8. Aesthetics at Work: Art and Ambience in an Organization

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A two-day conference on organizational symbolism was held at the University of Illinois in May of 1979. Eleven papers were given on humor in a machine shop, symbolic behavior in organizations, belief systems, meaning creation, and so forth. A few months later, a national conference on workers' culture was held. Sponsored by The University of Michigan and Wayne State University, this conference concerned a review and evaluation of research on workers' lore, the concepts of class and subculture, stereotypes of workers, and the lore of specific occupational groups. Organization theorists dominated the first conference and folklorists the second. Apparently, participants in one did not know about the other.

Paralleling the many dissertations and articles on occupational folklife in the late 1970s were numerous articles in organization studies on organizational stories, symbols at work and organizational cultures. At the beginning of this decade, Dandridge, Mitroff, and Joyce published an article entitled "Organizational Symbolism: A Topic to Expand Organizational Analysis" (1980). In retrospect, it must be seen as a seminal essay introducing organization specialists to expressive forms and research questions similar to those dealt with by folklorists (without, however, citing the works of folklorists or using the word "folklore"). The authors' list of "types of symbols," for example, brings to mind one of the textbooks in folklore studies, Jan Harold Brunvand's *The Study of American Folklore: An Introduction* (1986). For Dandridge, Mitroff, and Joyce identify "verbal symbols" (myth, legends, stories, slogans, creeds, jokes, rumors, names) similar to Brunvand's category of "verbal folklore"; "actions" (ritualistic special acts, parties, rites of passage, meals, breaks, starting the day) not unlike Brunvand's section "partly verbal folklore"; and "material symbols" (status symbols, awards, company badges, pins) analogous to Brunvand's "non-verbal folklore."

Notable, too, is that the research problems the authors discuss overlap those in folklore studies. "Questions arise," they write, "as to the origin of stories, how they reflect the present organization, and how they participate in subsequent growth or stabilization." Are there industry-wide "symbols," they ask; are certain individuals

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more influential in initiating or modifying them; what happens to these forms of expressive behavior during organizational change; what are the effects of an organization's "symbol system" on the social environment, and vice versa? Although research was carried out separately, with representatives of the two fields seemingly unaware of each other's existence during the 1970s, it is apparent in hindsight that folklore studies and organization studies are frequently complementary.

In March of 1983, the UCLA Center for the Study of Comparative Folklore and Mythology and the Behavioral and Organizational Science Group cosponsored the conference Myth, Symbols & Folklore: Expanding the Analysis of Organizations. Partly funded by the L. J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities, and directed by David M. Boje in Behavioral and Organization Science, Bruce S. Giuliano, President of Ponte Trading Company, and me, this symposium was the first to bring together folklorists, scholars in organization and management studies, and practitioners. Objectives included communicating recent findings in folklore studies and organizational science, encouraging joint research between the fields, and developing transdisciplinary methods based on the humanities. During the following year and a half, there were four more conferences.

Since the terms "corporate culture," "organizational symbolism," and "organizational folklore" began to be used with increasing regularity and frequency after 1980, numerous papers have been given on the subject at the annual meetings of the American Folklore Society, the Academy of Management, the California Folklore Society, the Western Academy of Management, the Organization Development Network, the Speech Communication Association, the International Communication Association, and the American Anthropological Association. Articles on the cultural and expressive dimensions of organizational life have been published in management, folklore, and speech journals, or in anthologies. Among the publications are Terrence E. Deal and Allan A. Kennedy, Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life (1982); Organizational Symbolism, edited by Louis R. Pondy et al. (1982); "Organizational Culture," a special issue of Administrative Science Quarterly, edited by Mariann Jelinek et al. (1983); Leadership and Organizational Culture: New Perspectives on Administrative Theory and Practice (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), edited by Thomas J. Sergiovanni and John E. Corbally; Gaining Control of the Corporate Culture, edited by Ralph H. Kilmann et al. (1985); Organizational Culture and Leadership: A Dynamic View, by Edgar H. Schein (1985); and Organizational Culture, edited by Peter J. Frost et al. (1985).

In 1983, after serving as the principal organizer of the organizational folklore conference, I gave a paper in Vancouver at the XIth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences called "Directions in Research on Organizational Folklore." Three months later, I organized and took part in a session of papers at the Organization Development Network meeting on "Dealing with Symbolic Expressions in Organizations." The following year I was cochair of a session of papers at the American Folklore Society meeting called "Research and
Management of Organizational Cultures” as well as of a panel titled “Human Resources and Folklorists: Ways of Working Together.”

The essay below grew out of several works. The first half of the article concerns the traditions and ambience in one of many units at UCLA being studied as part of a project on organizational folklore. The section that treats the concepts of organization and organizing incorporates some of the ideas in a paper that I gave at the American Folklore Society meeting in 1985 called “On ‘Informal Organization’: Folklore in the Writings of Chester I. Barnard (1938), CEO of New Jersey Bell Telephone Company.” The last section on organizational folklore studies was developed from notes for an introduction to a session of papers exploring the concept of organization in folklore. The present article is intended to define terms and clarify some concepts as well as illustrate one way in which the subject of organizational folklore can be studied—with an emphasis on aesthetic matters.

“I joke about this being my second home,” remarked one person. “It’s the only place on campus where you get positive feedback,” said another; “it’s a good feeling.” Said a third person: “Everyone respects you and your opinion. They treat you like a person.”

They were commenting on their work experiences in one unit of the university, the Academic Resources Center Math-Sciences Tutorials. The formal organization includes a director, a coordinator, three half-time student supervisors, and nearly three dozen tutors, each of whom meets with 40 to 45 students once a week for a total of nine times during the academic quarter. It is one of many units being studied in a project documenting and analyzing organizational traditions, management practices, and the aesthetic aspects of work life.¹

Some other statements from employees in this unit expressing their attitudes and perceptions are the following:

“You have freedom in conducting your sessions; you can experiment. It’s your work, not what someone tells you to do. You feel creative.”

“There’s a sense of bonding.”

“People hang around after work; they talk to one another.”

“This is a home base.”

“You feel like you are someone.”

“People feel protective of one another; they don’t want to see anyone get hurt.”

“People spontaneously do things for one another.”
"A lot of things happen that bring us closer together."

"You can see a sense of unity."

"I feel that what I am doing is important. This is a home base. I value the friendships I have made. I have a sense of self-esteem."

"You have a sense of pride in your work."

Many of these remarks evince aesthetic concerns, that is, the perception of and response to form. Multiple and varied, these forms include the atmosphere or ambience of the unit, the type of management and supervision, the interpersonal relationships that develop, customs and traditions, spontaneous events and occurrences, and the tutors' own work. Because they have been given aesthetic value, these human activities and creations warrant study in any exploration of "art." Moreover, the pleasant social and sensory experiences of members largely result from, as well as tend to lead to, the generation of "traditions" in the organization.

