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The Office as a Mixing Pot and Playground.
An Ethnographic Study at a Creative Workplace

Abstract   This paper aims to contribute to knowledge of the factors which inform the grouping of creative workers in particular places. It is based on a case study of Aragón, a region of Spain, and draws on a period of nine months of ethnographic work among a particular group of creative workers. The main hypothesis is that there are visual components in the work environment that are stimulating for workers and there is a number of creative flows in these workspaces. I have selected one office that is occupied by two different groups of creative professionals: web designers and programmers. The research concludes that there is evidence that a shared set of cultural values, ideas about work organization, and a hybrid work-life balance are significant to the location choices of creative workers. The research is relevant as a contribution to knowledge about how creative places work.

Keywords   Creative Flows; Workspaces; Digital Era; Hybridization; Ethnography

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Creativity is not a new research topic. When Csikszentmihályi (1998) considered the purpose of studying creativity, he concluded that there were two main reasons why examining the lives of creative individuals and the contexts of their achievements is useful. Firstly, the results of creativity enrich culture and, secondly, this enrichment indirectly improves the quality of our lives. However, Florida (2002) points out that there is a number of difficulties in analyzing these creative contexts, for example, that creative work is often intensely subversive because it disrupts thinking patterns and existing life. For this reason, it is even more interesting to approach the analysis of a creative environment through concepts related to imaginary and cultural values.

In order to grasp the *magma* generated in the creative process, the researcher must experience it and feel it *in situ*. The ethnographic technique allows us to dive into the space of creation and the processes that are generated. Researching into the imaginary process violates the established order because this type of research goes beyond the generated words that appear in a discourse. Our interest in including an analysis of the imaginary[1] is because we want to understand the different systems that are generated beyond the purely functional. These institutions cannot be understood if they are located outside social life as a whole, or if they are treated as a simply functional system, an integrated set of arrangements subject to the satisfaction of the needs of society (Castoriadis 1983).

The idea behind using this technique is to go beyond what the researcher is able to visualize. Ethnography is useful in this respect that it shows the researcher that the world we see every day is nothing more than a description (Castaneda 2009). Researchers have to see, not merely look, and go in search of these imaginary situations that are generated in the environment. When Garfinkel (2006:21) was developing his concept of ethnomethodology, he stated that it sought to "treat practical activities and circumstances and practical sociological reasoning as topics of empirical study." According to the same author, ethnomethodological studies focus on the most common activities and want to learn from them as the phenomena that they are in their own right. Garfinkel also considers ethnomethodological studies to be reflective in that their nature is embodied in explanatory practices, by which he means practices which it is possible to observe, see, and relate. These can be practices conducted in a particular setting that are subject to the various skills and know-how of the people located in that setting. According to Latour (2005:4), observed actions can be read and interpreted as though they were a story that is narrating a transformation. Goldthorpe (2010) argues that any form of local causality that is shaped within hypothetical social processes should be capable of demonstration through an ethnographic study if that study is well positioned and well directed by the researcher.

One of the characteristics of ethnographies is that they are developed in natural, "unforced" situations. They involve participant observation and conducting interviews as conversations. Goldthorpe (2010) reports how the purpose of these techniques is to reach a better understanding of those meanings experienced by people in their context. Although ethnography does not observe the totality of possible realities, Goldthorpe argues that ethnographies are considered to be a descriptive basis for generalization because the number of cases can be considered representative of the population in which they are included. The importance of an

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[1] The relationships that exist between the symbolic and the imaginary arise as a result of reflections on the same facts, since the imaginary has to use the symbolic both to express itself and to exist. To understand the influence of the imagination on the symbolic, Castoriadis (1983) argues that symbolism has the ability to link the two terms. This ability is constant, so that it simultaneously represents both terms.

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ethnographic representation can be understood in the sense that these techniques focus on cases that bring strategic advantages for research, cases that tend to be of, for example, a deviant, outstanding, or critical nature, or which "minimize or maximize certain crucial contrasts" (Goldthorpe 2010:58, 59). The greatest difficulty in the study of the processes generated in a working group is to control all the variables that are relevant in the interaction (Sawyer 2011). The most important thing is to observe these interactions in the real setting in which they take place, as it is the natural origin of the conversations and actions that take place in the native environment.

