

tant, developed and now facilitate “Soul Tech” workshops designed to help people live “passionately productive [lives] amidst a tech-stressed world” (SparkNW, 2008). The duo created the workshops in response to their consultancy clients’ repeated discussions about technology pressure. Because some prospective clients mistakenly thought the experiences were religious, Kimball and Hansen now refer to them as “Sustainable Technology” workshops (SparkNW, 2008). Hansen himself takes a “low-tech Sabbath” on Sundays, giving himself a day off from technology each week to resist the “time suck” of technology, to slow down, read books, and to connect with his wife and their daughter (Chansanchai, 2008).

Many people experience Western culture as a time-bound, time-compressed, and time-stressed society (Kleinman, 2007) focused on efficiency as the ultimate value (Stein, 2002). The growing influence of globalization and always-on information technologies enables this continuous connection or presenteeism. Traditionally defined as workers who are present at work in spite of illness, presenteeism (as opposed to absenteeism) now incorporates organizational and individual philosophies that value presence at work, whether physical or virtual, regardless of actual productivity (Kleinman, 2007).

The culture of efficiency (or the cult of efficiency) is rooted in modern business methods, particularly the work of American mechanical engineer and management consultant Frederick Winslow Taylor (1911), whose scientific management approach in the early 1900s—sometimes referred to as Taylor’s principles or Taylorism—emphasized efficiency and productivity enabled through the measurement of each discrete work behavior. Enhanced by contemporary information and communication technologies in particular, the culture of efficiency as currently manifested emphasizes 24/7, always-on connectivity, productivity, and multitasking. In practice, efficiency becomes the prime standard of success; in other words, doing more with less—be that less time, less money, fewer people, or less of some other resource.

Michel Foucault’s notion of Discourses (with an uppercase D) is relevant here: Discourses are the “standardized ways of referring to/constituting a certain type of phenomenon” formed in and from the conversations, cultural assumptions, and everyday realities of particular socioeconomic and historical locations (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000, p. 1134). Capitalist Discourses of efficiency, productivity, instrumentality, and economics remain privileged in the culture of efficiency. Work and leisure (or nonwork) are often discursively constructed as diametrically opposed, as opposites. Work is often privileged over leisure or nonwork in terms of time spent, even though leisure is something desirable to be attained. Tips and strategies for quick ways to save time, be more productive, and accomplish more abound in contemporary

No Punctuation

Searching for an Architecture of Time in the Culture of Efficiency

► BRENDA L. BERKELAAR

Technical civilization is man's conquest of space. It is a triumph frequently achieved by sacrificing an essential ingredient of existence, namely, time.

Abraham Joshua Heschel, 1975

The culture of efficiency and the production of material goods is deeply affecting the sense of time, which is now at the service of ferocious competition [influencing]... even the way economy and life are integrated.

Archbishop Mario Cargnello, May 15, 2001

You have reproved me for eating very little, but I only eat to live, whereas you live to eat.

Socrates

People are trying to get their souls right with technology or perhaps just trying to become a little less addicted to the pull of the screen. In Seattle, home of technology giants Microsoft and Amazon.com, Jay Kimball, former engineer, and Leif Hansen, former computer coach turned social media consul-

culture, such as how to fit in short workouts, take mini-vacations, and do business during commutes. Companies market productivity software in an effort to make sure you “use every minute” (Palm, Inc., 2008) and “help you make time behave” (Microsoft Corporation, 2008).

How we talk about things shapes our perceptions of them and our behaviors. In the culture of efficiency, both work and leisure are often discussed instrumentally, in other words, as means to an end. Work is a means to achieve a certain standard of living or goal. Paradoxically, proponents of leisure now sometimes argue not for the inherent value of leisure but for its contribution to overall productivity, often as a means to cope with work-related stress. For example, a Web site describing the InShape Indiana program touts that “healthy people perform better and save money for themselves, their employers and the state” (Indiana State Government, 2008). In addition, as argued by Daniel Cohen (1994), psychology author and news director, adult play, particularly in U.S. culture, has become something we work at, quantify, and measure. Intentional and unintentional proponents of the culture of efficiency privilege productivity and efficiency above alternate values or Discourses. This does not mean that there are not other ways to talk about work and leisure but rather that the culture of efficiency provides one predominant way.

