that the workplace has the potential to provide the emancipatory educational setting deemed necessary for individual change to occur.

Corporate / union leaders, if they so desire, have the ability and wherewithal to assist people in developing a view of the world where they become aware of how ideology, economics, and culture intersect to shape their individual lives. Merriam, (2002) identifies some parameters for framing research questions when employing critical theory. Research questions should be framed in terms of: How has a particular situation come to be? Whose interests are served by the arrangement? Who has power? How was / is it obtained? What structures reinforce its distribution? What are the outcomes of the structure? Who has access? Who has the power to make changes? From where are the people's frames of reference emerging? By analyzing the competing power interests the validity of the theory is supported because the subjects researched also support the philosophical views of society. As one can deduce by the prior questions, critical theory research would not be popular with everyone, especially those holding positions of power as privileged groups often have an interest in supporting the status quo to protect their advantages.

The atmosphere created within the domestic auto industry over time is certainly a learned culture. Those with a vested interest in the policies that have been instrumental in the development of said culture now have a hard time abandoning or altering policies that have proved individually and/or corporately successful in the past. Thus, changing the shape of an established corporation, yet alone an entire industry will not be easy as it appears that the older more successful a company or industry has been in the past the more difficult it will be to change. This research will examine the business and labor practices of the domestic automobile industry, both past and

present, as perceived by three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers regarding their perceptions to the differing change viewpoints.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

The structural basis of this research is predicated upon four assumptions. The first assumption is that globalization is impacting the United States labor movement and the resulting company human resource strategies within the domestic auto industry. The second assumption is that the unionized hourly work force has become complacent regarding their role in the industry. The third assumption is that any changes in the industry will directly impact present workers and their futures. The fourth assumption is that management, union, and workers share a different perspective regarding the motivation and educational techniques being implemented in the auto industry.

These assumptions regarding management, union and workers in the domestic auto industry have led to the following research questions.

1. What is the perception of management and union representatives within the auto industry regarding
   globalization serving as a catalyst to implement new human resource strategies?

2. What is the perception of the hourly work force regarding their role in the corporate / union culture that has developed in the domestic auto industry?
3. What is the perception of the hourly work force regarding the implementation of industry changes that could impact their livelihood and lifestyle?
4. What is the perception of management, union and hourly work force regarding the implementation of new personnel development strategies (for example, learning and motivation, etc.) designed to insure the survival of the domestic auto industry in a global environment?

These research questions will address the issue of the culture and subcultures of the auto industry and union that while providing the trappings of a middle class lifestyle for its workers has in actuality created a more legalistic corporate and union bureaucratic system that now excludes the average worker from participating in the decisions that ultimately affects him or her. Focusing on this issue will allow others to gain a greater understanding and knowledge of the culture and subcultures that exist within the auto industry and the conundrum presented to the industry and individuals in the present global environment.

This qualitative research is approached from a critical theory perspective using emic and ethnographic methods in addressing this particular issue. With the domestic auto industry in such dire straits a critical theory approach was taken to advance this research because it is a qualitative research method that attempts to uncover, examine

and critique the social, cultural, and psychological assumptions that structure and limit ones thinking (Merriam, 2002). Bogdan and Biklen (2003) define critical theory "as being critical of social organizations that privilege some at the expense of others …and that research is an ethical and political act that always benefits a specific group" (p. 21). Alvesson and Willmott (1996) contend that the intent of critical theory is to foster a rational, democratic development of modern institutions in which self-reflective, autonomous and responsible citizens become progressively less dependent upon received understandings of their needs, and are less entranced by the apparent naturalness or inevitability of the prevailing politico-economic order. To this end critical theory encourages the questioning of ends (e.g. growth, profitability, productivity) as well as the preferred means, such as dependence upon expert rule and bureaucratic control, the contrivance of charismatic corporate leadership, gendered and deskilled work, marketing of lifestyles, etc. (p. 17).

The cultural and historical powers at work in the auto industry can influence an individual's view of not only themselves but also his or her perception of the world. Power, as defined by Weber (1978), is the ability to get others to do something they would otherwise not do. The existence of power in organizations and its resulting consequences operates at different levels and is capable of influencing views by controlling the development of employee knowledge. While the uses and consequences of power within conditions of conflict is easily recognizable there are also other operational levels attributed to power. Power can also be employed to suppress issues to avoid decision making or in order to insure the ideas and practices of the dominant

party is sustained (Schied, Carter, & Howell, 2001). In addition, Lukes (1974) argues there is another form of power prevalent that he refers to as silent power. This silent power results in the inaction of the people to the point they become complicit in their role in the existing order.

A critical social theory is concerned with the issues of power and justice and the ways the economy, matters of race, gender, class, ideologies, discourses, education, religion, and other social institutions and cultural dynamics interact to construct a social system (Kincheloe & MacLaren, 2000). Habermas (1972), an influential adult learning critical theorist, describes three human interests for which one's knowledge is developed within that social system. First, technical knowledge is developed to control one's material environment by organizing and maintaining an economic and political system. Secondly, this knowledge incorporates a shared meaning of every day life by developing the practical interests that come from the need to understand one another. Thirdly, emancipatory interests are developed from the desire to be free of oppression. Emancipatory oppression is an understanding of the contradictions between what is truth and what is reality. Critical theory also has the potential to disrupt the status quo. Qualitative research that frames its purpose in the context of critical theoretical concerns produces undeniably dangerous knowledge, the kind of information and insight that upsets institutions and threatens to overturn sovereign regimes of truth (Kincheloe & MacLaren, 2000).

While critical qualitative research remains one of several genres of inquiry into non-quantifiable pictures of social life (Carspecken, 1996), it does not comprise a single

umbrella theory that answers all concerns raised. Assumptions reached through critical theory will constantly be questioned while providing an opportunity for disagreement in their perceived specifics. Researchers in critical theory must set aside their biases, prejudices, and personal concerns by objectively reviewing evidence both in favor as well as against a particular concern. The ultimate objective of critical theory is to empower people to change not only their social context but also themselves as individuals by providing the educational means necessary to free oneself from limiting constraints. This critical theory research in the auto industry will attempt to uncover, examine and critique the social, cultural, economic, and psychological assumptions that structure and limit the way auto workers think regarding the construction of their social system. The research questions were framed in terms of how has the present situation come to be. Whose interests are served by the arrangement between management and the union? Who has power? How was / is it obtained? What structures reinforce its distribution? What are the outcomes of the structure? Who has access? Who has the power to make changes? From where do the worker's frames of reference emerge (Merriam, 2002)?

Ethnography is employed in this research because it is the process of discovering and describing a culture (McCurdy, Spradley & Shandy, 2005). An assumption of ethnographic research is that every human group eventually evolves a culture that guides its member's view of the world and the way that they structure their experiences. With that being said, ethnography was employed as one of the instruments to analyze and interpret the culture within a Midwest unionized auto

mobile assembly plant. The research expands upon the definition of ethnography as a study of culture (Hoey, 2005) to include "an ongoing attempt to place specific encounters, events, and understandings into a more meaningful context" (Tedlock, 2000, p. 455). Ethnographic interviews were conducted with management, union representatives and hourly workers to examine and critique the industries social, cultural, and psychological assumptions that structure and limit it from their perspectives. The participants' thick descriptive narratives provide one with an overview of the beliefs, practices and behaviors that make up the culture of the domestic auto industry's work force. In addition to enhancing ones understanding of the overall culture of the auto industry the narratives provide a further glimpse into the subcultures that exist in the industry. McCurdy, Spradley and Shandy (2005) use the term subculture as one referring to a whole way of life found within a larger society. A subculture is generally defined as any culture found inside a national culture. McCurdy, Spradley and Shandy (2005) delve deeper into the definition and when they define subculture they are describing a third level culture as it exists in another group within the national group.

The ethnographic interview process of this research brings into focus a view of the third-level cultures that exist within management, union, and workers within the overall culture of the domestic industry in a global environment.

Research such as this cultural study requires a certain level of identification with the participants. In addition to ethnography my thirty years experience in the auto industry necessitated including an emic perspective of the problem. Emic constructs are

accounts, descriptions, and analysis of meaningful and appropriate responses to the conceptual schemes and categories expressed by those studied (Lett, 2006). An emic perspective essentially refers to the way that members of a given culture envision their world from an insider's viewpoint. These methods, while providing an avenue for both the researcher and participants to be heard, will also enhance the ability of others to critique their own cultures before their predicaments rival the employees in the domestic auto industry.

Methodological Framework

In retrospect I can trace my first interest to what I have since learned to be critical theory to the late 1970's. While doing research for a history class at a local community college I was attending I ran across a small article in the New York Times from 1972 indicating a military build-up for a potential invasion of South Vietnam by the North. Because I was a Vietnam veteran I was dumbfounded that people had this information and did not share it with those of us at the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) dividing North and South Vietnam before the invasion. We were given no indication what was to take place and a lot of people died because of it. While too late to do anything about that particular instance it piqued my interest in issues of censorship, control, and power wielding to the point that I switched my major and completed a degree in political science at a local state university.

With the intent of adding some credibility to my job as UAW Training Coordinator I received a Master's Degree in Labor Relations and Human Resources from a local state university in 1998. While continuing my education by working on this PhD

in Urban Education, specifically Leadership and Life Long Learning, I had the opportunity to conduct two different research projects within my place of employment. One pilot study was a quantitative study undertaken with the approval of management and union entitled: "Toward a paradigm shift in Ford Motor Company leadership style: Identifying effective coaching practices and characteristics" (Amolsch, 2004). I used a questionnaire that the company and union had jointly developed, but never used. The questionnaire dealt with determining the effectiveness of the supervisors, union officials, and group leaders who were responsible for coaching the work force in the implementation of new work processes. The new production processes entailed a change effort designed to meet customer demands for quality at an affordable price and dealt specifically with organizational change as the company standardized its corporate guidelines worldwide. The process required a cultural change for the company, union, and work force as both hourly and salary job duties were to be realigned. The implementation of the process would necessitate coaching the work force in shedding the antiquated assembly line mentalities developed over the last one hundred years. Upon completion of the project I found no internal avenue to present the findings jointly to management and union. Although the local union paid my expenses and lost time wages to present the paper at a Kent State University conference no one at the facility showed any interest in the findings. I did hand deliver hard copies to both the local union Chairmen and the top three management individuals in the plant but never received any feedback from any of them regarding the report. When I retired two years

later the PowerPoint presentation remained on the hard drive in the plant joint conference room awaiting delivery.

The other pilot study I conducted was a qualitative study entitled: "A Shifting of Unionized Manufacturing Workers Perception of the Auto Industry: Identifying Areas of Disenfranchisement" (Amolsch, 2005). Interviews were conducted with hourly workers only regarding their perception towards current job satisfaction, favoritism, labor contracts, competition, team concept and the future of the auto industry. The study identified issues that the workers perceived as hindering production and profits as well as the unionization of other auto companies. The themes identified in this earlier research were: psychology, behavior during interview, community, social and economic conditions, power relationships, inadequacies of the UAW, and strengths of the UAW.

This research allowed me the opportunity to expand the prior cultural study. D'Andrade (1992) writes that culture is something behaviorally and cognitively shared by an identifiable group of people and that it has the potential to be passed to new members while existing with some permanence through time. While an overall automobile culture exists I wondered if there would be differences between the three groups, management, union, and workers, if asked the same questions. I am assuming that each group consists of a subculture of its own and that events are interpreted in different ways depending on membership in that third-level subculture. This project will expand my prior cultural research with hourly workers in the domestic auto industry by including management personnel and union representatives.

The delays I encountered in obtaining Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects in Research (IRB) from a local State University for the original research was a valuable learning experience. The IRB concerns focused mainly upon the privacy and confidentiality of the participants. Although all participants and identity characteristics were to be kept confidential concerns of possible retaliation against the participants by the union was a major concern of the IRB. This included recommending locking my tapes in a safe at the state university if I was unable to transcribe them immediately after completing the interviews. The IRB was concerned if I did not destroy the tapes immediately after transcription they could be stolen in a break-in of my house and the participants identified through voice recognition. The fact that people outside the auto industry recognized this as a concern in a union that stresses its democracy further galvanized me to expand this type of research.

This research consists of the narratives of twelve individuals employed in the domestic auto industry. The twelve are divided into three categories; salary, union, and line workers with four people from each category participating. The participants varied in race, gender, age, job descriptions, and seniority. All but the salary individuals are unionized workers represented by the UAW at the same Mid-Western domestic automobile assembly plant. Limiting the participants to the same manufacturing facility provided a sense of continuity to the participants within the overall industry culture. Dividing the participants into three subgroups, management, union, and worker also provided for the possibility of three separate perspectives to the same research questions within the overall automobile culture. The interaction of the potential

cultural dynamics and ideologies in the construction and maintenance of the automobile culture as well as assumptions these same individuals have regarding American society continue to drive my interest in the necessity and importance of critical theory as a methodology.

Critical theory guided my research of the perspectives of management, union, and workers in the declining domestic automobile industry in this global environment. This qualitative research method addresses the social, cultural, and psychological assumptions that could conceivably structure a workers thinking. The theory also addresses issues such as power and justice and the ways they interact with cultural dynamics to construct a social system. This social system constructed ultimately benefits a specific group at the expense of another. This research can be considered an ethical and political act because it will address issues such as: Whose interests are served by the arrangement between management and the union? Who has power? How was / is it obtained? What structures reinforce its distribution? What are the outcomes of the structure? Who has access? Who has the power to make changes? From where do the worker's frames of reference emerge (Merriam, 2002)? The use of critical theory will offer a further insight into the functions of power at a range of levels; at the macro level of policy and economic structures; at the cultural level through language, texts, and curriculum; and at the micro level in the immediate experiences of freedom, possibility, control, and repression in educational settings (Heilman, 2003). While factory work would not generally be considered an educational setting Welton

(1995) argues that the workplace has the potential to provide the emancipatory educational setting necessary for change to occur.

Critical qualitative research does not provide a definite answer to the non-quantifiable pictures of social life (Carspecken, 1996). The continuous changes underway in the world, including the auto industry, provide an opportunity for disagreement with the theory depending upon ones perspective. Critical theory does attempt to uncover and challenge the existing social structures that could be hindering any successful change. In doing so critical theory has the potential to undermine and disrupt the status quo by uncovering and challenging these existing system(s) in place by making knowledge available to those interested. Not all are interested in challenging any system though and critical theory researchers assume that people reinforce the status quo of those holding power by accepting with little or no questioning the way things are. While having the potential to disrupt the status quo critical theory may also prove dangerous. Qualitative research that frames its purpose in the context of critical theoretical concerns produces undeniably dangerous knowledge, the kind of information and insight that upsets institutions and threatens to overturn sovereign regimes of truth (Kincheloe & MacLaren, 2000).

Each individual, be they management, union, or line worker has a different and unique perspective to their employment in the industry. Ethnographic interviews were conducted that allowed the participants the opportunity to voice their experiences while realizing and expanding upon the development of their perceptions from a critical theory perspective. Employing ethnographic interviews in this research allowed the

participants to be heard, maybe for the first time since their employment in the industry, by one not biased about their particular subculture. Researchers in critical theory, such as me, attempt to set aside their biases, prejudices, and personal concerns by objectively reviewing the evidence both in favor as well as against a particular concern. The ethnographic interviews were conducted to allow the perceptions of the participants to emerge from not only the culture of the domestic auto industry but also from three unique subcultures present within the industry. In addition, as a retired member of the industry I employed an emic approach in conjunction with the ethnographic interviews. Emic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analysis of meaningful and appropriate responses to the conceptual schemes and categories expressed by those studied (Lett, 2006). An emic perspective essentially refers to the way that members of a given culture envision their world from an insider's viewpoint. I had been immersed in the same culture as those being studied for over thirty years so the views, perceptions, and understandings of what is real and meaningful to those interviewed were recognizable to me from an insider's perspective. This allowed for the asking of direct and pointed questions if and when I felt I was getting rhetorical answers to the research questions.

Research Methods

This research will address the issue of the culture of the auto industry and union that while providing an upper working class lifestyle for its workers has in actuality

created a more legalistic corporate and union bureaucratic system that now excludes the average worker from participating in the decisions that ultimately affects him or her. This research was approached qualitatively from a critical theory perspective using ethnographic methods in addressing this particular issue. In addition to ethnography, my thirty years in the industry necessitated that an emic approach also be employed. These methods will permit the reader to

enter the culture and subcultures present in the auto industry through the personal stories of the participants in their own words.

Ethnography

Ethnography was employed in this research because it is considered the process of discovering and describing a culture (McCurdy, Spradley & Shandy, 2005). This research expanded upon the definition of ethnography as a study of culture (Hoey, 2005) to include "an ongoing attempt to place specific encounters, events, and understandings into a more meaningful context" (Tedlock, 2000, p. 455). The concern for ethnographers in this type research is having the ability to separate the participant's personal knowledge and opinions from their cultural knowledge. McCurdy, Spradley and Shandy, (2005) differentiate cultural knowledge from personal knowledge by the following key attributes: First, culture is a learned behavior. Group members pass on culture to those around them who act according to the knowledge they have learned. Secondly, culture is shared. It is social knowledge not unique to one individual. The study of cultures indicates how groups are organized and why one group can be distinguished from another. Thirdly, culture generates behavior. Culture defines a

range of behavioral possibilities from which an individual may choose but the choices may vary and be limited according to circumstances. The fourth attribute of culture is that people use culture to interpret experience. In other words, depending upon the individual social setting one will use their learned cultural knowledge to identify what is going on so they will in turn recognize the specific behavior expected. Lastly, McCurdy, Spradley and Shandy, (2005) identify two types of culture, tacit and explicit. Tacit cultural categories must be inferred from observations while explicit culture categories may be coded in language.

Emic

A study of a culture, such as this research, requires a certain level of identification with the members of the group. It is for this reason I have also approached the research from an emic perspective. Emic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analysis of meaningful and appropriate responses to the conceptual schemes and categories expressed by those studied (Lett, 2006). An emic perspective essentially refers to the way that members of a given culture envision their world from an insider's viewpoint. I had been immersed in the same culture as those being studied for over thirty years so the views, perceptions, and understandings of what is real and meaningful to those interviewed are recognizable to me from an insider's perspective.

Data Collection

Institutional Review Board Process

In qualitative research such as this that frames its purpose in the context of critical theoretical concerns that are capable of producing dangerous knowledge, the

kind of information and insight that upsets institutions and threatens to overturn sovereign regimes of truth (Kincheloe & MacLaren, 2000) additional safeguards are necessary to protect the identity of the participants. The researcher successfully completed one of these precautions, the CITI (Course in The Protection of Human Resource Subjects), on November 29th 2006. After a successful a prospectus hearing with my Dissertation Committee on April 26th, 2007 an Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects in Research (IRB) proposal was submitted to a local State University. One of the purposes of the IRB is to assist the researcher in protecting project participants from possible professional and physical harm if they choose to take part in research such as this. Included in the IRB proposal is the Informed Consent Statement that the participants must read and sign explaining the guidelines and confidentiality requirements of the research. The IRB provided additional assistance to the researcher in protecting the identity, privacy, and confidentiality of the participants by suggesting three minor revisions to the proposal. The appropriate clarifications were applied and this project received IRB approval on July 7th, 2007. In this research pseudonyms were applied so no names, job titles, or any other identifying characteristic other than what category, management, union or worker, will be revealed. See Appendix A for a copy of the Informed Consent Statement.

Research Site

With plant closings and continual rumors of additional plant closings in the domestic auto industry, it seemed natural that the site chosen for this research be a Mid-Western automobile assembly plant. The research conducted for this report

focused on management, union representatives and hourly employees at this selected auto assembly plant. The initial work force was hired in 1974 and 1975 when this facility began production under a traditional labor contract. A traditional labor contract identifies over thirty hourly classifications and strict lines of demarcation for skilled trades. In 1992 another vehicle line began production and resulted in another large scale hiring of workers. This facility became the company's first plant to operate under a Modern Operating Agreement (MOA) with the addition of the new vehicle. The MOA labor contract had only two hourly classifications and more lenient lines of demarcation for its skilled trades while focusing on team work and employee involvement. This makes the facility unique in its history because it built two completely different vehicles with two completely separate labor contracts. This arrangement resulted in one United Auto Workers' (UAW) local union but two separate Bargaining Units. Unit 1 built and continues to build one vehicle while operating under a traditional union contract. Unit 2 constructed vehicles under the MOA contract. When production of the Unit 2 vehicle ceased in 2004 another vehicle was built under the same MOA contract for one year. Unit 2 ceased total production in 2005.

It must be noted that in late 2005 and early 2006 the Big Three began offering early retirement "buy out packages" in the hopes of enticing workers to leave the industry. Employees at this site with over one year seniority were offered a variety of retirement packages. The various offers included; $35,000 plus full retirement benefits for those with over thirty years seniority, those with between twenty-eight and thirty years could receive 95% of their pay to stay home under the condition they would retire

when they reached the thirty year plateau with full benefits and retirement, $120,000 to those with less than thirty years with no future retirement or benefits to be paid, or four years of tuition paid for at a college with half pay and benefits for those four years only. Over 500 employees took advantage of this opportunity to retire or seek a career change at the facility. On January 3, 2006 production of the Unit 1 vehicle was expanded and the remaining Unit 2 employees were absorbed into that system. Over 1,000 additional experienced autoworkers also transferred from other plants into Unit 1at the facility under the traditional union contract. I took advantage of the buy out program and retired from this particular facility on April 1, 2006 after over thirty years of service.

Process

This research is not meant to determine how many, and what kinds of people share a certain characteristic but instead is intended to gain access to the categories and assumptions of a culture. It is these categories and assumptions that matter and not the individual holding them. I employed critical theory research guidelines to devise the questions and strategies for this project. An advantage of employing critical theory as a research tool is that it is not dependant upon how the researcher sees the world but instead relies upon how the theory is used. I followed the five steps espoused by Carspecken (1996) as well as the four step method of inquiry of McCracken (1988) simultaneously as guidelines to insure the integrity of this ethnographic approach.

McCracken's (1988) four stage method of inquiry consists of: 1) review of analytical categories, 2) review of cultural categories, 3) discovery of cultural categories,

and 4) discovery of analytical categories. Carspecken's (1996) Five Step method of inquiry consists of: 1) compiling a primary record, 2) conducting a preliminary reconstructive analysis, 3) dialogical data generation, 4) discovering system relations, and 5) using system relations to explain the findings. Both methods employed simultaneously reinforced my use of proper research techniques to insure the validity requirements for this project were met.

The purpose of this research was to examine the impact the past and present business and labor practices have had on the domestic automobile industry from the perspective of three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers. My literature review served as the initial starting point for this research and incorporated Carspecken's (1996) Stages One and Two (compiling a primary record and conducting a preliminary reconstructive analysis), with McCracken's (1988) Steps 1 and 2 (review of analytical categories and a review of cultural categories). In order to address the purpose and questions raised in this research the literature review focused on the development of the culture and subcultures of the company, union, and workers and its impact upon the successes and failures of the domestic auto industry from a critical theory perspective. My comprehensive literature review fulfills the requirements of both McCracken and Carspecken.

Step 3 of McCracken's (1988) four step method of inquiry process revolves around the discovery of cultural categories. As the primary record (literature review) was developed it was analyzed to determine any pattern development regarding the sequence of events, roles and power relations as well as any other recurring evidence of

embodied meaning and categorized accordingly. The literature review process also allowed the researcher to identify and investigate any perceived problems as well as serving as an opportunity to identify relationships and cultural parameters not considered in full by the literature. It was at this stage that the construction of the questionnaire and the planning of the interview process took place. The literature review served as an aid in the formulation of the participant interview questions. For example, where do the subcultures of management, union, and worker, in fit into the overall automobile culture? Will there be a difference between them? These categories and relationships became the basis for the formulation of the interview questions. This process was guided by: What should I be looking for? How will I formulate the questions? What question(s) will be interrelated to another? What is the most strategic way for me to ask a question that will aid in eliciting the response in the participants own words successfully?