According to the tutors, the director (Bill McGuire) and the coordinator (Valerie Eichel) "promote that kind of atmosphere," i.e., one in which the tutors feel they are supported and encouraged to be creative. Several questions arise. How do the director and coordinator perceive the unit and their roles as supervisors? If we consider management, like any other human activity, to be given aesthetic values (that is, to be an "art"), then what "forms" do the director and coordinator create; and how and why? What traditions are generated in the unit and among whom, how do they evolve, what meanings are attributed to them, and what effects do they have on participants?

Creativity and Community in an Organization

In what follows I give a brief overview of a few of the traditions in this unit, the attitudes of administrative personnel, and ways in which the administrators communicate their values to others. This is not intended to be a complete ethnography; rather, it is an introduction to several issues in the study of occupational folklife and organizational folklore.

Traditions

As one looks around the office of Valerie Eichel, the coordinator, one sees many objects that document traditions, play a central role in traditions, or are the product and symbol of a complex of traditions. On a wall to the left, for example, are nine mounted and framed enlargements of photographs of an end-of-the-year party, a softball team, participants in a Halloween party the
year before, and other activities involving the tutors, supervisors, and administrators. On a nearby table is a stack of more framed photos, ready to be hung on the wall, documenting different customs and celebrations; there is also a photo album. On the opposite wall is a map with pins in it (marking the present locations of former tutors), which is surrounded by post cards sent by current tutors on their travels or by former tutors from their present locales. On the walls and tops of tables, filing cabinets, and bookcases are mementos including gifts and cards from the tutors to the coordinator and also a makeshift trophy that the unit won by defeating another unit at softball. On the coordinator's desk is a candy dish; during a visit to her office one sees many tutors dropping by, some of whom take a piece of candy. Also on her desk and on tables are photocopied puzzles and games to give to the tutors, announcements of special events such as "secret pals" and "the name game," and a manual. The manual consists of 130 to 150 loose-leaf pages in a red three-ring binder; nearly every page contains one or more cartoons, epigrams patterned after "Murphy's Law," and puzzles and games along with, of course, instructions for tutoring students, filling out time sheets, and so forth.

In the office next door, occupied by three supervisors who are second-year tutors, there are mounted on one wall Polaroid snapshots of all the tutors. Each desk area is highly personalized with plants, post cards, and memorabilia. The supervisors decorate the office each holiday, combining materials accumulated by the director and the coordinator with items of their own.

There are many traditions in the unit occurring in the suite—as well as traditions generated in tutorial sessions and among networks of individuals when they are away from the suite—that are not documented or that do not have permanent objects serving as testaments to their existence. Among these are games, joking and bantering, the custom of everyone calling everyone else (including the administrators) by their first name, spontaneous food sharing, parties, and ad hoc celebrations. All the traditions occurring in the suite originated spontaneously. Some were suggested or initiated by one or more tutors, supervisors, or administrators, or by a combination of personnel. Some, many, most, or all the people in the unit participate in one or another tradition. Some traditions in the unit have been perpetuated from quarter to quarter or year to year while others are unique to a particular time and set of circumstances; even if repeated on other occasions, the activities always differ in some ways. What remains constant, however, is a certain feeling and a set of values pervading the unit out of which the traditions grow, and also a process of feedback and response affecting these activities.

Consider Halloween. Three years ago the coordinator began making a costume, which she intended to wear as a surprise. Just before Halloween, however, one of the tutors said he thought the staff should dress in costume;
the coordinator suggested he organize this. On hearing about the costuming, another tutor urged that there be a prize; the coordinator concurred, and proposed that this tutor be in charge. A third tutor thought a party with refreshments was in order; the coordinator agreed, asking this person to be responsible. The coordinator then prepared a colored flyer identifying the three tutors with their suggestions; the flyer noted that the director was not aware of the proposed activities and asked that he not be told so that it would be a surprise. The coordinator showed up in costume, which no one had expected. The director and some tutors took individual and group photos. The second and third years new tutors saw photos of and heard about previous events (which included the coordinator dressed in a blue Martian suit the first year and in mouse costume the second). Now some of the tutors carve jack-o-lanterns; the supervisors decorate their office with cobwebs, fake spiders, and other things appropriate to the occasion; and virtually all the tutors wear a costume (often, like the coordinator, of their own making).

Because several people were taking photos of special events, and they and others enjoyed looking at them, the coordinator left a stack of prints on a table near the door of her office. Eventually she put them in an album to protect them from frequent handling (and she enlarged others to put on the wall). People look at the photos after an event, of course. Some tutors examine photos before Halloween to see how people have dressed in prior years. If they are waiting for students to tutor or seemingly have nothing else to do, tutors come into the coordinator’s office to look at the album. Beginning to feel melancholy toward the end of the year, some of the graduating seniors dwell on the photos. Former students who have returned for a visit also tend to look through the album or at the photos on the wall.

The map on the opposite wall contains pins that mark where former tutors are in graduate or professional school. The coordinator had been keeping a list of the whereabouts of former tutors. “And I was having a conversation with somebody that any tutor could travel across the country by making a chain of extutors and almost not have to pay for a single hotel room.” The source of the idea for a map is now forgotten; all that the coordinator recalls is that the director and she began looking for and finally found a wall map large enough to clearly identify cities in the United States.

“I didn’t realize the impact that this had [or would have] on the tutors,” said the coordinator. “I don’t tell them what it is. I wait for them to come in and ask,” she said. “They ask, ‘Is this all the places you’ve been to?’ and I say, ‘No.’ ‘All the places you have relatives?’ And I say, ‘Sort of extended family.’” Eventually the tutors learn that the cities marked with pins are where the extutors now are. “They’ll come in and they’ll say, ‘I’m going to go to graduate school here.’ And I say to them, ‘Well, you show me a letter of acceptance and then you’ll get your pin.’”
Thus, a cluster of traditions has been generated around the map. Installed initially by the coordinator and director as a way of keeping track of former tutors but perhaps also as a statement of pride in their extutors (several times I was told that there is a 100% rate of placing former tutors in graduate or professional schools or in their "dream jobs"), the map has become a symbol to current tutors. It pleases them to know they will be remembered after leaving. Judging from their comments, the map gives at least some of them personal objectives and motivation to achieve them. "It surprised me that having a pin on the map is a very important thing," said the coordinator. One tutor recently announced that he intends to go to medical school at Harvard; his will be the first pin in Boston, he observed proudly. Others remark on where they aspire to go, and ask about who is represented by different pins in various places. The post cards taped to the left and below the map, sent by present tutors on vacation or by former tutors who have relocated, further communicate a family or community feeling.

