VALUES, CULTURE, SOCIAL CAPITAL, CHANGE:
THE CASE OF THE CAR COOP

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(Resource Management and Environmental Studies)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
(Vancouver)

February 2011

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Abstract

This is a study of the oppositional social forces at play within and around the hybrid commercial social enterprise. The literature reveals these tension points regularly in the history of the social enterprise movement as a whole, and within individual organizations within the movement. Typically, these tension points, quasi-paradoxes, or oppositional co-existences are cultural and values-based in nature, stemming largely from a core egalitarian-utilitarian synthesis that is emerging globally in many forms, including via social enterprise. Consequently, the theoretical frameworks used to explore these questions are also socio-cultural, economic, and values-based. In the early years of the coop, the social entrepreneur is the key mediating force between the entrepreneurial, market-building demands of a new business, and the egalitarian institutional cultural predisposition that led to its creation. Later in the institutional history the social entrepreneur’s prolonged success at market development catalyzes a wider stakeholder debate and cultural crisis regarding the future of the institution under conditions of rapid and persistent growth. The organization’s members, arguably the most important stakeholder, are explored last - as a separate unit of analysis, but through a similar values-culture tension lens. It is found that the organization's members hold a complex, often paradoxical mix of utilitarian and egalitarian values, and that are both important to the organization's value proposition. The study is a qualitative inductive ethnography undertaken in the format of a single paradigmatic case study.
Preface

This thesis research was undertaken solely by Jeremy Osborn, under the supervision of Dr. James Tansey and Paul Cubbon, both of the University of British Columbia. No publications were produced as part of this thesis research. This thesis research was approved by UBC’s Behavioural Research Ethics Board. The file number for the ethics review was H08-00915, and it was approved June 11th, 2008.
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Acknowledgements

I offer my enduring gratitude to Dr. James Tansey for his many hours of assistance, and guidance through this thesis. I would also like to thank my classmates, and the many other faculty and staff at the University of British Columbia for their support and assistance as well as the generous, passionate and friendly staff of The Car Coop for their many contributions.

I would also like to thank my family, especially my wife Lauren, for their love and support.
Introduction

This is a study of the oppositional social forces at play within and around the hybrid commercial social enterprise. The literature reveals these tension points regularly in the history of the movement as a whole, and within individual organizations within the movement. Typically, these tension points, quasi-paradoxes, or oppositional co-existences are cultural and values-based in nature, stemming largely from a core egalitarian-utilitarian synthesis that is emerging globally in many forms, including via social enterprise. Consequently, the theoretical frameworks used to explore these questions will also be socio-cultural, economic, and values-based.

These tensions are revealed consistently throughout The Car Coop’s history, as are mediating factors that allow these oppositional forces to occur and interact successfully, or in some cases not. In the early years of the coop, the social entrepreneur is the key mediating force between the entrepreneurial, market-building demands of a new business, and the egalitarian institutional cultural predisposition that led to its creation. Later in the institutional history the social entrepreneur’s prolonged success at market development catalyzes a wider stakeholder debate and cultural crisis regarding the future of the institution under conditions of rapid and persistent growth. The organization’s members, arguably the most important stakeholder, are explored last - as a separate unit of analysis, but through a similar values-culture tension lens. This study is largely ethnography. It is the story of one organization’s cultural development, but attempts to carry the spirit of broader themes to the movement as a whole.

As Keith Basso (1983) once remarked:

Attending carefully to claims people make about themselves, and then trying to grasp with some exactness what they have claimed and why, can be a perplexing and time-consuming
business…[yet] when the work goes well – when puzzling claims are seen to make principled sense and when, as a consequence of this, one is able to move closer to an understanding of who the people involved take themselves to be – it can be richly informative and highly worthwhile.
Context

The global history of the automobile is a study in the growth of collective ambivalence; it began with the enthusiastic pursuit of a liberating automotive idea, a quest for personal and collective autonomy, and the material removal of social constriction via enhanced mobility. Yet the automobile has become so ubiquitous that today these benefits are almost invisible, while the negative externalities have become more salient. The automobile is increasingly viewed as a source of health and safety risk, a visual stigma object, and an environmental hazard (Peltzman, 1975; Paaswell, 1972; Schipper, 1998; McCarthy, 2007). Human beings implicitly value the functions of the automobile, yet increasingly resent its form, challenge its central role in their lives, and contemplate alternate futures.

As the arc of prevailing social values and attitudes towards industrialization have changed, so too the automobile has come to represent – at least in certain vocal quarters, and from certain critical perspectives - an anachronistic symbol of industrialism gone wrong. A double-edged sword, the automobile is still seen as liberating, yet increasingly as socially damaging; empowering, yet risky; a source of freedom and opportunity, yet also a vehicle for social and environmental injustice (Babson, 1995; Bryant, 1995), pollution (Kassarjian, 1971; Wjst et al. 1993; Innes, 1996; Brunekreef et al. 1997), wasteful natural resource usage (Hanna and Freeman, 1977; Lomi et al, 2005), urban sprawl and decay (Kopecky, 2004; Frey, 1979), and excess (Sheller and Urri, 2005).

The history of the automobile can be divided into two phases. The first phase describes the romantic rise of the automotive idea in Europe and North America - denoted by a massive ramp-up in global production up to and through the First and Second World Wars and for about
two decades following it (Flink, 1990). After World War II, global automotive demand paused in the pre-globalization period of the mid 1960s and early 1970s. It was during this time that the first substantive critiques of the automobile emerged, and an element of ambivalence entered the automobile discourse.

This period also witnessed the emergence and growth of the first substantive environmental and social critiques of the automobile and the automobile industry. The iconic symbolism of the automobile was transformed, at least in part, from that of a social and materially lifestyle enhancing benefit to a socially and environmentally stigmatized risk. Not coincidentally, this transition happened at the apex of a number of converging forces. These forces include, but are not limited to the following: the emergence of a widespread characterization of modern industrial society as a risk society (Beck, 1992); the rise of a mainstream egalitarian ethic predisposed to judge the automobile as responsible for the fragmentation of communities and social groups via suburbanization (Satterfield citing Merchant, 1992; Sheller and Urri, 2005); the birth of an environmental justice movement critical of the inequitable dispensation of externalities from industrial production (Taylor, 2000); the proliferation of a non-profit citizen sector that increasingly advocated the use of market and organizational mechanisms for solving social and environmental problems (Borzaga, 2001).

Commercial car sharing in its earliest form was primarily a critique of the negative social and environmental externalities of the personally owned automobile, and secondarily – via its association with the social enterprise movement – a critique of the shortcomings of industrial capitalist society. Both critiques were born out of the non-profit sector and the values inherent in that movement. Commercial non-profit actors dominated the social enterprise sector and the commercial car sharing market from its inception, and their success has attracted interest from
different economic quarters. This has given birth to a new form of ideological and material
tension in some markets, and within and across the enterprises themselves, giving birth to new
models of competition and commerce.
Chapter 1: Background

Speculative theorizing on self-propelled vehicular transportation was introduced as early as the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries by Roger Bacon and Leonardo da Vinci; however, steam powered automobile experiments occurred only intermittently from the seventeenth century to the late nineteenth century, and with little to no prolonged success (Flink, 1990). American inventors valued the idea of independent automobile travel, yet an emphasis on steam-based technologies in the late nineteenth century – due to prolonged public subsidization of the railroads – caused them to come late to the internal combustion engine (Flink, 1992). Yet, while the Europeans invented the internal combustion engine and first commercialized it, it was American fascination, uptake and low-cost mass production that created the world’s first consumer car culture. This American cultural adoption was an important precursor to the eventual globalization of independent vehicular travel (Flink citing Rae, 1965).

Flink (1972) describes the parallel growth of an “automotive idea” in both North America and Europe during the 19th century. This was demonstrated by increasing interest in transportation technologies and the improvement of national road infrastructures. He explains that during the mid to late 19th century, from approximately 1860-1890, American predisposition was towards designing a commercially viable steam powered car. This digression was later recognized as futile in light of the German-French commercialization of the internal combustion engine and automobile. Automobile historians attribute Karl Benz and Constant Levassor with pioneering the first near-commercial prototype of the modern day internal combustion engine (Flink, 1972). Benz was “a German manufacturer of stationary gasoline engines,” and Levassor was a French engineer-entrepreneur who, in 1891, “innovated the mechanical arrangement of the modern motorcar” (Flink). By 1895, commercial automobiles were frequently visible on the
streets of Paris. This was partly attributable to the vast superiority of the French road infrastructure - due to a century of investment in automotive, road based military vehicles.

By this time, America was lagging, largely due to continued government subsidization of the railroads, an investment that signaled undue focus on the development of steam technologies. However, this trajectory began to change in the 1890s. The emergence of a new bicycle culture coupled with agrarian discontent with the monopolistic practices of the railroads created substantive civic pressure for improved roads and consumer access to independent modes of long distance travel (Flink, 1972). The ‘good roads’ movement gained substantial political traction, and became a priority for campaigning political parties, creating a political foundation for the development of improved automotive infrastructure, an irony not lost on present day cycling advocates.

According to Flink (1972), a critical tipping point for the American automotive journey occurred in June of 1895 when a long distance auto race in Europe was given extensive coverage by American media. By September 1895, the American Patent Office was flooded with over 500 applications for motor vehicle products. Soon after, the first European motorcars became available for purchase in the United States. By 1898 the first independent auto dealers were opening in New York City and the first American built vehicles were coming to market (McShane, 1999). This surge of entrepreneurial interest in building an American automobile culminated in the formation of the Ford Motor Company, which was capitalized with $28,000 cash in 1903 (McShane, 1999).

Americans fell in love with the automobile despite early critiques. The year after the founding of the Ford Motor Company, Woodrow Wilson proclaimed, “ownership of a motorcar is such an ostentatious display of wealth that it will stimulate socialism” (McShane, 1999).
Around the same time, the New York Herald warned that cars stir up “primitive emotions” (McShane, 1999). Despite this, the American domination of the automotive industry was underway. In 1908 Henry Ford’s Model T entered the market by storm with its revolutionary production line technology. This technology enabled the production of one Model T every fifteen minutes, dramatically reducing the price point of cars, and granting consumer access to millions of vehicles, first in America, and then in Europe. In 1914, one of Ford’s own production line workers could buy a Model T with only four months wages (McShane, 1999). By 1924 Ford had sold ten million copies of the Model T, including a surprising record of civilian sales throughout the duration of World War I (McShane, 1999).

Ford’s assembly line technology was improved and distributed throughout Europe after World War I, while the automotive industry there was being rebuilt. For the next forty years – until the first leveling of consumer demand and the emergence of the first substantive and enduring social critiques of the automobile – the ceiling potential, both in social freedom and market capitalization terms seemed nearly limitless. This lent credence to Anatole France’s declaration that “the future belongs to the metal beast” (McShane, 1999).

The Automobile as Risk Object

In the mid 1960s a series of social and economic forces converged and the first rust appeared on the reputation of the automobile. Flink (1972) described the first fictitious ‘death of the automobile’ as occurring in the mid to late nineteen sixties. Jerome says that “during this period, the largest industry the world has ever known...peaked out. The automobile industry began to die” (as cited in Flink, 1972). Jerome considered the railways “the biggest throw away economy the world has ever known”, yet conceded that the automobile held a “shorter past and a ‘shorter future’”(1972). And while history proved otherwise, this supposed end period demarked
a notable and increasingly ambivalent shift in public perception regarding the automobile. It did not, as prophesized by Jerome (1972), equal the death knell of the automobile industry. Instead, it signaled the birth of a sustained and salient critique against the negative externalities of independent auto travel. This critique exists and expands to this day in various forms and via various proxy arguments including climate change (Levy et al, 2002), air quality (Calvert et al, 1993), and critiques of global energy and materials policy (Newman, 1999).

Flink (1972) attributed this shift in perception to a rising awareness of the social and environmental costs of the automobile. He describes trends of increasing sophistication in technology, linked directly to increasing advances in social cost accounting. Social and environmental costs were beginning to appear in accounting ledgers, and the full cost of the automobile was being realized, supposedly making the value proposition less appealing. Simultaneously, market demand and profitability were growing stagnant, and the auto industry began to cut corners in production, resulting in numerous high profile safety and quality recalls (Flink, 1988). Jerome’s conclusion was that ‘the automobile must go’ (Flink, 1988). But it endured, despite increasing criticism.