Instrument

The questionnaire began with a short personal demographic section followed by a series of personal information questions such as; what were the circumstances regarding their being hired in the auto industry? Have they ever worked at any other automotive facility or belonged to any other union? If yes, did they perceive any difference in the way they functioned? These were followed by a series of open ended questions addressing their views of corporate and local management, International and

local union and the work force itself. I initially struggled with the development of the questions. I recognized most (some?) of my biases and was in a quandary regarding how to avoid them in the interview questions. The wording of the questions could possibly skew the participant's responses towards my biases if safeguards were not taken. McCracken's (1988) process assisted in alleviating some of my concerns regarding biasing the questionnaire as it consists of open-ended questions framed in a general and nondirective manner. Designing broad open-ended questions allowed the participants to relate their stories without me leading them in a predetermined direction. (See Figure 1, p. 134 for the relationship between the research questions and the interview questions.) The interview questions began with phrases such as; "Describe…"; "What is your perception…"; "What would you do if…" as prompts to solicit the participant's response. Clarification inquiries followed Merriam's (2002) parameters for framing research questions. Questions asked were in regards to; how has a particular situation come to be? Whose interest(s) is being served? Which particular institution, if any, is being served by the arrangement? Since the questions were open-ended the conversation could go as far as the participant wished to take it as long as the subject matter remained pertinent to the research. (See Appendix B for a copy of the interview questions.)

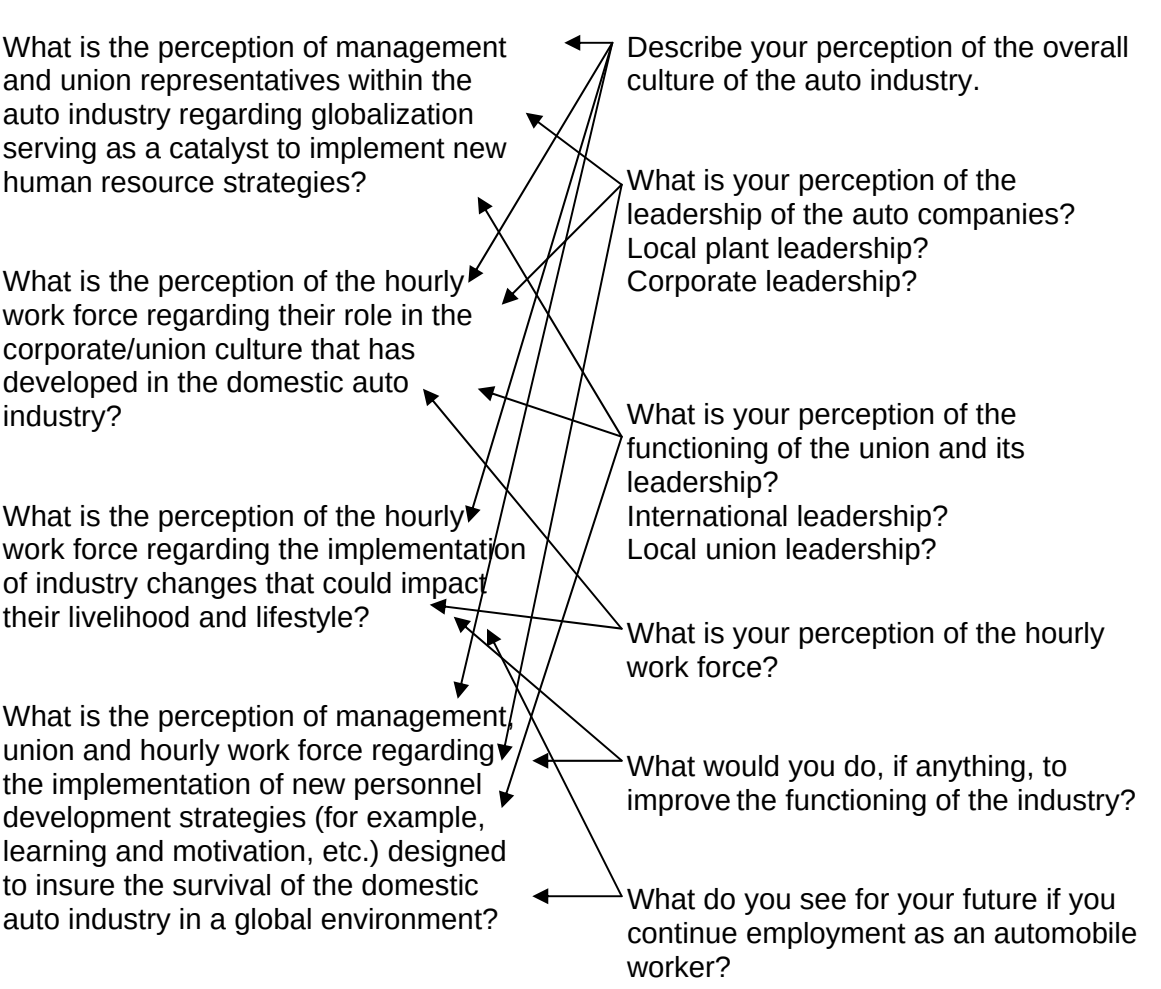

Figure 1. Relationship of Research Questions to Interview Questions

Participants

Between January 3rd and April 1st, 2006 I walked the assembly lines while production was ramping up to full speed and randomly spoke to people I knew and introduced myself to new employees. A conversational point of interest at the time was in regards to who would or would not take a buy out package. Inevitably I was always asked if I was taking a buy out package. I always replied in the affirmative and was usually asked what my future plans were. In some cases, if the opportunity presented itself in the conversation, I explained the basis of my pending research and asked if they

would consider taking part. If the individual agreed I took their phone number and explained that I would call them when the research began. If they were still interested in participating when I called them we could meet at a place outside the facility deemed acceptable by both of us to conduct an interview. Recognizing the possibilities I might lose contact with people after my, or them, leaving the company necessitated my having access to more than the required twelve actual participants. I left the facility with the names and phone numbers of forty-five individuals, fifteen for each category, management, union representative, and line worker, who consented to possibly participating in this research. The forty-five people that agreed to possibly participate in the study broke down demographically as; three Hispanic males, one Hispanic female, four Afro-American males, two African American females, seven Caucasian females, twenty-eight Caucasian males. Nine of the participants were not classified as Baby Boomers. Eleven of the participants were among the 1,000 employees transferred in from other facilities. The Human Resource Department would not release an EEOC demographics breakdown of the facility to me for this research to verify a true representation of the work force. I do belief this to be a fair demographic representation of the facility.

For this study the twelve participants were randomly selected from the forty-five individuals previously contacted from a total plant population of over 2,000. The twelve were divided into three categories; salary, union, and line workers with four people from each category participating. The salary participants were selected from a salary plant population of 200, the hourly participants from a plant population of 1,800 and

the union officials from a population between fifty and seventy. This number is imprecise due to not knowing the exact number of ex-union officials that transferred from other facilities. All but the salary individuals were unionized workers represented by the UAW. There was the possibility that some of the selected individuals had worked only under a traditional contract at this or their previous plant, only within an MOA contract or both an MOA and a traditional contract during their employment. I literally drew names from a hat by designated category and called the individuals in the order they were drawn until I had four people in each category willing to participate in this research.

Not all of the people called were still available for participation. One salary individual contacted agreed to participate and said he would call me the following week to set up an interview time but never called back. Two other potential salary participants apparently left the company and had given me only their office phone number so I was unable to contact them. One potential hourly participant cancelled his scheduled interview appointment due to a car accident. He called to apologize and indicated he would call the following week to reschedule an appointment but never did. Another potential hourly participant cancelled his interview appointment but did call me back and rescheduled. One potential union representative I contacted also indicated he would call me back to set up an interview but never did.

When contacting the individuals I informed them I was limited in where we could meet for the interviews. Due to an accident I had on June 7, 2007 I was confined to a wheel chair, unable to even live at my own house and unable to drive anywhere to meet

them. I informed the first four participants of my predicament and they agreed to meet me at my temporary quarters for the interviews. After my health improved I was able to move back home but was still unable to drive and the remaining eight participants agreed to come to my home for the interviews. Both meeting places were within a ten minute drive of the facility. The interviews took place in the dining rooms of both locations with no one else present in the home.

When the actual participants were identified they varied in race, gender, age, job description, and seniority. The participants ranged in age from 48 to 63. Their seniority was reflected by the previously mentioned hiring blocks of 1974-75 and 1992 and ranged from 15 to 38.5 years. In addition it became necessary to identify which participants were still with the company and which had taken advantage of one of the early retirement programs offered. The demographics of the research participants are reflected in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographics of Research Participants

Category	Avg. Age	Avg. Seniority	Still Working	Left Company	Gender		Race	
					M	F	AA	C
Salary	55.7	32.5	2	2	2	2	0	4
Hourly	54.3	23.2	2	2	3	1	1	3
Union	58.5	23.9	2	2	1	3	1	3
Total	56.5	26.5	6	6	6	6	2	10

Note: AA = African American; C = Caucasian.

I was initially concerned regarding the apparent high seniority of the participants until I realized that the work force had in fact aged. This seniority dilemma I encountered is in actuality a true reflection of the industry since over 50% of the present domestic auto industry workers will be eligible to retire by 2008 (Butters, 2003). The participant's ages also appeared to be high but again in actuality 70% of this facility's work force was born before 1963. I became aware of the age differences or so called "generation gap" in the facility while conducting classes. I found the distinct cultural characteristics of the different age groups presented potential concerns that could influence the success or failure of any programs being instituted. As an agent of change for the union and company I felt it was necessary in my capacity as UAW Training Administrator to attempt to address the differing views and values forming the participant's culture. D'Andrade (1992) states that culture is something behaviorally and cognitively shared by an identifiable group of people and that it has, "the potential of being passed on to new group members, to exist with some permanent time and across space" (p. 230). In this case I employed the terminology of Razi (2000) to identify the different age groups and their characteristics. Those known as Veterans, born before1942, have different cultural characteristics and traits from the Baby Boomers, born before 1963, and both have cultural characteristics different than the Gen X'ers, born between 1963 and 1982.

In an attempt to address these differences between age groups I began in the year 2000 to identify the "generation gaps" in the work force in order to gear my classroom presentations to a particular audience or in some cases to alleviate some of

the conflict between groups. I employed Bruner's (1973) learning principles: (a) A predisposition of learning where the instructor(s) must be concerned with the experiences and contexts that make the employee willing and able to learn, (b) the ways in which a body of knowledge can be constructed so that it can be most readily grasped by the learner, (c) the most effective sequences in which to present the material where the class can be designed to facilitate extrapolation and or fill in the gaps or go beyond the information given, and (d) the nature and pacing of rewards and punishment should include methods for structuring knowledge while generating new propositions, and increasing the manipulation of information to address the different rites of passage of the audience. The age of the participant's appears to be accurately reflected in the statistics. The facility hourly work force generational breakdown is reflected in Table 2.

Table 2.

Facility Hourly Work Force Generational Breakdown by Percentage by Year

		Year					
Category	Date of Birth	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Veterans	1922-1942	8%	7.4%	5.2%	4.3%	4.4%	4.1%
Boomers	1943-1962	65%	64.8%	61%	60.1%	62%	65%
X'er's	1963-1982	27%	27.7%	33%	35.5%	33.5%	30%
Next'ers	1983-2002	0%	0%	0%	0.1%	0%	0%

Interviews

As this process was completed the interview questions were formulated and the participant identification process completed Carspecken's (1996) Stage 3; dialogical data generation stage began. This consisted of the participant interview portion of the project. The interview techniques employed were intended to generate data with the people rather than the prior records information about them. The interviews took place in a one hour face-to-face setting in an environment outside of the manufacturing facility. In the participant selection process already explained the participants agreed to meet me at home or my temporary living quarters while I recovered from an injury. No one questioned the meeting place as they scheduled a date and time convenient for them. Depending upon which shift the individual worked determined the time of day for the interview.

Prior to commencing the actual interviews I thanked the participants for being so understanding about my situation and answered any questions they had regarding my accident. Getting these formalities out of the way before beginning the interview limited the potential for any future off subject conversations. I began by explaining the IRB procedure and the purpose of the Informed Consent Statement. I assured him or her that there was no particular reason or ulterior motive as to why they were selected over somebody else but that their name was literally drawn from a hat of people that had consented to participate. I informed the participants that others of differing races, genders, job titles and varying levels of seniority would also be taking part in this project but all identities, including theirs, would remain confidential. All of the participants after hearing my explanation and reading the Informed Consent Statement themselves

signed and dated a copy. I offered each participant a copy for themselves in case they had a question or problem with my procedure in the future. Only six participants took a copy for themselves. I reinforced again the confidentiality clause of the Informed Consent Statement regarding the taping, transcriptions and erasure of the tapes prior to beginning the interview. I also informed the participants that an abstract of the findings would be supplied to them when completed if they so desired. Appendix C reflects the interview schedule with pseudonyms applied.

It is this stage where my time working in the industry afforded me the advantage of building trust with the participants. The fact that I no longer worked at the facility and had little to gain personally, i.e. perquisites, assisted in reducing some participant anxiety. In order for my auto experience to prove effective during the interviews though, it was imperative that I "manufacture distance" (McCracken, 1988, p. 23) from the participants. To successfully "manufacture distance" I had to insure I did not impose my assumptions when a particular issue or practice was referred to by the participant in the research. My insight into the working of the industry also assisted in clarifying issues while increasing the thick descriptions of the participants as they related their stories in their own words. I was also provided further insight into matching my experiences in the industry to what the participants were describing in the interviews.

Transcripts

Further triangulation techniques were employed at this stage as each individual was invited to review their transcription of the interview for clarification and accuracy. A follow up meeting would be scheduled if necessary. Not one of the twelve individuals

was interested in receiving a transcription of what they said. I was the only person involved in transcribing all of the audio taped interviews. Each participant now has a completed individual transcript file kept on my home computer. A pseudonym replaced their actual name in the file in an effort to further protect their identities. The tape recorded and paper transcriptions will remain in a locked file cabinet in my home office for no more than three years after the completion of this project at which time the tapes will be erased and the papers shredded.

Field Notes

Immediately following the ethnographic interviews my field notes were recorded. They were hand written notes taken regarding the behavior of the interviewee during the process such as body language, tone of voice, and stalling tactics to name a few. The field notes also included any specifics regarding the physical environment of the interview. All field notes are included in the individual transcript file kept for each participant on my home computer.

Data Categories

This research focused on examining the impact the past and present business and labor practices have had on the domestic automobile industry from the perspective of three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers. The objective of this section of the research is to effectively determine the categories, relationships and assumptions that influenced the participant's perception of the world in general terms and then more specifically in regards to the topic. Step 4 of

McCracken's (1988) method of inquiry, the discovery of analytical categories and Carspecken's Stage 4, discovering system relations were adhered to. McCracken's Step 4 consists of five stages to the analytical process that subsequently represents a higher level of generality at each level. Stage 1 treats what is said in the interview transcript on its own terms and ignores any relationship to other aspects of the text. Treating each comment or remark in the transcript individually created an observation. Each narrative consisted of two parts; a story and a discourse. The story was the chain of events, or the "what", in each individual narration. The discourse became the "how" of the narrative, or the plot or order, of appearance of events (Sarup, 1996).

Stage 2 of Step 4 of McCracken's (1988) discovery of analytical categories consists of developing the observations from Stage 1 by themselves then according to the evidence in the transcripts and then further according to the literature review. This technique generated data with people rather than the prior records information constructed about them. Some of the preliminary categories, educated guesses at best, were predetermined prior to the interviews taking place. The preliminary categories were generated from different sources including my personal interests. My interests were; are the participant's personal and professional opinions regarding management, union and worker capabilities the same, what role members of each subculture perceived they had and are currently playing within the industry and how they perceive the past and future business strategies of the domestic auto industry. The pilot studies I conducted in 2004 and 2005, the literature review accompanying this research and my emic approach also served as an avenue for identifying the interactive patterns,

meanings, power relations, roles, sequence of events and other evidence identified as having meaning. In addition during the first stage of transcribing, additional categories were identified and noted. This stage was critical as it democratized the research process as any new data or information had the potential to challenge the prior information obtained in McCracken's (1988) Stage One. When this was completed I related the observations back to the transcripts and Stage 3 of McCracken's (1988) discovery of analytical categories. I looked for not only similar relationships but also contradictions before beginning the coding process.

Coding

In ethnographic research such as this there are various coding strategies that may be employed. I employed the broad situational coding techniques espoused by Bogdan and Biklen (2003) that place the data obtained from the observations into categories that not only define the setting and particular topics but which also define the participants relationship to the culture and subcultures. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) define situation codes as: "Under this type of code your aim is to place the units of data that tell you how the subjects define the setting or particular topic. You are interested in their world view and how they see themselves in relation to the setting of your topic" (p. 162). In following this stage I continued to develop the observations created from the prior stage and extended them for possibilities and implications.

In this research I started with the first interview and began the process of developing situational categories. Using an Excel spreadsheet format I inserted a new tab when a potential situational category appeared. I inserted the participant's full

quote into the tab in an effort to provide added emphasis to the participant's stories using their own rich descriptions. For easier future identification purposes I also attached the participant's pseudonym and page number from the respective transcript into the tab. Also, for easier identification purposes between the three subcultures I employed three different type styles; management comments were in Times New Roman, workers in italics and union in bold face type. As each interview was individually addressed in the same way units of data were inserted into an existing tab. When a new potential unit of data not yet mentioned in a prior transcript surfaced another situational category tab was added to the process.

Identifying Themes

Stage 4 of Step 4 of McCracken's (1988) discovery of analytical categories takes the observations from the interviews and determines patterns of theme consistency and contradiction. The coding process served as an aid in preparing for this section. As the coding process unfolded various themes began to emerge. It was at this juncture that I sought out relationships between the interview data and the categories and some of my identified categories were eliminated, merged with others if deemed redundant, or stood alone. I also looked for instances of dissimilarity among the participants in the categories. My thirty years experience in the industry regarding emic observations and conversations again proved helpful when compiling my theme design.

A critical theory perspective of research was used a guideline to determine themes. Critical theory has the capability to revisit the question of how the power relations of one group advance over another, the nature of truth, and the construction

of knowledge (Merriam, 2002). Since each narrative dissected consisted of a "what", the chain of events, and a discourse, the "how" of the plot or order of appearance of events (Sarup, 1996) it seemed a natural fit into the capabilities of critical theory. The themes developed consisted of the commonalities regarding the impact the past and present business and labor practices have had on the domestic automobile industry as perceived from three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers. My derived themes ultimately were; bureaucracy, alienation, economics and psychological.

Analysis

Stage 5 of McCracken's (1988) Step 4 of discovery of analytical categories brings the patterns and themes of all those interviewed together. This again includes patterns of both theme consistency and contradiction. It is in this stage where I no longer talk about the perceptions of the individuals but will instead concentrate on the general thoughts of the overall group culture and the subsequent subcultures. I also incorporated Carspecken's (1996) system relations guideline at this stage to explain my findings and suggest reasons for the experiences. This stage allowed me the opportunity to present through my analysis of the data my conclusions regarding the impact that the interrelationship between separate management, union, and work force subcultures are having on the reorganization of the domestic auto industry. It is also here that my findings are explained and reasons suggested for the reconstructed experiences and cultural(s) forms based upon class, race, gender, and the political structures of society.

Triangulation

Triangulation reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). In this research triangulation was achieved by employing multiple data sources and multiple methods in gathering said data. The use of two methods, ethnographic and emic provided a more in-depth understanding of the culture and subcultures of the auto industry. By using multiple sources of data, I was able to gain a fuller understanding of the perceptions of those employed in the domestic auto industry. The use of these two methods of research, ethnographic interviews and my emic approach, provided data from two distinctly different data sources: the participants from different subcultures and me as both a participant and researcher.

Ethnographic interviews with twelve participants of different races, genders, job titles, and varying levels of seniority in conjunction with my input increased ones understanding of what it is like to be employed in the domestic auto industry. Commonalities as well a few dissimilarities were discovered regarding what the participants shared as individuals during their ethnographic interviews. By using the two methods of gathering data, I discovered several commonalities present among all of the participants: the common psychological and economic challenges we faced in the troubled domestic auto industry; the common means we used to survive the bureaucratic challenges one faces in the industry; and the common sense of alienation that can be attributed to being employed in the industry. The commonalities and dissimilarities of what I shared as an individual in conjunction with the participants also

became more focused. The employment of the ethnographic methods of inquiry guidelines of Carspecken (1996) and McCracken (1988) simultaneously assisted in meeting the validity demands for this research. In addition, triangulation was also enhanced by adhering to the qualitative research guidelines of Carspecken (1996) and McCracken (1988) that served to support my reliability in regards to whether my results were consistent with the data I collected. Another individual with a PhD in Leadership and Life Long Learning, not a member of my dissertation committee, also reviewed my categories, patterns of theme, and consistency in order to insure credibility and transferability of the data.

Limitations/Strengths

The limitations to this research are outweighed by the advantages. One of the limitations to this research is the small number of interviews conducted. I only interviewed twelve people, four hourly employees, four salary employees and four union representatives. In addition, all of the participants were employed at the same facility and by the same company. Also by predetermining the preliminary categories with the construction of my interview questions there remains the possibility that I may have inadvertently limited the participants input. Additional stories may not have been uncovered and the subsequent feelings and emotions of the participants may have been lost. The opportunity to gain new knowledge and understanding may have been limited.

Schratz and Schratz-Hadwich (1995) indicate that people construct a sense of self from their memories. There is the possibility that the participant's responses will not

represent the majority. Will the stories and memories be the true experiences of the participants? Will the memories of these stories be accurate reflections of events or has time provided an opportunity for a revisionist viewpoint? There also remains the concern that the ethnographer in this type of research does not have the ability to separate the participant's personal knowledge and opinions from their cultural knowledge.

This research has the advantages of being approached qualitatively from a critical theory perspective using ethnographic and emic methods. These methods will permit the reader to enter the culture and subcultures present in the domestic auto industry through the personal stories of the participants in their own words. The use of two methods, the ethnographic interviews with twelve participants of different races, genders, job titles, and varying levels of seniority and my emic approach provided a more in-depth understanding of the culture and subcultures present in the domestic auto industry. By employing multiple sources of data I was able to gain a fuller understanding of how employment in the domestic auto industry is perceived from the participants thick descriptions.

The predetermination of preliminary categories from the construction of my interview questions served as an advantage to this research as the interviews stayed focused on specific areas of the domestic auto industry. Even though the interview questions were focused on the domestic auto industry my ability to use various communication skills such as silence and listening techniques allowed the participants to

tell their stories completely. It also permitted the participants the opportunity take different directions with their stories if they so desired as long as they stayed on subject.

Audit Trail Summary

This research is not meant to determine how many, and what kinds of people share a certain characteristic but instead is intended to gain access to the categories and assumptions of a culture. It is these categories and assumptions that matter and not the individual participants or the researcher influencing them. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) view qualitative research, such as this, as not capable of being viewed with a neutral or positivist perspective. This research recognizes that the integrity, validity, credibility and transferability of the investigative process can be impacted in the present global environment by various issues including; class, race, gender, and ethnicity. It recognizes that the researcher began with a framework in mind that required certain questions to be asked. It also recognizes that the researcher's interpretation of the information can be configured to influence the data analysis. In order to successfully navigate through this multicultural process of inquiry, this qualitative research employed the use of triangulation strategies to reduce the impact these variables would have on the research.

The following is a summary of the audit trail created through various means of triangulation to insure the integrity, validity, credibility and transferability of this ethnographic research. The use of multiple methods; critical perspective, ethnographic interviews, and emic approach, were employed to uncover, examine, and critique the social, cultural, economic, and psychological assumptions that supply structure to an

auto workers life while at the same time limiting the way they think regarding the construction of their social system. These same multiple methods also aided the researcher in confronting issues that could impact the ethics and politics of the research.

The literature review accompanying this research served as a means of identifying the interactive patterns, meanings, power relations, roles, sequence of events and other evidence identified as having meaning. The multiple method approach, in conjunction with the literature review, was an essential aid to compiling the analytical categories and interview design employed in the research. The questionnaire was designed employing broad open-ended questions which will allow the participants to relate their stories without me leading them in a predetermined direction. Since the questions were open-ended the conversation could go as far as the participant wished to take it as long as the subject matter remained pertinent to the research. Participation in the interview process was voluntary and was designed to be as non-threatening as possible. Confidentiality of the participants was insured. The diversity, race, gender, job title, and varying levels of seniority, of the twelve participants participating in the ethnographic interviews, provided for a data source not limited to one dimension. Participants in this research were also afforded the opportunity to review the transcription of their particular interview for clarification and accuracy. My field notes taken during the interview process noting body language, tone of voice, etc. including the physical environment were included in the data analysis. I also commandeered the services of another individual with a PhD in Leadership and Life

Long Learning, above and beyond the members of my dissertation committee, to review my categories, patterns, themes, and consistency in the research to further the validity. The audit trail employed in this research served as a guideline to insure the integrity, validity, credibility and transferability of the data addressing the interrelationship between separate management, union, and work force subcultures and the impact they are having on the reorganization of the domestic auto industry.