The softball team came into being because of this feeling. Having gotten to know one another through other activities in the unit, many of the tutors have become fast friends. They want to do things together. Spontaneously several of them organized a softball team (and more recently a football team) in February. Too late to be a scheduled part of intramural sports, the softball team nevertheless found another unit to play. Several tutors organized refreshments. The director and coordinator attended the game. The tutors' team won. Members of the other team were chagrined at losing; but more, they were distressed that none of the supervisors or administrators from their unit had attended, which suggested to them a lack of concern or support.

Some activities have become more formalized, and are planned and scheduled by the administrators because of their value in stimulating communication and promoting interaction. On the second day of training in the fall, for example, the coordinator and director insist that the tutors take part in a Guest-Host custom, which requires them to get to know all of the staff from the start. "I put everybody's name on a piece of paper and have them draw a name out of a paper bag. They are responsible for that person the entire rest of the day," said the coordinator. There is a potluck lunch on the second day, for which the tutors provide lunch. Individuals from outside the unit who affect or are affected by the unit (e.g., higher-level administrators, people from the Office of Residential Life, and so on) are invited guests.

The coordinator also has initiated a Secret Pals activity once a year, an idea she got from a teacher-friend who called it Secret Santa. Each tutor is assigned to another person for whom he or she must do things "to improve the quality of that person's day every day for a week without getting 'caught,'" that is, without his or her identity becoming known. The Name Game is another activity instituted by the coordinator and director. They note things
that tutors tell them about their backgrounds and experiences. Eventually they compile a questionnaire several pages in length. Each item describes a tutor. Tutors must fill in blanks without querying one another directly. The tutor who correctly completes the most blanks receives as a prize one "unquestioned mistake" redeemable at any time. Stories are told about tutors who did not recognize descriptions of themselves, about some who made major mistakes later but redeemed their coupons without reprisals, and about tutors who were surprised that anyone had actually listened to them and cared about who they are and what they have done.

Why do the coordinator and director initiate some of these activities and participate in and encourage others in the suite? The answer lies in what they value, have experienced, take pleasure in, and assume to be the nature and purpose of organizing.

**Administrative Values and Concerns**

The principal value is that of the social and intellectual growth and the well-being of people. The coordinator and director express this value in their behavior, demeanor, and words, and both in formal, structural ways and informally and spontaneously. This value has been influenced by their own organizational experiences (and undoubtedly other factors as well). It is reinforced by events in the suite and by what the tutors accomplish and achieve.

"Where much of this came from," said the coordinator, "was a number of years ago I was in charge of a program the goal of which was to assist freshmen and transfer students in their adjustment to the university." She was discussing with a counselor the problems of students. "One of the comments she made to me was that the biggest complaint or misgiving many students had about their education is that they had been at UCLA for four or five years and had never made a single new friend." Their networks consisted of a few people with whom they had attended high school. "And what happened was that in four or five years here they had not grown in any substantial way in terms of their involvement with new people. I think that's a really sad thing, because this is a community of 70,000 people."

The organization of the tutorial program only aggravated this. "The tutors make their own schedule, they work with their own students, they come and go as they please and they really don't have any structured, formal reasons for interacting with other tutors. They can come in and do their job without so much as a 'hello' to other people. That's pretty much what was going on when I took this job."

She continued: "Here was a group of 30 to 40 upper division and graduate students working in a fairly confined space, and many of them didn't
know each other. I set as one of my goals to make sure that that ceased. And now every tutor knows every other tutor at least enough to say ‘hello’ and call them by name. Minimally. As it turns out, they have developed an incredible support system for each other.”

This concern about friendships and support had a basis in personal experience earlier when the coordinator was in college. In her second semester at college, she was paired with a roommate whom she found intolerable. Her complaints fell on deaf ears. “Everyone else said, ‘Do the best you can.’ The dean of students didn’t care. Nobody cared.” After weeks of anguish, the only remedy for which seemed to be to leave school, a house mother “took pity on the situation,” said the coordinator. “I think that had a significant impact on the way I deal with students, because I know what it’s like to start out badly, on the wrong foot. I think that’s why many of the horror stories I hear are very real to me—I’ve lived it.”

The coordinator began working in the unit half a dozen years ago on a part-time basis shortly after the current director was appointed. Three years ago, after earning her Ph.D. in kinesiology, Valerie Eichel became a full-time employee. She views her role as “helping people go in directions they might not see by themselves.” To illustrate, she told me about a former tutor who had visited the unit recently and described a difficult job interview that he had just been through (successfully). Her comments to him emphasized the fact that his experiences as a tutor had given him the opportunity to “see yourself as others see you; you are constantly being put on the spot by students. So you have a great deal of training that most undergraduates don’t have in terms of extemporaneous speaking” as well as confidence in himself and his abilities.

“The whole point of the story,” said the coordinator, “is that [the director] and I see each person who works in the unit as unique and as having distinct talents. Granted, there are certain aspects of the job that are required and there’s a necessity to have it done a certain way across individuals”; hence, formal rules and procedures, particularly record keeping. “But there are other aspects of the job where people can develop who it is that they are. I see what we do as helping them develop whatever the potential talents are that they have.”

Much of what is emphasized is self-confidence and self-esteem. Tutors remark on the feedback and support they get from one another and from the coordinator and director. They comment on the friendships they have made with one another and with students they tutor, and about some of the spontaneous activities that grow out of and express a sense of camaraderie. Many speak of the unit as their “second home” or as “home base.” They mention their freedom to create and experiment in their tutorials with students, and the pride they feel in their work. They note the pervasiveness of
laughter in the unit and in tutorial sessions, including being able to laugh at themselves. Over and over again they refer to the “confidence” they have in themselves and one another, to having “changed as a person,” to being “more outgoing,” and to being “respected” by students, fellow tutors, and administrators. They tell stories about how this tutor or that one seemed to be “transformed.” They mention that a high-level administrator speaks to them at the beginning of the year, impressed that he cares about them and what they are doing. They speak of the coordinator's openness and of the enormous amount of time and effort she devotes to helping them prepare applications for admission to graduate school and writing letters of recommendation.

“I usually point out to them, ‘How many people do you think have had a job like this as an undergraduate?’” said the coordinator. “And then I ask them, ‘How many people do you tutor a quarter?’ They’ll say to me (hypothetically, if they’re working half time), ‘40.’ ‘Okay, 40 people. You’ve been here five quarters; do you realize you’ve touched the lives of 200 people with this job?’ And I get the same reaction each time: ‘Wowww, I never thought about it that way.’ When they start to realize those things about themselves, they begin to walk into new situations with a little more confidence.”