One of the aims of this ethnography is to discover whether there are common traits in creative workers. Csikszentmihályi (1998) has previously observed certain traits in creative people, including their genetic predisposition for, their interest in, and their access to a given field. Another aim is to observe how creativity develops in a group of individuals. Numerous theories have also emerged which are interested in new bonds of solidarity that are arising through the development of collective action, as opposed to the approaches of the autonomous social order.

Main Characteristics of the Office

This ethnography was undertaken from October 2012 to July 2013. The main focus of my study was observation-based, this being the best source of information for the analysis. I also used netnography (observing web use), through different social networks like Facebook and Twitter. This tech-

nique allowed me to uncover other details about the workers whom I was unable to observe in the actual places visited.

Most of the professionals in the workplace selected for my study were web designers or programmers. The workers were twelve people in total; eleven men and one woman. Other people also appeared occasionally, such as young people on internships, cleaning staff, et cetera. All the people working in the office were between 25 and 35 years old. The office has been running since 2009, showing the high entrepreneurial spirit that exists there.

There are many differences between the working cultures of designers and programmers. The function of designers is to design, create, organize, plan, implement, and change websites. Designers have knowledge about navigability and have to engage different media, including audiovisuals, texts, pictures, and online links. Bruce (2009) responded to the question about how designers think and work by arguing that design is about doing things conscientiously. Design functions by comparing different alternatives and trying to find the best solution. In reality, designers work with projects which present unknown concepts, normally visual material. This implies a kind of subjectivity, ambiguity, instinct, and intuition. Bruce (2009:41) suggests that, "visual imagination is a crucial aspect for design because it allows mental imagery to build those things that we have never experienced." Programmers, on the other hand, although they are often completely ignorant about design, set up the models and elaborate the necessary backgrounds

so that the designers can work in the virtual world. Programmers work with the following simple and basic code: a blank screen full of letters and words. Their function is to generate the instructions which the hardware has to execute, that is, they create the source codes of a computer program so that it is able to perform a specific task.