Public perceptions of industrialization also changed the way people perceived the automobile during this period. Jasanoff (2008) describes a twentieth century transition from the western industrial society to the western knowledge society, and describes ‘massive upheavals’ in public perceptions about risk as a result. In this sense, the perception of industrialization itself was changing. No longer a liberating force and purveyor of material wealth, security, freedom, and individual liberation, industrialization was increasingly viewed as causal to broad classes of social and environmental problems. It was also increasingly seen as a threat to the fabric of social groups, and the natural environments that sustained them. Unsurprisingly, that late icon of
industrialization, the automobile, followed a similar arc in the public discourse: from liberating force to risk factor.

The last thirty years has witnessed the rise of a social science perspective on risk, which partially explains the fall of the automobile from public grace. Lupton (1999) describes ‘governmentality’ as a modern approach to social administration that arose historically out of the breakdown in feudalism during the late middle ages. In a modern sense governmentality is an intrinsic categorical and coralling force that compromises a broad range of techniques for exercising the control of populations. Like the automobile, it is almost invisible due to its ubiquity in the modern nation state. It is the sum of the mechanisms that states or other large institutions use to enforce rules, and act on behalf of populations - usually in the interpreted interests of the dominant political paradigm. In late or post-industrial western states, Lupton describes governmentality with a dispassionate irony. The state, she says, serves a neo-liberalist agenda by promoting the interests and rights of the individual from transgressions or infringements of the state itself, or other large institutions (1999). Risk management under a governmentality perspective is viewed as a strategy for monitoring, managing, controlling and protecting populations from infringements on individual liberties. Prior to this modern incarnation of the state, governments relied on the use of the expert to observe, study, research, police, and educate the populous in terms of risk and idealized normative behavior (Lupton, 1999). Increasingly, however, the governmentality perspective embodies a trend towards promoting self-management of risk. Individuals, and non-governmental social groups, living in a societal wide ‘web of surveillance’ have become habitualized toward increasing their individual and collective responsibility for risk management via non-governmental means (Lupton, 1999).
The concurrent rise of social enterprise and carsharing during this period of governmental risk outsourcing is not necessarily coincidental. Car sharing has emerged as a critique and an alternative to the personally owned automobile, a proposition that aims to reduce the negative externalities associated with the individually owned automobile. Its emergence is partly a response to a perceived risk management failure on the part of governments, and its value proposition draws participants based on an individual’s perceived obligation to manage collective social and environmental risk. Lupton argues that these social norms exert an immense amount of pressure on the individual to broadly seek out expertise and knowledge in relation to risk-related personal decisions. These personal risk management strategies are undertaken in order to fulfill perceived social obligations, avoid social sanction, and to protect the self and valued others from the many harms inherent and ubiquitous, or perceived to be inherent and ubiquitous, in the modern risk society (Beck, 1992).

Thus, individuals have started looking for new ways to manage the risks associated with the automobile. Automobile historians all touch on various aspects of the transition of the automobile from social benefit to social risk (Pettifer and Turner, 1984; McShane, 1990; Sachs, 1992; Gartman, 1994; Berger, 200). The 1990s in particular witnessed increasing attention to the environmental problems associated with personal automobiles, particularly in light of growing concern over climate change, persistent issues of air pollution associated with rising populations, and increasing automobile sales in developing nations (Newman and Kenworthy, 1999; Vugt et al, 1995; Dryzak, 1998; Grossman et al, 1995). Automobile proliferation has also been associated directly with a number of new risks that are companions to the decentralization of cities and growth economies. These risks include pollution (Kassarjian, 1971; Wjst et al. 1993; Innes, 1996; Brunekreef et al. 1997); wasteful natural resource usage (Hanna and Freeman, 1977;
Lomi et al, 2005); urban sprawl and decay (Kopecky, 2004; Frey, 1979); and excess (Sheller and Urri, 2005). Numerous scholarly articles support this view, and public advocacy for a return to higher availability of public transportation, denser urbanization, and less reliance on the personal automobile is increasingly strong in many local contexts (Le Roy and Sonstelie, 1983; Glaessar, Kahn, and Rappaport, 2000; Glaessar and Kahn, 2003; Kopecky, 2004). Within this new risk arena, non-governmental risk management strategies have proliferated, including the emergence of commercial car sharing from out of the broader social enterprise movement.

**The Social Enterprise Movement as Industrial Critique**

Social enterprise emerged out of the non-profit sector as: a response to the new realities of the governmental risk society, a critique against industrial capitalism, and an implicit advocacy for the transformation of commerce (Lupton, 1999). Terminological ambiguity saturates the literature on social enterprise, yet emphasis away from profit maximization is prevalent throughout, and seems central to the definition of the emergent field (Bull and Crompton, 2006; DTI (2002); Ecotec, 2003). Bull and Crompton (2006) admit to the problem of definition and mapping, but lay out a discussion of the terminology to help frame the paper, referring to Kendall and Knapp (1995) and their definition of social enterprise as a “loose and baggy monster”. They also examine the British Department of Trade and Industry’s ((DTI) 2002) popular and highly cited definition, which is “a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximize profit for shareholders and owners.” Reid and Griffin (2006), while alluding to the literature, and the numerous “examples of definition making,” decline to enter the terminology foray, explaining that their paper “does not attempt to replace or correct any of these well-argued discussions; rather, it highlights what continue to be interesting
and important questions regarding social enterprise.” Yet in the paper, and its discussion of isomorphism, which is the tendency for social enterprises to assume similar form and structure, implicit assumptions about the definition and role of profit motivations of social enterprise are revealed regularly. Admitting the lack of specificity of this definition, Bull and Crompton explore a separate definition provided by ECOTE (2003), which argued that a social enterprise is a business where:

[During the provision of] regular, everyday activities involve providing products or services in return for payment; at least 25 per cent of their funding is generated from trading, i.e. in direct exchange of goods and services; they have a primary purpose to pursue a social or environmental goal (as opposed to being purely or mainly profit driven) and they principally re-invest any profit or surplus that is made in the organization or community to further the social or environmental goal.

Dees (1998), in his influential paper on social entrepreneurship defines enterprise value creation by stating that “value is created in business when customers are willing to pay more than it costs to produce the good or service being sold,” an implicit indication of support for profit generation in social enterprise. However, disagreement arises when discussing how that profit should be distributed. The historical bi-product of economic value creation has been wealth creation, but this assumption has been challenged in the social enterprise literature, at least implicitly (Ekins and Max-Neef 1992). There is a strong tendency to define social enterprise as a spectrum of activities focused on creating social and/or environmental value and distributing the profits to a wider group of social actors. There is also a notable absence of advocacy for wealth creating ownership models. While some authors admit to the existence of more “enterprise
focused” models of social enterprise, there is scant evidence of research investigating the pros and cons of increasing personal profit motivations within the sector (Flockhart 2005; Bull, 2007).

   Dees (1998) defines the social entrepreneur as the social equivalent of the entrepreneur; seeking social impact maximization rather than profit, emphasizing that “mission-related impact becomes the central criterion, not wealth creation.” As noted, there is little support in the literature for the inclusion of private, wealth generating ventures in the spectrum of activities termed as social enterprises. Yet these enterprises do exist anecdotally, and often mix measurable social or environmental impact with wealth generating ability. In many cases, the private sector is engaging in mixed mission activities with better access to capital financing, arguably lower agency and transaction costs related to condensed ownership models, and perhaps superior operational efficiency due to profit motivation and a greater singular focus on business performance (Brown, 2006; Jensen and Meckling, 1976).

   Thus, the treatment of definitions, values, and categorical inclusions and exclusions within the social enterprise literature speaks implicitly to a deeper set of ideological assumptions - focused on the redistribution of profits in service of collective social goals rather than the personal accumulation of capital to a smaller set of stakeholders.

   Broadly speaking, however, the dominant ideological tension within the social enterprise field can be characterized as a tension between the primacies of non-financial, egalitarian social values versus rational economic values. Dart (2004) attempts an explicitly sociological exploration of social enterprise with the aim of analyzing the fledgling institutions of social enterprise for legitimacy, rejecting a “rationalist and economics-based theorizing of social enterprise,” which he says “ignore or overshadow some of the sociological basis and cultural or political origins of the nonprofit sector.” These theories, according to Dart, ignore a broad,
complex, and organic process of emergence that cannot be fully realized through what he describes as the relatively narrow lens of strategic managerial and utilitarian forms. His perspective, while clearly sociological in nature, inadvertently avoids opportunities for synthesis within the field.

A less polemic view, which comes closer to attempting a meaningful socio-economic synthesis, is taken by Laville and Nyssens (2001), who argue for new models of socio-economic integration through innovative ownership structures in social enterprises. Ownership, according to Laville and Nyssens, is the primary criteria for determining organizational objectives; therefore, they postulate, ownership dominated by profit-seeking investors creates a high degree of emphasis on profit maximization. The social enterprise, he says, offers a new path via collective ownership, or a diverse set of property rights; one category for each group of stakeholder: “workers, consumers, benefactors, investors, and others” (2001). This approach, he argues, removes incentives to externalize social and environmental costs, and provides a more realistic framework for the pursuit of a democratic mission with collective benefits. Laville’s perspective is perhaps oversimplified, ignoring the range of particular forms that for-profit business may take. For example, small closely held companies with centralized control structures are still capable of making autocratic decisions in the interest of a broader group of stakeholders. So too are democratic, broadly owned cooperatives or social enterprise capable of creating large negative externalities. His point, however, seems to be more general; the degree to which ownership interest is concentrated is roughly inverse to the degree that organizational interest will extend beyond that ownership – in the average case. Democratic ownership, he argues, supports better institutional decision making in the collective interest. This is, he argues, because
of the availability of a more complete set of social information, and a wider, more divergent set of interests evaluating decision outcomes.

While Laville’s approach is not completely dismissive of a market perspective, it is certainly a departure from the historical underpinnings of western economic theory, at least outside of collectivist, communist, or traditional economies. Jensen and Meckling (1976), in their influential paper on agency costs and the firm, address the perverse side effects related to issues of financial agency. They argue that, “organizations are simply legal fictions, which serve as a nexus for a set of contracting relationships among individuals,” and describe the financial costs that can accrue relative to the degree to which financial agency is distributed collectively across these networks. As agency is distributed, they argue, transaction costs increase.

Jensen’s neo-classic perspective, if taken at face value, reveals a problem in Laville’s argument. While a distributive ownership model creates a matrix of stakeholder rights seemingly beneficial to inducing maximized social returns and the reduction of profit motives from a firm, collective ownership is inherently loaded with financial agency costs not typically born by profit seeking competitors. This can act as a disincentive to strong financial performance; a key success criteria in competitive markets where social enterprises reside. And due to the high level of interdependence between social and financial outcomes in the social enterprise, maximizing social outcomes is dependant on financial and managerial success, creating a socio-economic double bind of sorts.

Laville (2001) attempts to address the agency and transaction cost issue by invoking an ambiguous definition of social capital. He references Gui’s definition of social capital as ‘intangible capital assets that inhere in enduring personal relationships.” He hypothesizes that in the collective ownership model, the accumulation of social capital will be “an end in itself,”
apparently recovering agency costs, and advancing the competitive position of the firm in the
marketplace through goodwill generated by stakeholder relations (2001). Yet the evocation of
the power of social capital, and his assumption that collectively owned organizations can
leverage social capital more effectively than profit-driven enterprise, is not without criticism
within Laville’s disciplinary home of sociology. Portes (1998) suggests that the term social
capital has “evolved into something of a cure-all for the maladies affecting society,” and
describes it as approaching the status of a cliché – saying that it has come “to be applied to so
many events and in so many different contexts as to lose any distinct meaning.” This appears to
be the case in the Laville piece, where he uses social capital as an apparently self-evident
jumping off point for arguments against private ownership; he implies that private ownership
lacks the social capital leverage necessary to encourage democratic societies that support the
public interest. This argument is relatively unsupported in that it lacks a comprehensive
exploration of social capital employment, or lack thereof, in the private ownership model, which
some scholars suggest is fundamental to private sector business activity (Putnam, 1995).
Furthermore, he does not provide a clear and tractable explanation of the advantages of social
capital in the context he describes it, nor any indication of why a social enterprise might be
superior at leveraging this intangible asset towards the development of financial capital. This
thesis will explore social capital more thoroughly in later sections.