Focusing on this issue will allow others to gain a greater understanding and knowledge of the culture and subcultures that exist within the auto industry and the conundrum presented to the industry and individuals in the present global environment. Research such as this regarding the roles of management, union, and workers in the domestic auto industry will enlighten others in regard to the stories and experiences of the participants. This research will serve not only the auto industry but conceivably other industries possibly battling the same obstacles. This research paper also has the capability to integrate what was learned into college courses, continuing education classes, and mentoring programs that can lead to a more optimistic and profitable future for the manufacturing segment of industry and its work force.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The purpose of this research was to examine the impact the past and present business and labor practices have had on the domestic automobile industry from the perspective of three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers. This research will address the issue of the culture of the auto industry and union that while providing an upper working class lifestyle for its workers has in actuality created a more legalistic corporate and union bureaucratic system that now excludes the average worker from participating in the decisions that ultimately affects him or her. In conjunction with My Story (Chapter II) two distinct methods were employed to gather data. The use of two methods, the ethnographic interviews with twelve participants of different races, genders, job titles, and varying levels of seniority and my emic approach provided a more in-depth understanding of the culture and subcultures present in the domestic auto industry. By employing multiple sources of data I was able to gain a fuller understanding of how employment in the domestic auto industry is perceived from the participants thick descriptions.

This research was approached qualitatively from a critical theory perspective using ethnographic and emic methods in addressing this particular issue. These methods will permit the reader to enter the culture and subcultures present in the auto industry through the personal stories of the participants in their own words. Alvesson and Willmott (1996) contend that the intent of critical theory is to foster a rational, democratic development of modern institutions in which self-reflective, autonomous and responsible citizens become progressively less dependent upon received understandings of their needs, and are less entranced by the apparent naturalness or inevitability of the prevailing politico-economic order. To this end critical theory encourages the questioning of ends (e.g. growth, profitability, productivity) as well as the preferred means, such as dependence upon expert rule and bureaucratic control, the contrivance of charismatic corporate leadership, gendered and deskilled work, marketing of lifestyles, etc. (p. 17).

Ethnography was employed in this research because it is considered the process of discovering and describing a culture (McCurdy, Spradley & Shandy, 2005). Yes, the automobile industry has its own distinct culture as well as its own distinct subcultures. McCurdy, Spradley and Shandy, (2005) differentiate cultural knowledge from personal knowledge by the following key attributes: First, culture is a learned behavior. Group members pass on culture to those around them who act according to the knowledge they have learned. Secondly, culture is shared. It is social knowledge not unique to one individual. The study of cultures indicates how groups are organized and why one group can be distinguished from another. Thirdly, culture generates behavior. Culture defines

a range of behavioral possibilities from which an individual may choose but the choices may vary and be limited according to circumstances. The fourth attribute of culture is that people use culture to interpret experience. In other words, depending upon the individual social setting one will use their learned cultural knowledge to identify what is going on so they will in turn recognize the specific behavior expected. Finely, McCurdy, Spradley and Shandy, (2005) identify two types of culture, tacit and explicit. Tacit cultural categories must be inferred from observations while explicit culture categories may be coded in language. Subculture, on the other hand, as defined by McCurdy, Spradley and Shandy (2005) is a term used to refer to a whole way of life culture found within a larger society.

The ethnographic experiences of those interviewed are presented from three different perspectives, management, union, and workers, and provides various view points and meanings. Listening to each participant and analyzing their story through a critical perspective allowed me to look at how the present situation in the domestic auto industry came to be. In an attempt to analyze the present condition of the domestic auto industry I followed the guideline questions established by Merriam (2002). They are; whose interests are served? Who has power and how did they obtain it? What structures reinforce its distribution? What are the outcomes of the structure? Who has access? Who has the power to make changes? From where do the worker's frames of reference emerge (Merriam, 2002)? Critical theory was also employed because it has the ability to respond, from the participant's point of view, to additional Merriam (2002) questions regarding how has the power relations of one group

advanced them over another, the nature of truth, and the construction of their knowledge.

As the transcriptions were analyzed I employed the broad situational coding techniques espoused by Bogdan and Biklen (2003) that place the data obtained from the observations into categories that not only define the setting and particular topics but which also define the participants relationship to the culture and subcultures. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) define situation codes as: "Under this type of code your aim is to place the units of data that tell you how the subjects define the setting or particular topic. You are interested in their world view and how they see themselves in relation to the setting of your topic" (pg. 162).

For this research I started with the first interview and began the process of developing situational categories. Using an Excel spreadsheet format I inserted a new tab when a potential situational category appeared. I inserted the participant's full quote into the tab in an effort to provide added emphasis to the participant's stories using their own thick descriptions. For easier future identification purposes I also attached the participant's pseudonym and page number from the respective transcript into the tab. Also, for easier identification purposes between the three subcultures I employed three different type styles; management comments were in Times New Roman, workers in italics and union in bold face type. As each interview was individually addressed in the same way units of data were inserted into an existing tab. When a new potential unit of data not yet mentioned in a prior transcript surfaced another situational category tab was added to the process. Commonalities as well a few

differences were discovered regarding what the participants shared as individuals during their ethnographic interviews. From what I was able to share from my individual experiences in conjunction with the participant's perceptions allowed for a more focused view of the industry.

As the coding process unfolded various themes began to emerge. A critical theory perspective of research was used a guideline to determine these themes. Since each narrative dissected consisted of a "what", the chain of events, and a discourse, the "how" of the plot or order of appearance of events (Sarup, 1996) it seemed a natural fit into the capabilities of critical theory. By using the two methods of gathering data, I discovered several commonalities present among all of the participants: the common psychological and economic challenges we faced in the troubled domestic auto industry; the common means we used to survive the bureaucratic challenges one faces in the industry; and the sense of alienation that permeates the industry. My derived themes of; Bureaucracy, Alienation, Economics, and Psychological consisted of the commonalities regarding the impact the past and present business and labor practices have had on the domestic automobile industry as perceived from three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers.

The coded data categories compiled from the participants such as corporate and local management, International and local union, power, nepotism, job appointments and past and present change programs were developed further under the heading Bureaucracy. The theme of Alienation was comprised of the data categories that revolved around seniority, politics, retaliation, who is being hired for employment in the

industry, who is being served by the present arrangement(s) and what the participants perceive as what has and is going wrong with the industry. The third theme of this research, Economics, was centered upon the participant's responses in regards to contracts, training, Ability Rate Progression (ARP), absenteeism, slugs, money and the transplant auto industry. Finally, the Psychological theme was composed of the participant's responses regarding contracts, the workers themselves, hiring practices, education benefits, hegemony and their perceived futures in the industry.

The themes are not necessarily restricted to one research question as there is some over lap in the data. The first theme, Bureaucracy, addresses the first three research questions: 1) what is the perception of management and union representatives within the auto industry regarding globalization serving as a catalyst to implement new human resource strategies? 2) what is the perception of the hourly work force regarding their role in the corporate/union culture that has developed in the domestic auto industry? And 3) what is the perception of the hourly work force regarding the implementation of industry changes that could impact their livelihood and lifestyle? The second theme, Alienation, addresses research questions two and four; 4) what is the perception of management, union and hourly work force regarding the implementation of new personnel development strategies (for example, learning and motivation, etc.) designed to insure the survival of the domestic auto industry in a global environment? The Economics and Psychological themes both impact research questions two, three and four.

The discovered themes addressed the problem statement of this research which was to address the issue of the culture of the auto industry and union that while providing an upper working class lifestyle for its workers has in actuality created a more legalistic corporate and union bureaucratic system that now excludes the average worker from participating in the decisions that ultimately affects him or her. Uncovering and addressing these themes also served the purpose of this research which was to examine the impact the past and present business and labor practices have had on the domestic automobile industry from the perspective of three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers. The following sections will be an explanation of the various commonalities and differences between three existing subcultures in the domestic auto industry.

Participants' Behaviors and Concerns during the Interview Process

Prior to commencing my last interview with Lisa (Union) on June 13, 2007 she revealed she had received a phone call at home from an individual purporting to be conducting a survey for the UAW. She was mildly concerned whether this individual had anything to do with my project. I replied in the negative and told her that my wife had also taken a phone call for me on June 11th, 2007 from an individual identifying himself as Kyle regarding a survey about the UAW. Maybe it was just a coincidence and the UAW was doing some type survey but Kyle never called me back and both of us were relieved as it appeared that we were not singled out.

I was pleasantly surprised with the straightforward responses to the interview questions supplied by the participants. Each maintained their own individual

personality during the process. A few participants appeared extremely nervous when we started but in those cases I reassured them about the confidentiality of the interviews. I also explained that I initially had a demographic question pertaining to their job classification but had eliminated it due to the possibility of someone using that information to identify the participants in the future. This seemed to alleviate some of their misgivings and as we progressed their anxiousness vanished. Some participants remained a little tentative at first in their responses and had to be prodded to expand upon their response. I think this was because they felt awkward with possibly being asked to criticize their employer, union or both but as the interviews progressed they loosened up.

A few participants occasionally interrupted the interview to question their ability to supply the answers I was looking for. Ellen asked, "Did I answer that ok? Allison, was apologetic, "I was hoping I could sound a little more intelligent." Gary (Hourly), "Ok, does that answer the question though?" I insured them I had no set answers I was seeking but that I was searching for their honest perceptions regarding the interview questions and that there were no wrong answers. Some employed stalling tactics. I don't think it was to avoid answering the question but more as a ploy to gather their thoughts. For example, Gary (Hourly) had a tendency to respond to some of my questions with his own question such as, "Is that a possibility?" or "Why didn't it work?" I then had to rephrase the question and ask him to basically answer his own question. James (Union), on the other hand, had no apprehensions about answering anything. From the opening demographic questions it was apparent that he had an axe to grind

with both the company and the union. While courteous to me he was the only participant that raised his voice on a regular basis and was adamant in his terse responses to most questions.

All of the individuals wanted to talk and appeared appreciative for the chance to vent. They were all concerned about their futures, be they retired or still working, and were not afraid to speak their mind. They all hoped that somewhere sometime someone would listen to them. I think Brad put it most succinctly what all the other participants said or implied with his statement, "It would seem that to me that after you put this entire synopsis together that it would behoove members of both sides of the organization, both the union and the company (to) sit down and listen to what's within the framework of your text so they understand or have a pretty good idea of what individuals who have lived that situation saw and what they think they need to do in relationship to driving the process forward."

Bureaucracy

Corporate Management

The operating methods and human resource practices employed by the transplant companies, i.e. Honda and Toyota specifically have shown that their processes can be effective in the United States as well as other countries and cultures. The Big Three understand the need for more flexible operating methods in this global environment yet they continue to struggle in adjusting or changing the way they conduct business. The growth successes of the past have allowed The Big Three to develop into large complex organizations with their own individual bureaucracies.

Bureaucracy is considered a social function that legitimizes control of the many by the few (Perrow, 1986). The degree of bureaucracy may vary slightly between the companies but essentially the bureaucratic model employed so successfully in the past by the domestic auto companies has left them ill equipped in their ability to address their antiquated operating methods.

Failure to institute successful change programs is the result of inherited self defeating management styles formed in their respective companies' successful past (Samuelson, 2005). Wright and Smye (1996) claim that a result of this bureaucratic management approach in mature, age declining companies, such as the domestic auto industry, is the development of individual characteristics that are actually detrimental to progress. These detrimental management characteristics include: (a) Personal success stems from avoiding taking risks, (b) management emphasis is on form over function, (c) everything is forbidden, unless expressly permitted, (d) management authority is not matched with their responsibilities, (e) opportunities are seen as problems, (f) management is driven by inertia, and (g) political gamesmanship becomes the order of the day. These characteristics are supported by O'Neal and Mateja (2006) who, when comparing Ford Motor's latest troubles with General Motors problems, cited Ford as being hindered by a lack of firm, consistent leadership at the top and a divisive, feudalistic, cautious, cliquish corporate culture developed over time.

The bureaucratic unease created by corporate management was readily identifiable by members of all three subcultures. Responses from the participants regarding their perceptions of corporate management ranged from; Gary (Hourly);

"Well, I think they are letting this whole thing slip away." Allison (Salary), "They're clueless. I think they are scrambling for survival." Brad (Salary), "Different, different agendas." Dave (Salary), "Out of touch with reality." Irene (Union), "They don't see the big picture." James (Union), "I think they're a bunch of fools. They don't know what they're doing."

It was and still is a common arrangement in the auto industry; including management, that those men or women working in the industry can help get relatives and friends jobs. Their positions became a means to enrich not only themselves, but through nepotism and favoritism, a way of rewarding family and friends (Milkman, 1997). Ultimately, these people are expected to remember to whom they are indebted for their job. The result is that there is a perception that some non-qualified people are promoted over more deserving personnel. Allison (Salary) agreed, "You had these excellent people, just outstanding people that were overlooked because they were too old, they were male, they weren't female, or they weren't racially right for the mix." Allison (Salary) also felt, "that if the corporate bureaucracy doesn't change these wrongs nothing is going to change. Look at all the mangers that we had that were totally inept and Ford's answer to that was to promote them and move them out, no accountability, no responsibility."

How does something like this happen? James (Union) feels that managers at the plant level destined to be promoted are given positive artificially created progress reports because they, "know that they are there just for a transitionary period and they're going to move on up so they give them a good recommendation hoping that

someday, they'll get a little cocktail or something." Irene (Union) feels they are promoted because, "they golf together, they intermarry, they are just flim-flam men, they sell snake oil." James (Union) adds that some people deserving of a promotion, "don't kiss enough butt." Dave (Salary) feels the same way, "I've seen a lot of people promoted, in fact at our plant I've been at, and you kind of wonder, they never really, they never really seemed to cut it to be in touch with what was going on at the plant level but boy the next thing you know they're promoted. So, it's kind of, it kind of, it kind of proves a theory that people are out of touch."

The result is that managers rarely share information, even with other management personnel, as they attempted to protect their private fiefdom. The views of Wright and Smye (1996) and O'Neal and Mateja (2006) are reinforced by the management notion of chimney thinking. Chimney thinking is a term coined to describe the actions where one plant, department, production area or person is concerned strictly with his or her own success and not the success of the entire organization. Connie (Salary) refers to it as, "blind obedience. In many cases I think its blind obedience. They just do what they've been directed to do even if they know the decision is going to have ill effects on the plant level." Allison (Salary) who has had experience working in corporate management indicates, "There's a subculture up there, a pecking order and you don't deviate from that." To this day many management employees remain fearful of speaking up. They not only fear the possibility of ridicule for making an incorrect decision but they also fear the repercussions of possibly upstaging their boss if their suggestion is recognized as a good idea (Walsh, 2006).

In an effort to reduce the bureaucratic malaise The Big Three have resorted to hiring new CEO's from either outside the industry or from other automotive companies. The intent is to integrate into the system people that have no ties or allegiance to the existing work force. Dr. Trevino, professor of ethics and chairwoman of the Department of Management and Organization at Smeal College, Pennsylvania State University, says there is a small window of opportunity to get rid of people who do not agree with the new direction or do not have the required skill sets (Jennings, 2002). She feels a new executive has no more than six months to weed out people who need to be replaced and to assemble a new team. Sometimes the established bureaucracy stands in the way of this happening because unfortunately, the inherent management habits are still composed of the attitudes, beliefs, and expressions of those that inhabit their social world (Macleod, 1987). Connie (Salary) perceives, "Many people posture for their next position as soon as they get to their new position." Not only do they not want to lose privileges not offered to everybody but they also want to solidify their positions for the future. These unwritten rules limit communication and serve to reinforce present defensive behaviors within the existing culture. As some people are favored over others any notion of trust between all parties disappears thus increasing the patterns of functional allegiance and minimal cross-functional co-operation (Schein, 1996). The fear of real or perceived threats to anyone questioning these unwritten rules and assumptions has an impact upon employee behavior (Emiliani, 1998). There are not many that will buck the established system of formal allegiance and political loyalty implied by opposing their political emissary.

Even with new management the adoption of the competitions operating lean production methods and human resource practices will not automatically insure success for the domestic auto industry. In the book "The Machine That Changed the World" (1990), the authors, Womack, Jones, and Roos, coined the term "lean production" for the type of operating system designed to eliminate waste while still producing a higher quality product. Lean production assumes that the assembly line worker can perform most job functions better than specialists. In this sense the intent is to develop the work force as direct action people that have the ability and wherewithal to function autonomously, in not only the operational processes but also to provide an avenue for input for improving upon them. Total quality management, another part of lean production, where every step of the fabrication process is conducted perfectly, can be improved with operator input. This will then provide the opportunity to implement the concept of "just in time delivery." This practice reduces the need for large amounts of buffer stock being kept on hand. In order to be successful, this lean production culture invests full faith and confidence in people doing direct work. It stimulates the workers to develop their capabilities to the fullest while making maximum use of their individual talents (Nakane & Hall, 2002). A management and structure capable of delivering this kind of work force will be required to successfully implement these changes (Parker and Slaughter, 1988).

To prove this strategy successful certain conditions must be met, including a will to implement any agreed upon plans (Vaghefi, 2002). This change to a lean production type process by the Big Three is contrary to the culture that has been developed over

time within the industry. Allison (Salary) feels, “They are too top heavy up north, setting policies and procedures without understanding what’s going on in the plants.” Even though the lean manufacturing programs are being introduced from the upper echelons of management, many of the old management bureaucratic styles of delegate organize, and control are still emphasized at the lower levels. Karen (Hourly) speaking in regards to these lean production techniques not being as effective as planned is because upper managers, “lose perspective as it dwindles down. I don’t think they keep a handle on what’s going on down below. The things they implement above don’t drift down below.” Allison (Salary) perceives, “They’re clueless to how the plant works.” Lisa (Union) agrees and says, “I just think it’s a shame that these CEO’s and these engineers and these managers just don’t realize. They don’t actually understand how the plant achieves it.” Connie (Salary) continues about upper management, “I don’t think they have enough interaction at the plant level. I don’t think they have a real grasp at what goes on within an assembly plant. They do not know what these people are doing in the plant.”

Local Management

Allison (Salary) states, “There, there’s a big hierarchy up North but it all basically comes down to the plant.” Allison (Salary) agrees and feels that when the corporate hierarchy desires to implement a new work plan that, “There is very little regard for people that work in the plant. They send down edicts or give directives that tell me that they really haven’t been in the plant in some cases.” Connie (Salary) speaking on local management and the institution of change plans within the facility observes, “I guess it

starts with upper level management, you know, in Dearborn and trickles down." In order to achieve success with these lean production strategies the company must; recognize that all employees are stakeholders, commit to a team approach, commit the time and resources for the entire designated period, have an agreed upon plan for implementation of problem solutions, and individuals must receive the support of both their peers and bosses (Ingebretsen, 2003).

These plans must also include a focused determination and resolve by the leadership of the auto companies and union when attempting to implement these unfamiliar lean operational plans to local management and the work force. Allison (Salary) speaking on programs such as lean production deemed necessary for the success of the local facilities comments, "I think our people in the plant, the management folks, don't get a lot of heads up on what's coming down the pike. It also appears that they don't get an opportunity to have any input when it comes to them, it's a done deal." Irene (Salary) agrees, "Well it's a very difficult position for the local plant management to enact but the Northerners say because if you know any of them you can sense the frustration and in having to follow through on things that don't work and don't really make a lot of sense."

Historically, the bureaucracy of the industry consisted of many middle managers whose responsibility was to gather data for top management so they could coordinate activities, allocate resources, and set strategy for the company. In the past it was felt that a manager did not have to know the details of the business as they were evaluated in terms of return on assets target. If the numbers were poor it was time to change the

manager. If the numbers were good the possibility of a promotion existed. Allison (Salary) continues, “The plant has measurables and objectives and they are either met or not met and that scoring is what these managers and directors look at in order to make decisions on policy or anything else.”

In conjunction with the institution of lean production strategies already mentioned is the notion that a new management style must be implemented (Ingebretsen, 2003). Unfortunately, like corporate management the local management habits are also composed of the attitudes, beliefs, and expressions of those that inhabit their social world (Macleod, 1987). The same bureaucratic management characteristics that Wright and Smye (1996) identify as detrimental to progress in corporate management: (a) Personal success stems from avoiding taking risks, (b) management emphasis is on form over function, (c) everything is forbidden, unless expressly permitted, (d) management authority is not matched with their responsibilities, (e) opportunities are seen as problems, (f) management is driven by inertia, and (g) political gamesmanship becomes the order of the day also exist in the local management. These reasons contribute to the inability of the company to successfully implement the many past attempts to make production or human resource changes at the plant level. After so many false starts not every one in management sees a need to change the way they presently conduct business.

Like corporate management many local managers have their own personal agendas and want to achieve a promotion. Connie (Salary) indicates the corporate, “concept of salary people having to be mobile and having to move around, that’s self

defeating. The way we are moving mangers around in the past 5-6 years every manager at the plant level and, and I'm talking superintendent on up, knew that they were probably going to be in that position for 18 months 24 months max. So their objectives on their performance review were outlined and they would do whatever it took to on paper meet those objectives because in reality they would be long, long gone before any of this came to fruition. So there is no accountability." Hal (Salary) concurs, "Over the years, basically they were there for a short time. They wanted to make themselves look good and they were off to bigger and better things." When questioned in regards to how long has this been going on and how can it happen, Allison (Salary) responded, "Years, and years and years" and managers "were moved through so quickly they didn't have a clue and they relied heavily on certain people in HR, a lot of them, the managers just didn't care."

Past programs sent into the facilities by corporate management that had never achieved their total goals such Total Quality Management, the Modern Operating Agreement (MOA) and 6-Sigma were initiated with great fanfare and expense until the next financial crisis. Allison (Salary), "We have tried to model off of everyone with every program we ever brought in there starting with Employee Involvement, starting with MOA which we, we take their program, we don't modify it for the American worker or their specific circumstances and then we wonder why it fails." These change programs ultimately consisted of management still playing the role of boss while telling the work force what they wanted done in the name of teams. The only constant present in the past programs was cutting costs with little emphasis put on human development. This

lack of emphasis on human development also manifested itself in the salary ranks. A major obstacle to success in corporate management occurs when salary job descriptions do not reflect their new responsibilities, and managers are not rewarded or recognized for their efforts (Caffaralla, 1994). Katzenbach, (1996) indicates that some members of management are willing to try the latest change attempts but give up when they realize that no one will follow through on their efforts. Brad (Salary) comments, "We had some very good people in the organization that tried to make everybody understand how we were going to operate the business but again if you have been exposed to the traditional system for 20 to 25 years then you become pretty much complacent in relationship of how you think the organization is going to run and again, people do not like change."

Managers, comfortable within their sphere of influence, have little use for any program that could possibly have an adverse impact their jobs over the long term. The only measurement that traditionally meant anything to managers was the number of completed jobs that came off the end of the assembly line. The inability to follow through on corporate managements edicts led management to conclude that they were ultimately still responsible for production by the numbers regardless of the latest program. The inability to successfully implement the many past attempts to make production or human resource changes at the plant level had illustrated to the union and the workers that they could just wait out the latest change until the plan fizzled and the next plan was unveiled. A manager's ultimate goal remained; get the production units out of their area and into another production area regardless of any quality issues,

chimney thinking at its best (or worse). The underlying attitude of individual managers became one of meeting daily production quotas while functioning in a survival mode.

It has become apparent that with the demonstrated lean production techniques of the competition workers are being asked to make decisions that have historically been in the realm of management. Brad (Salary), "People in general in relationship to our industry reject change. They have a very, very hard time changing anything at all and the magnitude of changing from a traditional operation to a Modern Operating Agreement operation is just astronomical." Brad (Salary) continues, "There were a number of us who were very, very instrumental in trying to make the thing work. There were other individuals who found that particular system as an inhibitor or I should say they were afraid of the system because they felt that they might be relinquishing too much power to the folks that actually do the work." Power is a particular problem as managers do not want to give it up (Kanter, 1983).

As an organization, such as the domestic auto industry, flexes and flattens in an attempt to become lean, territorial infighting among upper and middle management becomes increasingly visible and contemptible to employees in the plant and further, discourages trust and respect (Chesterton, 1995). Since these new lean processes shift responsibilities within the facilities managers with intractable attitudes and mismatched skill sets can be identified. Salary employees that may have been good general managers under the old system may not be needed when their skills and mindsets do not fit the pattern of change (Katzenbach, 1996). Dr. Trevino, professor of ethics and chairwoman of the Department of Management and Organization at Smeal College,

Pennsylvania State University, says there is a small window of opportunity to get rid of people who do not agree with the new direction or do not have the required skill sets (Jennings, 2002). This opportunity identified by Dr. Trevino does not appear to be taking place at the site of this current research. Karen (Hourly) says, "I don't see anything different. The same supervision, the same fools are running the show."