The workers have their own language because they use specific terms to talk about their activity (keywords, definitions, etc.), as well as trivial topics. So, they have two languages: professional language and informal language.[2] The art of interpreting and understanding each other is related to the hermeneutic conception of Gadamer (1999). Hence, the workers use the three elements that Gadamer spoke of: understanding, interpretation, and application. The communicative capacity is triple: auditory, visual, and gestural. So, the workers combine different communicational typologies, including auditory and corporal expression abilities. According to Joas (2005), both verbal and corporal language are contained in expression and the latter can include elements such as postural behavior, movements, and face gestures.
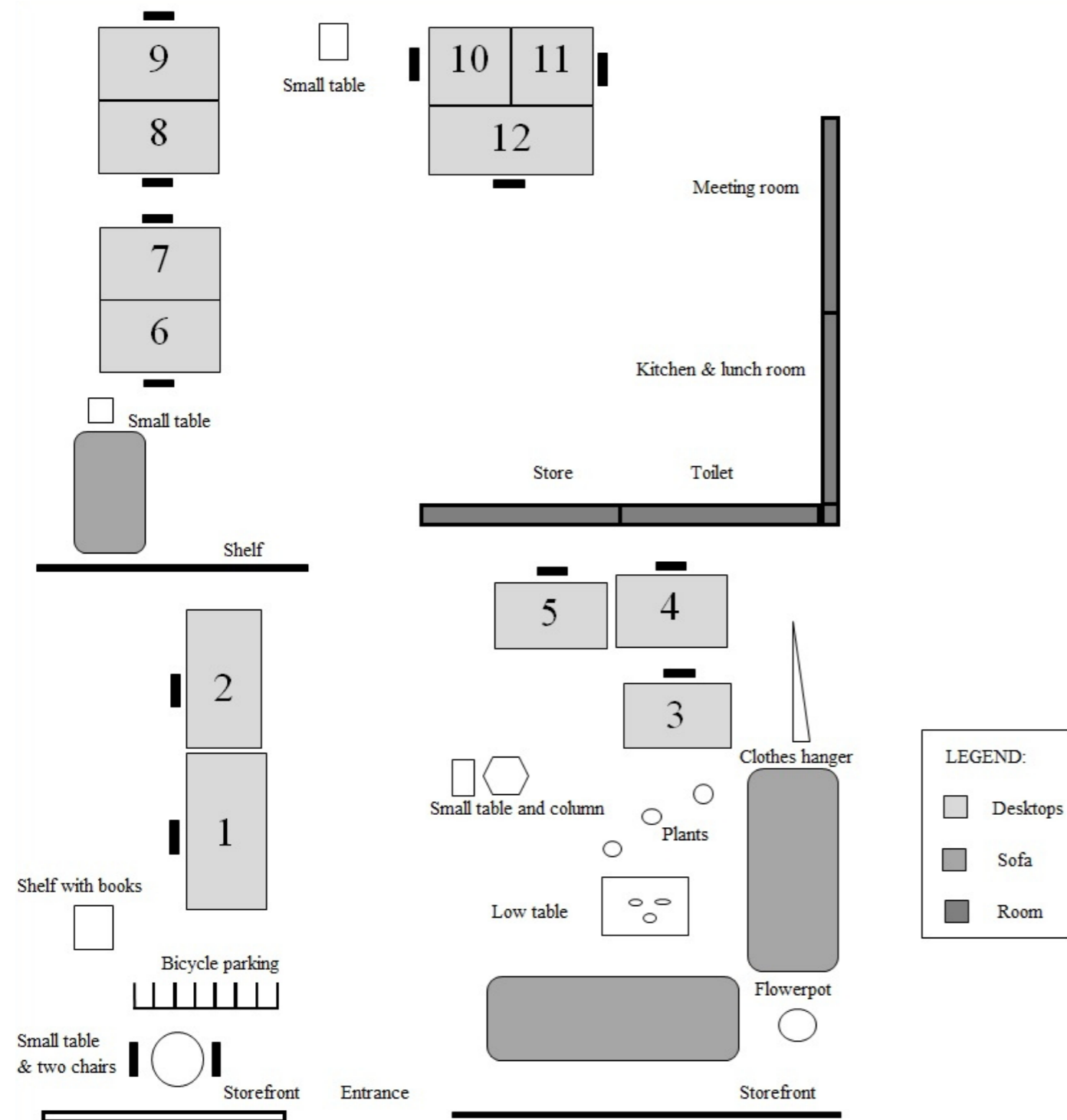
The office considered in this study presents a different format compared to a traditional business because it consists of professionals who represent

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[2] Gadamer (1999:457) argues that language is the expression of finiteness because it is present in "constant training and development as the maximum expression of the experience of the world." According to Castoriadis (1997), language is necessary for reasoning. This means that the multiplicity of existential contexts makes sense through the conversations and the different languages used by everybody. The transmission of power in both cases is wide because their contributions are straightforward.

two different enterprises sharing the same room in order to achieve common goals. The workplace is similar to a cooperative, but in a postmodern style. In addition, the office has its own idiosyncrasy because it is shared between two main companies and freelancers, as well as a number of people working on a project basis. The office is "U"-shaped and divided into two "rooms" with no intervening door. The "rooms" have no actual physical separation and each "room" is occupied by one of the two companies that share this space. The first group of workers is situated close to the entrance door and the second further inside the office. Towards the back of the office there are also some common spaces, a storage area, bathroom, a small kitchen, and a meeting room.

The workers develop their work in a large market with local, provincial, regional, national, and transnational intensities. This transnational and geographic spaciousness is the result of the idiosyncratic nature of their work, in that they do not have to be physically present at these places to be working. The Internet reaches across the planet so their action capacity is amplified. To complete this initial presentation, it is important to reflect on what is happening at this moment in terms of certain work, labor, and social concepts. Essentially, this type of job did not exist before the Digital Era. The creation and development of the Internet has meant, in turn, the creation and development of new types of work. The Internet tool has had an enormous impact on business and institutional organizations, enhancing the communication process, access to information, external development, et cetera.