The coordinator continued: “Being very bright, they tend to hide that from people, because it’s not a trait that’s always rewarded—especially by the people they’re competing with. Here they’re allowed to shine. ‘It’s okay to be a high achiever.’ That may be something they’re not getting from anywhere else. They’re getting a lot of real positive messages from a lot of different sectors [here]. They get it from [the director] and me, they get it from their students. The other place they’re getting it is in the training; we have [the higher level administrator] come here and talk to them. . . . We’re talking about an administrator from Murphy Hall, one of the people you hear about, whose name you might know, who you occasionally see written about in The Bruin, who is actually there in real personhood standing in front of them, talking to them. Every year without fail several of the tutors will come over to me to tell me how special they felt because this person took his time to spend with them. They don’t get that elsewhere in the university.”

A guiding principle of the unit is that of, in the words of Bill McGuire, the director, “a value of the importance of people.” Having been in organizations where this principle was not always dominant, he knew from firsthand experience the frustrations, turnover, and “burnout” that result when and where people seemingly are not appreciated. Making the value of the importance of people pervade the unit required certain actions and structural changes when he was appointed director in 1980. “We [the unit as a whole] had to do some things to establish our credibility, both among the faculty and the students,” said the director. “To do that, we had to be internally credible.
The people who worked here had to believe that what they were doing was a positive thing, and that they would be supported. A problem in this unit and others with tutorial programs was that the tutors "were held accountable to anybody who decided that they ought to be accountable." Individuals from outside the unit could—and sometimes did—interrupt tutoring sessions to administer tests, make demands on tutors, evaluate tutors in front of their students, and so on. "This gave the tutors no feeling of self-confidence, no feeling of worth," said the director; "they were pawns. They felt as though, for them, there was no support structure. The administration of their own unit would not back them up when confronted by someone from another unit."

He continued: "I decided that would not happen here. So the first policy was that the tutors were responsible to this unit, to its director and any other administrators within the unit, but that anyone from outside the unit had no right at all to interrupt a session. Any kind of interaction between individuals from other parts of the university and the staff of this unit would happen through me."

Another structural change was aimed at "the prevailing student attitude that the organization, UCLA, and anybody who represents it at any point, is the servant of the students. We decided to be sure that our people [the tutors] knew that there were certain limits that were set for the students [they served]." Among these limitations were that students were not free to call tutors at all hours of the day and night, that they could not fail to keep appointments with their tutors, and that they could not demand tutors' assistance only hours before an exam or expect tutors to help them miraculously achieve high grades. As a consequence, "we have very strict policies" regarding services rendered to students. However, "those by themselves would lead to a very negative perspective," said the director. "So we started putting in many 'positives' for the tutors so they didn't end up feeling like they were just policemen. We gave them some positive things to do for the students, gave them some materials which would be helpful. . . . At the same time we also said to ourselves, 'What can we do for these people?' [the tutors]. We are asking them to not only help a person with a course, but keep an ear out for personal problems, deal with immaturity, and do a bunch of other things." Hence, many of the activities initiated or encouraged in the unit originate in the desire to recognize and reward the tutors for their efforts, have them realize and truly feel that they "are a valuable part of the operation," and promote a "feeling of belonging."

To these ends, an effort is made to get people to know one another, to learn about each other (including realizing that the administrators, too, are people), to explain the rationale for policies and procedures, and to treat people fairly. "This takes much of the intimidation of authority away from the staff. They see us after a couple of quarters as people who are doing part of the
overall task. And they see themselves as people who are doing another part of the overall task... rather than as somebody just being a cog in the wheel and not counting for much."

One of the factors motivating such concerns is the director's own value system. "I suppose if you want a bottom line, for me it comes down to the fact that I have to like the person that I see in the mirror in the morning. That means there are certain kinds of things which need to be happening in my life," he said. "One of the guiding principles for me is that if you give up an opportunity to become involved in a situation in a positive way, you usually don't get that chance again. And so life comes down to a series of choices to become involved or not. I would end up feeling very sad for myself if I got old only to discover that my choices had been to not get involved."

When asked whether the ambience apparent in the unit could be generated elsewhere, the director replied in the affirmative, "because the things that begin it are actually very simple. What needs to happen is that you need to provide some behavior which is a catalyst. The behavior needs to give people permission to be themselves." An example is their urging new tutors to get to know one another and call each other by first name. "It's hard to get a sense of belonging when you've got an anonymous stature," he said. "If you say that the atmosphere here is one where you are an individual and you count as an individual and you have an identity which is important to us, all sorts of things flow from that. I think all of that can be done by management. You can say, 'This is the atmosphere we want to have,' and once you give people permission it feels good enough that they'll find ways to enhance it," he said, citing the impromptu softball and football teams, ad hoc field trips, and other spontaneous activities among the tutors.

"I made a decision some years ago that I only wanted to do things that were fun," said the director. "If something wasn't fun, I wasn't going to do it. I've gotten a lot of flack for that: 'That's the biggest crock I've ever heard!' " In addition, "I keep asking myself how I want to be treated and making the assumption that others probably want to be treated in a similar way, and trying to work out ways that will make that happen." Said the director: "If you really want to know a person, walk a mile in their shoes." Valerie and I have done all of the jobs that other people in this unit do," including tutoring, clerical work, and supervision. "We know the kinds of situations and feelings involved in doing those jobs." New tutors are required to work one hour in the central office tallying other people's time sheets so they appreciate the increase in workload for the coordinator and supervisors when errors are committed, one hour handling student assignments with the director so they understand the need for certain policies and procedures, and one hour working at the registration desk so they learn about what happens outside the unit.
Many of the behaviors, attitudes, and concerns of the director and coordinator, and what they do with and for the tutors, serve as models on which tutors base their own behavior. "The kind of thing that we ask our people to do is so complex that describing it would take all of their employment time and they would never get to put it into practice," said the director. "As it is, it takes us three very hard days [during training] to give them a sketchy introduction to what it is we want them to do. The hardest part of all of this," he said, "is that what we really want from them is for them to invest their personality, their life experiences, and so on in a relationship which is temporary—the relationship which they have with their students for a quarter." He continued: "We want them to do this in a way which establishes a really strong rapport very rapidly because we have precious little time to impact on students' academic life as it is, and waiting for a long time before this rapport is generated is not very productive. The tutors have to be willing to first open up about themselves. . . . They have to be very receptive to other people. . . . They have to be willing to become involved. . . ."

In sum, said the director, the tutors "have to give all of their personhood and expect all of their students' personhood in return. If that happens, then everything we want as a result will flow by itself. But it's hard to sit down with a person and say, 'This is how you express your personhood'. . . . The easiest way to do this is to show them by example, so we are to them [the tutors] what we want them to be to their students. . . . We provide the model for the kind of interaction we want them to have."