When asked why The Big Three aren't emulating the successful initiatives of the competition at the plant level Karen (Union) replied, "because higher up they think they are." When posed with the question; are you saying that local managers are lying to their bosses? Her answer was an emphatic yes. Karen (Union) continued, "Yeah, the local level makes all the paperwork so everything looks wonderful, hides cars all over the parking lot and lets them think they are doing what they are supposed to be doing up, up top." Frank (Hourly) agrees and indicates that corporate management has, "been lied to by their buddies trying to make their records look good so they can climb the corporate ladder." Gary (Hourly) commenting on when corporate management does pays a visit to the facility to check the progress towards the latest corporate initiative, "It's dog and pony show spit shine, clean up, clean up ok?" Frank (Hourly) agrees, "Any discrepancies found are sugarcoated to keep the corporate leaders off their back and make it look like the people didn't want to work." Karen (Hourly) concurs, "Well, we've had a couple, couple decent plant managers I think but then again it's all the show too. He, all they want to do is make it look good for up North. They don't care if it's, they rarely follow through they just want the numbers to be there." When asked how and why something like this can continue Gary (Hourly) responded, "They're probably just

too scared, to like we're saying to rock the boat." Corporate management cannot plead ignorance from blame regarding knowing how the local facilities operate because like Karen (Hourly) says, "What kills me is the same people that are up there we're once down here and they know that's what goes on." Yet it continues.

International Union

Labor unions came into existence as a direct response to the corporate productivity processes and the domination exerted over the work force by management. Forty years ago the Big Three (Ford, Chrysler and General Motors) sold nearly all the cars and trucks purchased in the United States. The United Auto Workers (UAW) union held a virtual monopoly over worker representation in the industry. Times have changed. Global competition with other auto companies with different business models of production and different work cultures are proving successful in rendering not only the old production model obsolete but also the UAW's operating methods. Since the 1980's the transplant auto companies such as Toyota, Honda and Nissans have been adding non union blue collar jobs while increasing their production and market share. These transplant auto companies illustrate that American auto workers are capable of competing in a global environment while still making excellent wages and benefits without belonging to a union. The constant external globalization changes affecting both the union and the companies in the domestic auto industry require constant internal changes. The consequences are that the companies (and unions), through lack of leadership, flexibility and imagination, that remain slow to react and adapt to the changes necessary to compete will not survive (Friedman, 2005). The

inability to address internal change issues within the industry and union in order to meet the demands of the competition has already resulted in the loss of thousands of domestic automotive jobs.

Historically the union's intent was to give workers a voice with accompanying power in a society where the bulk of the economic and political power was currently being held by the men controlling the corporations (Parker & Gruelle, 1999). Competition has forced the union and the auto companies to now work as active partners in creating the lean environment that appears necessary for survival. What makes these extensive work place innovation processes so significant is that there is now a management and union contractual commitment to changing the traditional employer-employee relationship at the factory level. They intend to implement programs that will provide every worker the opportunity to become involved in this lean environment by participating in the decision-making processes. Changing the established rules in the domestic auto industry in an effort to survive will not be easy as these changes to a lean production type process by the Big Three, UAW and workers is contrary to the culture that has been developed over time within the industry.

While the UAW recognizes the need for change the current union officials are entrenched in the system that has trained and developed them to operate within the same antiquated parameters that have proven successful for them in the past. The same parameters that have been employed in the past, the notions of a greedy management versus exploited worker, seniority over flexibility, fixed benefits, and strike threats to keep their respective companies profitable and innovative in a world of

growing competition (Editorial, 2005) are still being exhorted. These parameters preclude any change progress. Brad (Salary) thinks, "People in general in relationship to our industry reject change. They have a very, very hard time changing anything at all and the magnitude of changing from a traditional operation to a Modern Operating Agreement (MOA) operation is just astronomical." (An MOA is considered a form of lean production.) Brad (Salary) continues, "I think that the International union right now is absolutely scared to death about what's going on in the industry and I don't really believe they have a firm understanding of exactly what they need to do. They have a pretty good idea of where they think we need to go but you know, George, they have never been exposed to the industry the way it is right now. They never had to go through this type of competition where it's just dog eat dog on a daily basis and they're struggling really hard with it."

The United Mine Workers (UMW) union model adhered to by the UAW leadership at its inception has resulted in the union adopting the concepts and practices of a business union. A business union is an organization that operates as though its members are customers and they in turn are providing services to them. The transformation to a business union for an organization is characterized by well defined hierarchies, concrete rules, and a centralization of power (Clark, 1989). As this process matured the UAW took on some of the characteristics and outlooks of the managerial system. In this case the histories, organizational cultures, ideologies and programs for action, just like the bureaucratic systems deployed by The Big Three, have resulted in the UAW developing its own bureaucratic baggage under the business union guise.

Bureaucracy is a social function that legitimizes control of the many by the few (Perrow, 1986).

There was a disparity between the responses of some salary participants versus the UAW represented participants regarding the consequences of the UAW being considered a business union. Allison (Salary) states, "Actually I'm pretty impressed with them they're very good business men." James (Union) on the other hand states, "I think the UAW is a criminal organization. The International union as far as I'm concerned is inept, criminal, bourgeoisie, I could go on and on, that it's not even a union, it's nothing but another business, a very big business." Lisa (Union) summed up her opinion of the International in one word, "Joke." Dave (Salary) sees them as, "almost like corporate." Irene (Union) speaking about the bureaucracy created at the International level, "It is totally entrenched. It is entrenched. It is etched in stone."

The early UAW contractual successes against The Big Three provided the opportunity for the UAW to consolidate its internal power base. The Walter Reuther regime instituted the practice of only promoting supporters loyal to the International Union bureaucracy. Just like the companies the business model employed by the UAW precludes democracy by denying knowledge to all but the experts. It was made perfectly clear that the only way off the shop floor and advancement in the International UAW hierarchy was to become part of the existing political machine. Historically as the UAW continued to grow so did the number of staff professionals needed to provide services, thus causing the union organization to become even more bureaucratic in nature. The consolidation of power within the upper echelons of the

UAW continued when in 1963 the International representatives and national staff formed a union to represent themselves in dealing with their employer, the UAW. This professional staff union was formed to represent International union representatives in dealing with their employer, the UAW, regarding grievances, pay, benefits and especially, job security.

Advancement to these International staff jobs is the equivalent of finding the Holy Grail. Succession to these most desirable staff positions has been compared to a feudal dynasty where jockeying for power at both the UAW local and International level would became a full time activity for many union leaders (Tyler, 1973). The acceptance of this staff union system by the International UAW granted extended job security to those appointed to their positions. It prevented the removal of any International union representative on a political whim. This process now supported the claim of Magrath (2000) that once in power leaders are unlikely to be displaced. The job security issue resulted in the further entrenchment of the union bureaucracy as all International officers could now be handpicked, politically loyal to those in power. Now, just as an engineer in the company would stress his or her expertise in production matters to the work force, so could UAW staff members flout their expertise in union affairs by virtue of their appointment. This protection for the "experienced" staff from union politics and their possible removal from office provided the justification for the staff union system.

Traditionally these staff appointments did and still go to those politically loyal to the person doing the appointing (Clark, 1989). In return for an appointed staff job, the

appointer expected his or her appointee to owe formal allegiance and political loyalty to him or her while serving as the individual's political emissary. Lisa (Union), "They all get promoted from within. Once they make Chairman they're all promoted up there." When asked if the best qualified people are the ones being recruited for the International appointments there was again a difference in the responses from the management and union subculture participants. Allison (Salary) sees this system as effective as, "They, they seem to understand what's going on in the plants, what the needs of the membership are, they are smart enough to bring from what I've seen some of the brightest ones out of the plants to work up north." Irene (Union) disagrees, "To a degree they bring to the International the same incompetence's that they had in their local plants." She continued, "Now you're going to say, well how could they be so incompetent and have reached that level? "I don't know, they golf together, they intermarry"? Lisa (Union) and Frank (Hourly) both used the same phrase for how one gets to the International, "Your ability to suck up." These unwritten rules regarding staff appointments limit communication and serve to reinforce defensive behaviors within the existing culture.

According to their positional status the International representatives are accorded privileges that they may or may not even recognize. These International positions of power hold what is known as hidden privilege (Lawler, 1996). As far back as 1946, in his book "Spotlight on Labor Unions", William Smith voiced the concern that the means used to gain a desired end by a union official may be influenced hidden privilege. Union representatives, both National and local, enjoy a different, more

socially important status and inevitably their outlook differentiates them from that of the hourly line worker (Magrath, 2000). According to Unionfacts (2006), the top 700 International UAW representatives each receive monetary compensation in excess of $100,000 plus benefits not afforded to other UAW members. As some people are favored over others any notion of trust between all parties disappears thus increasing the patterns of functional allegiance and minimal cross-functional co-operation (Schein, 1996). Brad (Salary) believes the result of this misguided allegiance and lack of communication is the International representatives all have, "different, different agendas."

The issue of the International representative's status was a real sticking point in the interviews. While the salary participants had no real inkling for how the International differs from the people they represent the union and hourly participant's especially resented their separate contract. Gary (Hourly), "How do they get away with it? How can, how can you have one set of rules for one group and another set of rules for another group. We're all supposed to be on the same page right?" Irene (Union), "They have their own contract; they have better health care benefits than the majority of the line workers. They also get a double pension, one from the retirement from their local plant and one from the International." Lisa (Union), "They're up there for the second pension. They are totally different than what the hourly worker is." James (Union), "They still have their double retirement and yet they take away from ours. They're privileged people…." Lisa (Union), "They're power hungry and they want the

title of International. Do they do anything? I'm sure they do but does the common hourly worker know it?"

When it comes to the goals and policies of the UAW, it is no different than any other political organization or company regarding controlling their members. Aristotle defined democracy as "rule of the few watched by the many." (Watson, 1981, p. 7). A union is considered a democratic organization if it holds conventions, votes on contracts, and holds elections. The UAW proudly stresses the fact that it is a democratic union as its constitution states, "…the UAW has the duty and responsibility to promote real and meaningful participatory democracy through its members and their families." (Constitution, 2002, p. 4). Yet for a democracy to be effective the party in control must allow the opposition to criticize what the leaders are doing and propose alternate courses of action without fear of retaliating measures. This has not been the case.

The well defined hierarchies, concrete rules, and the centralization of power identified by Clark (1989) have made it extremely difficult for any local rank and file members to challenge the policies of the International UAW. Power can be employed to suppress issues to avoid decision making or in order to insure the ideas and practices of the dominant party are sustained (Schied, Carter, & Howell, 2001). Power, as defined by Weber (1978), is the ability to get others to do something they would otherwise not do. The fear of real or perceived threats to those questioning unwritten rules and assumptions has an impact on employee behavior (Emiliani, 1998). James (Union) believes that, "To move up there you have to go along and, and turn your eyes another way even if you see something wrong." Irene (Union) agrees, "They're in the cat bird

seat, many of them, many of them. Plus, it's a closed group so that if you are going to veer off the beaten path that your leader says this is what we're going to do they have ways of giving you assignments that are in Alaska." Karen (Union) also agrees, "If there are any problems they don't want to hear about it. They want you to go along with whatever they feel is right. If there are any problems that shake the boat they don't want to come down there and look."

Overall opinion of the current International UAW was not complimentary. Dave (Salary), "I think they are out of touch with the hourly worker in the plant." Connie (Salary) says, "I think they are their own worst enemy." Hal (Hourly) continues, "I think that the International has lost contact of the hourly worker also." Gary (Hourly), "They are in cahoots with the company." Frank (Union), "I think, I think somebody is selling somebody out." Dave (Salary), "Definitely, they, they made some great gains for the people they represent but it just seems that there are so many shortcomings."

As the UAW developed its own oligarchic system, it appears to have begun a drift away from the principles of unionism. Irene (Union) thinks, "Walter Reuther and Doug Frazier, they were among the best and the brightest that we ever had. I mean they were focused on taking care of the people, improved our working conditions and then we sort of lost sight of ourselves and what we were supposed to stand for and, and that's a shame because people that are in the auto industry now will never have the same sense of history or community that a lot of the others have." Hal (Hourly) agrees, "We're the last of the organized labor as we know it. I think that Walter Reuther would be rolling in his grave."

Local Union

The same characteristics of business unionism bureaucracy created at the International level can also be identified as present in the local plant unions. The local union is also characterized by the by the well defined hierarchies, concrete rules, and a centralization of power that Clark (1989) identifies as being part of a business union. It is also more identifiable to the work force. People realize that an elected or appointed union job is time consuming and comes with certain responsibilities but it is not physically exhausting like assembly line work. For example, union officials have better working conditions and more flexibility in their schedules than line workers but as Allison (Salary) states, "It's also twenty four seven and you have two, three thousand people calling on you."

Yet union jobs remain desirable because they are one of the few avenues of upward mobility open to production workers, who typically have little formal education and whose present work on the assembly line offers few intrinsic rewards (Milkman, 1997). Ellen (Hourly) agrees, "Sometimes I feel people get in to the union for the fact that I want to get off the line and not work the line so the union job is a lot easier." Dave (Salary) continues, "There's been several union representatives that I've worked with that I thought were very common sense and sincere and did the absolute utmost for their people but the majority of them I just, I don't have that same respect for." Allison (Salary) thinks the local union officials, "always had the memberships best interest but just like in management there is a lot of politics going on." This would not

be a concern if people with the membership's best interests at heart were the ones elected. The consensus of opinion was that this is not always the case.

The election and appointment processes even at the local level support the claim of Magrath (2000) that once in power leaders are unlikely to be displaced. Having the right union leadership in office can offer a more cooperative relationship with the company. In exchange for cooperation the company offers its power to help the union leaders keep their positions by rewarding friends, punishing enemies, and occasionally making the officials look good (Parker & Gruelle, 1999). Brad (Salary) agrees, "The chairman has so much power because he has been elected so many times and I think the local guy has been elected 3 or 4 times unopposed." Leaders can now base their power on the company's power rather than the rank and file. In the political science terms of Chomsky (2005), this process would equate to a country developing a group of elitists that would administer and control the population while enriching themselves through their relationship with the imperial power.

It is also possible for management to set up systems that disguise legal payoffs, joint junkets, and ease of getting overtime, to keep officials addicted to their position. Once elected or appointed, some unionists became enamored by these perquisites tied to their position. Local union positions, like International positions, of power hold what is known as hidden privilege (Lawler, 1996). According to their positional status they are accorded privileges that they may or may not even recognize. A union official's income can be significantly higher than the members he or she represents. Moody (2001) complains that full-time local union representatives can increase their yearly income by

$50,000 for performing non existent company paid overtime. Connie (Salary) agrees, "union reps, they were all automatically moved up to the top of the ARP whether or not they knew one job. When they get voted in they get top of the scale." (Ability Rate Progression (ARP) is a system of pay based upon the number of jobs one knows.) Allison (Salary) agrees, "I do know that while you're at the plant you get paid the highest rate of pay of the guy working there so it's, it's very lucrative position." Ellen (Hourly), "They're there for the money."

How can members of the union be dissatisfied with the election of people to UAW local union positions if they are permitted to vote for these candidates? Speaking about who gets elected to office James (Union) says, "Actually, the most inept get it. It's like water seeks its own level so (chuckles) the most inept get it because all they have to do is raise money." He continues, "A good example is they'll spend $10,000 on jackets, t-shirts and pass them out whether the people like them or not they give them a free t-shirt so they wear it. They give them a free jacket, it's raining out and they wear it and all the other people that don't have it see all these people, hundreds of them, with these jackets of people they don't even support or like and they say well if old Joe supports him because he's wearing his jacket I think I'll vote for him."

In addition, as previously mentioned regarding an International representative justifying his or her existence by stressing his or her expertise in union matters so to can the local incumbent candidates by virtue of their elected position. Gary (Hourly) believes incumbents do flout their expertise in union affairs as a reason to be reelected, "When they talk to people on the floor they always talk about their victories dealing

with management in the past no matter how small they may be but it always seems that well they were never going to do this but I got them to do this so I can get them to do things for you in the future if I'm elected." Connie (Salary), "I mean maybe some people buy into the fact that you know, they profess they are going to fight their company." Parker and Gruelle (1999) attribute these relationships that result in an individual getting more power on their job as an explanation to why union members prefer to elect those that deny them overall power in the union. The result is that often corrupt and bureaucratic officials repeatedly get elected because they talk tough against the employer while maintaining the ability to disperse perquisites such as trips and time off the assembly line to those supporting them. On the other hand candidates that do not come across as militant against the company flounder. Talking about those that run for union positions Brad (Salary) thinks, "It has to do with a lack of knowledge about the other individuals. I haven't seen any that come out and say what we really need to do is make it a point that to insure that we're on the same page as the company and we're trying to do the right thing for the company. Many, many times, that's been construed as being a company suck ass."

James (Union) equates union elections to United States government elections. "It's all about money, there's no difference between the local union elections than the national elections for president, senators, congressman. Its money that gets you elected not your ability to govern." Connie (Salary) also speaking on who gets elected to office, "It's a mystery to me why the membership votes in some people that they do election after election. Some of the best people running and some of the people that

have the plant and the companies best interest in mind, and people's best interest in mind aren't the ones that are elected." Dave (Salary) wonders, "How some of those people even got elected." James (Union) concurs, "A lot of good people run for office but they don't have the funds or the political know how to even have a chance." Karen (Union) takes it one step further, "Well, I think some of them get elected because they are selling half of them drugs if you really want to know the truth. Yeah, the union guys dealing drugs, pills and drugs and pot and, and they say, well, yeah that's what I think."

Karen (Union) believes part of the problem with the local union elections is, "The good people get run over because they are trying to do something right and they don't have a stinking chance." She explains, "I think that's it because in this last election there was some good guys that ran and should have been higher in the vote count because they're, to me they were very honest people. I knew them for a long time and they were really, really low. And it's because well if I tell you I'm going to vote for you then you're going take care of me later on down the line and it shouldn't be like that." Lisa (Union) agrees, "You have the people that are running that have been in office that know how to cut hogs, take care of the slugs and, and I mean that's truthfully what happens." (Cutting hogs is an automotive industry term for making deals.)

While trying to maintain their elected and / or appointed positions the art of making deals has become a time honored tradition in the industry. Union positions are viewed as a means to enrich not only themselves, but through nepotism and favoritism, a way of rewarding family and friends (Milkman, 1997). Hal (Hourly), "We had some guys that really knew the contract but yet their personal life, they were always getting

into some kind of trouble and stuff or they were cutting hogs for this friend or that friend." Cutting hogs is described by Gary (Hourly) as, "the underbelly of the union." James (Union) believes this system has succeeded for so long because, "Once they raise money they have their little minions they promised this job and that job to or that little thing to or a special privilege to somebody else and they're out there promising a hundred people even though they know they can't deliver. And the people that they promised to know they can't deliver because they are grasping at that hope they support them and they get elected."

Just like at the International UAW level the power in the local union remains the power to appoint, the power to punish, and the power of one's machine. Elected officials control appointments to local patronage jobs, paid time off for union business, grievance handling for friends, the control of union communications as well as the hiring practices. It was and still is a common arrangement or unwritten rule in the auto industry that men or women working in the plant themselves can help get their sons, daughters, nieces, nephews, or other relatives and friends jobs there. In 2005 a case involving the firing of a labor relations supervisor at one of The Big Three regarding these hiring practices was settled in court in favor of the individual. The case revolved around the unwritten rule or practice of letting the UAW choose ten percent of all hourly employees hired. This supposed side deal gave jobs to criminals, union officials' relatives and people of marginal skills (McNair, 2005). Workers with the proper connections could sometimes get many relatives and friends hired while others with less clout were ignored. These connected individuals could sometimes even succeed in

getting a newly hired relative or friend assigned to a highly desirable job over a more senior worker from the outset. If this is practice is true (I believe the ten percent number to be a low figure.) and preferential hiring tactics are open to both management and union the quality of the new employee's hired can be determined by the incumbent members (Krishnan, 1994). Having the ability to control who enters the work force also implies the union indirectly controls hiring. Ultimately, these newly hired people are expected to remember to whom they were indebted for their job. These unwritten rules limit communication and serve to reinforce the defensive behaviors of the work force within the existing culture.

While local elections determine the union offices, there does exist political appointments for both International and local plant level jobs. The further entrenchment of the union bureaucracy at the local level can now be continued as appointees can be handpicked, politically loyal to those in power. Brad (Salary) speaking in regards to who gets these coveted appointed jobs, "Normally what happens is from what I've seen is that the individuals who have been associated with those people in power that have the right to pass out those jobs, those opportunities." Brad (Salary) continues, "From what I've seen no, it certainly does not hurt to be a friend of the union or a friend of the person that might be making that appointment." Karen (Union), "I think it's about nepotism, it's about the buddy system. I think it doesn't matter if you are good at your job. If you're not their buddy and their friend it's not happening. I don't think it has anything to do with your qualifications." Recipients of these local appointments, both full time and part time off the assembly line jobs, are described by

Austin (2001) as individual's whose only job requirement is to show up at union meetings and support the officer who appointed him or her.

Within this scenario remains the fact that union officials both elected and appointed are not always the best educated for the jobs they undertake. Connie (Salary), "I mean I've seen functionally illiterate people get voted in time and time again and I can't imagine why you would pick somebody like that to represent you." Speaking about who gets the local appointed jobs Allison (Salary) concurred, "In some cases qualified people and some cases totally unqualified, couldn't do the job if their life depended upon it. It was some political or personal appointment to satisfy." She continues with an example, "Well, I can think of one that I worked with who, I wouldn't say he was illiterate but slightly illiterate but good common sense and knew and understand every job there and can work through it." Brad (Salary), "Well, most of the time from the standpoint of those individuals, to be very truthful with you, its pretty much cultural, because of the fact, you know, they're not going to be willing to meet you half way or even have a discussion in relationship to a problem." Dave (Salary) agrees, "Their ability to understand what the people are going through seems very limited and it seems like their tactics are not to negotiate by using data, so to speak, and looking at a desired outcome. It's almost fear tactics, threats and if you don't do this we'll do that." Hal (Hourly) thinks, "People don't realize that there are other people that are fixing their mistakes" because "the bottom line is that there are good people in that plant and they don't need to get screwed over."

This is not to imply that all union officials are uneducated or inept at their jobs. Connie (Salary) views the bureaucratic system that has been developed as a major advantage for the union. She explains that when a management / union contractual dispute arises the manager is at a disadvantage. " Those people are up against union people, often times who are at the same plant, know the intent of the contract at the local level, know the people they're dealing with but the salary people are moving around so they're at a disadvantage right off the bat." Allison (Salary) agrees, "The union representative was more knowledgeable of the contract language than our HR people in many cases."

Allison (Salary) also comments on working with inept officials she states that when she had a problem she, "tried not to go to go to that person but go to the person that was capable." She would get around dealing with that person and, "would go take advantage of a person whose responsibility did not fall in that arena but because they understood the circumstances they would take care of it for you." Ellen (Hourly) says, "If I need to be represented, and that I have been represented, but it's like you go over people's heads until you're represented by the right person." Brad (Salary) says, "Everything is related to time and what happens is you that you get to the point where you just don't physically have the time or the patience to get into some type of combative situation with an individual who is not knowledgeable about what has to happen and what would be best not only for the employees but also for the company."

There are not many that will buck the established system of formal allegiance and political loyalty implied by opposing their political emissary. Not only do they not

want to lose privileges not offered to everybody but they also want to solidify their positions for the future. Some have aspirations of being recipients of an appointed International job and the privileges that job entails. Succession to these most desirable staff positions has been compared to a feudal dynasty where jockeying for power at the UAW local became a full time activity for many union leaders (Tyler, 1973). James (Union), "Local union leadership, the one's at the top, have did everything they could to manipulate to get up North to the International so they can get that double retirement at the expense of the people. Well, they only have to work up there 5 years and they get a double retirement." Irene (Union) agrees, "Some of them want to, some of them definitely want to and that's their total focus. I'm, I'm going to improve my golf game, I'm going to be a precinct committeeman, I'm going to go to church, I'm going to stay married to the same wife that I absolutely hate, my kids are going to be outstanding athletes, I'm going to volunteer for the United Way, I'm going to lead the, the walk for whatever because I want to move to where ever it is they move to, Dearborn, Deerfield Heights."