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Figure 1. Distribution of the workplace.

Source: Self-elaboration.

The best thing about this new online generation, as Clark (2003) says, is that we can all take advantage of the knowledge generated collectively and implicitly on websites. The computer is a fundamental part in the development of their professional tasks. According to Bruce (2009), designers use computers to capture ideas and the workers share their ideas with colleagues from their design and production teams. The software they use is sophisticated and is a tool that designers need to do their work. The concepts they generate can be modified, stored, and reproduced online. So, the workers can create prototypes and models from their computer systems. As they can work at home, this results in greater conciliation between their personal and professional lives. However, one of the negative aspects of advances in computer science could be an excessive dependency on such technologies, an addiction created by the massive use of the virtual network among organizations and professionals.

After this brief introduction, it is important to explain the key aspects that I will use in the analysis that follows. I consider that these aspects suitably explain the imagery and cultural values of these creative workers. I will analyze this ethnography through the principal ideas of fusion and play. Fusion was observed in this study on numerous occasions in the workplace and with respect to numerous concepts: fusions between their personal and professional life, between work and game, and between other ideas related to language, the cyborg concept, et cetera. The second element I consider is play, and more specifically—a play which integrates humor and fun at work. I have focused on play because it is a repetitive and substantial aspect which consol-

idates the idiosyncrasy of these creative workers. In addition, play is connected with the disconnection of time and space.

Does Creative Work Mean Fusion?

The main observation of this paper is that the workers mix many different spheres of their lives. In other words, by conducting private affairs at work, they fuse many of the spheres that are usually separated in social science. The definition of fusion in this paper is the combination of different elements and situations into one sphere. For this reason, the best concept that could be used to describe this element is that of heterogeneity. The most frequently observed fusions during the period were: listening to music at work, discussing leisure activities at work, eating and resting in the office during working hours, discussion of private lives at work, flexibility of working hours, the sharing of personal opinions at work, and a variety of other daily habits.

The creative workers that were observed during the research behave like partners and colleagues, even though they may belong to different companies which on occasions can be in direct competition. The workers know each other and share the workplace, so this behavior is a risk, but also an opportunity.[3] There are many benefits from these collaborations and the main condition for the exchange is that there must be a "perfect intercommunication" which offers the best knowledge for

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[3] In human nature, the concept of risk plays a role, either directly or indirectly, in many behaviors and decisions. In this regard, Knight (1933) argues that if we knew the probabilities, we would not take risks.

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each person involved in such an exchange (Knight 1933:86). The fusion between private life and work life extends to personal hygiene and eating; workers can eat and clean themselves at the workplace. For example, they leave their toothbrushes in the bathroom and receive personal correspondence at their work address. After all, they spend much more time during the day at work than at home or elsewhere. They also reward themselves with little pleasures at work, such as cold beer. It is normal to listen to music in the subjects' work environment, where background music is everywhere, and the workers freely speak about their music tastes while at work. They also constantly interact with each other in talking about their intergroup and intragroup work problems. According to Amabile (1990), this feedback cycle affects creative results positively and motivates people to work by fostering camaraderie.

Continuing with the observation of fusion, mutual help and fellowship are both present at this workplace. The workers have close relationships and are committed to each other. Their relationships go far beyond normal relationships between colleagues, in which genuine friendship is not a requirement. There are many situations in which they request the help of a partner or in which one member offers advice without being asked. Fellowship is extended even between different companies, with workers from each of the different companies helping each other in different tasks. When some colleagues need to ask for help or advice at work, these workers do so openly. In relation to this, Florida (2002) believes that creativity is an inevitable social process and that interdependence between colleagues and assistants in a creative industry is to be expected.