Laville also argues that social enterprise lends itself more fruitfully to democratization
than private enterprise, implicitly revealing democratization as an ideal objective for the sector.
Yet Laville’s argument is convincing only if the primacy of this democratic objective and his
assumptions on social capital and the nature of organizational influence on the public and private
spheres, are left unchallenged. He asserts that social enterprise is more apt to increase the
maximization of social capital through the development of trusting relationships. These trusting relationships, he says, are a bi-product of the social enterprise’s unique ability to bring traditionally private social issues into the public sphere for exposure to collective scrutiny, thereby increasing the democratization of social issues via the creation of a more complete set of social information. Yet again, it is not self-evident that social capital, as he describes it, lends itself to the advancement of democracy – defined as collective or distributed ownership or agency - any better than other modes of capital. Nor does he provide evidence to support the assertion that collective ownership models are superior at leveraging social capital in this manner. In fact, Laville’s own definition of social capital fits adequately with any form of organization regardless of structure. This includes many community engaged private enterprises, public sector organizations, and charitable societies. His argument is intriguing and perhaps intuitively satisfying from certain perspectives, yet there is little evidence that he has applied his theory comparatively to other enterprise models – revealing at best a need for further research on this topic.

So, while social enterprise has emerged from within the non-profit sector, the past two decades have also witnessed a corresponding shift in the neoclassical model of commerce. Due to the work of a host of thinkers and actors from a variety of disciplines, and public demand for greater social and environmental accountability in the private sector, modern profit-centric commerce has increasingly concerned itself with the creation of social and environmental value. For social enterprise, this convergence of private sector operational strategies and ideologies and not-for profit social value maximization techniques has created a dichotomy of non-profit and for-profit businesses that is still largely in its infancy. During the 1980s many governments in developing nations moved social welfare provision into the private sector, while simultaneous
and exponential growth in the not-for-profit sector caused an increasingly competitive environment for funding between “donative non-profits” (Zietlow 2001). The result was an increasing emphasis on improving funding self-sufficiency within the not-for-profit sector. This forced many non-profits into commercial markets. Concurrently, changing consumer and citizen values have increased the demand for a new value proposition in the for profit sector. The result is the convergence of non-profits and for profits in markets where the consumer/citizen is increasingly demanding not only individual utility maximization, but also collective social or environmental benefits associated with their consumption.

A Brief History of Carsharing

The first printed evidence of commercial car sharing was a Zurich based non-profit co-operative known as Sefage, which translates to “self-riding community” (Sperling, 1998). Sefage was initiated in 1948 as an economic alternative to the prohibitive costs of owning a private vehicle in post war Switzerland (Shaheen, 2007). After Sefage, there is little indication within the limited historical perspectives of the car sharing literature of any additional activity until the 1970s when a number of public car sharing experiments were “attempted and later discontinued” in the United Kingdom and Europe (Shaheen, 2006). According to Britain (cited in Shaheen, 2000; Van Winkle, 2006; Cousins, 2000; and Strid, 2000), the timeline was as follows: Procotip (France, 1971 to 1973), Witkar (Amsterdam, Netherlands, 1974 to 1988), Green Cars (Great Britain, 1977 to 1984), Bilpoolen (Lund, Sweden, 1976 to 1979), Vivallabil (Orebro, Sweden, 1983 to 1998), and a Bilkooperativ (Gothenburg, Sweden, 1985 to 1990).

Procotip appeared during the period typically associated with the emergence of the first substantial critiques of the automobile. Vague references to Procotip abound in the small car sharing literature; however, very little concrete operational data seems to exist beyond the
recognition that the service existed in Montpellier, France from 1971 to 1973. An obscure stand-alone reference from the website of the Arts and Humanities Data Service of the UK based University College for Creative Arts contains a scanned online repository of Design Journal (2007), which carries a 1974 opinion editorial on Procotip:

Everyone will regret the failure of Montpellier's Procotip shared car scheme. The experiment, using 37 Simca 1000s, failed for lack of funds. But behind that simplistic explanation, there are at least three specific lessons for the future. Firstly, cooperative car ownership of this kind should be treated as an opportunity to introduce purpose-built urban cars with non-petrol propulsion. Secondly, urban traffic systems and equipment must be adjusted to assist such schemes. Thirdly, encouragement for this kind of scheme must go hand in hand with discouragement for private ownership.

Witkar was a Dutch carsharing experiment that occurred around the same time. Time Magazine (1974) described Witkar inventor Luud Schimmelpennink as ‘something of a Dutch Don Quixote’ for his desire to generate renewable energy to power his purpose-built fleet of Amsterdam electric cars. The non-polluting Witkar, which translates to white car in Dutch, was capable of speeds of up to 20mph and could drive 2.4 miles between strategically placed recharging stations (Time, 1974). Witkar did not receive public funding, so was incorporated as a cooperative. It initially consisted of 35 Witkarren, 5 charging stations, and a centralized computer system for tracking car usage (Bendixon, 1976). Coop members were charged by the minute, and charging stations were placed strategically to deter automobile travel to the site. In fact, charging stations were intentionally located far from parking lots (1976). This egalitarian bent of Witkar, which relied on a strong, reliable connection between self-transcendent values, and a predisposition to environmentally significant behavior is likely one of the reasons Witkar
encountered problems of scale, despite good intentions (Schwartz, 1992). Britton (2000) describes Green Cars as a series of Car Sharing experiments that originated in Milton-Keyes in the United Kingdom. Green Cars was the first explicit attempt to motivate uptake by shifting fixed automobile ownership costs to variable per trip usage costs. It recognized that the shared car was one piece of an interdependent transportation infrastructure, and therefore reliant on the availability of other modes of transportation for its success. Britton describes Green Cars as a series of 17 one car pilot schemes, which attempted to make Car Sharing work administratively and economically. Bilpoolen, Vivallabil, Bilkoperative are all Swedish Car Sharing companies that emerged in the early to mid-1980s; however, there is only scant and cursory reference to them in the literature, and so their contributions to Car Sharing operational practice remain a mystery.

According to Shaheen (1998), North American car sharing emerged in the 1980s with two limited experiments. The first was Mobility Enterprise, a Purdue University research program which ran from 1983 to 1986. The second was the Short-Term Auto Rental (STAR) demonstration, which ran in San Francisco from 1983 to 1985. Today, 90% of all North American work-related vehicle trips are made in single occupant vehicles, while 58% of all non-work trips are made in single occupant vehicles (Shaheen, 1998). Shaheen (1998) advocates car sharing from a rational economics perspective as a more efficient mode of vehicular transit where utilization costs are assigned to improve the incentives for reduced usage, and to encourage maximum utilization of the automobile as an economic asset with high depreciation costs. Additionally, carsharing serves to reduce the total number of vehicles on the road by reducing demands for highway infrastructure and parking space. It also curbs particulate tailpipe emissions, and reducing associated negative health impacts. Car sharing now exists in “16 cities,
18 nations, and on 400 continents.” Nearly 350,000 people are now sharing approximately 12,000 vehicles around the world, with 60% of that number in Europe (2006). Shaheen (2006) estimates that between 6 – 23 cars are replaced by each car sharing vehicle, and that upwards of 30% of car sharing customers sell their vehicles after joining. She describes the North American car sharing movement as a “late comer” with an increasing number of car sharing organizations emerging since 1994 (2006). Since that time, 40 organizations have “been deployed” in North America, with 28 of those still existing in 36 urban areas. In Canada, there are 11 carsharing companies in operation, with an average member to vehicle ratio of approximately 20:1. In 2005, total membership in car sharing in Canada was approximately 12,000 though that number has risen since.
Chapter 2: Theoretical Frameworks

Three overlapping theoretical frameworks, and two units of analysis were chosen for this study. Cultural theory and social capital theory were chosen to explore the internal operating environment of the coop via an ethnographic historical narrative. Values theory, social capital theory, and cultural theory were used to explore member motivations and behaviour.

A Values Based Approach to Theorizing The Car Coop

Bennett et al. (2005) remark that the term ‘value’ is much more than a signifier of economic value. They identify value debates in ancient Greece as foundational to many of the modern incarnations of the term. Perspectives on truth (epistemology), goodness (ethics), and beauty (aesthetics) were the cornerstones of the philosophy of both Aristotle and Plato, and these concepts, according to Bennett et al, served as proxies for conceptions of what is valuable. Modern values discourse, according to Bennett et al, “almost invariably ranks these in order.” Plato, in particular, held a hierarchical view of values. This is commonly referred to in modern environmental values literature as an “axiomatic” stance (Satterfield, 2005). He placed “a life of contemplation” as the highest pursuit of human life, thereby also devaluing other life pursuits such as labor, athleticism, or the pursuit of sensual satisfaction (Bennett et al., 2005). Aristotle, conversely, held a “vertical” or what is modernly known as a “relativistic” (Satterfield, 2005) values perspective where different “species” (Bennett et al., 2005) of goodness, truth, and beauty are embodied ontologically in different roles (i.e. thinker, athlete, laborer).

Value assumptions almost invariably underpin any philosophical argument on what is right, ideal, or desirable. A Marxist philosophy, which emphasizes the rightness of “productive, creative, liberated work” (Bennett et al., 2005), necessarily valorizes the “use value” of labor technologies and materials, while – at least in historical practice - devaluing “exchange value”
associated with economies of scale, abstract capital markets, and invisible distant labor forces (2005). The late or post-modern approach to value and valuation recognizes the subjectively evaluative and relativistic nature of value. Yet despite this relativistic approach to modern value debates, a prescriptive axiomatic tradition persists in values scholarship, in which advocates claim the superiority of some values over others. Not unlike Plato’s hierarchy of values, axiomatic or “absolute” (Bennett et al., 2005) values fall most typically within the ethical, and occasionally within the epistemological approach to values, and are considered to be positions on what individuals or societies should or ought to do or know. These approaches abound in the environmental values literature, and have given birth to several moralist value based critiques both within and against modern environmentalism, many of which take the form of critiques of utilitarianism (Sagoff, 1998; Naes, 1984; Guha, 1989; Salleh, 1993). Conversely, the social sciences and humanities have to a large extent approached values, and environmental values, with a commitment to values neutrality. Typically descriptive and predictive in nature, sociology and anthropology have sought to understand the emergence of values paradigms within specific cultural contexts, and anticipate and map the relationships between values, cultural constructs, attitudes, beliefs, and behavior. This has resulted in attempts at unifying behavioral theory (Stern and Dietz, 1994), and values and worldview elicitation typologies (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992; Dunlap et al., 1978). This thesis explicitly takes a value neutral stance.

**Consumer versus Citizen Values**

In the context of car sharing, social enterprise, and consumerism, it is useful to make a clear distinction between consumer and citizen values (Sagoff, 2005). Sagoff describes this distinction as being between a utilitarian (preference based) philosophy of value, and a Kantian (principle based) one. These conceptions of value both have different disciplinary underpinnings
and academic histories. Both conceptions of value, however, hold importance in the study of car sharing and both will be employed methodologically in the determination of what is important to the Cooperative Auto Network and its stakeholders.

Consumer values are typically instrumental in nature, and arise from a utilitarian perspective. The goal of utilitarianism is to measure utility, the relative satisfaction achieved from desired or consumed goods and services. Utilitarian economists view the individual as a rational consumer who seeks above all to maximize personal utility through expressed preferences, often using money as a proxy. Contingent valuation is the practice of extending this theory to all goods and services, whether physically in the market or not. Advocates of contingent valuation believe that any desired or valued object, material or otherwise, can be measured for utility. Economists predisposed to utilitarianism as a full explanatory theory of behavior presume that satisfaction from any valued object can be measured via individual consumer preference. Sagoff (2005) argues that individuals have multiple identities within a society and that in some contexts individuals do act towards self-interested utility maximization. Yet he argues that individuals also make decisions based on “what we ought to do as a society” rather than based on any explicit and exclusive preference of self-interest as a consumer (2005). Sagoff views the individual as collectively interested citizen - a broader view of behavior, and one that recognizes the rise of egalitarianism in mainstream society over the past decades

Sagoff also challenges the connection between consumer preference and individual well being, arguing that contingent valuation has failed to account for collective citizen preferences. The utilitarian view, and its more recent application via contingent valuation are, he argues, deficient at measuring a host of values not within the limited domain of individual self-interest. Sagoff’s perspective stresses the limitations of instrumental valuation, and argues for a broader
definition, which balances the complex relationship between degrees of self-interest and altruism in individual and group decision-making (2005). In car sharing, this raises questions about the motivation of customers of environmentally beneficial products and services. Specifically, it questions the extent to which the customer is acting as a consumer to maximize individual utility via price, convenience, satisfaction, and to what extent the customer is acting as a collective minded citizen, concerned with egalitarian social and environmental outcomes.