There is more to moving up North besides giving the appearance of a concerned active citizen. One must also appear to the International as an individual that will fit into their bureaucracy. How is this accomplished? John (Union) says that at the local level, "They agree to contracts even before they know, like the MOA, before they know what it entails. They agree to it because they buy were told you buy, sell this to the membership, get them to vote on it and you got a job up here." For those that do have International aspirations Karen (Union) says, "You better think the way they think and as

far as our regional reps go you better think the way they think. The local elections, I don't think they care that much about. As long as they're going to help the upper elected officials. I don't think they care who's a committeeman, who's a chairman as long as that chairman is going to buy into what the International is doing."

There also exists a fear of real or perceived threats to those that question the unwritten rules and assumptions of the union bureaucracy. When questioned regarding why no one, hourly, union or salary complain about inept union appointees, Dave (Salary) replied, "Well, you don't do that verbally because that gets right back to the appointed person or the chairman or committeeman and that makes any type of relationship you may have developed, that puts the kibosh on that." James (Union) believes there is so little resistance from the hourly ranks is because, "The first time any worker tries to unite they'll either end up fired or set up to be fired or they'll just be said hey if you don't straighten out and shut up you won't have a job, and everybody's got a family to support." Karen (Union) continues, "You better think the way they think. You do whatever they want you to do. You don't rock the boat." When asked what happens if you rock the boat Karen (Union) responded, "you can be blackballed pretty bad. I can tell you first hand." Brad (Salary) agrees, "Very few individuals in power in a local union that are willing to rock the boat." Karen (Union) when questioned about what happens to a union official at the local level that may be perceived as rocking the boat she replied, "Nobody in the union, that is corrupt which has been going on forever, is going to help that person that's got it all together and wants to do what's right. They're not

going to stand behind them on decisions. They're going to throw them on the bus every chance they get. They're going to run them over every chance they get."

Alienation

The Big Three and the UAW have created a partnership that is designed to improve their production, their quality, and overall worker morale while increasing the job satisfaction level of its employees and members. Parker and Slaughter (1988) contend that a management (and union) leadership structure capable of delivering this kind of work force is required to successfully implement these changes. In this cultural environment leadership becomes synonymous with the development of people (Nakane & Hall, 2002). Instead, the centralization of power, defined hierarchies and specific rules of both the domestic auto companies and the UAW are continuing to further alienate the work force. People become alienated when the existing systems have the capability of limiting individual involvement. The perpetuation of this process results in the development of cynicism in the entire system. As participants described what they believed went wrong with the industry they identified issues such as bureaucratic politics, misuse of seniority and retaliation that resulted in some members of the union benefiting from the practices over others.

Politics

Trust between all parties, company, union and worker suffers when some people in the organization are perceived as being favored over others. The bureaucratic politics of both management and union within the facility mentioned earlier is perceived as reprehensible to the work force. This territorial infighting among both union and

management is having a detrimental effect on the work force trying to participate in the production process within the facility. Workers, in the past, have responded with enthusiasm to programs regarding some form of restructuring until management failed to deliver on their promises. Workers believe management resistance is the primary reason progress has been slow in their ability to achieve the desired level of influence they were to have under lean production. Connie (Salary) agrees, "It's just the flavor of the month, I'm sure. Everything is like it's going to be the saving grace this month and in six months somebody else will move in and give it a whirl. I just think the system is just so broken that there is nothing they can do. I don't care who they bring in." The programs may change but to Karen (Hourly) the bottom line is, "I don't see anything different. The same supervision, the same fools are running the show." James (Union) comments, "Nothing changes, the same supervisors that drove us into the hole ten years ago, twenty years ago in the 80's when we were doing so bad are the same supervisors now. They either moved them up or they moved them to another area." Enthusiasm to participate in any new way of doing business disappears when the daily reality of life on the shop floor does not meet what was promised. Now many workers resent managements failure to implement fully any promised changes.

From the union perspective the hog cutting and back stabbing already mentioned has resulted in the workers perceiving that their vote or voice no longer counts for anything. Like James (Union) stated earlier, "It's all about money, there's no difference between the local union elections than the national elections for president, senators, congressman. Its money that gets you elected not your ability to govern."

Worker realization that things are not the way they are stated has increased dissatisfaction. Brad (Salary), "I think it goes back to leadership and I'm not just talking about leadership from the HR community. I'm talking about leadership in the union role too. There is a number of individuals that are pretty much self righteous from the standpoint of it's everything for themselves and nothing for the overall good, which is in direct conflict with what the thought process of the UAW is."

Seniority

Worker reaction to what is occurring depends upon the discrepancy between what they expect versus what is actually happening. For example, the parameters of lean production processes should be having a major impact on one of the foundations of a union, seniority. Merit and ability are the terms used in lean production for one to transfer to another more desirable job. Seniority versus merit and ability is a dichotomy that continues to confound the historical cultures of management, union and worker. Gary (Hourly) says, "I do believe seniority is a big, big, a big, big situation, a big problem. Shouldn't we be going on merit, accountability, responsibility?" Karen (Union) agrees, "I don't think seniority should matter if the person is qualified."

Qualifications are still very rarely utilized for worker placement unless it can be used as a reason for handpicking a person for a job. Seniority as well as merit and ability are regularly ignored in these cases. The existing union and company bureaucracy allow for those with the proper connections to still be handpicked for jobs they are not qualified for nor have the seniority to obtain. Dave (Salary) agrees, "In my thirty-three

years at Ford I've only worked with one appointed person that you could actually work with and that's sad. It's hard; it's like working with an hourly time standards guy who doesn't even know how to use a stopwatch. I mean, it's pretty hard to deal with people that they're just not; they're not trained in their jobs.

Workers with connections can still succeed in obtaining a highly desirable job even if the company resists the union effort because of fear and intimidation. Dave (Salary) says, "The union tries to get things by threats and intimidation. It's almost like if management at any level, when they try to do the right thing, it's always a threat by the union that it could be as much as a strike, it could be as much as calling OSHA (Occupational Health and Safety Administration) in for made up safety violations, it could be work stoppages or work slowdowns. Not formal but just informal enough that the company feels that boy if we stand by what's right and we know it's right it's going to cost us so much in the long run that we'll just kind of look the other way or bend." Karen (Union), speaking in regards to the union and company granting approval for an individual moving to a better job, "Whatever fits them that's what they're going to do." Connie (Salary) believes seniority, "doesn't play into the picture at all. It's only used when it's convenient." Hal (Hourly) agrees, "Seniority is only when they need it." While this practice perpetuates loyalty to those in power it has a negative influence upon those that are being legitimately bypassed for the job. As Gary (Hourly) stated earlier, "How do they get away with it? How can, how can you have one set of rules for one group and another set of rules for another group."

Retaliation

The work force will reflect the actions and attitudes of the leadership of both the union and companies in the speed of their acceptance or amount of resistance to any proposed cultural changes. Henry Ford believed that people worked for only two reasons: one is for wages, and the other is the fear of losing their jobs (Thompson, 2005). Resistance to company practices is one of the founding credos of the union. But unions demand allegiance and commitment from their members when trying to meet their goals and priorities (Lawler, 1996). In this case they are working jointly with the companies to implement a new strategy. Having the right union leadership in office can offer a more cooperative relationship with the company. In exchange for cooperation the company offers its power to help the union leaders keep their positions by rewarding friends, punishing enemies, and occasionally making the officials look good (Parker & Gruelle, 1999). Leaders can now base their power on the company's power rather than the rank and file. Ultimately the union leadership can assist the company in not only running the workplace but also in disciplining the work force.

The bureaucracy of both the management and union organizations are now capable of implementing any changes they feel necessary with little or no opposition from the workers. While not all workers accept the goals established by the company and union, both the company and union have in place mechanisms to insure working towards the pre-established goals meets the individual's needs. The company and union bureaucracies have organized production in such a way as to minimize workers' opportunities for resistance and to even alter workers' perceptions of the desirability of opposition. Worker resistance has also been minimized through the established

dominant UAW practices. Parker and Gruelle (1999) contend that the main barrier to rank and file control of the union appears to be elected and appointed officials who employ undemocratic rules while making deals with management to ward off any threats to their perquisites.

Has anything really changed? If an individual resists both the company and union plans James (Union) thinks they will "either end up fired, or set up to be fired." Connie (Salary) says people may not be fired but they are "cognizant of the fact that if they make waves or are overly critical of their union structure they're screwed. They will not be supported like the rest of the people. If they need a day off and they need union intervention for example they won't get it. They won't get any help from them. So, it's in their best interest to just keep their mouths shut and bite the bullet and understand that's the way it is and shut up and go about their business." Lisa (Union) agrees, "If you speak out you're going to feel retribution is going to come from the union. So you keep your mouth shut, you do your job and that's it."

Who Is Being Served?

The archaic leadership styles of the company and present union oligarchy already discussed is not conducive to the newly conceived worker environment of cooperation. When asked who is benefiting from the current turmoil in the domestic auto industry it the participants agreed it was definitely not the workers. Allison (Salary), "It's not the shareholder, it's not the stock holder because that's, that's too big of a picture. There is a little subculture within each plant and it it's the sub culture that is being served." Lisa (Union) replied, "Certainly not the hourly worker. Not the majority

of the hour, hourly workers. The union, management, the CEO's." Dave (Salary) agrees, "I think, the interest of the leadership is served first and a by product in some small instances is the workers."

Economics

Mass automobile production in conjunction with mass consumerism produced sustained economic growth as well as widespread material advancement for the workers (Thompson, 2005). The corporate / union production arrangements and union negotiated contracts provided autoworkers the opportunity to enter the upper echelons of the working class. Historically in the auto industry this employment relationship or social contract had been characterized by a mutual long-term commitment between companies and employers. In this case the term social contract implied an agreement between the auto companies and the union regarding the wages, benefits and future employment of the work force. In order to make up for the monotonous, degrading, and life draining assembly line work, the unskilled work force benefited from their membership in this social contract by receiving relatively high pay, a reduction in working hours, health care coverage, pension plans, educational programs, cost of living adjustments and supplemental unemployment benefits, to name a few. They were incorporated into the elite of the working class that were able to successfully escape from poverty while attaining both industrial and political citizenship (Bottomore, 1966). As capitalism continued to successfully expand into their lives the autoworkers now realized they had access to a more affluent and more secure way of life, the American Dream.

Times have changed. While auto workers were once viewed as the aristocrats of labor, the supposed millionaire's of the working class (Milkman, 1997) they are now becoming an endangered species. Globalization is now impacting them to the point they are fearful for their futures. Globalization, as defined by David Rothkopf, a former senior Department of Commerce official in the Clinton administration, describes the changing relationship between governments and big business. Rothkopf says; "But what is going on today is a much broader more profound phenomenon…It is not simply about how governments, business, and people communicate, not just about how organizations interact, but is about things that impact some of the deepest, most ingrained aspects of society right down to the nature of the social contract" (Friedman, 2005, p. 45). The business approach of both The Big Three and the UAW while successfully shaped and defined during the past decades has proven ill suited to the present world situation of globalization. Brad (Salary) concurs, "I know this will sound very simple but I really believe that both management and the union took their eye off the ball. They did not understand what was going on." While The Big Three's fortunes have plummeted since the 1980's another segment of the auto industry known as transplants has risen substantially.

Transplants

Brad (Salary) speaking in regards to this competition says, "If you remember back in the late 70's both the union and the company said what we really need to do is have the foreign competition come here and make, build their plants here and be competitive in that." They did, and now the other auto industry in the United States,

consisting of mainly the Japanese dominated sector (Honda, Nissan and Toyota), is literally taking the Big Three to school. The motor of capitalism, including the auto industry, remains competition. Each business must have the capabilities to undercut their competitors if they are to survive. The best way to sell automobiles cheaper is to maintain the ability to produce cheaper vehicles. The bureaucracies present in the domestic industry are now hindering them in the production of their vehicles.

It was the advent of the Asian auto industries flexible production system, in particular the Toyota Production System (TPS) that rendered the successful past labor practices of the domestic auto industry and union obsolete. This flexible production system presumes that a competitive edge cannot be gained by treating workers like machines and that no one in the manufacturing process, with the exception of the assembly line worker, adds value to the product. Brad (Salary) agrees, "I think they really believe that the individuals who are the most important to the process which are the line individual and they use them more and us them more from the stand point of picking their brain than we have in relationship to The Big Three. They actually don't want you to just put the nuts and bolts on the car they want you to come up with a way to make the process more streamlined and more efficient and to that end I think they have been extremely successful to the point where they continuously continue to take market share away from the Big Three."

Since the 1980's these transplants have been increasing their production and market share while The Big Three continue to decline in both categories. Lisa (Union) thinks these transplants, "have some sort of vision that our Big Three aren't seeing."

Dave (Salary) cited an example of a missed opportunity to learn from the competition, "I was fortunate to be involved in; I call it an experiment, where Ford actually sent some of their top people to these other plants like Toyota and so forth and see how they did things. They wanted to replicate that in the Ford system. I don't believe that the people that were supporting that implementation really understood what it would take. It was like, kind of like, okay, here's what we want to do, let's go out and do it and, and we're going to see some big benefits right away but they didn't even understand what they looked at at Toyota, I don't think." Frank (Hourly) compares their production system to that of The Big Three, "I give them credit, if a cars not right the Japanese don't send it out there. If a cars not right here some foreman will come up and say, well ship it and let the dealer worry about it, and that's not the way to go."

There are other mitigating circumstances that provide cost advantages to the transplants such as limited legacy costs, relatively new facilities, and non-unionized employees. An example of union versus non-union worker costs becomes evident when comparing auto industry health care costs. Health care alone accounts for $930 of the price of a General Motors vehicle, $560 of a Ford vehicle but only $100 of a Toyota vehicle (Elliott & Szczesny, 2006). Frank (Union) also thinks the transplants currently enjoy a cost advantage because, "The Japanese don't have anybody retiring yet. You wait until they retire then they'll have the same problems we have."

The transplants have also resisted any thought of unionization while adding many non union blue collar jobs. These transplant auto companies are illustrating that American auto workers are capable of competing in a global environment while still

making excellent wages and benefits without belonging to a union. Connie (Salary) says that the reason unionization is so hard for the UAW is, "because the people who are at non union facilities don't see a need for it." She continues, "They were already being treated fairly, equitably and respectfully so I think that's part of it." She illustrated her point with an example from her brother who had been employed at a transplant parts facility, "They voted down unionization like ten times because they treated their people well and they saw that as interference and a waste of their money for something they didn't need."

Contracts

Historically the union in contract negotiations attempted to obtain immediate gratification, pay increases, benefits, and time off for its members rather than plan for the future of the industry (Womack, 2006). As the transplant competition conformed to restructuring in the global world, the domestic auto industry remained complacent and the union remained demanding during contract negotiations. Occasionally the companies would face a short work stoppage with the union but The Big Three and the UAW routinely renewed their labor contracts. The contracts were publicly heralded but in private the companies bemoaned the contracts as ruinously expensive and restrictive (Levin, 2006). Gary (Hourly) says, "The International union is the one that has to set the standards. They have to keep a fair pay for the average worker, they need to keep your health benefits for the working people. You know that, that's their job. Their job is the cost of living allowance and everything. That's their responsibility ok? So, for me that's my bottom line with them." Speaking of the labor contracts negotiated between the

companies and the UAW Connie (Salary) says, “I think that they’ve negotiated for wages and benefits that have just priced them out of the auto industry market. I think that is why there is a problem with imports and stuff. You can’t compete, you just can’t compete when you’re paying people so much money and you’re funding benefits that are so costly.” James (Union) looks at the past contract negotiations differently. He says, “I think the wages and the benefits they got is because the people that negotiate on the company side, maybe they had a conscious or feeling guilty because they were taking so much so they thought they would throw a little this way.” One of the most controversial contractual items that all parties wanted to discuss was what is known as GEN (Guaranteed Employment Numbers).

Guaranteed Employment Numbers

GEN is a great example that reinforces the perception of a demanding union and a contract publicly heralded but one that has proved expensive and restrictive to the company. GEN is a contractual agreement negotiated in 1984 that permits laid off workers to receive ninety-five percent of their pay for not working in the plant. Initially the agreement allowed for the individuals in GEN to work on an approved community service project or replace people working in the plant so the operators could attend training classes. A disagreement between the company and the union regarding abuses of the system resulted in no more community service and no more training replacements. The GEN people were relegated to sitting in a room reading, playing

cards, sleeping or anything else they wanted to do. Speaking about the program Hal (Hourly) says, “When they first put it in everything was going good, the industry was booming, they were making all kinds of money, it was, it was, a nice thing to have.” Lisa (Union) adds, “It’s a wonderful program for those that have been in it.”

While the program intent remains commendable it is still based on the past practice to take care of workers during cyclical industry down time. Historically the industry went into a slump at the holidays and summer and workers were laid off. The program was intended to address these short term layoffs. Due to competition plants are now closing and workers are being laid off long term. The inability to address this costly issue by both the union and company perplexes the work force. How can a company remain competitive and undercut their competitors by producing cheaper vehicles when they are paying people not to work? The workers realize the demands placed on the industry by the competition and are aware of the wastefulness of the program. Allison (Salary) says, “That’s the most ridiculous thing I ever heard of to pay people 95 percent of their pay to sit in the cafeteria, drink coffee, smoke cigarettes while there are people sweating like pigs, working like dogs out in the plant for the same amount of pay.” Even Hal (Hourly) who earlier said it was a good thing to have now refers to it as “ridiculous.” Allison (Salary) continues, “There are still people sitting in GEN banks in closed facilities getting paid (chuckles) because they won’t transfer.” The wastefulness of the GEN program even reached into other aspects of the implementation of a lean production system.

Training/Ability Rate Progression

While the ongoing dispute between the company and the union continued regarding the uses of GEN, training in the plants suffered. Karen (Union) blames management for misusing the GEN people to the point that the union stopped their participation in the program. GEN was initially to be used to substitute on a job so the operator could attend class but she feels management did not use it for that purpose. Instead of using GEN people to cover jobs for training purposes supervisors used them to let other people go home without pay and allow them to meet budgetary constraints. Karen (Union) says about management, "When they had GEN people come in for training they let people go home. They didn't let them do the training. Alls the company was thinking about is how they could save a buck by having those people in GEN getting paid if they came in they let somebody go home". Allison (Salary) backs up Karen's observation that it was budgetary. "If you went to a two hour training class I'd have to pay the back up worker a minimum of four hours to cover you and you know the budgets were very strict."

The entrenched bureaucratic management / union approach to the GEN issue contributed to the ineffectiveness of a lot of the training that was perceived as necessary for the workers to participate in the lean system. Allison (Salary) supports the previous mentioned notion of bureaucratic management and no accountability and responsibility by both parties, "we spent hundreds of thousand of dollars on MOA and on training and I think a good percentage of it was to check a box, either for the State of Ohio or for Ford Motor Company." Brad (Salary), "When you give the individual all the

tools and all the processes and all the abilities of having the training you have the right to expect them to do the job." This was not a reality in some cases.

Included in the MOA was what was referred to as Ability Rate Progression (ARP). This was a company/union agreement that paid workers extra for attending training classes and then implementing the training they had received on the job. Their pay increases were based on the number of jobs (versatility) they were able to perform in their area. This process was also abused by both parties. Allison (Salary) says, "I thought ARP was a farce. It didn't benefit the company because invariably people would do the training just to get the rate progression but either refuse to do the job or there wasn't a rotation going on. When asked how someone could move up the ARP either without attending classes, knowing additional jobs or refusing to do certain jobs she replied that her "suspicion was that some of the contract issues like ARP were used as a payoff for grievances from the companies stand point." Connie (Salary) thinks some of the abuses were the result of favoritism, "You know, I think that's the pull, you know, vote for me and I'll make sure you end up at the top of the ARP." She thinks other abuses were related to threats and intimidation from the union, "The supervisor on the floor does something and the union catches them at it, does something he shouldn't do and now he owes the union rep a favor. The favor to that union rep may be, hey my buddy here needs to move up the ARP." The individuals then move up the ARP without attending the required classes or proving they are qualified on other jobs.

James (Union) thinks, "the training classes were probably one of the better things going except for that management didn't take it serious. Even a lot of union

officials in high positions didn't take it serious because it would be a threat to their authority and their power." He blames both the union and company for the problems in training. He says, "Both of them are underhanded to stop the training. They would sabotage it if it meant that somebody was going to take away some of their authority or their authority wouldn't mean as much. They would sabotage it, do what ever it took to keep their, to keep their little fiefdom going." James (Union) says both parties would sabotage training, "because if everything was implemented like they say in the training classes and everything they would be just like another worker and they won't allow that. They have to be more than just another worker; they have to be in charge."

Allison (Salary) speaking on her perception of the ineffectiveness of training, "Initially we did it off shift so you're working out there ten, eleven, twelve hours and then you're supposed to go to a training class for an hour or two and absorb the material, impossible. Then we switched it to training during the shift. Well, you could never get a qualified back up worker to get you off the line." Dave (Salary) on the other hand thinks management had good intentions but was hindered by the union. He thinks the management objective was, "to train with a desired outcome in mind." He did not think that was the union's intention. Dave (Salary), "On the union's side it was get the people off the line, overtime in the class, or time away from their job and keep them in there. They even negotiated how many minutes of break they could have, how many people per trainer so you could get them off and the company paid for all that without looking at the desired outcome."

Training also suffered because of the nepotism and favoritism present in the facility. Some trainers were given the job strictly on who they were friends or relatives with regardless of their ability. Frank (Hourly) confirms this with an example, "When we was in PWS (Process Work Sheets) and they put this guy into something and he couldn't even read. He was dumb as a box of rocks." Dave (Salary) sums up training, "We did the best we could with what we had and the people that really suffered on that was the people in the classes. They were given the opportunity, corporate supplied the money, those people should have got the best training that was possible to deliver but when you're handicapped with trainers that aren't capable because of the agreement between union and upper management that so and so is going to do it then it limits the outcome."

Slugs

Speaking of an issue where globalization has affected the industry and they have not responded in a way to remain competitive are the people referred to in the industry as slugs. These are individuals who never come to work, refuse to do certain jobs and yet still remain on the payroll. The participants varied on what percentage of the work force they considered slugs. Most perceived five to ten percent of the work force to be what they considered slugs. Gary (Hourly) broke it down even further into what he called "the good, the bad and the ugly." He felt there was thirty percent good employees, thirty percent bad employees and forty percent what he considered the ugly. His definition of the bad employees was, "the people that come to work three days a week." He defined the ugly as, "The people that really don't care alright and

there is a large contingency in there. You've got people that just don't care about anything. They don't even care about themselves." Dave (Salary) says the slugs were "always the same people you know and they just keep taking their time off and coming back to work"

Connie (Salary) speaking in regards to the monetary cost alone of maintaining these workers, "The fact that they have to keep all the extra people on paying for their benefits whether or not they're coming to work." Not only is there a monetary cost but other aspects of production also suffer. When regular machine operators do not show up for work they must be replaced to keep the assembly line running. Brad (Salary)agrees, "You have different people filling in when they're not there because everything suffers, quality, productivity and you wonder is having a job at Ford an entitlement?" Gary (Hourly) agrees with Brad's assessment of slugs and their attitude of entitlement, "They're owed. They're owed and that's where the 40 percent is. There's a lot of people in there that feel that they're owed." When asked where an individual frame of reference comes from regarding the concept of entitlement Gary (Hourly) responded, "It's got to be the union guys, right. Ok, their mom and dads worked in there before; their grandmas and grandpas worked in there before ok? Irene (Union) agrees, "They learned from maybe a sibling of how to really work the system. They might have a parent who might have held an elected office someplace else at one time so somebody takes care of them".

Another way to work the system is by seeing a doctor and have that individual provide you with medical coverage. While the majority of medical leaves are legitimate

there are some parties that have found ways to abuse the system. Lisa (Union) speaking about bogus medical leaves replied, “Some of these doctors, I don’t know where these people find them. I think they pay them off to get all these medical slips. So many people have their doctor in their pocket and every time they want a day off they run to the doctor to get a slip.” Frank (Hourly) agrees and states that when a person exhausts his or her coverage from one doctor “you switch doctors. Then you go here, go there, get this doctor to say this, get this doctor to say that.” Brad (Salary) concurs, “Well, there is no doubt in my mind that that has something to do with it and the fact that you can’t question the validity of anything that a doctor would have put on an excuse of why the individual hasn’t been at work.”