For some of the workers, this is not their only job—one works part-time as a DJ, another is a graphic designer in a different company, and another is also a web designer. This is related to the entrepreneurial spirit of the workers. On one occasion, the part-time DJ commented to his colleagues how he was thinking about a web design he was working on while playing music in a nightclub the night before. When eating together in the dining area, one worker commented how a song he had heard at a concert had provided him with inspiration for a web design he was working on. Koestler (1989:35) has described such occurrences as *bisociation*, and argues that it is a basic device in creativity. He defines it as "the perceiving of a situation or idea…in two self-consistent, but habitually incompatible frames of reference" (Koestler 1989:35). This term is used with the intention of distinguishing between routine skills (one plane of thinking) and creative acts (more than one plane of thinking). The first plane is used in the workplace when just one person is working on a project, and the second plane is used when several people are working together in a team. They can reach the *eureka* moment in different contexts, not just in the workplace; for example, when they are eating, watching a film, dancing in a nightclub, playing music, et cetera. Despite the time that they spend at work, the workers are aware of the world around them. They connect their work lives with their personal lives, even centering their personal lives on their work lives, using certain mechanisms (such as their websites, social media, etc.) to interconnect the two. Thus, these two vital aspects coexist in parallel, even though the workers spend most of their time at the office.

Another fusion that has been observed is between leisure and work. This was apparent when the workers were talking about their personal lives, free time, tastes, and concerns, and making jokes in the office. This means that they know each others' tastes, and so are able to mix their working and personal lives because they know each other well on a personal level. During working hours, the workers plan activities to do together after work. The result of this fusion between leisure and work is that the different ideas and strengths of each worker can be drawn on to the benefit of the job at hand. On one occasion, for example, a group was trying to come up with names for servers. One of the designers who was a football fanatic demonstrated this fusion of leisure and work by proposing the use of the names of football players (in the end, the programmer pointed out that this could as well complicate matters in the future, and the idea was rejected).

A new fusion was found between work and the worker's identity. This fusion goes beyond the workplace because it is connected to other groups, and other people and urban tribes in the city. According to McLuhan (2001), this natural tendency to expand one's connections to the surrounding communities has the goal of strengthening the intensity in all functions. The network allows ideas to be exchanged. McLuhan explains that new inventions are built on earlier work and the division of previous action into stages, arguing that exchanges inside a city maximize citizen action inside the city. Regarding the fusion concept, the bidirectional union between city and creative workers is connected to the idea of hybridization. According to McLuhan (2001), certain intensities and hybrid energies

appear unexpectedly in the metropolis, which arise as the result of the exchange between diverse functions and knowledge. The manner that they act and perceive the world is similar in both cases, so this *habitus* (Bourdieu 1984) defines a social environment in which they share their lifestyles and similar thought structures. As an example, I can cite in my study the extensive interest on the part of these creative workers in the world of bicycling, as seen in their Facebook profiles, and in the fact that many of them come to work with this mode of transport and some are friends of a bicycle designer/remodeler (alternative movements). A distinctively ecological trait can be observed here, something also revealed in other situations that were observed. On more than one occasion a light bulb left on by a colleague in another room was switched off and conversations were held about the environmental benefits of one type of light source over another. Sport and football in particular form part of the masculine identity of the male workers. Through commenting frequently about matches and results and discussing the merits or otherwise of one team or another, they do so with good humor and respect for other opinions and never exaggerate its importance.

The idea of fusion appears again, but in this case, in connection to innate and acquired skills which create the ideal worker profile and which are essential to enable such teams to work well. The innate abilities are operative, adaptive, listening, and pro-active skills and the acquired skills include teamwork, knowledge of how to do one's job, and the idea of expertise. The workers have their own way of understanding and interpreting each other. This observation is in keeping with Gadamer's definition

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of hermeneutics (1999), which, he argues, is the process by which one understands things and which, he explains, consists of three elements: understanding, interpretation, and application. Interpretation of what the other says is one of the main characteristics of these creative workers. They have their own vocabulary and terminology and use it to discuss a particular subject and to share the many aspects of their work. However, they do not always share their problems in order to receive advice; sometimes they just seek to get something off their chest, or to share their feelings with others. This type of brief catharsis at work seems to relieve the workers of some of their stress. In general, they do not constantly speak to each other, but they do tell each other interesting stories or give their opinions about something that they have seen on a website or elsewhere.