This chapter focuses on how people use spiritual Discourses to both resist and exploit technology, including those technologies implicated in the creation of the culture of efficiency. Although new technologies do not necessitate the development of the culture of efficiency, the culture of efficiency is enabled by many contemporary technologies. Globalizing pressures for just-in-time delivery and cost- and time-efficient processes, along with evolving information and communication technologies, allow for continuous connection and the corresponding pressure to be continuously connected or, at the very least, to multitask. In particular, mobile devices, such as iPhones and BlackBerries, facilitate ongoing communication, collaboration, and multitasking even as work “spills over” into leisure and family time (Chesley, 2005).

Ironically, as I write this chapter on my laptop computer in a local Starbucks coffee shop connected to the Internet on a Sunday during my summer “break,” I am trying to temporarily forget four projects due in the next few weeks—a 75-page collaborative book chapter, another book chapter, a final report related to a funded research project, and comprehensive exams, which are weeks of written tests followed by an oral exam required of doctoral students to assess readiness for independent research and teaching—amidst an onslaught of e-mails for various opportunities and responsibilities, including numerous family and community events. And now I’m ignoring my ringing cell phone, too.

A disclaimer: despite its prevalence (and prominence in my personal life), the culture of efficiency is not an everywhere, everyone phenomenon. Certain cultures and certain types of jobs are more likely to be engaged in the culture of efficiency. As well, the culture of efficiency is not necessarily the only culture being enacted within a particular society. Time pressure, a central component of the culture of efficiency, is the dis-ease particularly of what have typically been called developed or industrialized countries, which now often include information economies. Although predominant in Western cultures, and the U.S. in particular, the culture of efficiency (and its effects) is not a distinctly Western phenomenon. For example, in 1987 the Japanese Health Department recognized *karoshi* (also spelled *karoushi*), death by overwork or job-related exhaustion (Tubbs, 1993), with recent cases making international headlines (e.g., Associated Press, 2008b; Lewis, 2006; Okamura, 2008; Pesek, 2009; see also Maynard, chapter 3, for a description of fast-paced Japanese culture).

Second, there are collective exceptions to mainstream senses of time pressure and always-on work environments within industrialized, information societies. For example, throughout the world, the Plain People, which include Old Order Amish and Mennonites, offer a counterpoint to dominant cultural practices as evidenced by their deliberate and contemplative technology adoption and usage. For example, prior to adoption or following a trial period, the Old Order Amish examine the possible impact of technologies on the community and its values. This evaluation includes examining the impact of a particular technology, such as the telephone, on silence and the interruption of rhythms (Cooper, 2006). In the case of the telephone, it was initially adopted because of its value in contacting doctors and veterinarians, ordering supplies, and connecting with others, particularly during crises such as fires. The telephone was eventually banished to barns or booths, or borrowed from neighbors, because of its “amplification of gossip, worldly contact, and disruption of family rhythms” (Cooper, 2006, p. 144).

Even though groups such as the Old Order Amish may not experience all of the lauded benefits, however defined, of so-called developed information societies, in terms of connection, convenience, accessibility, efficiency, and so forth, they seem to have something that some people in larger time-pressured communities desire. For example, proponents of the loosely coupled voluntary simplicity movement work to reflect some of the principles of the Plain People lifestyle, rejecting the pressures of consumerism and careerism, but do so typically without joining a church (Grigsby, 2004). Journalists in particular publicly criticize this and the related Slow Food movement for its elitism (see Glover, 2007), since most people cannot afford the wholesale rejection of contemporary work practice or can only do so after years of working diligently (see Houy, chapter 2, for more about the Slow Food movement).

I know, chapstick. According to Lauren Winner (2003), a visiting fellow at the Princeton Center for the Study of Religion and former agnostic turned practicing Jew turned Christian, these “non-gastronomic fasts” find their roots in ancient religious practices such as the *tzom shittukah*, the fast of silence of the Jewish mystics.