All of the participants are aware of the competition and the idea of producing quality vehicles at a lower cost yet are confounded by the ability of these people to keep their jobs. Dave (Salary), “Sometimes you wonder how a person can keep a job working three days a week.” How can a person only work three days a week and still maintain his or her employment? Allison (Salary) believes the company is ultimately at fault, “The Company had a very poor policy on curbing absenteeism.” Brad (Salary) agrees with her assessment of the policies regarding absenteeism, “We don’t adamantly go after those individuals as much as we should.” Karen (Union) also blames the company, “They don’t want to deal with it. They give them GU (General Utility) jobs. They give them easy jobs. They take their jobs away. They give them days off. And that’s exactly what they want. Yes it is a human resource decision and what they do is they wheel and deal with the union, I should say certain union officials, and they overlook this person not coming

to work for three months." Allison (Salary) supports Karen (Union) when she complained that a supervisor would rather give a slug a day off rather than a good worker because "you give the slug the day off because he is a slug and you would rather not have him there."

In addition Brad (Salary) thinks vehicle production takes priority when addressing an issue such as absenteeism, "There is a direct reflection between in relationship to the order bank and what the needs of that particular facility at that given time. If you're in a situation where you have a vehicle that is not selling well and you got down weeks or down time or things of that nature you should be able to do a much better job of insuring that the thought process of discipline and fair play for all is much closer aligned to what you think it should be." On the other hand, "If you're in a situation where you got to have every vehicle that you need, all the time and you're on a ten to twelve hour days on a rotational basis … unfortunately the deal there is you gotta have to take a look and say well I would like to take a look and get that done today but it's not going to happen." Regardless of the various reason why absenteeism and the issue of slugs is not addressed properly is summed up by Ellen (Hourly), "I mean any other place you work if you didn't show up for work without excuses half the time you wouldn't be working there."

What happens to someone that is eventually fired? Karen (Union), "It's almost like you really got to mess up to be terminated and if you know somebody it's almost impossible to get terminated. If you're related to somebody up there in the union it's almost impossible." James (Union) agrees with Karen (Union) regarding those that are

eventually terminated. “Well, those are family members. They don’t get fired for organizing and for doing right things. They get fired for the wrong things like missing time, sabotage. They bring them back because that’s their cousin or their son or their daughter.” Ellen (Hourly) feels the union fights to bring them back “because, you know what, because they pay union dues. And because you pay union dues it’s, it’s just like people have to be represented.” Hal (Hourly) agrees, “As a union official it’s your responsibility to represent them no matter what because if you don’t then you can be taken up NLRB (National Labor Relations Review Board) and brought up on charges. But I blame that on the company for not firing them and then when they do get fired somewhat it’s the unions fault because they fight to get them back.” Connie (Salary) agrees about the company wheeling and dealing with the union to bring a terminated employee back to work, “Sometimes they do, it depends on what’s negotiated during that grievance.” Lisa (Union), I don’t understand, once they get fired from the company the union should not be allowed to bring them back. That should be it. You have been given this opportunity, this great job making great money for a blue collar worker and you’re the one that’s screwing it up.”

This issue of entitlement and some individuals feeling they are owed for working there also affects the morale of the rest of the work force. People become dissatisfied and resentful because they can not get a day off because of absenteeism. Brad (Salary) sums up the whole issue quite succinctly, “If you stop and think about it if you take those five percent of the people and address them in relationship to how the operation works to the point where they are either suspended from the facility or up to

termination there is a very good chance that you would have much better harmonious working relationships with the entire hourly work force because of the fact that those individuals who are out there working extremely hard on a day in and day out basis are the people that you really, really, really, need to have on your side and you don't get that if you allow the five percent or the slug that you talk about to be able to continue to operate and get paid, at the same rate by the way, is that individual who is busting their can."

Psychological

Contracts

The Big Three and the UAW are trying to create a partnership that is designed to improve their production, their quality, and overall worker morale while increasing the job satisfaction level of its employees and members. These corporate changes are fully supported by the union leadership and are intended to empower the work force by providing a new (leaner) means of running the business by reducing the demand for unskilled labor while requiring more numerate and literate workers capable of self-direction. While all lean systems techniques are designed to eliminate waste, they are also intended to develop direct action people to function autonomously, in both the operational processes as well as improving upon them.

At this particular automotive assembly plant there were initially two separate labor contracts. This arrangement resulted in one United Auto Workers' (UAW) local union but two separate Bargaining Units. Unit 1 built and continues to build one vehicle while operating under a traditional union contract. A traditional labor contract

identifies over thirty hourly classifications and strict lines of demarcation for skilled trades. Unit 2 constructed vehicles under what was referred to as a Modern Operating Agreement (MOA). An MOA is considered a type of lean production where the labor contract had only two hourly classifications and more lenient lines of demarcation for its skilled trades while focusing on team work and employee involvement. This particular facility was the company's first plant to operate under an MOA.

The MOA was intended to offer what Freeman and Rogers (1999) indicated are the employment opportunities that are more likely to produce worker job satisfaction. The MOA allowed workers to participative in matters that directly impacted their quality of work life. They worked with management to establish a more positive relation through increasing trust levels and a willingness to share power. They wanted the independence to deal with management as individuals regarding various duties, including off-line job opportunities, and control over work methods and pace. They welcomed this type of employee involvement program that allowed them to interact with their peers and were willing to work with management to make the firm more productive if it meant protecting the security of their job. This was supported by most of the participants. Allison (Salary) spoke about when a problem occurred on the MOA side of the plant and how she found it easier to solve, "You could go to the group leader for assistance in motivating the person to help. You didn't have to go through the supervisor you could go directly to the operator. You could go directly to the team leader." Karen (Union) liked it better than the traditional contract, "because you had more say in what was going on. There was less management. Engineering listened to

whatever changes that you thought would affect your job to the better. Most of the time they did and at least got your opinion if their idea was better they would discuss it with you."

Karen (Union) also thinks the MOA reduced problems when dealing with the issue of seniority, "Everything was done by seniority, everything. We had teams which we have now but if a job opening came within the team the highest seniority person had the right to bid, get that job." Lisa (Union) also liked the idea of the ARP, "The pay scale was there. The three tier pay scale so the more jobs you learned the more you got paid."

Gary (Hourly) states, "We were given more opportunities, more jobs to learn. The more jobs you learned the more pay you earned. Was it a hard process? I had more control over my job. I had more control if I need time to do something for my family."

Gary (Hourly) also liked the system because of the versatility involved. "I have the opportunity if I don't feel so good today George you're on my job next to me and you got say an easier job I can look to you and say hey George how about taking my job over for me today? My back hurts, ok, I can't bend over as much as I can, do you think you can help me out and do my job for me? Sure (Gary), no problem let's switch for today." Lisa (Union) concurs, "You had more flexibility on the line as far as learning different jobs. You were able to, if you wanted to and if people agreed, if you got bored on your job you could switch and rotate on the different jobs. I just liked the fact that you didn't have to stay on one job all the time because boredom sets in." Karen Union)

thought the MOA system "was fair." Frank (Hourly) also preferred the MOA "because they had their stuff together, you know. They did ergonomics you know, you get better pay, it's, its better work conditions."

Gary (Hourly) believes the MOA worked successfully and says, "We proved a point when we went, when we, when we did MOA. We had, we had proved a point in many different areas. And matter of fact when I was in the body shop we had proved that we didn't need a coordinator. (Coordinator was an MOA term that defined a supervisor role.) The coordinator came in the morning, took a head count, did what he needed to fill every job, team leader had the responsibility, the team leader did it, ok. Come Friday here comes the boss with the pay checks, took his head count and left again. We proved we didn't need those guys." Brad (Salary) agrees, "The shop had been, I would say run in a traditional basis for a long, long time and without calling it an MOA…what we really tried to do and the people that worked for me understood how working as a team or a group we could get things done that just well, it would be amazing that you would absolutely not see in a regular traditional situation."

Not everyone was enamored with the MOA though. Brad (Salary), "We had some very good people in the organization that tried to make everybody understand how we were going to operate the business but again if you have been exposed to the traditional system for twenty to twenty-five years then you become pretty much complacent in relationship of how you think the organization is going to run and again, people do not like change and I think that's one of the biggest drawbacks to the traditional system is that they have been indoctrinated into that system for so long that

they don't see the need for change." Dave (Salary) agrees and cites an example where an outside company came into the facility to evaluate their procedures in relationship to the Toyota Production System. He says this company was, "being paid by corporate to help share their culture. They came with us so we could pick up the things that what went right and try to apply them and it was almost like a battle." He felt that on both the union and company side, "some people feared them like they were the enemy or something. I mean, it was like we have been doing it this way for so long."

James (Union) preferred the traditional system over an MOA, "In my opinion the traditional, it's cut and dried, what you can and what you can't do. The Modern Operating Agreement, every day they change it to suit their needs not to the peoples needs." Connie (Salary) also preferred the traditional contract for the same reason, "It's more cut and dried, less gray area. There were relationships on the Modern Operating Agreement which didn't really allow it to function as it was designed to function, in my opinion. A lot of favoritisms between group leaders and the people that worked for them, I just didn't think that, it wasn't that easy to administer the contract on the Modern Operating Agreement side as it was on the Traditional side." Ellen (Hourly) also preferred the traditional arrangement "because for one thing under the team concept we were supposed to learn other jobs and I didn't have that capability and I say that because I could not. I tried learning jobs. I didn't do as well as other people did so I was stuck on the same job for six and a half years." She also thought the traditional system protected seniority rights better.

The consequences of having two different Bargaining Units and two sets of managers for the two vehicles resulted in quite a lot of territorial infighting between the union in both Units as well as between management. Allison (Salary) thinks part of the problem revolved around the perceived notion that, "the (Unit 1) people were so used to the traditional and to be honest with you when they brought in the MOA and started having training classes they labeled, they used traditional in a bad light. It was good versus evil black versus white so they labeled the traditional way as an archaic means of producing the vehicle and the MOA as the new wave of the future. And the MOA really didn't have anything to offer that the traditional didn't, it just gave you an avenue to accomplish things by virtue of it being in the contract." Brad (Salary) agrees, "I think it had something to do with the perception of the fact that early on the Modern Operating Agreement was also know as the team concept. And there were individuals in the structure who had, were absolutely opposed to the operating agreement and had because of the fact that the word team had become notorious in relationship associated with the MOA. I really believe that's one of the reasons that the case against them, the union and the use of the word team."

Ultimately, for any cooperative effort to last it must be demonstrated that the gains to cooperation are greater than the costs to all parties. The net gains in the new system to those involved must at least match those derivable from the more traditional relationships of the past. Obviously they were not. Brad (Salary) continues, "There were a number of us who were very, very instrumental in trying to make the thing work. There were other individuals who found that particular system as an inhibitor or I should

say they were afraid of the system because they felt that they might be relinquishing too much power to the folks that actually do the work." The resulting political infighting had a detrimental affect on the work force trying to participate in the change process within the facility. For example, initially if a training class was to take place one hourly instructor and one manager were to serve as instructors. The intent was that workers attending the class would see that the union and management were on the same page regarding the intent of the class. The bargaining structure of both Units succeeded in having the company agree to have one trainer from each Unit to serve as instructors if the class was a combination of traditional and MOA attendees. This action doubled the trainer costs immediately and reduced any potential cost savings of the program. Management stopped sending their representative as a result. The usual excuse was they could not be released from the production floor. Their lack of participation only confirmed to the workers another lack of commitment to the latest program.

While the majority of the workers interviewed appeared to prefer the MOA and the way it was run it was eventually abandoned. The initial Unit 2 vehicle ceased production in 2004 but another vehicle was built under the same MOA contract for one year. Unit 2 then ceased total production in 2005. Yet when the facility expanded and absorbed the work force of another plant the opportunity to operate under an MOA was disregarded by both the company and the union. The facility renewed production of one vehicle in January of 2006 under a traditional contract arrangement. Why would both parties pass up the opportunity to expand upon a lean production system that had proved effective and return to an antagonistic traditional contract arrangement? Brad

(Salary) thinks part of the problem was, “In any given situation there are situations where the companies are very worried about the perceptions that the union has in the relationship in the way that management runs the organization and I truly believe, that for what ever reason, the union itself seemed to be less than open armed with the Modern Operating Agreement. Although, there were numerous individuals, within the local structure who were absolutely adamant about furthering the MOA, and the way it operated the business and, unfortunately, those gentlemen weren’t successful.”

Workers

Assembly line work is hard and monotonous work. All of the participants spoke highly of the existing work force with the exception of the five to ten percent they classified as slugs. Who exactly makes up the work force? Allison (Salary) describes the work force as, “Just normal everyday people that were in there to make a living for their family. Most of them are hard working. Most of them did their jobs.” Irene (Union) describes the work force as, “these are parents, these are homeowners, these are church goers.” Allison (Salary) refers to them as everyday people that “made the decision for the sake of their family to not become a teacher, a nurse or whatever but go to work in the automotive plants for the sake of the income and the benefits so that they could do better for their family financially.” Lisa (Union) thinks, “they’re wonderful people. I think they are dedicated to their job, overall. I think they are very giving people to their community and the people around them. I would say ninety percent of the people are like that. I would say maybe ten to fifteen percent aren’t.” Hal (Hourly) agrees, “I think the hourly worker, when I left, ninety percent or better want to do a

good job. They want to be there to work." Frank (Hourly) also agrees, "The hourly work force, like I said with the, without the, you know if you discard the ones that don't want to work is a nice group. You know because they come in and work ten hours a day, they work five, six days a week, they work, they work." Ellen (Hourly) supports the view in regards to the hard work involved in building a car and says they are, "worked to the bone (laughing)."

Karen (Union) says this about the work force, "Over all I think are pretty decent. I think they care about what they're doing. I mean you got a few bad apples but I think overall most of them there, most of them are productive workers."

Irene (Union) compares the overall plant population to, "that of a small city, you have your mayor, you have your director and your police force, yada-yada, and then you've got your citizens that all live in their gingerbread houses, or no cookie-cutter houses." The development of a people's consciousness is directly related to the relationship between production and the material conditions of a society. This development of consciousness also appears to be true of those working in the domestic auto industry. Just like society as a whole the workers are motivated by their desire to maintain their relative position with critical reference groups (Katz, 1985), in this case the upper working middle class. Capitalism successfully expanded into the life of an autoworker when he or she came to the realization that they now had access to a more affluent and more secure way of life, the American Dream. They had secured a place in the upper working class that has successfully escaped from poverty and attained both industrial and political citizenship (Bottomore, 1966). This access to the upper working

class luxuries available to them has convinced auto workers that that all the material extras they are capable of obtaining are worth the stress and pressures of the assembly line system.

Capitalism assumes an individual is not all that rational and that his or her behavior, within limits, can be deliberately controlled (Perrow, 1986). In this case autoworkers have become objectified, that is, they are now separated from their creativity and identity. Employment in an automobile factory in a mass production environment is no exception to the process of commodification as workers are now separated from their creativity and identity and have literally become a cog in the machine. Individual qualities such as energy, skill, personality, and creativity have become objectified to the point they are just another asset to be sold on the market (Brookfield, 2002). Original thinking and decision making in the auto industry has never been a high priority and now there is even less opportunities for critical thinking. Any thoughts of an opportunity to participate in job decisions that would impact their jobs were dashed when the MOA was discontinued. Karen (Union) substantiates this when she talks about now working in a traditional environment, "They don't even listen to anything you say on this side. They don't ask you, they change the job, they don't get your opinion, nothing."

Grenier (1988, p.194) suggests that workers participate in the work process "much as slaves participated in slavery—as captives of an economic and social structure out of their control." This statement is unrealistic when comparing the economic and social structures of slavery to that of an auto worker. An auto worker has an option

available to him or her that a slave does not; he or she can quit their jobs and move on to another career. They choose not too because the cultural and historical powers at work in the auto industry have had the ability to influence an individual's view of not only themselves but also his or her perception of the world. In the past the UAW has been so successful that most auto workers reached an accommodation with capitalism (Ransom, 2001) and became content with their work and union situation as long as they maintained their upper working class standard of living. James (Union) agrees, "The people now especially because of economic times the way they are, the people are even afraid to say anything and in some ways I can't blame them, in some ways they're all sheep. But they're uh, being led to a slaughter, it's only a matter of time where they'll be thrown out in the street." Brookfield (2002) uses the term automaton conformity to describe this process of social manipulation that results in people striving to be exactly the same as he or she imagines the majority of the population. This notion of automaton conformity has affected freedom of thought, speech, and actions even in the work place. When this transformation occurs members begin to act as individuals and look out only for themselves.

The leadership of the union appears to be strong when its members are willing to follow their directives. The ability to maintain the high wages and benefits of the work force is dependent upon the political power of the union. There remains political strength in numbers. As the workers aspirations became generally bourgeois they began to judge their successes, failures, and fun according to middle class values (Magrath, 2000) and strayed from the union's intent to give workers a voice with

accompanying power in a society where the bulk of the economic and political power was currently being held by the men controlling the corporations. The typical autoworker no longer wants to be part of a bloc (union), nor is he or she prepared to delegate control over political and social decisions to a handful of leaders (Mead, 2004). This phenomenon has resulted in the UAW being no longer capable of guaranteeing a bloc labor vote for a particular political candidate or a national issue they have endorsed. For example, traditionally, the UAW leadership has almost invariably supported Democrats candidates for office yet only one-third of union members on the Worker Representation and Participation Survey (WRPS) now consider themselves Democrats (Freeman & Rogers, 1999). Irene (Union) agrees, "They've all become Republicans." Irene (Union) cites an example where union political policies were questioned by members. "I had people come and ask me for the form that they could sign so that … no percentage of their union dollars goes to any political anything, no political action, whatsoever. And you know I would ask them why and from all it was because they don't believe in what the UAW is doing."

The restrictive policies and favoritism of the leadership of the UAW continues to further disenfranchise the work force. Some rank and file members now consider their union association to be just as distasteful as their job situation (Kolchin & Hyclak, 1984). Some members even view the union as a necessary evil that exists mainly to protect incompetence and to keep jobs for deadweights (Milkman, 1997). Frank (Union) thinks this is a major factor in why the union negotiates with the company to keep the slugs already discussed on the payroll, "The UAW isn't going against them number one

because they might lose a member and that's, that's what?, $30 some a month they're losing so you figure if you got ten people that's $300." He continues, "You know the International should wake up and realize that everybody they're representing, they ain't worth it."

Parker and Gruelle (1999) attribute the current reduction in the total strength of the union organization to the deterioration or lack of competent leadership. UAW membership has plummeted from 1.5 million members in 1980 to less than 500,000 in 2007 (Will, 2007). Lower membership numbers will manifest itself in less political power. The union has now become weak without the input of its members while officials now seek to preserve their job and comfortable life style. James (Union) says, "The union has no clout, no power, they do what they're told." The existence of power in organizations and its resulting consequences operates at different levels and is capable of influencing views by controlling the development of employee knowledge. The union leadership mentality that espoused such attitudes as, "Members aren't interested in democracy: they're interested in results. We'll get good results if we the leaders just come up with the right plan" (Parker & Gruelle, 1999, p. 13). James comments: "As far as I'm concerned the auto industry is based on lies. The union is based on lies and they keep lying to each other, lying to the people and if you lie to them enough they start believing it." This existing communication problem is compounded further when the workers are not part of any union / company discussions. Alienation increases when the labor contracts negotiated do not necessarily include what the workers want but what the company and union see them

needing. Connie (Salary) agrees, "I think that some of the things they negotiate for and the people that they (deep breath) support and (sigh) fight for aren't deservant (sic) of that."

A majority of UAW members regard the union only as a service organization that aids them in attaining economic benefits (Magrath, 2000). They are not concerned with its day-to-day operations. While the uses and consequences of power within conditions of conflict is easily recognizable there are also other operational levels attributed to power. Lukes (1974) argues there is another form of power prevalent that he refers to as silent power. This silent power results in the inaction of the people to the point they become complicit in their role in the existing order. Hal (Hourly) agrees and talks about the lack of participation in local union affairs, "A lot of people, the majority of the people there just want to go in, do the best job they can and go home. They're not really into politics because all you would have to do is look at your union meetings. Out of, let's see, let's say 1,700 people you might be lucky, if I'm not mistaken you need sixty to have a quorum and you get about sixty. So that means out of the rest of the people either they don't care or in my opinion they just, you know, they got a job to do, they want to go in, they don't want to be hassled, they want to be able to build the best product they can and go home." Gary (Hourly) cites the lack of time and the bureaucracy in place that controls the information presented as the reasons he does not attend union meetings, "I'm away from my house on the average fifty to sixty hours a week if we're working a full ten hour day. I should take the responsibility and go to the union meeting just to hear what they have to say. If there is something going to be

coming up you know a different issue that we need to know about because you know you've seen it yourself all the little bulletins that come out yadda yadda yadda yadda yadda it's they're talking and you know they are just giving you what you want to hear. You're not getting a whole in depth situation."

Most union members do find that the majority of the time a union can and does valuable things for them. Kahneman, Knetsch, and Thaler, (1991) speak of the endowment effect in regards to why there is such little opposition to union policies. The endowment effect involves people placing a higher value on what they have than something else of identical value that they do not possess simply because they have the former. Assuming that a union is doing a reasonable job, if workers with neutral feelings regarding unions are placed in a union environment, they will be more favorably inclined to unions. For example, The Center for Automotive Research reported that between 1960 and 2002 auto workers consistently earned more than the average American factory worker (McCracken & Hawkins Jr. 2006). Ellen (Hourly) comments, "I have to respect the union because I've actually gained things from the union." Even if a worker is unhappy with the union as many are, he or she will probably stay in that job anyway as it will generally offer better pay and benefits than a non union job. Irene (Union) compares membership in the union as, "It's, double sided, it's a double edged sword. I've got a pension and I have health care benefits negotiated by people that sat down at the table and got those for me. They didn't get it without my blood, sweat and tears but they did get it for me. So, you know, you're kind of like how can I dump on them when they've done this for me? And then you say, I can dump on them because

they're making the retirees pay x number of dollars for their health care and they're getting ready to do it to them again. So I'm really ambivalent about a lot of it. It just goes against my sense of fairness."

Yet there remains an undercurrent that the workers are contributing to their own demise by this notion of automaton conformity that has affected their freedom of thought, speech, and actions. As the workers became part of the upper worker class they saw nothing wrong with exercising their freedom in how they spent their money with no regard to the impact it would have on the industry. Irene (Union) thinks "for a period of time the vast majority of them were very consciousness about their purchases. They were die hard Ford people, bought Ford's, encouraged their neighbors and relatives and who ever else to buy to buy Ford's. I can go through the parking lot now and you think, oh, I don't know, you look up and see that Lexus and you just want to hurt somebody." Ellen (Hourly) agrees and thinks the workers "live in the present and say ok I have a job. I make this kind of money and I can do with my money what I want to do with my money." Karen (Union) also sees this as a concern as "they're still buying foreign cars." Ellen, (Hourly) says we have a freedom of choice but "you're screwing yourself if you're going to go out and buy a Kia." She continues, "I was very disturbed the other night when the news came on about our national agreement being talked about right now and they went into a Ford parking lot and said compare our vehicles being $2000 more per vehicle than a Toyota and with that in a Ford parking lot they zeroed in a Toyota license, a Toyota car. Does it say something? Yeah it may. Yes, I'm very disappointed because I truly believe that if you're going to make a living by you

know building a Ford, building a product you want to buy that product to you know support your own."

The reality of globalization is causing some of the membership to lose faith in the capabilities of the union as solidarity is continually eroded through the enactment of two or even three tier wage scales, benefit cuts, and plant closings. Yet, the membership remains relatively quiescent to their predicament as they continue to accumulate more material things and enjoy the increased leisure time afforded them. Their only concern seems to be that they maintain their current income in dollars and benefits. Despite globalization and the decline of the domestic auto industry many autoworkers still cling to the past successes of the company and union and hope that the industry will be revitalized. James (Union) agrees that some workers "are not really facing reality. They are lying to themselves because there is no such thing as a job for life in this country and in this industry." Dave (Salary) concurs, "I don't know, after this last year when Ford closed something like twelve plants I think maybe it really sunk in with some people" but "I don't think it sunk into a lot of people." He thinks "something more drastic will have to happen before a lot of people would kind of wake up and say hey." Hal (Hourly) believes, "The younger work force, the fifteen years and stuff, they know they need a job. They realize the consequences of this place closing."

Hegemony

As a process of adult learning, even in the work place, one must analyze the concept of hegemony. Hegemony emphasizes how the logic of capitalism and

commodification permeate all aspects of everyday life, culture, and education. Hegemony describes the way that people learn to accept as natural in his or her own best interest an unjust social order (Gramsci, 1995). Hegemony is powerful yet adaptable, able to reconfigure itself, skillfully incorporate resistance and give just enough away to its opponents while remaining more or less intact (Brookfield, 2001). It is this sense of false consciousness and acceptance of commodification that prevents people from perceiving their actual situations while assisting in perpetuating repression in both society and the work place. False consciousness as defined by Brookfield (2001) is the system of artificial beliefs that justify practices and structures that keep people unknowingly in servitude. The irony of hegemony is as adults take the initiative to learn they act upon the beliefs and assumptions that are actually holding them back.