The Importance of Building Ideas Through Language Fusion

Language and communication between the workers are important in the development of their work. These skills serve as immaterial work tools. The value of dialogue has been known for many centuries and many authors have written about it. Gadamer (1999) comments about a document called *Cratylus* (Κρατυλος) which refers to dialogue and was written by Plato in 360 BCE. In it, he explored the semantic problem in language philosophy. As Gadamer says, two linguistic categories which appear in this document reflect the reinvention of language based on the magnification of expression:

1. Professional language, which is based on technical words and full sentences. They do not nec-

essarily use formal language, but rather more technical language which can only be understood by people who understand the subject and the technical expressions.

2. Informal language, which is more colloquial and which the workers use when they are not speaking about their work. This informal language uses short sentences and expressions which enable the workers to communicate more easily and quickly.

Communication is multidimensional because ideas are translated orally to the workers. They also communicate virtually, using the Internet, computers, telephones, mobile phones, and emails. It is important to be sensitive to the dynamics that influence the acceptance of the idea (Rickards 1988), as well as the capture of the idea. The way that the workers get their work done is through reasoning rather than through authority. Face-to-face dialogue between two or more people enables each party to influence each other and allows for the creation of a common background between interlocutors (Tsoukas 2009).

On occasions, the workers in my study were observed to carry out spontaneous brainstorming, without any prior scheduling. The modern origin of this technique is attributed to Osborn who popularized it in his book *Applied Imagination* in the mid-twentieth century. However, this technique is in reality far older, with a kind of brainstorming being practiced over three thousand years ago in Asia (Rickards 1988). Rubenson and Runco (1995) analyzed teams and workgroups that use brainstorming and observed that almost all organizations ap-

plied this type of reasoning to resolve problems. They recognized that there are implicit pressures on organizations that are opposed to brainstorming. These pressures tend to maximize the risk associated with using an original thought and the stigma of being different. The value of diversity and heterogeneity is that the opinion of every worker is considered and respected. Several studies, such as those of Sawyer (2011), have shown that groups are better than individuals at selecting good ideas. There are different versions of brainstorming, but all who use this tool report that it brings great benefits (Rickards 1988). This means that brainstorming is not only beneficial for a company because it enables unrelated solutions to be found, but also because the workers enjoy it, and so the brainstorming activity itself becomes an individual benefit. Csikszentmihályi (1990) reported similar results in his research on artists. Accordingly, many creative individuals say that the formulation of a problem is more important than its solution. Csikszentmihályi adds that real progress in science and art tends to appear when people ask about new questions, or when people look at old problems from a new perspective. This happens in this office where brainstorming is part of everyday conversations. Similarly, Sternberg (2006:90) points out that, "to be creative one must first decide to generate new ideas, analyze these ideas, and sell the ideas to others." In the same way, these actions help to create new ideas in an informal and unexpected way.

One feature of interest for this paper was the ability observed on the part of the workers to do multiple tasks at the same time. All of the workers showed adeptness at multitasking, but on various occasions

one or more of the workers got their co-workers to come up with solutions by asking them questions without giving their own views. These kinds of "leaders" were using a kind of impromptu brainstorming in order to get their co-workers to think of creative solutions to their problems. This problem-solving is almost a game for the workers, because they are having fun using these techniques, and is yet another example of the fusion that was observed between work and fun.

The Digital Era: Between the Physical and Virtual World

The computer is the cornerstone of the work that is done in the office and it seems an extension of the worker's body, creating a man-machine fusion, or cyborg. McLuhan (2001) believes that any invention or technology is an extension or a self-amputation of our physical body. This extension entails the creation of new relationships or a new equilibrium between the different organs of the body. In daily life, we use different electronic machines (clocks, computers, telephones, etc.) that combine with the functioning of our brains. As highlighted by Clark (2003), our brains are like cyborgs whose activity is combined with complex technological machinery. The result of this addition is that the brain develops a greater capacity. McLuhan (2001) says that technology leads to an increase in the direct demands of our own world. Technology can seem like parts of our own bodies and can feel like extensions of us. The workers in my study use the computer when working on their projects and to communicate. They also share their time with their computer, eating breakfast or lunch at their desk. The computer

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is part of their privacy because they do not separate certain personal activities of the screen. To think about the complexity of action which goes beyond the physically perceivable, we can use the third principle of Morin (1998), the *hologramatic* principle, which relates the difference between the observed and the observable.