Deeply Held Values

In addition to the ongoing debate between instrumental and principled perspectives on value, social psychology has witnessed the emergence of the study of deeply held values. In the spirit of its disciplinary underpinnings, proponents of this field view values as core constructs of the psyche, which stabilize over time, and which have complex interdependent relationships with decision-making and behavior. Until the 1970s, deeply held values had been at best a side conversation for social psychologists during the twentieth century. Milton Rokeach’s 1973 book *The Nature of Human Values* was the first serious attempt at creating a robust theoretical typology of human values that could be tested methodologically within and across specific cultural groupings (Schwartz, 1992). Rokeach defined two distinct facets of each value typology, which he termed terminal and instrumental values. The terminal aspect he described as a desirous goal or end state (e.g. noun. obedience) while the instrumental aspect he described as a desirous state of being (e.g. adjective. obedient) (Schwartz, 1992). Rokeach, a psychologist by discipline, defined these values as inherent, general, and abstract in nature, carried and applied from context to context by the individual.

During the same period, Dunlap’s measurement of the New Environmental Paradigm (NEP) (1978) was born as an extension of Pirage and Ehrlich’s revelation that the dominant
social paradigm of America contained considerable anti-environmental sentiment (Pirage and Ehrlich, 1974). Dunlap’s methodology sought to capture through time the emergence of a new environmental sensitivity, which reflected anthropocentric (humans at the center of existence, and nature as serving human needs) versus eco-centric values (nature as inherently valuable, and holding equal or greater rights than humans) as well as beliefs about the limits of nature and humanity’s relationship to the earth. The Dunlap methodology sought to study a changing environmental worldview, and was also necessarily general. Deliberately qualitative, the NEP sought to elicit new ways of viewing an emerging egalitarian relationship with the natural environment, and can be viewed as an alternative to assigned economic valuation instruments popular in the environmental policy world at the time.

The ensuing period also witnessed the emergence of a more relativistic tradition of valuation in the applied public policy sphere. Applied policy work in the social sciences, including foundational work in the decision sciences, moved strongly towards preference elicitation techniques. This perspective viewed individual values and assigned valuations as neither right nor wrong, merely different (Satterfield, 2004). The relativistic din found some alignment between the typically “values-neutral” (Satterfield, 2004) social science and economics disciplines, for both of whom - stringent positivists aside – “the individual being is seen, for all practical purposes, as the originator of preference and, therefore, of value” (Brown cited in Satterfield, 1984). This relativistic approach has not precluded countless axiomatic perspectives from emerging in the environmental values literature. From a policy perspective, values relativism has resulted in a pronounced lessening of the traditional influence of experts in public decision making contexts, and created a more broadly inclusive environment where a range of values and perspectives, including a new cadre of expert decision facilitators, were all
considered valid and relevant.

Despite early efforts to measure general values and environmental worldviews, the study of environmental values really began in earnest with the work of Shalom Schwartz and the publication of his groundbreaking paper *Universals in the Structure and Content of Human Values* (1992). Schwartz (1994) describes values as “trans-situational” motivational goals that individuals carry with them from context to context. He describes these goals as general guiding principles in the life of people, institutions or “social entities.” Largely discarding the content and typological efforts of most values theorists prior to Rokeach, Schwartz sought to find a universal structure and content that was commutable across national cultures globally, something Rokeach had been unable to do. Lacking a typological approach, Rokeach sought “comprehensive coverage” (Schwartz, 1994) of all possible values in related surveys and methodological instruments. He then sought to reduce these variables to a number of universal values that had weak relationships empirically, and clear differences conceptually. Thus, Rokeach published his value framework – 36 distinct values. He experimented with loose intuitive classification of these values into a higher order typology, but did not find empirical support for them.

Schwartz built upon Rokeach’s distinct values, and defined a higher order typology, which classified these values into empirically validated value types, and resulted in the Schwartz Value Survey. The survey revealed 56 distinct values metrics that acted as “a general guiding principle in an individual’s life” (Schwartz, 2005). The 56 distinct values group into ten value types, or categories: self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence, and universalism. These types distinguish, according to Schwartz, the type of motivational goal that each of the values within the type represent. These ten value types
then aggregate into four discrete quadrants that Schwartz (1992) describes as a motivational continuum. The quadrants are self-direction, self-transcendent, open to change, and conservatism. Schwartz (1992) used his value survey to elicit approximately 40 initial samples from twenty countries, representing 13 languages, and all of the world’s major religions. He hypothesized that his 56 specific values would fall into 11 different value types, mentioned above. Using smallest space analysis (SSA) to analyze frequency relationships between values within different samples, he found a striking empirical and spatial correlation between specific values and his hypothesized value types. It was enough to show a near universal structure to the content of ten out of eleven of the self-reported values defined in the survey as consistently belonging to specific value types. Extensive testing showed difficulty in finding additional values that meet the near universality of these ten, though numerous culturally specific values emerged in isolation. While the Schwartz Value Survey (SVS) has proven incredibly robust at eliciting consistent patterns of values across cultural contexts, there has been little success at establishing a strong connection between values and behavior. Notable attempts to find strong empirical links between values and behavior have failed, thereby casting doubt on the Schwartz definition of values as guiding principles for life (Stern and Dietz, 1994; Stern et al. 1999).

Values as Identity

Like so many social science thought objects, the reification of values is not well understood or easily tested empirically. In this sense, the entire construction of deeply held values thought in academic literature relies on self-reported survey test methods such as the Schwartz Value Survey, which are subject to errors of self-perception. Given this problem of material location, and the recursive errors inherent in self-identification, some academics have come to view values as equated with personal identity, reflecting a discovered consistency in the
way people think of themselves, rather than direct knowledge of how they interact with their world (Kempton and Holland, 2003). This thesis supports the view that deeply held values are at least a core construct of identity (Hitlin, 2003), and at most equivalent to identity (Kempton and Holland, 2003; Kitchell et al. 2000). This distinction will be used in analyzing consumer values at The Car Coop.

**Social Capital and Social Network Theory**

Social capital thinkers agree that connections across and within social groups have value. In the social enterprise sector, there is a sentiment that social capital is the source of competitive advantage (Laville, 2001) or at best a neutralizing force against arguments that social enterprises cannot compete fairly in markets due to increased transaction costs associated with distributed financial agency (Jensen and Meckling, 1974) and the servicing of non-financial objectives.

Social capital is historically fundamental to sociology. Its premise is that embeddedness within bounded social groups or networks can provide positive mutual reinforcing consequences for individuals and the groups they associate with (Portes, 1998). Portes describes the work of three scholars as laying the foundation for modern views of social capital: Louray, Coleman, and Bourdieu.

Louray was an unintentional pioneer of modern social capital thought. Portes (1998) describes him as a disgruntled economist engaged in the search for a counter thesis to rational views of human behavior. Louray (1977) himself found the atomic concepts of individual preference and utility maximization unsatisfactory, and looked beyond the individual for economic theories of human behavior. Specifically, he studied racial issues and found that government policy alone would be perpetually ineffective in alleviating economic hardship in black communities due to a lack of social capital. This meant, in his terminology, a lack of
access to networks where flows of financial and non-financial capital were available. In this sense, Louray saw social capital, though he only used that term once, as both a potential and a barrier to developing human capital.

Bourdieu (1985) asserts that capital of all types, including social capital, represent the “immanent structure of the social world, i.e. the set of constraints inscribed in the very reality of the world, which govern its functioning in a durable way, determining the chances of success for practices.” Portes (1998) attributes Bordieu with initiating the first attempt at defining the structure and means of social capital flows. His early works on the topic were in French, so are rarely translated, and were therefore inaccessible to this researcher; however, a later work, The Forms of Capital, represents a synthesis of much of his early work. In it, he provides a precise definition of social capital as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bordieu, 1985). Portes (1998) argues that this definition was socio-economically sophisticated as it described, for the first time, social capital as a benefit enduring in stable intangible assets that must be leveraged through investment strategies. Importantly, according to Portes, Bourdieu also made a clear separation between social capital, and the processes used to acquire it; though Bordieu (1985) contributed more to the discussion on forms and characteristics of social capital, than on the various means of transfer. To Bordieu, social capital was reducible and exchangeable for economic capital. Therefore, the sum of an individual agent’s social capital stock was roughly equivalent to the size of the agent’s network, multiplied by the amount of available social capital residing in each member of that network. Portes (1998) demurs, contending that the intangible political, cultural, and social resources that go into building social capital are not directly transferable because they are informal,
unstructured, time uncertain, and subject to lapses in reciprocity. The methods and predictability of transfer differ from other, more tangible forms of capital. Normal economic exchange mechanisms, he argues, are not prone to these same uncertainties due to the explicitness of legal contracts, and can therefore be quantified and leveraged more reliably. In this sense, the social capital concept seems at best a qualitative heuristic, rather than a reliable comparator.

Coleman (1988) builds on Loury, and attempts to use social capital theory to extend the rational actor model into the domain of sociology, seeking a socio-economic synthesis via social capital. Recognizing the limitations of either a strictly rational explanation of human behaviour, or a strictly sociological one, he attempts a vague definition of social capital for conjoining the two, stating first that, “a person’s actions are shaped, redirected, constrained by the social context; norms, interpersonal trust, social networks, and social organization are important in the functioning not only of the society but also of the economy” (Coleman, 1988). Coleman (1988) then defined social capital as having two murky properties, social structures and an enabling or disabling effect on social actors within those structures. He also says that social capital is “not a single entity, but a variety of different entities” (1988). This fairly general definition, according to Portes (1998), is at least partially responsible for a proliferation of contradictory terminologies, and perhaps the generalization of the term to the point of near meaninglessness within popular discourse.

Coleman (1988), who does not cite Bordieu in his writing, also fails to make the distinction between social capital and the ways and means of transferring it. Consequently, he asserts in one instance that social capital “inheres in the structure of relations between actors and among actors”, but later defines social capital as reciprocity expectations, group enforcement of norms, and privileged access to information – the means for transferring it. Portes (1998) recognizes this
confusion, and argues that any systematic treatment of social capital must make a distinction between those who have social capital, those who are seeking it, and the resources themselves, i.e. the donor, the recipient, and the exchange mechanism. Despite these shortcomings, Coleman (1988) made some significant contributions to the later concepts of bridging and bonding social capital, particularly with the introduction of the concept of closure. Closure is the idea that a social network, or social group, must have a sufficient number and strength of connections to guarantee the observance of social norms – in order for social capital to be meaningfully understood. Portes (1998) also recognizes Coleman for his discussions of bounded solidarity, whereby members of a bounded social group with strong observance of norms are empowered towards altruistic acts, which garner “approval and status in the collectivity,” in exchange for human capital benefits derived from that altruism (1998).

Yet despite a wide variety of conceptual divergence and confusion, a broadly recognized dichotomy has emerged in social capital theory, based on the differences between tightly bounded (high group according to the grid-group heuristic discussed later) and loosely bounded (low group) social contexts (Adler and Kwon, 1999). This dichotomy distinguishes between the relations of social actors across weak, divergent networks (bridging social capital) and the interrelations of actors “within a collectivity” (Adler and Kwon, 1999), also known as bonding social capital. Adler and Kwon (1999) describe bridging capital as an important feature in commercial markets that explains in some instances, “the differential success of competitive firms” (1999). The contributions of social network theory to this dichotomy are important. Granovetter’s landmark 1973 piece The Strength of Weak Ties had far reaching consequences for the development of social capital thinking. He postulated that tightly knit social groups rely on the sum of their weak connections to other social networks in order to keep abreast of important
new developments. Granovetter (1973) describes ties as an intuitive, qualitative metric. He says that, “the strength of a tie is a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie” (1973). The concepts of strong and weak ties are central to the definitions of bridging and bonding social capital, and are used herein.

While strong ties within a social group do not necessarily preclude the formation of weak ties, the degree to which weak ties to other networks are developed is, generally speaking, the degree to which an individual or social group has access to the flow of bridging social capital. Granovetter (1973) argues that in situations where an individual or social group has a strong connection to another individual or social group, the two networks are more prone to overlap, causing members of both networks to interact and increase the likelihood of developing ties, either strong or weak. He attributes this to cognitive balance. For example, if A has strong ties to B, and A has strong ties to C, then it is likely that B and C will develop ties, because to form negative ties, or no ties at all, would prove psychologically difficult to resolve (1973).