"We make it so that what tutors are supposed to do here is all that they see," continued the director. "Everything that they see around them is exactly what they're supposed to be doing. You've seen our map with the pins in it for where all our people are? There's a message there, a lesson for the tutors that says, 'You are so important that even after you leave here you are still important to us.' We hope that's communicated to students in 'You are going to be important to me even after we stop seeing each other every week.'"

"What really made an impact on me when I was hired," said a tutor who is also a supervisor, "was the fact that they kept stressing that your job as a tutor is important: not just to help students grow scholastically, but helping them to grow as a person." Many of the students rarely have someone to talk to or someone who cares about them and what they are doing. "You may be the only person on campus to recognize them and say 'hello,'" the tutor continued. "It really made me feel that what I was doing was very important. That's part of the reason that I feel so good about this place."

"I'm amazed at the sense of belonging and the sense of ownership that people do develop working here," said the coordinator. She gave as an example tutors stepping in to answer questions from students who come to
the suite, relieving the coordinator of the task. "It also gives them [the tutors] a part in the management of the unit because they know they have the authority, and they take the responsibility to help."

A model for behavior that has evolved over the years is the manual that is given to the tutors. An obvious purpose of such a manual is to set forth the rules and regulations and the policies and procedures governing the unit—the formal or structural aspect of the organization—communicating what needs to be done, who should do these things and how, and why the tasks must be carried out in particular ways. Consisting of 10 sections, the tutorial manual provides an introduction to the matter of tutoring, explains what occurs weekly in the unit during an academic quarter, offers insights regarding student motivation, characterizes departmental policies and procedures (including peer observations and evaluations as well as the making of demonstration tapes of the tutors for their own review), gives advice to tutors, sets forth instructions for submitting time cards, addresses the matter of excuses (from both students and tutors), provides general guidelines, contains an index to references, and offers "Things to Keep You Busy When Your Students Don't Show Up." (Developed before tighter procedures were instituted in the unit to reduce student "no-shows" at tutorials, the puzzles and games in the manual now serve other purposes or are turned to for other reasons.)

Initially the manual was 40 or 50 pages long and consisted of a formal list of procedures and policies. Finding the manual formidable, boring, and inconsistent with the ambience they were promoting in other ways, the director and coordinator made many changes in it over time. It has grown to 130 to 150 pages in length, largely because of the incorporation of numerous cartoons, humorous epigrams, and puzzles.

The first paragraph emphasizes that, because of the complexity of tutoring and the interactions between tutors and students, this manual is a guide only, not a how-to-do-it book. "Your own individuality and your experiences will remain your single greatest source of ideas and strategies." Below this paragraph, set off with asterisks, is "OPPENHEIMER'S LAW: There is no such thing as instant experience." The next paragraph indicates that throughout the manual are "suggestions that will allow you to avoid some of the chronically troublesome situations" that arise in tutorials. There is a cartoon below this passage suggesting some of these problems. Then there is a short paragraph that explains the functions of professors and teaching assistants, contrasting these with the nature and purpose of tutoring; it warns that confusion over these functions will reduce the tutors' effectiveness.

Next in the introduction is a section on "General Tutorial Considerations." A brief statement notes that tutorials cover course content, but "good technique for any subject is characterized by"—following which
are stated and explained four qualities (which also are illustrated with cartoons). One is "sensitivity to individual personalities, strengths, and needs." A second is "respect for the role each person plays in the tutorial encounter." The third is "confidence in the ability of each person to achieve the goals of the session and the course." The fourth is "mutual trust which allows views and feelings to be expressed openly."

A section in the introduction that follows the above reads: "The attainment of the supportive and stimulating environment suggested above demands that the tutor exercise four basic counseling skills." Like the qualities or techniques mentioned earlier, these are listed (with emphasis), explained, and graphically illustrated. The first is "awareness: become aware of the student's and your own attitudes toward both academic and personal matters which relate to the tutorial session." The second is "empathy: attempt to understand the student's triumphs and defeats, anxieties, and problems by touching similar feelings and experiences in your own life." The third is "sharing: many of a student's fears are based in a feeling of singular difficulty. Sharing of your own experiences with the student helps allay these fears and increases the student's self-confidence." And a fourth is "confrontation: confront the student with course-related or other problems before they get out of hand. These confrontations should be candid, but handled with the gentleness of someone who cares."

The seventh page of the first section lists the "Ten Commandments of Tutorial"—in Gothic script. The first is "Thou shalt not do thy students' homework." The second is "Thou shalt not turn in thy time sheets late." The fifth is "Thou shalt not attempt to reteach the course."

On yet another page, without comment, is a large box in which is typed the title "That's Not My Job" followed by "This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody would do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have" (adapted from Xeroxlore of anonymous authorship).

Infusing the tutorial manual are sensitivity and seriousness of purpose tempered by humor. These same qualities are expressed in many other ways by the director and coordinator, as indicated earlier. They are evident in the remarks and behavior of the tutors, too, as they interact with one another and with their students. Personnel at all levels seem to enjoy themselves, interact cordially with one another, and even identify with the unit. This ambience results largely from people wanting pleasant social and sensory experiences within an organization that provides services to others while simultaneously
serving the providers. The ambience comes about because of an orientation of mutual support that, once established, draws strength from itself.

"I think there's something special that Bill and Valerie do, because they try to promote that kind of atmosphere around here," said a tutor who is also a supervisor. "In training, when everybody first gets to meet one another, Bill and Valerie really stress the fact that we're a family-knit unit and we really like to do things together. They don't know why it happens, but 'it just happens that way.' So I guess people feel that it's supposed to happen that way. But it really does happen," he said. "I don't know if it's because of the magical words that they say, or because of the things we do around here [i.e., the impromptu social activities]. But it happens that way."

Some of the feeling of “family” or “community” is communicated and demonstrated by traditions, whether spontaneous and unique or repeated from one year to the next, which also establish and express some of the character or ethos of the organization. Halloween, for example, which has been celebrated three years in a row, "for the people who are working here for the first time, this represents a tradition-in-the making, a new way of seeing things, a new aspect to the identity of the place," observed the director. "And a new set of memories that can be added to the mental picture of not only our unit but the university."

The attitudes and the traditions that reflect or reinforce them illustrate both the importance and process of aesthetics at work. Although the subject of art and ambience in a tutorial unit within a university seems far removed from conceptions of “folk art” as naive painting and sculpture of an earlier era, there is precedence in folklore research for examining tradition and the aesthetic impulse at work in a contemporary organization. On the other hand, there is precedence in studies of organizations for considering the informal culture and traditions that develop.