Like fasting, the Sabbath is also associated with abstinence; however, one abstains from work or the act of creating rather than from food. Although conceptualizations of the Sabbath find their origins in Jewish notions of Shabbat, rooted in the Hebrew word for rest, inactivity, or ceasing, “Sabbath” is often used synonymously with any weekly holy day set aside for worship or religious purposes (Simpson & Weiner, 1989). Sunday or the “Lord’s Day” for Protestants and Friday, *Jama’ah* or *Jum’ah*, the day of gathering for Muslims are Sabbath-like in the sense that they are holy days set apart from other days. For Jews, on the Sabbath individuals must not create anything, since the Sabbath is “a serene period during which one strives to have minimal impact on the world and to leave the world unchanged” (Woodruff, Augustin, & Foucault, 2007, p. 529). By surrendering control, renouncing autonomy, and affirming God’s dominion, one is able to focus and reflect on larger issues (Woodruff et al., 2007), or, as eighteenth-century Christian pietist Johann Friedrich Starck argued, the Sabbath allows man to “disentangle his mind from worldly cares and troubles” (Erb, 1983, p. 181).

Following the injunction that “the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath,” Christians redefined notions of Sabbath. In commemoration of Christ’s resurrection, Christianity redefined the Jewish notion of Sabbath, moving it from Saturday to Sunday when Emperor Constantine declared Sunday as a “day without work” in the fourth century. But it was not until the Reformation that the notion of Sunday as Christian Sabbath became popularized (Simpson & Weiner, 1989), typically involving a day of gathering for religious sermons, prayer, and/or singing, and mandated rest from work.

Islam’s weekly holy day, *Jama’ah*, is not actually a day of rest; however, the book of Islam’s sacred writings, the *Koran* or *Quran*, calls people to prayer (*athan* or *adhan*) in congregation, away from work, at noon. The person leading the prayer, the *Imam* or the *khatib*, usually provides religious oration, or *khutbah*. According to Islam, Muslims may go back to work after prayer (*salat*) as long as business is closed during prayers, but in many Muslim countries, including Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, Friday is equivalent to Sunday in Western countries, with the workweek typically extending from Saturday to Wednesday, in contrast with a Monday to Friday workweek typical of Western industrialized nations.

Both fasting and Sabbath keeping, by which I mean observing a day of rest, prayer, reflection, and/or worship, tend to focus on withholding or absti-

The related Slow movement focuses on combating time famine by putting “the brakes on people’s high-velocity lifestyles” with a fundamental emphasis on sustaining resources of time, energy, and the environment (Blake, n.d.).

Freedom from Technology: Co-opting Spiritual Practices

More recently, some people are co-opting particular spiritual practices to resist pressures imposed by technology, rather than engaging in wholesale simplicity movements. Specifically, they are taking media or Internet fasts and technology Sabbaths. Although there are individuals who eschew e-mail and the Web completely, Internet fasts and technology Sabbaths are part of a grassroots movement to switch off technology and refrain from work typically for at least one day a week—and sometimes longer—but not permanently (Glaser, 2008; Serjeant, 2008).

Fasting traditionally involves abstaining from food, drink, or both for religious or nonreligious reasons. In some ancient religions, including the Greek and Roman mystery religions (Meyer, 1999) and the Druids (Macculloch, 2005), as well as Native American religions (Irwin, 1994), followers often fasted in preparation to receive divine teachings or visions or to perform magic. Adherents of most major religions often engage in fasting for reflection, remembering, refocusing, discernment, self-discipline, or purification, often with the central focus of being mindful of God. For example, the Jews fast during the Day of Atonement, Protestants and Catholics often fast during Lent, and Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset each day for the entire month of Ramadan. Others fast to accomplish political or social purposes. Gandhi is a notable example of someone who fasted as a spiritual discipline and also often refused to eat until demands for social reform were met. During one political fast, Gandhi (2008) opposed discrimination of the untouchables, a caste, or hereditary social class, whose members were the economically, socially, and politically oppressed outcasts of Indian society. His fast helped persuade officials to offer more political representation for the untouchables in India. Additionally, beyond religious or political reasons, people fast for more instrumental reasons. Fasting may be required before surgery or as a precursor to medical tests to ensure accurate results, as in the case of some blood tests for cholesterol or blood sugar levels.