Bonding capital typically refers to strong ties within closer social networks and to collectives with strong group identities. Coleman (1990) focused largely on bonding capital and described it as an affective force operating between actors within a specific social structure. Portes (1993) described it as “those expectations for action within a collectivity.” Adler and Kwon (1999) note the importance of the distinction between bonding and bridging capital, and the tendency of bonding capital scholars to implicitly valorize internal linkages and internal structures within well defined and bounded social groups. This causes bonding scholars to focus ‘specifically, in those features that give the collectivity cohesiveness and thereby facilitate the pursuit of collective goals.” Putnam (1995), for example, valorizes bonding capital by attributing
a perceived decline in social capital in the United States to a reduction in close group
associations. He describes social capital as “features of social organization such as networks,
norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit”, and he
argues that while bowling has increased in the United States, bowling leagues have more or less
ceased to exist (1995). He attributes a general decline in close group associations such as
bowling leagues, union halls, and sports teams to a large-scale decline in social capital - reflected
in civic disengagement, political disenfranchisement, and a decline in volunteer public service.
While Putnam admits to the importance of bridging capital, he sees bonding and bridging capital
as critically interlinked; he attributes his postulated decline in American social capital first and
foremost to a decline in bonding capital. Critics of Putnam note that he avoids the negative,
marginalizing aspects of bonding social capital particularly within the era he describes, the 1950s
and 1960s. According to Portes (1998), these include “exclusion of outsiders, excess claims on
group members, restrictions on individual freedoms, and downward leveling norms.” Bonding
and bridging social capital will be used heuristically throughout this thesis.

Culture
Clifford (cited in Bennet et al, 1988) describes culture as a “deeply compromised idea” yet also
one that cannot yet “be done without.” In this sense the word culture, perhaps even more so than
the word value, has come to be so overused that its meaning is approaching cliché. Qualified
uses of the word exist, which imply an earlier connotation of culture as holding class
implications: high culture, folk culture, pop-culture. Yet these are, according to Bennett et al,
inadequate in describing the wide multiplicity of meanings that have emerged in recent decades.
Geographic notions also exist that describe culture along national or regional lines, but these are
insufficient; they ignore immaterial or lifestyle cultural distinctions such as club culture, drug
culture, body culture, consumer culture, or forms of culture such as black culture, gay culture, 
lesbian culture, typically associated with structuralism. Culture used as an adjective is also 
increasingly common (Bennet et al, 1988). Terms such as cultural imperialism, cultural 
stagnation, cultural policy, all qualify the word culture in their unique contextual manner, and 
vary in their degree of ambiguity. Culture as a desired normative state is increasingly less 
common, and use of the word culture as indicative of the superiority of one set of tastes or 
preferences over another is in decline, likely in response to the emergence of egalitarian and anti-
hierarchical values within mainstream western society since. No longer can individuals or social 
groups easily claim a “monopoly of cultural value” (Bennet et al).

The term culture has, in late industrial society, lost its connotation with social 
 improvement, progress, and upward development. It has given way, in a relativistic fashion, to a 
 meaning more aligned with contextual similarities and differences between social categories. 
Taylor (cited in Bennet et al, 1874) expresses sympathy with a definition of culture as “that 
complex whole that includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other 
capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” This definition is an 
“anthropological or ethnographic definition of culture”, and owes its “most influential 
contemporary formulation” to Franz Boaz, who was the first to argue for cultural pluralism, and 
against placing cultures in “evaluative hierarchies or evolutionary sequences” (Bennet et al). 
Boaz’ sensitivity towards the social and relational natures of cultures can be seen as laying the 
groundwork for modern cultural anthropology, and its central focus on contextualization rather 
than generalization.
Cultural Theory and the Grid-Group Typology

The first reference to grid-group cultural theory appeared in the book *Natural Symbols* (Douglas, 1970), and represented Douglas’ attempt to reflect classification as a core construct of culture creation. Grid-group, which later became known as cultural theory (Wildavsky, 1987), was her attempt to reduce the parameters of social classification itself, and to “account for the distribution of values within a population” (1970). However, her focus on “classifying the classifications” was worked out of the theory between *Natural Symbols* (Douglas, 1970) and *Risk and Culture* (Douglas, 1980).

Douglas introduced the grid-group theory as a critique of modern cultural anthropology and its inability to develop a general theoretical construct for comparing cultures. Despite an early positivist leaning, Douglas (1980) later describes grid-group analysis heuristically, as a useful way of “checking characteristics of social organization with features of the beliefs and values of the people who are keeping the form of the organization alive.” This particular distinction between the individual and the social organization stemmed from Douglas’ structuralist perspective on social organization, where the study of individual behaviour, symbols, and other components of social organization guide the investigation into the deeper structures that enable and support the existence of the group. According to grid-group theorists, individuals and organizations contain interactive cultural bias across two near axiomatic dimensions of sociality – grid and group. In *Risk and Culture* (1980) Douglas describes group as the boundary that people have “erected between themselves and the outside world.” Grid, she explains, represents “all of the other distinctions and delegations of authority that they use to limit how people behave to one another.” Thompson et al (1990) also describe grid-group primarily as a heuristic tool for assessing the various “modes of social control” at play in social contexts. This emphasis on power implies that individual behaviour in social contexts is
prescribed heavily by the degree to which actions are “bound by group decisions,” or by “the rules accompanying their position in life” (Thompson et. al).

Two broadly different versions of the theory have emerged (Mamadouh, 1999). The first is soft grid group cultural theory, in which the typology is used as a heuristic device for the classification of social contexts and the individual and group behaviors interacting within them; this is the version used by this thesis, and will be referred to as grid-group theory henceforth. The other is the use of the theory as a full explanatory theory of behavior, referred to hereafter as cultural theory. The grid-group typology used herein has been described as polythetic (Gross et al., 1985) because there are divergent constructions of the theory, each with some properties in common making the specific characteristics of the two dimensions, and the quadrants they create, somewhat variable. For a conceptual description of the theory and its quadrants, see Appendix B.

Grid-group theorists claim that the two dimensions are universal because they “grasp the fundamental nature of sociality” (Mamadouh, 1999). That is, they act as a useful lens in any socio-cultural situation. Of the two dimensions, grid is accepted as the more difficult to grasp and is also commonly considered to contain a wider degree of polythetic meanings. Douglas (1978) described it as having four basic elements - insulation, autonomy, control, and competition - while Mars (1982) describes it as containing autonomy, reciprocation, insulation, and competition. Group typically contains less ambiguity and often has “mutuality, frequency of interaction, scope of activities, and group boundary” (Mamadouh, 1999). Despite this divergence in the specificity of the definition, Wildavsky (1987) describes grid-group as answering two main questions: ‘Who am I?’ and ‘How should I behave?’ A weakness in cultural theory, revealed in the statement by Wildavsky, is its generality and its problematic predisposition
towards reductionism and essentialism. Also, due to the lack of agreement in specificity, it is
difficult and cumbersome to measure quantitatively (Gross et al, 1985; Leisserowitz, 1999).

Many studies have contributed to grid-group theory, including numerous empirical works
and at least one attempt to quantify the measurement of culture using the typology (Gross et al,
1985). While this mathematical model for measuring culture is not relevant to this study, the
descriptive elements used to heuristically measure grid and group are useful and are adopted in
the analysis of the data. The study by Gross et al. (1985) identified six aspects to the group
dimension. They include physical proximity, transivity of relations, frequency of interaction,
scope of group activities, impermeability (how easy is it to become a group member), and
commonality of experience. The grid dimension included specialization, asymmetry in role
exchange, entitlement (roles ascribed to categories of people), and accountability (the existence
of explicit dominant and subordinate relationships).

The grid-group dimensions combine to form four typological quadrants, each of which
represents a “way of life” (Thompson et al., 1990) or social solidarity. For example, the low grid,
low group quadrant is typically called the individualist quadrant and is characterized by “neither
group incorporation, nor prescribed roles” (Thompson et al, 1990). In this type of environment,
group boundaries are transitional and negotiated, rules are few, and transactions are typically
symmetrical, creating expectations of reciprocity which are typically difficult to enforce and
more subject to lapse due to a weaker normative environment. This pattern is “justified by the
pursuit of personal rewards in a competitive environment…and is vulnerable to a lack of
cooperation” (Mamadouh, 1999). Blame is usually placed on personal failure, rather than group
shortcomings. The low grid, high group quadrant is typically labeled the egalitarian quadrant
(Thompson et al. 1990). This type of environment is described by strong group allegiance and
identification, clear boundaries between the group and other groups, minimal role differentiation, and strong observance of social norms. Fairness is important, and results, credit, and blame are expected to be apportioned equally. Authority is typically rejected, so leadership is emergent and tenuous. The fatalist quadrant is high grid, low group and is described by “binding prescriptions on behavior and weak group incorporation” (Mamadouh, 1999). Individuals in this context are outsiders, suffering - sometimes by choice – the will of other individuals, groups, or system effects. Equality, reciprocity, trust and initiative are all lacking in this context. Blame, and most outcomes, are attributed to fate or luck. This type is “vulnerable to unwillingness to plan ahead and inertia” (1999)). The hierarchy quadrant is high grid and high group. This context is characterized by “strong group boundaries and binding prescriptions on behaviour” (1999). A hierarchical context is inequitable by definition, and individuals endure their social position in deference to the collectivity. “Division of labour, differentiated roles, hierarchical social relations” (Thompson et al., 1990) are all standard in this context. According to Mamadouh (1999), “fairness consists of equality before the law…blame is put on deviants who do not endorse the established procedures…this way of organizing is vulnerable to misplaced trust in authority.”
Chapter 3: Methods

This thesis uses an inductive, exploratory approach to develop a paradigmatic single case study of The Car Coop as a learning and self-identification tool for other social enterprises. The methodological approach involved the distribution of a web survey to the The Car Coop membership (N = 3960, response = 226) and a series of 13 depth interviews with organizational employees, members, and key institutional stakeholders. The survey response was adequate, though somewhat lower than hoped, due in part to the invitation being placed deep within a lengthy text-based newsletter, and also because follow-up reminders were not permitted.

Interviews

13 depth interviews were conducted in September of 2008. This represented five coop members, five employees (23% of full-time staff), one board member, and two extra-institutional stakeholders. The participants were guided through a series of loose categorical questions related to organizational culture at The Car Coop, member values, organizational value proposition, and social capital. See Appendix E for interview questions. No access was granted to union employees in the organization’s call center due to political sensitivities, which created an unfortunate shortcoming in the study’s coverage.

The Survey

The web survey served several purposes. First, it used a shortened version of the Schwartz Value Survey psychometric to elicit deeply held values of the membership for comparison against a general population sample of the Schwartz Value Survey in Canada. Second, it used a series of Likert style questions related to consumer choice to determine the key reasons why members chose to join the Cooperative Auto Network and in cases where relevant,
to compare their decision to join The Car Coop against reasons why they did not join Zipcar, The Car Coop’s closest market competitor. These questions were proxies for the themes identified earlier in the thesis. The survey was tested using the talk aloud method with seven graduate students at the University of British Columbia’s Institute for Resources and Environmental Sustainability. The most consistent response was regarding the length of the Schwartz value survey. The initial intention was to use the full Schwartz value survey (56 metrics ranked using a Likert scale). However, the full Schwartz survey had initially been designed for in-person delivery, and proved very lengthy and cognitively unwieldy. Test subjects consistently complained of difficulties in performing cognitive comparisons between 56 different value items, despite efforts at anchoring by having test proponents choose their highest and lowest scores first - as suggested by Schwartz (1992).

In response to this feedback, and given the fact that the survey would be distributed electronically via the Internet without interaction between researcher and research subject, the Short Schwartz Value Survey (SSVS) was used instead. The SSVS (Lindeman and Verkasalo, 2005) was designed for higher level heuristic usage, and reduced the 56 items from the original Schwartz survey to 10 value categories. Each of these 10 items represented one of Schwartz’ 10 value types, and each includes complete adverbial and adjective description of the item. For example, “Power, that is social power, authority, and wealth,” would have been ranked separately as three unique rankings on the original Schwartz survey. The Short Schwartz Value Survey (SSVS) compresses these into one item: “Power (social power, authority, and wealth)”.