Although the workers seem sometimes to concentrate only on their own tasks, working on their computers, they are nevertheless alert to external stimuli. The Internet is a tool on which the workers are very dependent, but which at the same time makes them more broadminded, adaptable, and flexible, enabling them to react to changing situations. This explains why they are not very bothered or distracted by the presence of an external observer; because they are constantly exposed to novelties and they react quickly to change. According to Clark (2003:153), the Internet has developed into the global information network through an "anarchic mass" series of individual efforts. He says that the main drawback of the Internet is that there is no central index or any effective method of finding the things that you need. This problem is compounded by the magnitude of the Internet and by the fact that some of its content has been created randomly. In addition, he argues that hyperlinks are a potent tool to access large bodies of information bases which are created collectively. Returning to the workers' relationship with the Internet, creative workers in the study at hand have a fluid communication and share each others' discoveries, whether these are discount coupons or news items or cultural events. This allows them to grow personally and professionally because they are sharing things on many levels (profession-

ally, socially, etc.). They are benefitting from what Granovetter (2000) has called "the strength of weak ties." The weak ties at this workplace are created through sharing information. The information that they share every day can be useful in developing solutions and making discoveries. Hence, they all employ their ingenuity and creativity in the development of their projects and the use they make of their free time.

The Disappearance of Time Conscientiousness

One of the most interesting aspects of the workers is their timetable or their work pattern. One way to summarize their working hours is that when someone is working, they give themselves over completely to their work. Castoriadis (1997) says that space is derived from time, even though traditional platonic ontology argues the opposite. Castoriadis' theory implies that space is a necessary condition when creating something. However, once the forms are created, they do not require time. There is a wide range in the type of timetable used at the workplace because the workers do not have the same schedule. Interestingly, those who do not have a specific timetable tend to spend more hours at work. According to Florida (2002), flexible timetables are a response to changing social needs. Although it may seem that the workers do not have free time, they enjoy their tasks and are happy to work many hours. Other traits of creative individuals include openness and sensitivity, which can generate a wide variety of emotions and feelings; a lot of pleasure, but also suffering and pain. The union of pain (tiredness because they spend many hours at work) and pleasure

(satisfaction because they enjoy their tasks) is another fusion that I have found at the workplace. These double feelings are a trait that was found by Csikszentmihályi (1998) in creative people, who argues that most creative people have a great passion for their work, although they can be objective about it.

Despite losing the notion of time, they are aware of the concept of time and save their projects with date and time. The explanation for this, as given by Florida (2002), is that creative work cannot be controlled by managing the amount of time and creativity cannot be activated or deactivated in pre-established moments. This is so because creativity is a fusion between work and play and because it is impossible to know how long the creative workers will need to spend on a given project. The creative workers in my study do not follow a constant pace of work; their working hours depend on the needs of their projects. They come and go when they want, and if they finish their tasks early, they leave work early. They are also free to decide their own work pattern and how to spend their time depending on their clients' demands. Their ability to make decisions concerning their working hours is greater than that of an aligned worker. It is important to highlight the different conceptions regarding alignment and autonomy. On the one hand, Castoriadis (1983) argues that autonomy is the main goal of a revolutionary process. He cites Freud because he identified the problem of autonomy in the relationship between the subject and another/others from a psychoanalytic point of view. In relation to alignment as a social phenomenon, Castoriadis (1983) notes that the conditions required for alignment to take place go beyond the individual unconscious and the intersub-

jective relationship that happens in the social world. On the other hand, Florida (2002) says with respect to employment that people have decided to sacrifice work security in order to have greater autonomy. He also adds that creative workers have various interests and personalities, and participate in various creative activities.