Research on Occupational Folklife and Art at Work

A large body of literature on occupational folklore and folklife has been amassed since the early decades of this century. Until the 1970s, this literature tended to dwell on such “primary industries” as logging, seafaring, ranching, mining and railroading. It emphasized narratives, songs and beliefs and superstitions (for an overview, see Green 1978). More recent research has broadened the scope of occupations to include modern transportation and telecommunications industries, manufacturing companies (e.g., aircraft and textile), firefighting, bartending, parks and recreation services, and trade schools. The kinds of expressive behavior also have been enlarged to include personal experience narratives, celebrations and festive events, and examples of art at work (e.g., Bell 1976, 1983; Collins 1978; Dundes and Pagter
The earliest research on occupational traditions was largely documentary. As with other examples of folklore in various social settings, the intent was to record the traditions before they disappeared. Later analysis examined the origins of particular stories or songs as well as their development and change over time. Some research considered functions, investigating, for example, the role of beliefs and rituals in reducing anxiety in the face of environmental uncertainty or of customs and rites of passage generating a sense of community and esprit de corps among many of those taking part in them.

Some recent research on art in the workplace addresses similar questions about function. Focusing particularly on “homers”—items that workers make for their enjoyment and use—these studies suggest that workers derive a sense of self-esteem and self-worth from such activities that they do not get from their jobs. For many, the job is meaningless and their treatment at work demeaning; art is meaningful, a source of pride, and a symbol of what can be accomplished when given the opportunity. There are obvious implications and ramifications for management and organization design, which an increasing number of researchers are pointing out in their publications (e.g., Dewhurst 1984; Lockwood 1984).

A logical extension of the research on workers’ culture and occupational folklore or folklife would embrace at least three considerations. The most fundamental is to realize that the workplace usually is part of an organization (be it a bar or restaurant, a factory or mill, the cabin of a commercial jetliner, or the office of a unit in a university). Even cottage industries and many traditional crafts are the product of collective effort that, however informally structured and supervised, is orchestrated.

Second, although the constructs “group” and “community” are appealed to in research on occupational traditions, often only a few people are interviewed and representatives of only a few segments of the organization are included in the research as subjects and “stakeholders.” If the researcher realizes that the workplace is not an isolated social setting but is an integral part of a larger phenomenon, then the researcher would include other populations in the inquiry. Not only will this enlarge understanding of the circumstances studied, but also, in so-called action or applied research, it increases the likelihood of bringing about improvements in work conditions, administrative sensitivity, and working relations.

Few of us claim that the formal organizations in which we participate—particularly those that serve as a workplace and a source of livelihood—are free of problems or need no improvements. Rarely would
one cite a formal organization as a paragon of excellence, much less contend it is perfect in all respects. But when people do refer to one supervisor, work situation, or organization as "better" than another, what do they mean? What happens, and why, to precipitate positive comments and attitudes? The value of documenting and analyzing instances of people who feel a sense of personal satisfaction, fellowship, and self-esteem is that the research can uncover what activities and situations promote these feelings. A third consideration, therefore, is to investigate circumstances in organizational life that in the view of the participants bring out the best in them.

I have described some aspects of research in progress concerning traditions, attitudes, and activities in an organization that result in positive feelings among people regarding the unit, one another and themselves individually. This research is part of a larger project begun a few months ago to identify and analyze positive management practices and networks of support as perceived by a cross-section of participants in a variety of units. The research neither assumes perfection nor ignores problems. Rather, it seeks through a comparative approach to discover what organizational participants perceive to be "better" in order to understand what members of organizations expect socially and aesthetically and to derive principles for improving organizations and their design and administration. A necessary foundation for this inquiry is concepts of "organization" and "organizing."

On Spontaneous Organizing and Informal Organizations

In 1938, Chester I. Barnard published *The Functions of the Executive*, which many today consider a classic work partly because of its extensive treatment of the concept "organization." Barnard writes that an organization comes into being whenever "(1) there are persons able to communicate with each other (2) who are willing to contribute action (3) to accomplish a common purpose" (1938:82). Perhaps because Barnard was an executive, and certainly because his book examines the functions of the executive, he was concerned with "formal" organization as an *enduring* institution. Barnard characterized two other kinds of organization, however, that are of special interest to contemporary folklorists.

In addition to formal organizations, writes Barnard, there are "spontaneous organizations." He defines spontaneous organization as an association of two or more people who contribute efforts simultaneously, sometimes without announced leadership, to accomplish a common purpose. He gives as examples the organizing of rescue efforts, on the one hand, and on the other games or similar activities in which people cooperate for purposes of amusement. One could add many instances of celebrations,
parties, get-togethers, sports, impromptu group lunches, and so on. Such
"organizations" are new, rapidly created out of internal impulse, and usually
short-lived. They qualify as organizations because they constitute "systems of
effort" that accomplish common goals through cooperation and coordination
(Barnard 1938:102). They also exemplify the fundamental process of
organizing, in that people contribute action to accomplish a common
purpose; it does not matter that the objectives are humanitarian, social, or
aesthetic.

Yet a third type is that of "informal organization." As Barnard describes it,
an informal organization (in the context of a formal organization) includes or
produces "customs, mores, folklore, institutions, social norms and ideals"
(1938:116). Sometimes these customs and norms contrast with the official
procedures, policies, and proclamations of the formal organization (see e.g.,
McCarl 1978, 1980, 1984a; "Works of Art, Art as Work and The Arts of
Working" 1984; Smircich 1983; Jones 1980a). Barnard championed informal
organization in a formal organization as "necessary to the operation of formal
organizations as a means of communication, of cohesion, and of protecting
the integrity of the individual" (Barnard 1938:123).

Continuing to distinguish among these three kinds of organizations,
Barnard insisted that informal organization precedes formal organization.
This is because "the possibility of accepting a common purpose, of
communication, and of attaining a state of mind under which there is willingness
to cooperate" demands "prior contact and preliminary interaction"
(Barnard 1938:116). Obviously, a major institution does not simply spring
into existence; it is the outcome of human endeavors, originating in people's
ability to communicate with one another and willingness to contribute
action to achieve collective goals.

On the other hand, informal organization must have a degree of structure
and formal accoutrements to persist. This is so even when the object of
association is social, for people are impelled as a condition of their existence
to do something and to seek purpose to their actions, contends Barnard. A
party, a game, or a ceremony requires for its success a degree of structure,
order, and consistency (see, e.g., Humphrey 1979). Hence, there is
interdependence. Features of a formal organization are essential to order and
consistency, and qualities of an informal organization are essential to vitality;
"there cannot be one without the other," writes Barnard. "If one fails the
other disintegrates" (1938:120).