This shared meaning in the established system results in the development of customs within the culture and subculture that are continually perpetuated. D'Andrade (1992) writes that culture is something behaviorally and cognitively shared by an identifiable group of people and that it has the potential to be passed to new members while existing with some permanence through time. As a worker's knowledge is developed through perpetuation of the dominant ideology the continued existence of the system can then be maintained with little or no opposition from the workers. While Brookfield (2001) contends that this dominant ideology has convinced people that the existing social arrangements are naturally ordained and work for the good of all is dispelled in this situation. The bureaucracy and alienation sections of this research have indicated that the participants recognize some major flaws exist in the system such as a

resistance to change, favoritism and nepotism yet they take little or no action to provide a solution.

For each work setting in the factory, be it new training programs, contractual issues, line speed increases or favoritism, to name a few, there is prior cultural knowledge held by each individual regarding not only the action but the expected results versus the actual results. Hal (Hourly) speaks about why even upper management can not make changes that everyone professes would help the plant and the industry. "It's like if you're the plant manager, if you go in there and start changing stuff" the response from the entrenched bureaucracy is, "I've done this, we've been doing this, this way for twenty or thirty years now you're going to come in and change it." Dave (Salary) also sees an attitude of "this is the way we've done it for so long" that any changes are resisted.

The psychology associated with hegemony in this case supports the views already related by the participants in regards to bureaucracy, alienation and economics. If people recognize the inequalities of the present system why is there so little action on their part to remedy the situation? Hal (Hourly) believes, "That people are afraid to rock the boat. They're afraid to see what is going to happen." Irene (Union) agrees, "In many respects that means you don't buck the system, you don't question a lot of things you don't rock the boat." Gary (Hourly) cites an example of what happens if you do, "rock the boat." "I've been ridiculed, I've been cornered, I've had people come to me and say look you know back off suck ass and it's like you know I'm just doing my job." Allison (Salary) speaks about dealing with the union with a particular problem in regards

to bucking the system, “You turn your head and ignore this because you want this done. You bargain this away because you don’t want to deal with the hassle.” That’s the way it has always been done.

Nepotism/Favoritism

Karen (Union) thinks the nepotism and favoritism associated with the company and the union is so entrenched that it is the norm, “It’s almost expected from the old people, from the people that are in the plant, the one’s that have been around awhile, it’s almost expected of them.” Karen (Union) speaking in regards to union official passing out perquisites such as trips and time off the assembly line to their families and friends and those that support them, “Well, they do it, everybody’s done it. They’re not going to be any different than that last person.” Hal (Hourly) addressing the issue of nepotism and favoritism when it came to the hiring of new people who are mostly related to someone already working there, “It’s, somewhat the relative thing but I think it’s the way it’s always been.”

While it may not be worth the time, effort, or potential harassment to run for a union office there remains a willingness to maintain ties with those elected if an individual may benefit from their association. This may explain why perceived corrupt and bureaucratic officials are repeatedly elected because they talk tough against the employer while maintaining the ability to disperse perquisites such as trips and time off the assembly line to those supporting them. Frank (Hourly) responds to this conundrum with, “Who else is running? “You take the less of the two evils.” Lisa (Union) agrees and says, “That’s the way it’s always been done and as a member you feel like there is

nothing that you can do." Irene (Union) sums up the impact of these artificial believes on the workers as, "I think sometimes you just lose your whole self, your integrity, you become the person that you swore you never would be."

Education Benefits

Faced with an uncertain future and recognizing the inequalities of an unjust social order perpetuated in the employment system one would think that the workers would at least try and prepare for a future without the auto industry. Connie (Salary) says that with predicted future layoffs and plant closings the workers are "going to have to do something different. I just don't think there'll be blue collar jobs available for all the people who are in there. I think they'll have to be trained in something else." Irene (Union) agrees and says to the workers, "Look at the situation, educate people, educate yourself." While there are some workers who use their educational benefits as a safety net for a future that is not guaranteed, most don't. James (Union) noted a statistic that I was unaware of when he revealed that "less than two percent use our educational benefits." Two of the salary participants had college degrees but no one else. Irene (Union) did use the program "to a degree. I took some classes at Lorain Community, got almost an Associates Degree but I didn't finish." Karen (Union) "took real estate" while Ellen (Hourly) took "took a financial class one time. That's all I took." James (Union) used the program extensively for personal improvement courses.

When asked why they would not take advantage of the educational benefits provided for in the UAW contract there was a multitude of reasons provided, "I think the educational thing is nice but for the hours we work I think it's very demanding to be

able to take the classes. I know I wouldn't be able to do it you know. I work ten hours and then go to a class for four and a half. And the way the scheduling you almost have to go to the classes and the line to work and that. That's why, that's one of the main reasons I never really took it." Frank (Hourly) says the same thing, "When I get done with there I was through working, period. That's it." Lisa (Union) cites as reasons for not furthering her education as, "my age, my family. When I started at Ford my son was six years old. I started later in life." James (Union), the individual who uses the educational benefits quite a lot thinks differently as to why others do not use them, "My own opinion is the reason why is because they're lazy. Another reason why I think is because they think there's always going to be two cars in their garage and two chickens in their pot even though times get bad they adjust, times get worse they adjust, uh. They're credit card happy."

Future

Irene (Union) and Gary (Hourly) both used ships as example to illustrate their perspective of the future of the domestic auto industry. Irene says, "Well you get the feeling, and it's been growing in the last couple of years, that we are on the Titanic and the iceberg is clearly visible." Gary (Hourly) says, "Somebody has to step in there though sooner or later I mean because the ship is sinking." James (Union) thinks "the auto industry in America is finished." While all do not agree that the situation is totally lost they do perceive the situation in the domestic auto industry as scary. Connie (Salary) thinks The Big Three "are in deep trouble." Both Dave (Salary) and Connie (Salary) think there will be a major reorganization in the industry. Connie (Salary)

believes that probably another major, one of the major three's will go under. I think they're to far out of whack as far as being able to sustain." Dave (Salary) also does not, "see Ford Motor, Chrysler, or General Motors being anywhere near the size what they are now. Hal (Hourly) sees the plant closing and layoffs as an excuse, "I don't think they want an industry in this country. Yes, oust it all. I think when it comes down to it you'll have maybe only a few plants in this country, everything else would be either outsourced or other countries, Mexico." Lisa (Union) holds out hope for the industry if the companies can communicate to, "the USA, the common consumer of what you want. Let's start building cars thinking about what the common consumer wants." Irene (Union) agrees and says, "Well, a good product is built not only from the technical standpoint of good design and all of that but it is also built on the backs of consciences workers. The workers need to be involved in the whole production process."

Freeman and Rogers (1999) indicate that there are certain employment opportunities that are more likely to produce worker job satisfaction. Workers would like a participative voice in matters that will directly impact their quality of work life. In working with management, they would like to establish a more positive relation through increasing trust levels and a willingness to share power. They welcome employee involvement programs that allow them to interact with their peers and are willing to work with management to make the firm more productive if it means protecting the security of their job. While the opportunities presented by Freeman and Rogers (1999) have been half-heartedly attempted in the past the participants still see most of the problem of the bleak outlook for the industry as the result of ineffective past change

programs, be they associated with absenteeism, Employee Involvement or any of the other initiatives that were never implemented as they were intended. It appears that the union and company bureaucracy continue to interfere with the intent of the latest programs. Karen (Union) says about the company, "I just, I don't see them following through on anything. I think they come up with all these ideas like I said and they don't follow through on them."

Lisa (Union) says if she had the opportunity to restructure the industry she, "would go to upper management and I would say get your stupid programs out of here because you change them every year and it's a pain in the rear. Find a program that works let's get it going, let's listen to the people out there." Dave (Salary) agrees and thinks the company must, "open themselves up completely with the union since the union is a part of the company. The union's survival would have to be geared towards the company survival." Karen (Union) says the company must be the ones to instigate the changes because, "the union is not on the same page" but if they do as Dave (Salary) says the UAW will also benefit. "I think the things that they implement up North and I'm talking about the company now, I'm not talking about the union, because I don't think the union is even thinking that way. I think if the company comes up with anything good to keep what they have and even more and get more UAW members and more factories open and that they have to implement things and follow through with it and make sure it's happening down below." For all parties to prove successful the union and company must not only agree on a particular change program but they must allow the program to be implemented as it was intended. Karen (Union) sees this as key.

"They've got to say this is the way it's going to be done or you're not going to have a job. Plain and simple this is the way it's got to be done."

There was a myriad of other thoughts that came from the participants regarding the security of a future in the domestic auto industry. This would include producing vehicles at a lower cost by getting rid of the antiquated attitudes of management, union and slugs. Karen (Union) thinks "they need to clean house." James (Union) says, "Number one, they should get rid of all the supervisors that have been there forever and ever that think they're back in the 1950's." Frank (Hourly) agrees, "Get rid of all these old foreman's with the old ways. You're talking about new ways but you send the same old foreman's in there to teach you the new ways that they don't know about." The same mentality regarding getting rid of management was also present regarding responses about the union.

Worker attitude towards the union depends upon personal attributes such as age, sex, ethnicity, income, working conditions, and experience (Freeman & Rogers, 1999). The work force no longer maintains the same attitudes and convictions towards union solidarity as they had in the past. Karen (Union) thinks the workers have lost so much faith in the union that "they don't even want to call them anymore. I mean the faith in the union has really gone. Locally and Internationally it's really gone. I really believe that."

Lisa (Union) speaking about changing the union would start "Internationally and then work my way my people down to locally." Frank (Hourly) agrees but sees a major problem because "if you do that you would have to wipe out the entire local union and

start over from scratch." Frank (Hourly) continues, "Get rid of all the people that you appointed jobs that don't know their job."

While workers would prefer the option to deal with management as a group for benefits, medical, and safety issues through their union the responses supported the research of Goldfield (1987) where if it came down to a choice for workers between labor management committees, unions, or other employee organizations that would collectively bargain with management only twenty-five percent would want a union. Karen (Union) confirms this train of thought with her response, "If it wasn't for the wages and the days off that that they worked so hard to get I really think if they voted for union right now they'd be in trouble." James (Union) agrees, "The union, now this is my opinion, the union no longer serves its function. The union shouldn't even be there anymore. The union has become the workers enemy. I hate to say that but that's the way it is." Workers would prefer the independence to deal with management as individuals regarding various duties, including off-line job opportunities, and control over work methods and pace instead of the union. Gary (Hourly) says, "Confidentially, on the record, ok, me myself personally, I trust the company. Well, the company gave me the job."

The people continue to blame both the company and the union for the waste involved in maintaining a welfare type system for workers that abuse medical and the attendance policies. James (Union), "I really hate the auto industry and I hate the union even worse. As far as I'm concerned death would be too good for them all." That is quite an extreme attitude for someone still employed in the industry yet for those that

feel their futures are hinging upon a small group that is not stereotypical of the entire work force appears justifiable. James (Union) continues regarding the industry perpetuating the perception of over paid auto workers, "It's the ones that aren't, the lazy one's that never come to work that the general public judges the auto workers by and it's not totally true. The first time one auto worker makes a mistake or is in the news we're all that way." All of the participants think that in order for any positive changes to occur the nepotism and favoritism must be eliminated and the union and company must begin to cater to the ninety percent of the workers who do a good job and not vice versa.

Brad (Salary) agrees about the importance of addressing the issue of people that do not come to work and its repercussions throughout the system, "You have different people filling in when they're not there because everything suffers, quality, productivity and you wonder is having a job at Ford an entitlement?" Gary (Hourly) agrees with Brad's assessment of entitlement, "They're owed. There's a lot of people in there that feel that they're owed." When asked where an individual frame of reference comes from regarding the concept of entitlement Gary (Hourly) responded, "It's got to be the union guys, right. Ok, their mom and dads worked in there before, their grandmas and grandpas worked in there before ok? Irene (Union) agrees, "They learned from maybe a sibling of how to really work the system. They might have a parent who might have held an elected office someplace else at one time so somebody takes care of them".

Due to the nepotism and favoritism already mentioned many that are terminated are usually given their jobs back after negotiations between the company

and union. The participants agreed this "buddy system" must cease. Regardless of who is related to who the consensus of opinion was, Frank (Hourly), "Get rid of all the people that don't want to work." Lisa (Hourly) agrees, "You got to come to work. We're not putting up with people that are getting fired and rehired and getting fired and rehired. I mean we're not playing games anymore." Hal (Hourly), "People have to start working." When terminated, "You're not getting your job back no matter how hard the union fights, you're done", (Lisa, Hourly). Karen (Union) agrees this is a must but, "They can get rid of all those people and they don't and I don't know why they don't."

Karen (Union) still thinks the future of the domestic auto industry "looks pretty bleak." Dave (Salary) sees another result of the turmoil in the domestic auto industry is that people are and will continue to lose their "sense of security." This sense of security is the social contract historically negotiated in the auto industry that implied a mutual long-term commitment between the company and employee. In this case the term social contract implies an agreement between the auto companies and the union regarding the wages, benefits and future employment of the work force. Allison (Salary) agrees, "They made a commitment to me that I would have a pension and medical benefits and after thirty years I expect them to honor that commitment." Dave (Salary) while worried about the loss of the social contract thinks there are larger problems. "Right now people, some people, not all, are worried about their retirement, when the company may not even be here."

Allison (Salary) speaking in regards to future employment within the domestic auto industry, "I would never advise anyone to go into the automotive industry. Not,

well specifically because there is no future in it now. And you're never certain of your job but it's not worth the price that you pay." James (Union) thinks the past social contract will in no way resemble the one the industry workers have been acquainted with. He feels that any new hires in the industry will be "all temporary workers and there'll be very, very few full time workers and the few that are left they'll turn the temporary workers against them because the disparity in rate of pay." Karen (Union) continues, "The new people that come in are never going to see what we enjoyed. I think anybody with five years or less is not going to see what we've enjoyed and had and retirement. I think they're going to have to invest in their own retirement. I don't think they'll ever make the money we're making. I don't think they'll ever see the benefits we're, we have."

Summary

This research consisted of the narratives of twelve individuals employed in the domestic auto industry. The twelve were divided into three categories, salary, union, and line workers with four people from each category participating. The participants varied in race, gender, age, job descriptions, and seniority. All but the salary individuals were unionized workers represented by the UAW at the same Mid-Western domestic automobile assembly plant. All of the participants recognized a culture change in the industry would be necessary for it to survive if they were to maintain either their jobs or their retirements. Through the ethnographic interviews and my emic approach to this research a greater understanding of the trials and tribulation of those working in the domestic auto industry was acquired.

Granted, building cars is hard monotonous work but the employees feel they earn their money. There was a pervading common feeling of thankfulness to both the company and the union as each individual was extremely grateful for the living they had been provided by being employed in the domestic auto industry. In addition there arose a few commonalities present among all of the participants; the common psychological and economic challenges we faced in the troubled domestic auto industry, the common means we used to survive the bureaucratic challenges one faces in the industry, and the sense of alienation that permeates the industry. In addition to that positive sense of gratitude there is an overriding negative combination of desperate hope, despair, and revulsion that the individuals portrayed as they talked about the past and their struggle with the future. All of the participants had opinions regarding what went wrong within the industry and what was needed to reinvigorate the auto industry again. It also became clear that in the view of the participant's that the inherent bureaucracy present in the existing culture and subcultures will preclude any possible positive changes in the industry.

Ethnography was employed in this research because it is considered the process of discovering and describing a culture (McCurdy, Spradley & Shandy, 2005). McCurdy, Spradley and Shandy, (2005) differentiate cultural knowledge from personal knowledge by the following key attributes: First, culture is a learned behavior. Group members pass on culture to those around them who act according to the knowledge they have learned. Secondly, culture is shared. It is social knowledge not unique to one individual. The study of cultures indicates how groups are organized and why one group can be

distinguished from another. Thirdly, culture generates behavior. Culture defines a range of behavioral possibilities from which an individual may choose but the choices may vary and be limited according to circumstances. The fourth attribute of culture is that people use culture to interpret experience. In other words, depending upon the individual social setting one will use their learned cultural knowledge to identify what is going on so they will in turn recognize the specific behavior expected. Subculture, on the other hand, as defined by McCurdy, Spradley and Shandy (2005) is a term used to refer to a whole way of life culture found within a larger society. The participants recognized that a total change in the industry culture was being impeded by the existing subcultures.

Critical theory was also employed in this research because it encourages the questioning of ends (e.g. growth, profitability, productivity) as well as the preferred means, such as dependence upon expert rule and bureaucratic control, the contrivance of charismatic corporate leadership, gendered and deskilled work, marketing of lifestyles, etc. (Alvesson and Willmott, 1996. p. 17). By employing the two methods of gathering data my derived themes of; Bureaucracy, Alienation, Economics, and Psychological were developed and consisted of the commonalities regarding the impact the past and present business and labor practices have had on the domestic automobile industry as perceived from three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers.

The past business and union practices have created what critical theory views as an ideology of broadly accepted sets of values, beliefs, myths, explanations, and

justifications, that appear self-evidently true, empirically accurate, personally relevant, and morally desirable to a majority of the populace, but that actually work to maintain an unjust social and political order (Brookfield, 2001). Critical theory perceives this ideology as inherently duplicitous. This system of artificial beliefs that justify practices and structures that keep people unknowingly in servitude is defined as false consciousness (Brookfield, 2001). Understanding and challenging the dominant ideology, be it in society or the domestic auto industry, is a major premise of critical theory. Habermas's (1972) first human interest for which knowledge is developed is in regards to technical knowledge being developed in order to control one's material environment by organizing and maintaining an economic and political system. Even in the work place, one must analyze the concept of hegemony. Hegemony describes the way that people learn to accept as natural in his or her own best interest an unjust social order (Gramsci, 1995). Hegemony is powerful yet adaptable, able to reconfigure itself, skillfully incorporate resistance and give just enough away to its opponents while remaining more or less intact (Brookfield, 2001). The irony of hegemony is as adults take the initiative to learn they act upon the beliefs and assumptions that are actually holding them back.

How is it possible that the majority of workers can accept as natural this unfair ideology? Althusser (1971) indicates there are two types of socialization agencies that ensure the predominance of the ruling ideology. The first, repressive state apparatus includes the legal system, the police and armed forces that ensure that the state has some control over these aspects of an individual's life. This would include the

corporations and union as a repressive force. The second, ideological state apparatus includes the church, mass media, community, and the education system. Education as an ideological state apparatus works to ensure the perpetuation of the dominant ideology not so much by teaching values that support the ideology but by immersing learners in ideologically determined practices.

As the work force gained a penchant for mass consumer commodities they knowingly or unknowingly gave up aspects of control in their every day lives. This desire to maintain a standard of living equal to or above their peers has produced a work force not willing to object to the status quo. Hegemony emphasizes how the logic of capitalism and commodification permeate all aspects of everyday life, culture, and education. It is this false consciousness and acceptance of commodification that prevents people from perceiving their actual situations while assisting in perpetuating repression in society and the work place. Employment in an automobile factory in a mass production environment is no exception to the process of commodification as workers are now separated from their creativity and identity and have literally become a cog in the machine. As false consciousness and commodification increase so to does alienation. People become alienated politically, for example, when the existing systems, be they political or economic have the capability of limiting individual involvement. This becomes a major concern when organizations have the ability to silence dissenting voices. With the UAW as a willing partner working with the companies there is no longer any opportunity in the process for dissention. The perpetuation of this process results in the development of cynicism not only in politics but in the system itself. Like

Karen (Union) said regarding whatever program the company and union develop for the work force in the future, “I think it’s going to work because there are no jobs out there. They’re not going to like it but they are going to do it.”

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

Over thirty years experience in the domestic auto industry and two prior research projects on other facets of the industry piqued my interest in conducting this ethnographic research. I interviewed a total of twelve individuals, four salary, four hourly workers and four union representatives regarding their beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, values, and meanings associated with their employment in the domestic auto industry. The individuals were asked open ended questions that addressed my research questions: 1) What is the perception of management and union representatives within the auto industry regarding globalization serving as a catalyst to implement new human resource strategies? 2) What is the perception of the hourly work force regarding their role in the corporate / union culture that has developed in the domestic auto industry? 3) What is the perception of the hourly work force regarding the implementation of industry changes that could impact their livelihood and lifestyle? and 4) What is the perception of management, union and hourly work force

regarding the implementation of new personnel development strategies (for example, learning and motivation, etc.) designed to insure the survival of the domestic auto industry in a global environment? Several recurring themes began to emerge as the interviews and my field notes were completed and transcribed.

The major source of data was compiled by employing an ethnographic approach to the research. The research expanded upon the definition of ethnography as a study of culture (Hoey, 2005) to include "an ongoing attempt to place specific encounters, events, and understandings into a more meaningful context" (Tedlock, 2000, p. 455). An assumption of ethnographic research is that every human group eventually evolves a culture of certain values, practices, relationships, and identifications that guides its member's view of the world and the way that they structure their experiences. For each work setting in the factory, be it new training programs, contractual issues, line speed increases or favoritism, to name a few, there is prior cultural knowledge held by each individual regarding not only the action but the expected results versus the actual results. This can also include unspoken understandings of particular events. The auto industry has its own particular culture but there also exists subcultures within the union, management and the workers.

Critics of critical ethnographic research argue that the subsequent research does not have the capabilities to find a final answer. Another concern for ethnographers in this type research is having the ability to separate the participant's personal knowledge and opinions from their cultural knowledge. McCurdy, Spradley and Shandy, (2005) differentiate cultural knowledge from personal knowledge by the following key

attributes: First, culture is a learned behavior. Group members pass on culture to those around them who act according to the knowledge they have learned. Secondly, culture is shared. It is social knowledge not unique to one individual. The study of cultures indicates how groups are organized and why one group can be distinguished from another. Thirdly, culture generates behavior. Culture defines a range of behavioral possibilities from which an individual may choose but the choices may vary and be limited according to circumstances. The fourth attribute of culture is that people use culture to interpret experience. In other words, depending upon the individual social setting one will use their learned cultural knowledge to identify what is going on so they will in turn recognize the specific behavior expected. In addition to enhancing ones understanding of the overall culture of the auto industry the ethnographic narratives provided a further glimpse into three subcultures existing in the industry. Subculture, as defined by McCurdy, Spradley and Shandy (2005) is a term used to refer to a whole way of life culture found within a larger society. The ethnographic experiences of those interviewed are presented from three different perspectives, management, union, and workers, and provides various perceptions and meanings.

A study of a culture and / or subculture, such as this research, requires a certain level of identification with the members of the group. It is for this reason I also approached the research from an emic perspective. Emic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analysis of meaningful and appropriate responses to the conceptual schemes and categories expressed by those studied (Lett, 2006). An emic perspective essentially refers to the way that members of a given culture envision their world from

an insider's viewpoint. I included My Story for essentially three different reasons. First, by critically reflecting on My Story I was provided an additional opportunity to understand how I view the world and why I think the way I do. I had been immersed in the same culture as those being studied for over thirty years so the views, perceptions, and understandings of what is real and meaningful to those interviewed was recognizable to me from an insider's perspective. Secondly, the intent of sharing My Story was to relate my experiences so that others could possibly relate to my journey through thirty years of employment in the domestic auto industry. Third, hopefully My Story will inspire others to take the opportunity to reflect upon their own personal stories. Their stories, like mine, could assist others in discovering who they are as individuals as they reflect upon their own pasts. In order to comprehend who these individuals are a researcher must take into account each group's culture.

When the transcriptions were analyzed certain themes began to emerge and were grouped together and coded. I employed the broad situational coding techniques espoused by Bogdan and Biklen (2003) that place the data obtained into categories that not only define the setting and particular topics but which also define the participants relationship to the culture and subcultures. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) define situation codes as: "Under this type of code your aim is to place the units of data that tell you how the subjects define the setting or particular topic. You are interested in their world view and how they see themselves in relation to the setting of your topic" (pg. 162). My derived themes of; Bureaucracy, Alienation, Economics, and Psychological consisted of the commonalities regarding the impact the past and present business and labor

practices have had on the domestic automobile industry as perceived from three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers.

The purpose of this research was to examine the impact the past and present business and labor practices have had on the domestic automobile industry from the perspective of three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers. The four themes not only addressed the research questions but also addressed my problem statement of the research. The intent of my problem statement was to address the issue of the culture of the auto industry and union that while providing an upper working class lifestyle for its workers has in actuality created a more legalistic corporate and union bureaucratic system that now excludes the average worker from participating in the decisions that ultimately affects him or her. It was discovered that the individual participants faced quite a conundrum regarding their employment in the domestic auto industry.