The workers in my study confront problems with an entirely positive attitude. They have great responsibility and help people who do not have specialist knowledge or who have not mastered a particular field completely. In relation to creative expression, Epstein and Phan (2012:278, 279) identified four basic competencies: capturing, challenging, broadening, and surrounding. These core competencies allow people to control their creative process and, as a consequence, their creative output increases. According to De Bono (1970), a perception is perceived when one realizes the difference between what one has and what one wants to have. De Bono went on to explain that three types of problem exist. The first can be defined as a problem for which, in order to find a solution, one needs new information or needs to know the best way to handle it. The second type of problem does not require new information, but requires a certain predisposition (restructuring of vision) to acquire the information. The third type of problem refers to the block caused by adaptation to improve, so the challenge is to realize that there is a problem and the aspects that it might be possible to define and enhance. The first type of problem is solved by vertical thinking, which is selective, unidirectional, analytical, and sequential, et cetera. The last two types of problem require lateral thinking for their resolution, which is generative and does

Conclusions

Throughout this ethnography situations were observed which reveal the dynamics of a creative group at work. These include, among others, the way of constructing ideas through the fusion of language, the disconnection of time, and the weight that the virtual exercises have on the workers' creative processes. The common themes that unite these realities are the ideas of heterogeneity and hybridization. During the research, the main theme that appeared was the fusion between work and other areas of life, including basic needs, play, leisure, personal life, use of time and the city where the workers live. The main observations are that a casual pace exists in the workers' daily life, in the sense that they do not have a regular working schedule. This disconnection between time and place extends to their other activities, such as eating. They have no fixed meal times, but rather eat around their working hours, and postpone their lunch depending on the progress of their tasks. Meetings between team members about their projects are informal and they speak without a set schedule.

They are decisive and try to respond to the problem straightaway. Similarly, they listen to each other and discuss possible alternatives. This is in keeping with Gadamer's (1999) hermeneutic perception because these workers use the three characteristic elements in the hermeneutical process, namely, understanding, interpretation, and application. Another feature is the speed with which they handle different data

and information and their ability to change easily from one topic to another. This also indicates that mental flexibility is an innate characteristic of these workers. Similarly, they have a great capacity for adaptation; as soon as a meeting is concluded, they have a coffee and return to work. The speed at which they adjust is remarkable and they do not seem to need to take time to switch to another activity. This speed is apparent in how they communicate, through the transfer of ideas and information, and in how they keep themselves up-to-date through the Internet, enabling them to stay constantly informed about the world outside. It is even apparent in their daily vitality, as these creative workers are constantly thinking about and planning activities, both professionally and personally.

These creative workers have greater freedom than the typical alienated worker. They have fun at work and are always joking and laughing. They share different experiences and anecdotes of their personal life with each other. They behave like a group of friends who are playing together, in contrast to the traditional serious nature of a workplace. In addition, they openly share their ideological views on issues, despite having opposing views. They also speak about their ideas aloud while working on the Internet and take decisions through informal consensus. They often say the first thing that comes into their head, even if these thoughts have nothing to do with the tasks that their colleagues are doing. In this regard, Sawyer (2011:247) concludes that people prefer to work in groups with diverse flows. For this reason, companies try to create work environments where workers have to improvise, enabling them to attract and retain the most creative professionals.

Different personal skills in the professional profiles are valued. There are two main skills, innate abilities and acquired skills. The union of these two competencies is the best way to work in these types of multidisciplinary working teams. The two groups in this study share information without hesitation, even though they could be rivals. This type of behavior, as well as the common area for dialogue, is beneficial for everybody. Communication is multidisciplinary between designers and programmers and intergroup communication is fluid. The productivity level of each person is different depending on the time of the day.

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This research is relevant because it includes the idea of the hybrid and mixing. These are concepts that have not been researched much in social science. This research breaks with binomial ideas of inside-out, public-private, personal-professional, work-play, et cetera, and explores fusion as a main characteristic of creativity and a hallmark in professional organizations. This article also provides another way to understand the creative potential through the union of diverse situations and through the connection of social realities that have always been separated.

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