This format was followed for all 10 of Schwartz’s categories. The SSVS holds considerable validity and was originally tested for reliability (Lindeman and Verkasalo, 2005) in four large samples (n ~ 600 each). This was to ensure that the ten items segmented in a quasi-circular
fashion and with the same distributive tendencies as in the original SVS (Schwartz, 1992), and to ensure the same demographic, test-retest and time-savings reliability existed.

The web survey was redesigned based on feedback from the talk aloud sessions, and distributed via the Internet to a pre-test group of ~150. After several reminders, it achieved a response rate of approximately 40%, or 60 respondents, mostly consisting of research graduate students (PhD and Masters) from the Institute for Resources, Environment, and Sustainability at the University of British Columbia. Bonding capital was at play as the researcher directly coerced his classmates to take the survey. Open format textboxes were placed on each question to solicit feedback. This test group put forward more useful suggestions on question wording, placement, and format and many were incorporated into the final survey, which was distributed to The Car Coop’s membership on August 1st, 2008. 226 members responded for a response rate of 5.7%.

**Analytical and Design Challenges**

The research suffered from an unexpected design flaw, as it was originally intended to be a comparison of member values and organizational culture across the coop and its closest competitor Zipcar. However, Zipcar withdrew unexpectedly from the research a few days after the coop survey was sent to members. The Zipcar survey was supposed to go out at the same time, as per a longstanding agreement. It was decided to carry forward the research project and adapt it into a single paradigmatic case study. This proved quite challenging, and introduced a number of alignment issues into the literature review, background, and theoretical sections, which required reverse engineering. In order to accommodate these changes, interview structures were also changed after the survey had been sent out, further complicating an already less than ideal research design. Lastly, the coop’s call center staff were not accessible due to political
sensitivities at the time. This made ethnographic coverage within the single case study format partly incomplete. Despite these challenges, and after much re-working, the data did tell a compelling story about the coop.
Chapter 4: Results and Analysis

There are two units of analysis in this section. The first unit of analysis is the internal organizational culture of the coop, explored over time in a narrative format through the lens of grid-group and social capital theory, with support from the literature on social entrepreneurship and social enterprise. The second section is a non-temporal study of the coop’s membership, and uses values theory, social capital theory, and grid-group theory to explore member motivations, values and culture.

A Brief History of The Car Coop (1995-2006)

In 1995, Tracy Axxelson was working as a receptionist and publisher at Canada’s Fraser Basin Council, an environmental non-profit organization dedicated to regional sustainability in Greater Vancouver. And while the job “wasn’t quite enough” for her over the long term, she enjoyed the work, and found the role dynamic. She frequently attended the organization’s conferences and events and witnessed perennial efforts to persuade people to “make better choices” in their lives and communities. This eventually led Tracy to understand that her car, an old beat-up MGB, was “a gross polluter, which [she] rarely drove.”

Concurrently, Tracy was finishing a Diploma in Community Economic Development at Vancouver’s Simon Fraser University and was also the primary caregiver for her grandmother, who lived in the suburbs of Vancouver and depended on her for transportation. Thus, when Tracy and her husband decided to take their car off of the road, they immediately experienced a “heavy trade-off.” Tracy’s Grandmother was frustrated. She had “loved having someone drive her to the places she needed to go”, and had never owned her own car. Tracy experienced similar difficult situations, where she would have to either rent a car or ask family members to drive her
places. This included one particularly difficult situation, where Tracy’s grandmother was unable to attend an important family function because Tracy could not find transportation for her.

That same year, Tracy discovered carsharing. She was visiting a friend and bemoaning the poor public transit service to the area, describing the difficulties it caused her and others. Her friend, a local urban sustainability activist, showed her a video on carsharing from Cologne, Germany, which Tracy found intriguing. Two months later, she found herself in need of a practicum to complete her diploma at Simon Fraser University. She decided to set up a local model for carsharing – because the idea resonated with her, but also because it was something she could “do off the side of her desk” without giving up her full-time job.

Tracy put up a sign at the next Fraser Basin Council conference asking if anyone was interested in carsharing. Several people responded, including Kevin MacLachlan. Kevin is now a founding owner of Autoshare, a privately owned carsharing organization in Toronto. Together Kevin, Tracy, and several others started meeting to discuss building a carsharing organization in Vancouver. This was hard work, according to Tracy, as she worked a full time job and attempted to incorporate and commercialize the new carsharing organization in her free time. The group considered incorporating as a non-profit, as a for-profit, and as a cooperative. The non-profit model had “severe limitations” in terms of finding growth capital, and the for-profit model required personal financial liability on the part of the founders - a risk they weren’t prepared to take in the early days. They favored the cooperative model, in part because they had received assurances that they could acquire seed financing from values-aligned organizations, and in part because it aligned with the cultural values of the founding group, which was egalitarian and social mission focused. Interviewees frequently mentioned that creating the coop was not about “getting rich,” or “making money,” and that profit motivation was not central to the group’s
formation, or to Tracy’s motivation as their leader. Money, as one interviewee put it, was “not what charged her.” In interviews, Tracy described her personal motives as social mission oriented, rather than profit-driven. She conceived of carsharing as a democratic undertaking, more aligned with the principles of cooperatives than with the profit-driven private sector. Additionally, she described the traditional car rental business model as undemocratic, where an organization or individual purchased an asset and then charged others to use it. In her opinion this was not sharing; it was not democracy.

The early group met regularly, sharing the work of crafting the organization’s rules and structure. They debated the different ownership models, eventually agreeing on the cooperative model. They saw it as most deeply aligned with the concept of sharing cars and with the group’s values. Again, Tracy was adamant that when an organization owned cars and let others use them for profit was called renting, but if the users of the cars owned the organization and shared the cars, then it was carsharing because it was democratic. “We own the coop together, and to me that is sharing. There’s democracy, and outside of that it isn’t carsharing,” she explained during interviews. Choosing a cooperative was also the most friendly to the group’s collective financial risk concerns, as it seemed to distribute risk more evenly than a for profit model by allowing a larger group of stakeholders to take a smaller amount of risk. The group, in Tracy’s words, were “a bunch of broke hippies,” averse to taking on serious financial risk as well as pessimistic about their chances of getting loans since they had little securitization and the carsharing business model was still “unheard of.” The non-profit model was an option, but it was legally challenging for a growth-oriented, revenue generating business. Yet in the end, the cooperative model still required securitization, so Tracy and her husband stepped forward and co-signed a loan for $45,000 with Vancity Credit Union, a community based financial institution in Vancouver, and
also a fellow cooperative. According to Tracy, the decision contained a contradictory mix of confidence and naivety - she felt sure the idea was going to work, but she had never run a business before.

On January 23rd, 1997 The Car Coop launched with two cars and sixteen members. In the early years, Tracy carried the weight of the organization herself and every new member increased her workload, making for long hours of hard work. The initial founding group of volunteers called themselves “the ignition crew,” but none were able to take on the job of leading the organization’s operations full-time. Tracy was “in love with carsharing,” and her passion and commitment were growing, and so early in the life of the coop she left her job at The Fraser Basin Council, taking on the work of the coop full-time.

The coop’s first two cars were located in a high-density neighborhood in the west end of downtown Vancouver. The initial internal operation, which one long time staff member called the “pencil and paper period,” was an entrepreneurial “one-person show,” with support from volunteers. Those who remember this period recall Tracy answering the phones, taking bookings, signing up new members in coffee shops, moving cars around on a daily basis, handling the finances, and promoting the coop within the community.
Tracy’s success in these early years seems connected to her ability to leverage bridging capital towards the coop’s development. She gained early support from mature, like-minded organizations and was almost solely responsible for driving member and revenue growth within the community. Mountain Equipment Coop provided support in setting up the organization’s governance structure, and Vancity provided the organization’s first loan, relaxing its lending rules to accommodate the group. The Cooperators Insurance Group, a large financial cooperative, provided $40,000 of initial seed capital. For Vancity, there “was an early interest in supporting the group,” and the first lending contract was negotiated without lawyers, an anomaly in the world of finance attributed to the fact that the loan officer knew the founders personally, and trusted them. According to Tracy, those early years required “blood, sweat, and tears.” During this period, she acquired deep first hand knowledge of car sharing and competency across most of the day-to-day operational functions. She also developed an early bias towards the weak role differentiation typically associated with egalitarian cultures and organizations where “everyone can do everything.” According to several sources this tendency characterized her leadership style for years to come, even to the point of this research, over a decade later. One staff member noted that during this early period, “all decisions were made anecdotally, and the organization could adapt immediately to member requests.”

Tracy’s entrepreneurial energy and dynamism appears to have been a critical factor in the organization’s success in these early years. From a grid-group theory perspective, this is somewhat paradoxical. On the one hand, her sentiments towards the egalitarian collective cultural type (with its low-grid, high group connotations) seemed obvious and were supported by her express desire to share cars, ownership, and work tasks as well as to incorporate as a democratically structured cooperative. Yet her single-minded, initially individualistic drive to
build and leverage weak-tie networks towards the coop’s growth and success seemed characteristic of a contextual bias towards competitive individualism. With its low-grid, low-group connotations, its tendency towards transactional relationships, and its success at leveraging bridging capital, this behaviour is most typically associated with entrepreneurs within grid-group theory. Using grid-group heuristically, Tracy appeared to hold conflicting biases within her role at the coop.

Social entrepreneurship theory seems prepared to mediate this conflict, or at least identify its occurrence normatively in practice. Borzaga (2009) notes that “commercial entrepreneurship is attracted by large or growing market sizes that can provide for profitable opportunities, [while] social entrepreneurship is attracted…by the opportunity for social change.” He explains, however, that the hybrid commercial-social nature of social enterprises makes founders more likely to adopt institutional structures consistent with egalitarianism, such as cooperatives. These democratic institutional structures, according to Borgaza (2009), tend to “reduce the probability of opportunistic behaviors by single individuals,” yet he explains that they are often led by “charismatic leaders” in the form of social entrepreneurs, individuals who “play key roles in the setting up of the enterprise and its development,” and in ensuring the organization is “managed in an entrepreneurial way.” This trade-off is conceptually aligned with one of the central tensions in the social enterprise movement as a whole, the conflict between individual and group motivations, or egalitarian and utilitarian impulses. Tracy explained that managing this tension was a “constant balance,” describing how “everything goes in [points at her head] and gets distilled. I take in all the stats and the worries, and the wants and the complaints and the praise and whatever dribbles in,” she explained, “and [in the end] it is always about…choice, and people’s money, and the environment.”
The pencil and paper period ended in early 1999, when the coop had grown to about 20 cars and 400 members and had moved into their first office in downtown Vancouver. This initiated what one employee termed “the office phase.” According to Hynes (2009), “firm growth changes the internal context of the social enterprise and as a result requires change in the role of the social entrepreneur.” In 1999 the coop’s growth curve became steeper and the need for business systems and employees to manage growth emerged. According to Hynes, this new stage of development typically creates a “requirement for the social entrepreneur to adjust from their original role in the business to accommodate the changing internal and external demands on the business.” Tracy’s role in the pencil and paper phase was largely as an externally oriented social entrepreneur, leveraging weak-tie networks and bridging capital towards organizational growth and then managing that growth herself. Her success pushed the coop into a new stage of development. This stage involved shared space, employees and the need to build systems to manage growth.

When the coop moved into their first offices space, on the second floor of the Roger’s building in downtown Vancouver, new members began coming into the office to join, and new staff took on more of the day-to-day work. During this phase, employees were expected to know
how to do everything, as Tracy did. The attitude during this period was that “people do what needs to be done because everybody knows how to do what everybody else is doing.” This bias towards role-symmetry is typical to high-group egalitarian cultures in grid-group (Gross et al. 1985). By 2001, The Car Coop had over 600 members and close to 50 cars. The social enterprise literature indicates that at this stage of organizational growth, a large percentage of social entrepreneurs feel “less comfortable in this extended manager role.” This is presumably because of the shift from external networking activities with bridging capital connotations, to internal team and institution building activities with bonding capital connotations. Interviews did not illuminate the bonding capital implications of growth during this period, but did reveal several situations where Tracy successfully leveraged bridging capital towards internal objectives.