To summarize Barnard's views, formal organizations arise out of informal
organizations, giving the latter structure. In turn, when formal organiza-
tions are generated, they bring into existence and require informal organiza-
tions whose effects are the establishment of norms and ideals, customs and
mores. Formal organization always has its informal qualities; and spontaneous or informal organizations require a degree of structure in order to function and survive.

What Barnard characterized are not necessarily different kinds of organizations but perhaps different aspects of the process and outcome of organizing. The so-called formal organization is really the structural element with a formal division of labor (the organization chart and written job descriptions), clearly stated rules and regulations, lines of communication and a chain of command, and so on. Spontaneous organization is less an entity than a process—that of organizing when and as the need arises, often without manifest rules and rarely with the organization enduring beyond immediate necessity. An informal organization consists of the daily activities of people, generated in and modified by particular circumstances of interaction that are largely traditional and expressive—the "folkways" that Barnard mentions (see Peters 1978; Trice et al. 1969).

Much is expressed in informal interactions and spontaneous groupings that would not be communicated through official documents, and this information as well as the vehicles by which it is transmitted affect individuals' experiences, knowledge, attitudes, and feelings. An important consequence of so-called informal organization, workers' culture (McCarl 1979; Lockwood 1984), or folklore in organizational settings (Jones 1985b; Dandridge et al. 1980; Fine 1984) is that of, in Barnard's words, maintaining "the feeling of personal integrity, of self-respect, of independent choice" (1938:122). This is because the interactional aspect of organization is dominated by choice and personal attitudes, not by an impersonal goal or authority. "Though often this function is deemed destructive of formal organization," writes Barnard about the preservation of self-respect through folklore, "it is to be regarded as a means of maintaining the personality of the individual against certain effects of organizations which tend to disintegrate the personality" (1938:122).

I cite Barnard's observations because of their relevance today. Nearly 50 years ago, the chief executive officer of New Jersey Bell Telephone Company, writing about the functions of the executive, realized that we need to know about folklore to understand, function within, and administer organizations (see also Pauchant 1985; Wolfe 1974). Some officials and executives deny or ignore the existence of the expressive and symbolic aspect of organizations; yet simultaneously they acknowledge that an organization cannot be understood from its organization chart, charter, or official rules and regulations. "Learning the organization ropes' in most organizations," writes Barnard, "is chiefly learning who's who, what's what, why's why, of its informal society" (1938:121). "Despite its importance," however, writes Barnard, "informal organization in formal organizations is ignored as far as possible" (1938:289 cf. 121, 128, 286).
Obviously, two individuals with administrative responsibilities who do not ignore informal organization or traditions at work are the director and the coordinator of one of the units that provides tutorial services for students at UCLA. Bill McGuire and Valerie Eichel are well aware of the structural features required for an organization to endure. But they also realize the necessity of informal organization and spontaneous organizing. Their concern is epitomized in many ways, even in the tutorial manual. Containing information about necessary procedures and policies—a structural element—the manual is infused with a spirit of good humor and playfulness—qualities of informal interaction and spontaneity.

Barnard concludes The Functions of the Executive by noting that at the heart of his study is a "deep paradox and conflict of feelings" in people's lives vis-à-vis organizations (1938:296; see also Hurst 1984). Organizing is a fundamental human endeavor; social action is scarcely possible without it. We can neither escape the impulse to organize nor elude the organizational presence in our lives. But sometimes formal organizations (or the structural aspects of organizing) seem to demand much of a person and perhaps give too little in return. As the director of the tutorial unit observed, "There's a lot of structure even here at UCLA that does not have a value on people at all—that has a value on budgetary constraints or organizational survival." The result is frustration, "large amounts of turnover," and, for those who persevere, "burnout."

It is not surprising, then, that formal organization or the formal aspect of organizing—however necessary it might be at times—generates mixed feelings. Few people in the tutorial unit enjoy the paper work, for example, that is required to provide services to several thousand students a year. Record keeping, accuracy, and completing tasks in a timely way are the bane of many people's existence. The week is emotionally draining for the staff because of the burdens of data maintenance and the many emergencies that arise.

Nevertheless, there are pleasurable moments and memories. Tutors speak of the friends they have made with other tutors and their students, their experience of the unit as a "second home" or as a "home base," the enjoyment of being able to socialize with others, the satisfaction of affecting in a positive way the lives of others, the creativity that is encouraged in the unit, and the sense of pride they have in their work. "I get a lot of pleasure when one of my tutors comes in and says they had a really good session, and proceeds to explain why," said the coordinator. "I get a lot of pleasure out of hearing that one of my tutors has just gotten into grad school, professional school, or a dream job. I take a great deal of pride in that kind of accomplishment. I take a great deal of pleasure in seeing people grow... Many of the extutors who come back during their vacations go home and then they come here. The first two places they are is home and here. That gives me pleasure, because I know..."
there's a lot of warmth and good feelings associated with the time they've spent here. Halloween in a funny kind of way, I take a great deal of pleasure in. Because we have a very mixed ethnic group here, and for some of the tutors it's the very first Halloween they've ever had."

A balance between the structural-technical dimension and the human side of organization may be possible, if this unit can be taken as evidence. Certainly a step toward resolving the conflict in feelings about the formal requirements of organizing entails recognizing fundamental human needs and striving to fulfill expectations of meaningfulness, fellowship, and personal satisfaction—all of which is in the realm of aesthetics and tradition as revealed by studies of folklore in organizational settings.

**Organizational Folklore Studies**

Often folklorists have been aware implicitly of "organization" when studying expressive forms and processes manifested in interactional networks. Inspired by nationalism, for example, many recorded popular traditions in contrast to the "official" culture of administration, literature, and art. Some have documented children's play of a "spontaneous" nature, opposing it to the structured activities formally scheduled and imposed by teachers or principals. Those who write about folk religion usually conceptualize it as being juxtaposed to the body of doctrine and practices of "organized" religion. To understand work life, folklorists have eschewed the printed rules, regulations, and policy manuals, seeking instead to observe and note the customs and techniques generated in face-to-face interaction. Even many who define the word "folklore" distinguish it as "informal" and "unofficial" in contrast to the written, the formal, the official—whether in business, government, schools, or other contexts.

What folklorists rarely have done, however, is to consider the ramifications and implications of the fact that many instances of folklore are examples of informal or spontaneous organization; nor have they examined the generation and manifestation of folklore in terms of the concept of organizing. Perhaps this neglect is owing in part to the connotation of the word "organization" as a formal institution and enduring entity. Or maybe in shunning formal organizations folklorists have spurned the concept of organization.

One value in exploring organization and organizing as these relate to expressive forms and processes in interactional, communicative, and experiential networks (Blumenreich and Polansky 1974) is that these concepts offer a new way to look at folklore. How are celebrations, games and play, ethnic display events, and other expressive forms organized? Ascertaining this might help answer questions about why various forms and examples of
folklore are generated, modified, or perpetuated as well as what their mean­nings and functions are.