Despite its traditional associations with abstinence from food, more recently evangelicals and Catholics fast not simply from specific food groups, but also from attitudes and behaviors, such as watching television (Winner, 2003), speaking negatively of others, or, in the case of one middle-schooler

nence practices, from food or from work and creation, in order to focus on something other than the immediate material situation (typically on God), whether that be for an entire day, as in Judaism and Christianity, or for a period during the day, as in Islam. Although only three world religions are presented here, there are also Sabbaths or weekly holy days in other religions. Additionally, though the weekly Sabbath or holy day is described here, there are also sabbatical years. For example, within Judaism, in Mosaic law, every seventh year was the sabbatical year during which the land was to lay fallow, slaves freed, and debtors forgiven. Outside of religion, within academia and now in other professions and companies as well, a sabbatical involves a period of leave from duty for study, travel, or simply rest or absence from duties; in academia, faculty are typically eligible for a sabbatical every seven years (Simpson & Weiner, 1989).

Media fasts and technology Sabbaths refocus abstinence on the use of and creation with information and communication technologies, rather than on abstinence from food or work per se. One could argue that information and communication technologies are intimately intertwined with work in contemporary information economies, such that technology Sabbaths are in significant part, although not exclusively, about abstinence from work, since these technologies are also an increasing part of people's nonwork lives. National Public Radio journalist Mark Glaser (2008) argues that the "concept of a 'Technology Sabbath' is becoming more widespread, both in religious circles and among bloggers and media people who are overwhelmed with the always-on nature of the broadband Internet and smartphones." Some technology Sabbaths are simply extensions of religious practices, as articulated by Kevin A. Miller in his 2004 book, *Surviving Information Overload*:

The Sabbath.... had two purposes: rest and remembrance of God. An info-tech Sabbath, as I dub it, has the same goals: rest for our minds and overstimulated senses and remembrance that life is bigger than the news stories, stock quotes, and sport scores. It's bigger than ourselves. There is in fact a God and we're not it. (p. 157)

But not all technology Sabbath and media fast practices have religious overtones, aside from the Sabbath label. For example, in addition to the "Soul Tech" workshops that are nonreligious "sustainable technology" workshops, mainstream media, including the *New York Times*, *ABC World News*, and *The Today Show*, have all recently covered the concept of "secular Sabbaths," in some cases highlighting author Ariel Meadow Stallings (2008) and her blog, *Unplugged*, in which, ironically, she chronicles her experience of abstaining from the Internet, her cell phone, and television every Tuesday evening for a year. Taking an academic perspective, American University communi-

cations professor Donna Walker (2007) required her students to abstain from television, computers, iPods, radio, video games, CD players, records, cell phones, landlines, and the like for 24 hours and to reflect on the influence of information technology and media in contemporary society.

It is the co-optation of religious practices and language by individuals not associated with religious organizations that makes these secular versions of Sabbath and fasting fascinating. Motivations for these fasts and Sabbaths appear to be imposed rest, opportunity for reflection, and freedom from technology addictions, and sometimes include arguments for increased productivity. Despite more and more examples in the popular press of technology fasts and secular Sabbaths, there is a paucity of academic research on these phenomena.