In addressing all of the research questions I followed a critical theory perspective in an attempt to give voice to the participants through their thick descriptions as they expressed their various viewpoints. The stories shared by the participants included ways in which they view not only the issues of power and justice but also the economy, class, ideologies, discourses, education, and social institutions and how these cultural dynamics interact to construct their social system (Kincheloe & MacLaren, 2000). This research presented me the opportunity to observe issues the participants faced on a daily basis and the techniques they employed in order to maintain their status quo. Critical theory also has the capability to question how the power relations of one group

advance over another, the nature of truth, and the construction of knowledge (Merriam, 2002). The participants shared stories and provided insight into their experiences as to the impact globalization and competition is having on both the industry and the institution of new work rules designed to govern the work force. In addition as the individuals related their stories my intent was to focus on; whose interests are being served by the present arrangement? Who has the power and how did they obtain it? What structures reinforce the distribution of power? What are the ultimate outcomes of the structure? Who has access to the existing structure? Who has the power to make any changes? And, from where do the worker's frames of reference emerge (Merriam, 2002)?

The participants provided a tremendous amount of data in regards to research question one; what is the perception of management and union representatives within the auto industry regarding globalization serving as a catalyst to implement new human resource strategies?, question three; what is the perception of the hourly work force regarding the implementation of industry changes that could impact their livelihood and lifestyle? and question four; what is the perception of management, union and hourly work force regarding the implementation of new personnel development strategies (for example, learning and motivation, etc.) designed to insure the survival of the domestic auto industry in a global environment?

The data and / or trends compiled from the ethnographic and emic approaches to this research has allowed for a reliable estimate of what the foreseeable future of the domestic automobile industry holds. In addition, employing critical theory in this

research enhances any projections of future implications as to how the domestic auto industry will function in regards to the false consciousness, alienation, commodification and emancipation that permeates the three subcultures

studied. To a person the participants all agreed that the bureaucracy associated with both the union and the company was hindering any progress towards successfully implementing the latest change program revolving around the idea of lean production. A lean production type system is designed to eliminate waste while still producing a higher quality product. Lean production assumes that the assembly line worker can perform most job functions better than specialists. In this sense the intent is to develop the work force as direct action people that have the ability and wherewithal to function autonomously, in not only the operational processes but also to provide an avenue for input for improving upon them. In order to be successful, this lean production culture invests full faith and confidence in people doing direct work. It stimulates the workers to develop their capabilities to the fullest while making maximum use of their individual talents (Nakane & Hall, 2002). While Parker and Slaughter (1988) indicate a management and structure capable of delivering this kind of work force will be required to successfully implement these changes the participants do not think either management or union is competent enough to successfully implement the plan.

All of the participants recognized that global competition is not only affecting the industry but also their future livelihood as well as that of their families. To a person they all agreed that the industry must change if it is to survive. They all cited examples of past programs that were instituted but never implemented they way they were

intended. Connie (Salary) agrees, “It’s just the flavor of the month, I’m sure. Everything is like it’s going to be the saving grace this month and in six months somebody else will move in and give it a whirl. I just think the system is just so broken that there is nothing they can do.” The programs may change but to Karen (Hourly) the bottom line is, “I don’t see anything different. The same supervision, the same fools are running the show.” James (Union) comments, “Nothing changes, the same supervisors that drove us into the hole ten years ago, twenty years ago in the 80’s when we were doing so bad are the same supervisors now. They either moved them up or they moved them to another area.”

Managers, comfortable within their sphere of influence, have little use for any program that could possibly have an adverse impact their jobs over the long term. The only measurement that traditionally meant anything to managers was the number of completed jobs that came off the end of the assembly line. This inability to follow through on corporate edicts led management to conclude that they were ultimately still responsible for production by the numbers regardless of the latest program. The inability to successfully implement the many past attempts to make production or human resource changes at the plant level have illustrated to the union and the workers that they could just wait out the latest change until the plan fizzled and the next plan was unveiled. A manager’s ultimate goal remains get the production units out of their area and into another production area regardless of any quality issues, chimney thinking at its best (or worse). The underlying attitude of individual managers became one of meeting daily production quotas while functioning in a survival mode.

The only constant present in the past programs was cutting costs with little emphasis put on human development. This lack of emphasis on human development also manifested itself in the salary ranks. A major obstacle to success in corporate management occurs when salary job descriptions do not reflect their new responsibilities, and managers are not rewarded or recognized for their efforts (Caffaralla, 1994). Katzenbach, (1996) indicates that some members of management are willing to try the latest change attempts but give up when they realize that no one will follow through on their efforts. Brad (Salary) comments, "We had some very good people in the organization that tried to make everybody understand how we were going to operate the business but again if you have been exposed to the traditional system for 20 to 25 years then you become pretty much complacent in relationship of how you think the organization is going to run and again, people do not like change."

The participants also agreed that while the UAW recognizes the need for change the current union officials are entrenched in the system that has trained and developed them to operate within the same antiquated parameters that have proven successful for them in the past. The same parameters that have been employed in the past, the notions of a greedy management versus exploited worker, seniority over flexibility, fixed benefits, and strike threats to keep their respective companies profitable and innovative in a world of growing competition (Editorial, 2005) are still being exhorted. These parameters preclude any change progress. Brad (Salary) says, "I think that the International union right now is absolutely scared to death about what's going on in the industry and I don't really believe they have a firm understanding of exactly what they

need to do. They have a pretty good idea of where they think we need to go but you know, George, they have never been exposed to the industry the way it is right now. They never had to go through this type of competition where it's just dog eat dog on a daily basis and they're struggling really hard with it."

Brad (Salary) was kind in his assessment of the UAW and its leadership. Other participants were not, James (Union) describes the UAW as, "a criminal organization. The International union as far as I'm concerned is inept, criminal, bourgeoisie, I could go on and on, that it's not even a union, it's nothing but another business, a very big business." Lisa (Union) summed up her opinion of the International in one word, "Joke." Dave (Salary) sees them as, "almost like corporate." The well defined hierarchies, concrete rules, and a centralization of power (Clark, 1989) are interfering with any possible production improvements. Irene (Union) speaking about the bureaucracy of the International, "It is totally entrenched. It is entrenched. It is etched in stone."

Henry Ford believed that people worked for only two reasons: one is for wages, and the other is the fear of losing their jobs (Thompson, 2005). This notion was reinforced constantly by the participants. While not all workers accept the goals established by the company and union, both the company and union have in place mechanisms to insure working towards the pre-established goals meets the individual's needs. The company and union bureaucracies have organized production in such a way as to minimize workers' opportunities for resistance and to even alter workers' perceptions of the desirability of opposition. Worker resistance has also been minimized through the established dominant UAW practices. Parker and Gruelle (1999)

contend that the main barrier to rank and file control of the union appears to be elected and appointed officials who employ undemocratic rules while making deals with management to ward off any threats to their perquisites. If an individual resists both the company and union plans James (Union) thinks they will, "either end up fired, or set up to be fired." Connie (Salary) says people may not be fired but they are "cognizant of the fact that if they make waves or are overly critical of their union structure they're screwed. They will not be supported like the rest of the people. If they need a day off and they need union intervention for example they won't get it. They won't get any help from them. So, it's in their best interest to just keep their mouths shut and bite the bullet and understand that's the way it is and shut up and go about their business." Lisa (Union) agrees, "If you speak out you're going to feel retribution is going to come from the union. So you keep your mouth shut, you do your job and that's it." Although the participants recognized these flaws in the present union and management bureaucracy they accept it as a necessary evil and do not actively question where they are being led. James (Union) observes, "The people now especially because of economic times the way they are, the people are even afraid to say anything and in some ways I can't blame them, in some ways they're all sheep." As the company and the union are now working as partners to implement lean manufacturing programs that will supposedly provide every worker the opportunity to become involved in this environment by participating in the decision-making processes there is no resistance.

As a process of learning, even in the work place, one must analyze the concept of hegemony. Hegemony emphasizes how the logic of capitalism and commodification

permeate all aspects of everyday life, culture, and education. Hegemony describes the way that people learn to accept as natural in his or her own best interest an unjust social order (Gramsci, 1995). Every participant cited at least once part of the problems they saw were caused by the attitude of "that's the way we've always done it". Salary people were quick to point out instances where they had to ignore certain situations and / or negotiate a situation with the union even they knew the result was detrimental to business yet by doing so it allowed them to survive for another day. Hegemony is powerful yet adaptable, able to reconfigure itself, skillfully incorporate resistance and give just enough away to its opponents while remaining more or less intact (Brookfield, 2001). My Story reflects my personal acceptance of hegemony. Throughout My Story I reflect more than once on my desire to speak up and contradict my bosses but my fear of retaliation and the loss of my appointed job interfered with me doing what I thought right. It was at this point that I realized I had become a product of the system that would not tolerate a dissenting voice. I accepted this but still tried to do the best I could in training people so they could and would be ready if they were ever afforded the opportunity to implement their skills developed in the class room on the shop floor. Irene (Union) sums up the impact of these artificial believes on the workers as, "I think sometimes you just lose your whole self, your integrity, you become the person that you swore you never would be."

While professing a desire to create this lean manufacturing culture that states the worker is the most important asset the company has, a sense of false consciousness continues to permeate the industry. Critical theory views this ideology as a broadly

accepted set of values, beliefs, myths, explanations, and justifications, that appear self-evidently true, empirically accurate, personally relevant, and morally desirable to a majority of the populace, but that actually work to maintain an unjust social and political order (Brookfield, 2001). As stated earlier lean production assumes that the assembly line worker can perform most job functions better than specialists. In this sense the intent is to develop the work force as direct action people that have the ability and wherewithal to function autonomously, in not only the operational processes but also to provide an avenue for input for improving upon them. Capitalism on the other hand assumes an individual is not all that rational and that his or her behavior, within limits, can be deliberately controlled (Perrow, 1986). To alter individual behavior one does not need to change their personality or even amend their human resource skills. Instead, people's responses to individual decision making situations can be adjusted by changing the premise of the worker's decision making process. For example, as goals and objectives are established and broken down into sub goals at each level of the organization, the company and union have the power and tools to structure the workers environment and perceptions in such a way that they see the desired outcomes in the proper light. As the employee's work towards these corporate / union objectives they are only provided the information necessary to make a correct organizational decision (Perrow, 1986). The flow of information on which individual decisions are made is controlled to the point that the basis of their decisions is influenced. They felt their input was considered of little or no value to the company and union anyway so why bother. Karen (Union) substantiates this when she talks about working in a traditional

environment, “They don’t even listen to anything you say on this side. They don’t ask you, they change the job, they don’t get your opinion, nothing.” Personal development strategies such as these have little or no value if the worker can not employ critical thinking. This ideology of accepting new human resource strategies to remain viable is summed up by Karen (Union) “I think it’s going to work because there are no jobs out there. They’re not going to like it but they are going to do it.” It is this false consciousness and acceptance of commodification that prevents people from perceiving their actual situations while assisting in perpetuating repression in both society and the work place

My second research question was in regards to: What is the perception of the hourly work force regarding their role in the corporate / union culture that has developed in the domestic auto industry? They realize their success of maintaining an upper working class life style is due in part to the contracts negotiated for them between the UAW and the company. The UAW has been so successful that most auto workers reached an accommodation with capitalism (Ransom, 2001) and became content with their work and union situation as long as they maintained their upper working class standard of living. Lukes (1974) notions of the prevalence of silent power that results in the inaction of the people to the point they become complicit in their role in the existing order is identifiable in the hourly workers. They recognize the auto industries overall cultural dynamics and also its sub-cultural dynamics but feet helpless to do anything about either one of them.

The participants mostly saw themselves as helpless victims of the entrenched bureaucratic system. They all cited, described and talked about their personal situations and justified at least to themselves why they did not participate in any attempts to achieve a position of leadership where they could potentially affect change. They gave examples of instances that resulted in them no longer attending union meetings and why they do not question any policies. Even the union and ex-union representatives down played any impact they could have on the system. They face the bureaucracy, alienation, economic and psychological impact of being employed in the industry on a daily basis. While each individual was personally unique all had developed survival skills and techniques to maintain their jobs which in turn maintained their standard of living. "That is the way it has always been and we don't rock the boat for fear of retaliation" was a major concern of the individuals. They will continue to do whatever it takes to survive even if it is as a cog in the machine to maintain their high paying blue collar jobs with good benefits. They continue to remain quiescent and hope for the best.

Through ethnographic interviews and my emic approach I discovered various themes and commonalities among the salary, union representatives and workers that helped explain how each is being impacted by global competition in the domestic auto industry. By uncovering the four themes; Bureaucracy, Alienation, Economics and Psychological, I was able to ascertain the answers to my research questions. Ultimately I also addressed my problem statement which was to address the issue of the culture of the auto industry and union that while providing an upper working class lifestyle for its workers has in actuality created a more legalistic corporate and union bureaucratic

system that now excludes the average worker from participating in the decisions that ultimately affects him or her. I also addressed the purpose of this research which was to examine the impact the past and present business and labor practices have had on the domestic automobile industry from the perspective of three existing subcultures: managers, union representatives, and hourly workers.

Through exploring the stories of the twelve individuals and relating My Story I was able to determine that while the overall auto industry culture recognizes a need for change but that the subcultures are hindering any progress towards a successful change. The subcultures of management and union representative profess they have the workers and membership's best interest at heart. They fail to recognize that the system that has got them to their positions is flawed. They are also products of the system of hegemony. In order for the latest lean production techniques to succeed the overall culture of the industry must change where the existing subcultures can not interfere with the adaptation of lean production. Workers must be allowed to participate without the fear of retaliation. Management and union must concede some areas of power to the workers. Workers must then take some responsibility and begin to work within the system. All parties must recognize for the overall good of the industry the nepotism and favoritism must end and merit and ability must be a factor along with seniority.

As long as the industry continues to pay lip service to change programs and the subcultures interfere with taking action the industry will continue to struggle because, "the iceberg is in sight."

LIMITATIONS

The major limitation to this research is the small number of interviews conducted. This research consisted of the narratives of twelve individuals employed in the domestic auto industry. The twelve were divided into three categories; salary, union, and line workers with four people from each category participating. There is the possibility that the participant's responses did not represent the majority not only of the total work force but of the subculture they represented. Other participants may have had different view points regarding employment in the domestic auto industry. Schratz and Schratz-Hadwich (1995) indicate that people construct a sense of self from their memories. In the quest for answers critical ethnographers must distinguish between truth claims and validity claims. Truth claims imply a different understanding than one finds in traditional logic and philosophy. Because truth itself depends upon consensus, validity issues are not simply limited to the logic of an argument. Validity issues extend into the premises of an argument such, as how the culture understands democracy, power, and leadership in their employment situation. One has to ask, Are the stories and memories the true experiences of the participants? Are the memories of these stories accurate reflections of events or has time provided an opportunity for a revisionist viewpoint?

Another limitation to this research is that all of the participants were employed at the same assembly plant. Will the participants of this study in this particular facility be an enigma or will it serve as a blueprint for all manufacturing facilities? Is the plant culture different from others or does it represent the prevailing culture of the industry?

Also this research was conducted with all participants employed by the same company. Historically, The Big Three's only competition had been each other. The standard operating procedure developed by The Big Three consisted of designing, producing, marketing, and distributing their vehicles in the same way (Pearlstein, 2006). Have the other two members of The Big Three already implemented policies such as lean production and are they succeeding? Is this facility unique in its operations even within the company or are all assembly plants of this company the same? Is it possible that workers at other assembly facilities do not have the same concerns as this one? Is their a more supportive work atmosphere at other companies and their facilities?

There also exists a potential limitation to this research by my determining preliminary categories prior to the interviews. This may have limited the stories of the individuals. Other possible stories may not have been uncovered and additional feelings and emotions may have been lost. Furthermore, the opportunity to gain new knowledge and understanding may also have been lost. There also remains the concern that I did not separate the participant's personal knowledge and opinions from their cultural knowledge as well as I could have.

Future Research

There are several areas where future research could prove prudent for one wanting to further examine workers in the domestic auto industry. First; additional research should be conducted at competitor's facilities. Granted they are mostly non-union, but an accurate depiction of the roles of mangers and workers could be obtained. In particular, research could explore what are they doing differently that make them so

successful and can their techniques be applied at a unionized facility? In addition there are many common jobs when it comes to assembling a vehicle, i.e. putting on tires, wiring harness installation, etc., and it would behoove the industry to compare worker attitudes and morale between different facilities and companies when the individuals are doing basically the same jobs. One could obtain first hand information from the operators regarding what makes the job better or worse between the systems. It would present an opportunity to expand research into the cultural difference between generations, such as Boomers (born before 1962), X'ers (born before 1982) and Next'ers (born after 1982) (Razi, 2000). Future research could investigate what, if any, are the differences in the different generations perceptions of working in a lean production environment versus a traditional environment, their work ethics, their views on authority, their views of leadership as well as their perceptions regarding unions?

All of the participants in this study agreed the bureaucracy of both management and union is having a detrimental impact upon their futures. I would suggest conducting further research into the existing bureaucracy of both parties and the impact it is having in preventing them from fully meeting the demands of the competition. While investigating this topic a researcher can also delve into what can be done to alleviate the nepotism and favoritism that appears to plague the industry. This research could be expanded to include only those that meet the criteria of a slug, examining their views of themselves and where they fit in the industry culture comparable to the other workers and what they see as their future?

Additional research should be conducted into what the workers themselves really want, not what the union and company think they want but what the workers actually perceive they need. In conjunction with this avenue of research one could continue into how well the system functions if the work force is granted the autonomy to make production decisions. This could be validated with cost, efficiency and quality numbers. Finally, I would like to see more research into adult education training at the facilities if the system changes were implemented as intended. What classes would be considered essential by consensus of the three subcultures studied, management, union, and workers and the results of training statistically documented regarding their impact on the new system should also be included in this line of research.

Future Implications

The work force has little trust in the company, and surprisingly in this research, it was revealed that all three subcultures studied held a great animosity towards the union. The work force will reflect the actions and attitudes of the leadership of both the union and companies in the speed of their acceptance or amount of resistance to any proposed cultural changes. Those involved in organizational change agree that it is easier to facilitate a change if the people participating in the change believe those instituting the change have their best interests at heart (Hollens, 1994). The intended lean corporate and union changes that are intended to empower the work force by requiring more numerate and literate workers capable of self-direction must be implemented in such a way that the work force recognizes WIIFM (What's In It For Me). Since The Big Three have been offering buy out packages to its employee's, one must

ask who the people are that are choosing to leave the company. Are the people that would be identified as good employees prematurely leaving the company while those that use the system as a welfare net the ones remaining? What will happen when the percentage of slugs in the work force becomes proportionally larger in relationship to the total work force?

Successfully implementing change programs company wide will remain in vain if an adequate budget is not also supplied. Strict adherence to the training budget must be a priority. No more abuses of training for union official overtime or slugs coming to the training two or three times because they are not wanted in their areas. The proper people must be in attendance for training and they must be allowed to implement what they learned on the shop floor. The constant in-fighting between management and union must cease for the future betterment of the facility, the company, the union and the workers. A major restructuring of the union and company bureaucracy must take place in order to win back the hearts and minds of an alienated work force.

Workers must no longer be faced with the constant fear of retaliation from the union or the company for their actions or decisions made in regards to the lean production system. The issues of nepotism, favoritism and attendance must be addressed immediately. The cost of maintaining a welfare system for people that do not want to work must be prohibitive, yet it continues. There must also be instituted a system that will allow for leaders to be evaluated not only by their peers but also by their subordinates. Ultimately nothing will change except for more plant closing and job losses unless all of the existing sub cultures within the culture of the domestic auto

industry take a realistic look at themselves and their functions. If they chose not to change or continue their haphazard approach to running the business, there will be no business left to run.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

I am George M. Amolsch and presently conducting research towards a PhD in Urban Education at Cleveland State University. My supervisor for this project will be Dr. Catherine Hansman, PhD. Her office is located at Cleveland State University, 2121 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio, 44115 in Rhodes Tower, Room 1407. Should you need to contact Dr. Hansman her phone number is (216) 523-7143, e-mail address: c.hansman@csuohio.edu.

This research will focus on individual employee's feelings and perceptions regarding his or her participation in the culture of the domestic automobile industry. As you know working in an automobile assembly plant is hard work. By virtue of your employment in the domestic automobile industry as a member of management, a union representative or an assembly line worker you have a unique perception of the industry. Due to a variety of reasons, competition, costs, and globalization to name a few the industry is both volatile and unpredictable. Plants are being closed, benefits are being reduced and people are losing their jobs. You have been randomly selected as a voluntary participant in this research project that involves a thirty to sixty minute interviewing process regarding being employed in a unionized manufacturing environment. There is also the possibility of a follow up interview if a clarification becomes necessary.

The results of the interviews will be used for a qualitative analysis of the perceptions of management personnel, union representatives and line workers employed in a manufacturing environment. Your responses to the interview questions will be tape-recorded but will remain confidential. I will be the only person involved with the transcription of the taped interview. To insure confidentiality the audio tapes and the transcribed notes will be securely locked in a file cabinet in my home office for a minimum of three years. The risks to you are minimal. If at anytime you no longer wish to continue further participation in this project you may withdraw with no consequences whatsoever. At the completion of the project an abstract of the findings will be made available to you upon request. Your name and any identifying information will not be used in the findings or final report of this research study.

"I understand that if I have any questions about my rights as a research subject, I can contact the Cleveland State University's Institutional Review Board at (216) 687-3630."

If you agree to this Informed Consent Statement please sign and date this form. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this project. If at anytime you have questions regarding this project or the results please contact me at (440)-933-8988.

_____ _____

Name Date

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Demographics

Age
Seniority
Job Classification
Gender
Race

Personal Information Questions

What were the circumstances regarding being hired in the auto industry?

Have you ever worked at any other automotive facility?

If yes, do you perceive any differences in the way they function?

Do you have any experience in an MOA environment?

If yes, do you prefer MOA or traditional contract? Why or why not?

Have you ever belonged to any other union?

If yes, is there any difference in the way they function?

Do you take advantage of any educational benefits provided by the company / union? Why or why not?

Employment Information Questions

Describe your perception of the overall culture of the auto industry.

What is your perception of the leadership of the auto companies?

Local plant leadership

Corporate leadership

What is your perception of the functioning of the union and its leadership?

Local union leadership

International leadership

What is your perception of the hourly work force?

What would you do, if anything, to improve the functioning of the industry?

What do you see for your future if you continue employment as an automobile worker?

Is there anything else you would like to tell me regarding any of these issues?

Guidelines for expanding upon the questions listed above.

How has a particular situation come to be? Whose interests are served by the arrangement? Who has power? How was/is it obtained? What structures reinforce its distribution? What are the outcomes of the structure? Who has access? Who has the power to make changes? From where are the people's frames of reference emerging?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Name		Age	Seniority	Sex	Race	Scheduled	Where / Notes
Allison	Salary	55	30.0	F	C	9/10 at 9:30 am	Dining Room / Home Bob scheduled on 8/22 or 8/23 never heard back.
Brad	Salary	58	38.5	M	C	8/15 at 11:00 am	Kitchen / Summer Home
Connie	Salary	53	28.7	F	C	8/16 at 2:00 pm	Kitchen / Summer Home
Dave	Salary	57	33.0	M	C	8/28 at 5:30 pm	Dining Room / Home
Ellen	Hour	57	15.0	F	C	9/16 at 1:30 pm	(Ed scheduled for week of 8/20 cancelled due to car accident, never rescheduled) Dining Room / Home Called to reschedule for 4:30
Frank	Hour	59	31.0	M	AA	8/16 at 2:00 pm	Kitchen / Summer Home / Called would be late
Gary	Hour	48	15.0	M	C	8/25 1:00pm	Cancelled due to friends death – rescheduled following week Dining Room / Home
Hal	Hour	53	31.9	M	C	8/28 1:00pm	Dining Room / Home
Irene	Union	63	31.0	F	AA	8/17 4:00pm	Kitchen / Summer Home
James	Union	59	34.5	M	C	8/21 3:15pm	Dining Room / Home / Dated 8/21 but conducted on 8/22 JS
Karen	Union	57	15.0	F	C	9/17 at 12:00 pm	Dining Room / Home / LJ (DL-contacted 8/17-no return)
Lisa	Union	55	15.0	F	C	9/11 at 1:30 pm	Rescheduled for 9/13 /Dining Room / Home / JG