A second reason for exploring these concepts through a study of folklore is the potential contribution to be made to the body of literature on organiza­tions that, to date, is based largely on research on "organization" conceived of as a formal and enduring institution. Folklorists are well aware that every formal organization has its informal and traditional dimension; and they should know that organizing is one of the universals in human experience. Unless folklorists communicate their understanding to those who write about, design, and administer formal organizations, they can scarcely expect the institutional aspects of social life to conform to their values and vision.²

Research on organizations also brings to the fore such concepts as "aesthetics" and "art." As long as these matters are thought to be a world apart, then they are not a part of our world. It is abundantly evident, however, that the aesthetic impulse—a desire to create, and a need for pleasant sensory and social experiences—is a vital aspect of organizational life and work. "You feel like you're doing something important," said one of the tutors; "you have a sense of pride."

To conclude, my intent has been to suggest some of the ways in which organizational folklore can be examined in order to develop the emerging field of organizational folklore studies. By "organizational folklore" I mean the subject matter for study, which may consist of, variously, folklore in organizational settings, folklore about organizations, or examples of folklore as instances of organizing. All three are evident in the data on the tutorial program described above. The softball team and its games, the Halloween party, and other impromptu, spontaneous and ad hoc traditions exemplify folklore as instances of organizing. Stories about members or former mem­bers of the unit, and stories told by others about the unit and its members are examples of folklore concerning organizations. A whole host of traditions generated in tutorial sessions, among networks of tutors and among the various levels of personnel in the unit comprise folklore in organizational settings.

By "organizational folklore studies" I mean that inquiry into expressive forms and processes manifested in people's interactions in which the concepts of organization and/or organizing are primary. An analysis of how traditions are spontaneously generated and informally organized, a study of informal organization within a formal and enduring institution, and research on the impact of formal organization on folklore (and vice versa)—all are examples of organizational folklore studies. This research is primarily descriptive, not prescriptive. There are often implications and ramifications of a practical nature, however.
Conclusion

Among other lessons, activities in this tutorial program suggest how vital the element of "play" is, even—or especially—in an enduring institution. Usually associated with the creative process, and often thought of as an antidote to "work," playfulness seems to be necessary for physical, intellectual, and spiritual survival. "I always make sure there's a playful element in many of the aspects of what goes on here," said the coordinator of the tutorial program, who added, "I don't know how well that would work outside the university" because "people take themselves too seriously.... Let's face it, if someone's busy playing volleyball, then they're not being 'productive' in terms of time-cost efficiency. Except I think they're more efficient, and time is better spent...." In addition, she said, "most people hate their jobs, they hate where they work, hate the environment they're in; I mean nothing about it makes them happy. Why should they want to be playful in that environment?"

How people feel is made abundantly clear in the stories they tell, the language they use, and the customs that they engage in (or do not participate in or organize spontaneously). Either discordant notes are struck in the folklore, or the traditions strike a responsive chord. Much has to do with the attitudes pervading the organization, what the values are, and whether the technology of organizing is balanced by humanistic concerns which, fundamentally, are social and aesthetic in nature.

At the beginning of his book, *The Functions of the Executive*, Chester I. Barnard lamented being unable to "convey the sense of organization, the dramatic and aesthetic feeling...." He contended that many lack interest in the scientific study of organizations "because they are oblivious to the arts of organizing, not perceiving the significant elements. They miss the structure of the symphony, the art of its composition, and the skill of its execution, because they cannot hear the tones" (Barnard 1938:xiv). While much research remains to be done in the study of organizations, the matter of art, aesthetics, and ambience at work seems an appropriate place to begin.

Notes

1. The research in progress was funded in part by a grant from the Academic Senate in combination with support from the UCLA Research Programs and the office of the Administrative Vice Chancellor. I am indebted for some of the information in the present article to the following individuals in the Ph.D. program in folklore and mythology who are serving as research assistants to the research project: Ms. Susan Montepio (folklore and applied anthropology). Ms. Susan Scheiberg (folklore and communications), and Mr. Peter Tommerup (folklore and behavioral and organizational science).

Early in this article I refer to the "name game." The coordinator and director of the unit compile a three- or four-page questionnaire deriving information from the tutors' Person-
Casual remarks made by or about them. The coordinator and director include themselves in the questionnaire, their superior and others who have become involved in the unit. Everyone participates in completing the questionnaire. At the end of the day there is a pizza party at which the director and coordinator read the correct answers and the tutor with the highest score receives an award, that of one unquestioned excuse.

In 1987, the Name Game took place on Thursday, 5 March. One question is "In _____'s complete name with title, the first two letters and the last two letters used to be the same." The answer is "Ms Valerie Eichel, M. S." Valerie Eichel, the coordinator, now has a Ph. D. After earning her master's degree several years ago, her father asked what she would do with it. She replied that at least she could write MS before and after her name.

Another question reads: "An avid fisherman, _____ met his match when he discovered fishing gear in the trunk of _____'s car." The fisherman is Edward (Chip) Anderson, Director of Preparatory Programs in the College of Letters and Science (under whose supervision this tutorial unit falls), and the owner of the car is Bill McGuire (director of this tutorial unit) who carries fishing gear.

Every question grows out of, or leads to the telling of, a story that intensifies participation. The questions, seeking answers to them and hearing the answers contribute to participants' learning more about each other—particularly discovering personal information resulting in subjects' being seen not in formal organizational roles but as fellow human beings.

Other questions this year that included nontutors are "Traditions are not a hit or myth affair to _____ and _____." (Michael Jones and Peter Tommerup, from the Center for the Study of Comparative Folklore and Mythology, who were conducting research in the unit). "If you want to talk to an expert on Appalachian folk art, _____ is the person you need to find" (Michael Jones, author of a book on chairmaking), "and _____ literally pounds out his music" (Peter Tommerup, who plays the hammered dulcimer and who has prepared an instruction manual and demonstration tapes, published by Kicking Mule Records), and "It may seem like a long way from ARC [Academic Resources Center, of which this tutorial unit is a part] to the Jayhawk Cafe [in Lawrence, Kansas], but not if you ask _____" (Michael Jones).

2. "[T]he organizational current ... moves to the fore because it proposes to reveal what is of most concern in a future-oriented society—the present state of the modern world and its guiding structures for the future," writes Bronner (1986:128). He continues: "[A]s folklore studies increasingly moves outside the academy, as it becomes more subject to organizational differentiation, and as it lodges in governmental agencies, foundations, corporations, museums, and libraries, then the keyword organization may balloon into a prominent theory of folklore studies."