Hynes (2009) notes the tendency for “social entrepreneurs [to] have a certain charisma which they use to enlist the commitment of others.” For example, Tracy hired almost exclusively from the coop membership. Several of the coop’s earliest members became staff, managers, and directors. Many of them are still working in the organization in 2010. The first iteration of the company’s online booking system “was built, like everything else, by Tracy,” but the next iteration was not. Around 2001, Tracy reached out to two long-time members to design and build a more robust system. The system “didn’t work at first,” but became the foundation for the coop’s custom online booking, which launched in 2002. The person hired to manage the system was one of the earliest members of the coop and holds the position still. Tracy seemed capable of converting bridging capital into bonding capital.
One employee called the period from 2002-2006 the “experimentation and computerization phase,” while another employee called it “the writing phase,” - comparing the development of the coop to the development of a child. The coop was six years old, and “practicing writing things down,” which meant focusing on consistency, documentation, and systems. During this period the organization’s growth curve became steeper again, and the online booking system was launched to members, giving them a full digital view of the fleet and its availability for the first time. The organization also hired an answering service to take bookings, while experimenting with satellite car locations further from the nucleus of downtown. A long time member turned board member attributed the coop’s success and continued growth during this period to Tracy’s flexibility and willingness to create innovation in the business model, saying that her attitude was that “we’ll try something new, and if it doesn’t work, we’ll try something different.” This included several short pilot projects in neighboring municipalities, programs with community organizations, and programs for commuters and business. Interviewees brushed over this period without making strong statements or noting many significant events.
Social enterprises are often led by social entrepreneurs who excel at market development activities. Yet the resulting growth causes many to become strategically and operationally challenged (Hynes, 2009). Many social entrepreneurs admit to using “ad-hoc and informal approaches to the development of action plans for their business” (Hynes), frequently citing uncertainty regarding how to “formalize” the business or where to seek advice or guidance. At the coop, references to a “crisis of formalization” appeared in the interviews from late 2005 onwards.

Organizational strategy can be defined as “a comprehensive action plan that identifies long term direction for an organization (Diochon, 2010).” During the crisis of formalization, the coop’s board became concerned with the lack of a long-term strategic plan and proper internal systems to ensure quality control during growth. One board member noted that “[we] didn’t have any way for the board to say which direction we were going, where we’re trying to get to”, noting that decisions were made based on “Tracy’s latest plan.” This director also noted a lack of “cut and dry policies,” and a corresponding lack of documentation for implementing and measuring the consistency of member service. He felt this made the organization vulnerable to
an unreliable customer service experience. One employee, again using child development as an analogy, described the crisis of formalization by saying that “we're eleven and a half now, and hormonal and growing like crazy and a little bit confused about that.” Derek Gent from Vancity managed the financial relationship with the coop during this period. Having worked with numerous social enterprises, he stressed that these types of crises of formalization were “very common”, explaining that those who “[didn’t] get the systems in time to handle growth” often failed, particularly in egalitarian organizations like the coop, where it “isn’t just the boss” who is responsible for making decisions. He perceived quality control and financial management as the biggest systems-based risks during the crisis of formalization. He warned that disgruntled members could start to appear on the board of directors with change agendas, if things started to “slide” too much.

The crisis of formalization brought human resource stresses to the surface as well. Hynes (2009) explains that during the growth phase of a social enterprise, “the success of the firm is [dependant on] its ability to attract and retain the correct blend of complementary skills to those of the social entrepreneur.” Yet several interviewees expressed concern regarding the organization’s human resource strategy. A director cited a need for more specialized, skilled staff. A staff member described how Tracy's view was “that every one here should know how to do everything, which was the way it was when there were three of us. But now we are a different size…there are different things to do, and we all have different skills.” Another employee said that when the coop was smaller, it was easier for individuals to do every task in a single day, but noted, “[that] day doesn’t exist anymore.” One employee openly questioned Tracy’s leadership, saying “organizations that continue to have the person that founded them at the helm have different challenges, because those who are very good at starting something may
not be the same person to grow it to the next stage.” Interviewees consistently described formalization as the need for better systems, more consistency, stricter rules, and differentiated roles; in short, a move to a higher grid culture.

Grid is defined herein according to Gross et al (1985) as the degree to which specialization, asymmetry in role exchange, entitlement, and accountability exist within an institutional context. Many of these desired high-grid characteristics were in opposition to the typically egalitarian coop. Egalitarian cultures tend to be biased towards minimal rule and role prescription and to reject imposed authority, or perceived inequality amongst members (Wildavsky, 1987). In this context, the move to formalization at the coop was paradoxical, a commercial necessity born of the hybrid nature of the organization, but culturally counterintuitive given the structure and history of the coop. Wildavsky (1987) describes hierarchy as “institutionalized authority,” and describes it as “justified inequality” which creates specialization, division of labor, accountability, and controlled inequity in a way that allows people to live together with more harmony than they did without these relationships. From a grid-group perspective, unionization seems a rational response to perceived shortcomings in a commercial egalitarian culture experiencing rapid change, or in this case, growth.

At the coop, the crisis of formalization peaked with the unionization of the organization’s call center employees, starting in the Fall of 2006 and concluding with the signing of the first collective bargaining agreement in the Summer of 2007. The board chair, after participating actively in the negotiations, said that he “[took the unionization] as a formalization issue.” In his view, unionization occurred in response to perceptions of inequity in the scheduling system. He explained that some within the call center felt that scheduling decisions were “dependant on management reaction to individual requests for variations.” His experience was that “staff
wanted to get away from that.” Tracy corroborated this view, also citing job security as a motivation, though a lack of interview data from within the call center makes these assertions speculative.

**Table 1: Perceptions of Rising Grid**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspective 1</th>
<th>Specialization</th>
<th>Asymmetry in Role Exchange</th>
<th>Entitlement</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“So more and more [employees] are becoming experts on a subcategory and are managing that subcategory.”</td>
<td>“Now we are a different size…there are different things to do, and we all have different skills.”</td>
<td>“[staff ask] Why can’t we just do what we did before? [we have to say] Sorry, it’s not in the contract.”</td>
<td>“The “crisis of formalization” is dead on, because [staff] have to delegate work, and trust the person will do the job, but still be responsible.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perspective 2</td>
<td>“I think Tracy’s practice has been to hire quite junior people. I’m not sure that’s good enough anymore.”</td>
<td>“There is definitely and us and them now.”</td>
<td>“With the unionization…if you can’t work Sunday then you can’t have the shift.”</td>
<td>“The contract was signed in the summer of 2007. We [managers] moved [upstairs] just a few weeks later.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perspective 3</td>
<td>“[new staff] are never going to experience a balanced day that contains every single task…that day doesn’t exist anymore.”</td>
<td>“[we’re moving from] people doing what needs doing because everybody knows how to do everything [to] nobody knows how to do everything.”</td>
<td>“This used to be a very democratic place.”</td>
<td>“[unionization] has created levels that we didn’t have before.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wildavsky (1987) contends that hierarchies are built on “an ethic of sacrifice.” In this sense, the desire for formalization, as expressed most lucidly by the unionization, seems to represent a fracturing of the culture along the grid axis; this created a jarring formal contractual boundary between those within the call center, who were now “employees,” and those without, who were now “managers.” Symbolically, Tracy and most of the new managers moved into a separate office on the tenth floor within weeks of the contract signing, whilst the call center remained on the second floor. One manager noted that “it [unionization] has created levels that weren’t there before,” describing the persistence of an “us and them” mindset. Friction seems to have appeared mostly in relation to the new rules and prescriptions, and how they were interpreted. Interviews revealed employees asking to do things “the way we used to,” with the typical response being “sorry, it’s not in the contract.” Tracy’s view was that the union provided
a useful “breaking off-point” for a culture that had become “too laissez-faire.” One manager noted that “the coop used to be a very democratic place,” but now the response to non-contractual requests was often “too bad.”

Table 2: Measuring Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Coop Pre-union</th>
<th>Coop Post-union</th>
<th>Managers Post-union</th>
<th>Call Center Post-union</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Proximity</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
<td>Low (1)</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transivity of Relations</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
<td>Medium (2)</td>
<td>Medium (2)</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of Interaction</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
<td>Low (1)</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope of Group Activities</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
<td>Medium (2)</td>
<td>Medium (2)</td>
<td>Medium (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impermeability</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonality of Experience</td>
<td>Medium (2)</td>
<td>Low (1)</td>
<td>Medium (2)</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a result of the unionization and the move, the group dimension also changed. In Table 2, individual conceptual elements of the group dimension (Gross, 1985) were assessed heuristically against interview and observational data to rank each organizational unit’s culture along each element of the group axis of the grid-group tool. “Coop Pre-union” represents the entire coop before the unionization and the move occurred. Conversely, “Coop Post-union” represents the entire coop after the unionization and move. “Managers Post-union” refers to the 10th floor management culture post-unionization. “Call Center Post-union” represents the second floor call center culture post-unionization. The group dimension is defined conceptually as the equally weighted sum of physical proximity, transivity of relations, frequency of interaction, scope of group activities, commonality of experience, and impermeability (1985). This model demonstrates the amoebic effect of the unionization and the separation, whereby the previously distressed egalitarian culture is catalyzed by the crisis of formalization into a sort of mitosis, splitting into two physically distinct high-group, high-grid sub-cultures within the coop’s greater structure.
The overall culture, it is important to note, experienced a decrease in the group dimension due to a large net decrease in the total number of strong-tie linkages between individual team members, which resulted in less interaction and physical proximity, fewer common experiences, less shared work, etc. As one interviewee explained, “the unionization segregated the organization into the call center and the rest of it [managers]”, noting that this forced the organization to have a manager (hierarchy) in the call center for the first time. One of the call center managers noted that a year after the unionization the “grieving process” was still underway, and explained that due to higher formalization, there were more “levels.” Yet she noted that “sometimes we skip levels,” either “out of necessity, or because we are [still] close to each other here.” In general, however, most managers felt that unionization would bring clarity and cohesiveness in time. One manager thought that the new titles and job descriptions made most people “less willing to go across a job description,” though she admitted that management was presently trying to follow the union contract as strictly as possible, which naturally increased transaction costs. She also noted that the organization was “still trying to figure out where we’re at, all of us...[without] stepping on too many toes.”
From a grid-group perspective, the overall consequence of the unionization and the resulting move seemed to be a decrease in the overall group dimension coupled with an increase in the grid dimension. This resulted primarily from the introduction of structured inequality between managers and call center staff via the union contract, and also because of the move. Considering what interview data was available, the coop as an entirety appeared to shift towards the low-group and high-grid connotations of a fatalist context. Mediating this effect was the process of sub-culturing itself, which appeared to strengthen ties between members of each group separately. Interview data from within the call center was sorely missed through this phase of the analysis, though indications from managers, and from Tracy, seemed to support the view that overall bonding capital and cohesiveness had declined, at least temporarily. Managers were optimistic that the situation would improve with time. In general, the call center seemed to be in
a marginally higher grid situation than the managers post-union. This is because interactions between and across groups were highly prescribed by the union contract in the call center, and management’s intra-group behaviours were less prescribed formally and contractually, by virtue of their non-union status.

Tracy described feeling surprised when first learning of employee’s desire to unionize, though she indicated she was generally a supporter of unions. Her impression was that the unionization was largely related to issues with job scheduling and also job security. She did not feel that the staff benefited as much as they had hoped from the process, indicating that in some areas such as pay and scheduling she felt they had “less power” after the negotiation. She also referenced the persistence of an “us versus them mindset,” and described the coop at the time of the interviews as being in a “transition period”. Tracy was adamant that “most of the staff love what we do so much, and are so proud,” yet she also expressed disappointment that no call center staff had attended the coop’s most recent annual general meeting - though they were all members, and had attended in the past. She felt regret over the separation of the offices, and described a desire to reunite the two teams sometime after the Vancouver Olympics, which were due to take place about fifteen months from the time of interviews. Despite difficulties, Tracy felt the unionization was good for the organization, and that the new rules and structure “made her life easier.”

**Member Motivations, Values, and Culture**

A survey and five interviews were used to explore member motivations, values, and culture. Survey respondents were 59.8% female, 39.3% male, and .9% other gender. 79% of survey respondents were under the age of 49, and the population was evenly distributed by income, with 20% of the population earning less than $30,000 per year, and 16% earning more
than $70,000 per year. Interviewee demographics represented a similar gender, age and income balance. Approximately 80% of members lived either alone (36.5%) or with one other person (44.7%). 17.8% of members indicated they would rather own a car than carshare, while 13.7% of members both owned a car and used carsharing. 60% of members drove less than 100 km per month, and 96% of members drove less than 500 km per month.

Survey and interview data revealed a complicated mix of utilitarian and egalitarian values co-existing both within the coop’s membership collectively (survey) and within individual’s self-perceptions as members (interviews). In the survey, members were asked to rate the importance of each of a list of ten individual categories of values using a shortened version of the Schwartz Value Survey. The categories were power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security. Descriptive elements (individual values that describe each category) can be found in Appendix A and were taken from the original Schwartz survey. Schwartz’s 10 value categories create what he called “a motivational continuum” (1992), consisting of the four quadrants seen in Figure 8.

Figure 6: Schwartz Value Quadrants
The mean survey score across all value categories was 5.53/8.00 and the standard deviation was 2.25. High outlying variables were universalism (7.62), benevolence (7.42) and self-direction (7.42). Low outliers were power (3.4), conformity (4.07), and tradition (4.23).

Figure 7: Ranked Member Values

The mean survey score for values in the self-transcendent quadrant was 7.52. The self-enhancement quadrant scored 4.44 while openness to change and conservation were 6.00 and 4.45.
Respondents ranked egalitarian value types higher overall than their utilitarian counterparts. Several utilitarian values (self-direction, stimulation, and achievement) were ranked moderately high, which conflicted the message, but overall members expressed high preference for self-transcendence. The self-transcendental quadrant is similar to common definitions of egalitarianism, which denote an individual or group predisposition towards social and environmental equality (Dp.61unlap, 2000). Schwartz’s definition of self-transcendent values includes broad-mindedness, beauty, social justice, a world at peace, equality, wisdom, unity with nature, environmental protection, helpfulness, honesty, forgiveness, loyalty, responsibility. These are all values that express or imply the desirability of social or environmental equality as a desirable means or end. In grid-group theory, egalitarian cultures are frequently described as social groups organized against inequality (Douglas, 2007; Mamadouh, 1999).

The interviews were also conflicted, showing marginal primacy to utilitarian values, but complexity overall. Allan (2005) notes that the social or environmental value portion of the
social enterprise offering is similar to mainstream brand marketing, in that brand managers seek to have the consumer “look beyond the basic offer of quality and price…[and] appeal to the consumer’s emotions, values, or sense of identity.” For example, all but one interviewee cited utilitarian reasons first when asked what they valued most about the car coop when joining, indicating that the core utilitarian experience was most of top of mind from a values perspective. One member responded “flexibility,” a clearly utilitarian trait, citing that she could “get a car whenever she wanted.” Next for this member was that “the cost was very reasonable.” Later in the conversation, however, this interviewee responded unprompted that a “big thing” in relation to her values was that “these things offer ways for people in the community to drive less without sacrificing cost or flexibility.” Another member described her reasons for joining as mostly economical, saying she calculated the cost of buying a car and compared it against the cost of carsharing before deciding to join, though she said as an afterthought that that she was also “conscious of the environmental side of things too, which factored a lot in my decision.” Only one interviewee cited her primary reasons for joining as stemming from an egalitarian impulse, stating, “it’s kind of cool to try things out that are good for everybody...like for the planet as a whole.” She also noted that after joining it became “a more important part of the decision,” noting that she “realized there is a lot of intrinsic satisfaction.” Another interviewee noted that he’d left Zipcar, the coop’s competitor, purely because the coop seemed cheaper, noting that “the primary issue was cost. It just seems dramatically cheaper.” And the final interviewee explained that his reasons for joining the coop were “primarily economic,” but that he considered himself a lifelong sustainable transportation advocate, and had been cycle-commuting for “as long as he could ride a bike.” Survey responses were similar, with utilitarian costs and convenience
emerging as top reasons for joining, but with environmental and community concerns also ranking highly.

**Figure 9: Why I Joined the Coop**

For members who had considered Zipcar (n=55), the coop’s direct competitor, cost was cited as the top reason for *not* joining. But other factors were strongly at play; out of 55 respondents who had considered Zipcar before joining the coop, 40% provided textual responses in the “other reason” category. Of these 22 responses, 82% of responses were related to Zipcar’s operating model, referencing one or more of the facts that it was an American-owned, for-profit, multinational corporation. One interviewee noted hearing “that it was an American company [therefore] it didn’t seem worth the bother to go and research.” Another interviewee recalled similar reasons, saying, “I don’t know if it’s true, but I heard that it was an American company than ran it,” as though this fact were gossip. Members also ranked a lack of community involvement highly, possibly a proxy for the sentiments expressed in the “other category.”
According to Douglas (2007), egalitarian groups tend to “repudiate the inequalities of the rejected outside world,” and have an activist tendency to try to “strike down” oppositional regimes, rather than “take them over and reform them.” Thus a relatively high number of coop members define their consumer choice in opposition to the perceived hierarchical, non-egalitarian ownership model followed by Zipcar, while also describing environmental, cost, and utilitarian variables as core to their experiences. From a grid-group perspective, these data describe the coop paradoxically – as both a weak-tie, low-group utilitarian network, and a bounded egalitarian enclave resembling as much a social movement as a commercial offering.

Table 3: Why I Did Not Choose Zipcar: Other Reasons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why I Did Not Choose Zipcar – Other Reason</th>
<th>Other Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“They are an American company so therefore I like CAN better.”</td>
<td>“It was for profit, i.e. not a co-op.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Because they are an American for-profit company.”</td>
<td>“I strongly disliked that the zip cars were private for-profit.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I support co-ops and local organizations over international chains.”</td>
<td>“Prefer coops.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I like the idea of a co-op instead of a commercial enterprise.”</td>
<td>“I didn't look into it much, just knew that this was a coop and the other a corporation.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“[Zipcar is a] for-profit corporation.”</td>
<td>“Interests seemed more corporate minded ($$) than cooperative.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The other organization (i.e., Zip Car) is a for-profit business, whereas</td>
<td>“I like the fact CAN is a non-profit.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why I Did Not Choose Zipcar – Other Reason

| “I preferred the philosophy behind [the car coop] over the other car sharing organization.” | “Did not know much about this organization compare to CAN. Interests seemed more corporate minded ($$$) than cooperative.” |
| “The other company seemed too commercial and too much about profits.” | “I like the fact CAN is a non-profit.” |
| "I prefer a cooperative over a private held company.” | “A non-profit organization was more in line with my values.” |
| The Co-operative Auto Network is a co-operative, and I'd much rather support a co-op than a for-profit company.” |

With respect to egalitarian activist tendencies of the membership, 72.6% of coop members did not know a person who was a member of Zipcar (indicating group closure), while 92.9% of members indicated they had recommended the coop to at least one person. 33% of members surveyed indicated they had recommended the coop to more than 10 people. There was also a statistically significant relationship (.347, n=226) between the length of time an individual had been a member of the coop in months, and the number of people that individual had made recommendations to. And a statistically significant (.237, n=226) correlation between the length of time an individual has been a member, and the number of other members the individual knew. Interviewees all noted that they promoted the car coop within their networks. One noted that they believed the coop was a “very established organization,” commenting, “anyone I’ve talked to who has used it has been very positive.” Another explained that “it’s a positive experience talking to friends who don’t know about it,” noting that, “it appeals to more people…once you’re sitting down and talking about it,” and commenting with a smirk that “you get a bit preachy about it.” Another interviewee explained how they even talked about the coop with people they “meet randomly,” though they admitted giving the topic “more weight,” if it was someone they knew well. The final interviewee was evangelical, saying he talked to everyone he knew about it, and “genuinely believed,” it was an option for almost anyone. He said he’d talked to more than fifty people about joining.
Epilogue

In November of 2008 Tracy Axxelson left The Car Coop after thirteen years. At the time, this researcher had just joined the board of directors - shortly after completion of data collection. The departure, from my perspective, was seismic, in no small part because the coop was, in the words of someone close to the organization, “Tracy’s baby.” It was hard for many involved with the organization to imagine the coop without her; for those close to the coop Tracy was synonymous with carsharing: founder, leader, chief entrepreneur and marketer, visionary, and parent. Yet to turn to an analogy expressed in the interviews, the organization was approaching adulthood, and perhaps the timing was right for the coop to set out on its own path.

The period after Tracy’s departure was one of uncertainty and introspection, but also one of possibility and freedom. For the board, it was an opportunity to step back and ask seriously: “Who do we want to be when we grow up?” The answer to that question is still largely a work in progress. Since Tracy’s departure, the coop has spent the better part of the past two years focused inwardly. The new executive director has spent considerable energy re-working the internal systems, in short completing the formalization project started in 2006. The coop is now leaner, more efficient, more decentralized, has better cost control, a clear and actionable strategic plan, and relations between management and call centre staff are improved. In the Spring of 2010 a second union contract was signed, and both sides were happy with the outcome. The 2nd floor office is undergoing a major renovation, and in early 2011 management and staff will move back in together after almost four years apart. In other areas, Tracy’s departure has been felt keenly – lacking a social entrepreneurial leader, and feeling the prolonged presence of a direct competitor in Zipcar, the organization’s member and revenue growth curve has slowed to pre-crisis of
formalization rates. For two consecutive years the coop has taken losses. This is not abnormal for the coop, or social enterprise generally, but it is not sustainable.

Despite the existence of these new challenges, including some dramatic shifts in transportation demand patterns in Vancouver post-Olympics, optimism abounds. In mid-2010, shortly after I became chair of the board, management and directors went on retreat, and developed a bold new strategic plan. This was followed up with the hiring of a new marketing director, and the launching of a well-funded re-brand project. The project has the coop grappling with the complexity of its value proposition in a very real way. In the search for brand touch points that will resonate with targeted people of a diverse variety of values, the question of egalitarian versus utilitarian values is highly relevant. Present consensus amongst board and management is that the utilitarian “core service experience” is fundamental to the value proposition, while the egalitarian and communitarian aspects of being a member are considered important value-added differentiators against Zipcar and other new entrants entering the market. The feeling is that we have to get the core experience right before anything else. The organization recognizes the distinction between values as identity and the core utilitarian needs associated with a paid transportation experience, and we’re getting more sophisticated at speaking to different members in different ways. Meanwhile, employee morale is high, internal dynamics are cohesive, bonding capital is rising, and a new stage in the coop’s life is beginning.
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Appendix A: Schwartz Values Categories with Descriptive Elements

1. Power (social power, authority, wealth)
2. Achievement (success, capability, ambition, influence on people/events)
3. Hedonism (gratification of desires, enjoyment in life, self-indulgence)
4. Stimulation (daring, a varied and challenging life, and exciting life)
5. Self-direction (creativity, freedom, curiosity, independence, choosing one’s own goals)
6. Universalism (broad-mindedness, beauty, social justice, a world at peace, equality, wisdom, unity with nature, environmental protection)
7. Benevolence (helpfulness, honesty, forgiveness, loyalty, responsibility)
8. Tradition (respect for tradition, humbleness, accepting one’s position in life, devotion, modesty)
9. Conformity (obedience, honoring parents and elders, self-discipline, politeness)
10. Security (national security, family security, social order, cleanliness, reciprocation of favors)
Appendix B: Grid Group Descriptions and Quadrants

1. Grid: Specialization, asymmetry in role exchange, entitlement, accountability.

2. Physical proximity, transivity of relations, frequency of interaction, scope of group activities, commonality of experience, and impermeability.


5. Hierarchy: high-grid, high-group.

6. Fatalism: high-grid, low-group.
Appendix C: Survey Questions

Survey questions can be found online at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZM2XVQS
Appendix D: Interview Questions

Member Interviews

1. Explain thesis questions, what is a depth interview, privacy, interviewee rights.
2. Biographical questions – how long as member, how did you learn about coop, etc.
3. Why did you join?
4. What is the single most important value in relation to coop membership?
5. Do you feel like you are part of a movement?
6. How much do you know about Zipcar?
7. What are your perceptions of the coop’s marketing?
8. Do you talk to other people about the coop?
9. How many people have you talked to about it?
10. Any other thoughts?

Organizational Interviews

1. Explain thesis questions, what is a depth interview, privacy, and interviewee rights.
2. Biographical questions – how long have you been associated/worked for the coop.
3. Please talk about the history of the coop.
4. What can you tell me about the member’s values?
5. What can you tell me about Zipcar?
6. Can you talk about how the coop does marketing?
7. What can you tell me about the unionization?