Embracing Technology for Religious Fulfillment

Not everyone seeks respite from contemporary technologies. Some religious groups are embracing and developing information and other technologies to better fulfill religious commitments. Religion is defined here using Emile Durkheim's (1912/1995) neutral stance that deemphasizes whether religious beliefs are true or false, instead focusing on social practices and religious communities. Research on religious groups' spiritualizing of the Internet (Campbell, 2005) and techno-spiritual practices suggests "increasingly visible intersections of spiritual practice and technological development world wide" (Bell, 2006, p. 141). Although recent research describes how people are using technology to support religious practice (for example, Bell, 2006; Woodruff et al., 2007), the use of technology to support religious practices is not a new phenomenon. For example, Muslims applied the technologies of compasses and telescopes to support a central practice in Islam: the five daily Islamic prayers, or *salat*, which require facing east toward Mecca (Wyche, Caine, Davison, Arteaga, & Grinter, 2008).

Contemporary examples from Jewish, Christian, and Muslim religious practices provide compelling evidence of technologies as potential tools for religious practice. Mobile devices, and smart phones in particular (sardonically called electronic tethers and crackberries), remain popular targets of time pressure critics and key elements of the culture of efficiency. Muslims and Jews employ religiously oriented smart phones and/or software to maintain religious commitments and rhythms. For example, the ilkone is marketed in the Middle East and Europe as "the world's first mobile phone with unique Islamic applications" (AME Info, 2004) and in East Asia as "a mobile phone that connects you to your beliefs where you are" (ilkone Asia, 2004). Its global positioning system (GPS) and other features allow users to find the direction of Mecca from anywhere, hear the call to prayer in a live voice

(*athan* or *adhan*), and read the Koran in Arabic and English. The phone automatically disables during times when one would be at the mosque or in prayer (Bell, 2006). The iPhone was not marketed in the U.S. in part due to the lack of compatible cell phone technology, since the predominant type of network in the U.S., where there is no mobile phone system standard, is different and incompatible with the networks typically used in Europe and the rest of the world. But designers in the U.S. recently developed cellular software to provide *salat* (prayer) reminders in a culture where the low density of mosques does not allow individuals to hear the Imam's call throughout the day (Wyche et al., 2008).

In the UK, many Jews also employ religiously compatible, or kosher, phones. Something is considered kosher if it is prepared according to Jewish ritual and religious law, and this typically involves certification by a Jewishate council. On start-up, kosher phones display the seal of the rabbinate council. They do not send text messages or connect to the Internet and cost only a penny a minute, except on the Sabbath when a minute costs £1.50 as a religious penalty, currently equivalent to about US\$2.70 (Drainey, 2007). There is also a kosher version of the Internet for ultra-orthodox Jews that blocks access to a range of Web sites, including more easily apparent concerns such as sexually explicit or pornographic Web sites as well as sites that are not required for legitimate business use. The kosher Internet can also identify ultra-orthodox individuals who do not use the kosher Internet. The primary goal is to allow ultra-orthodox Jews to use the Internet option, without risking exposure to educational and spiritual damage resulting from exposure to the world outside of their tightly knit communities (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2007).

Christians also use technology for religious purposes, including mobile phone software designed to reach current generations. For example, the Bible Society in Australia (n.d.) has translated the entire Bible into SMS format: "4 God so luvd da world."

Groups are using more than just information and communication technologies to meet religious needs. Other technologies are being leveraged as well. There are kosher vending machines that distribute kosher food (Severson, 2007), with Hot Nosh 24/6 providing kosher hot dogs in places such as Fenway Park in Boston (Associated Press, 2008a). Kosher technology entrepreneurs have developed pens with ink that disappears within a few days, which avoids prohibitions against permanent writing on the Sabbath, as well as sound systems and kosher wheelchairs that work through indirect action, or *grama*, a Jewish legal concept that offers a means of using appliances while still observing Sabbath laws (Levin, 2008). There are also smart homes, fully automated domestic environments designed to anticipate and meet occupants' needs, whose very name conjures up scenarios popularized in

science fiction, in the early 1960s animated sitcom *The Jetsons*, and by Bill Gates.

Despite futuristic allusions, smart homes have existed within Jewish families for decades, and they offer compelling examples of technology serving religious goals (Woodruff et al., 2007). A recent qualitative study of 20 Orthodox Jewish smart homes in the U.S. demonstrated how technology took over mundane activities so occupants could focus on their relationship with God and surrender control over quotidian activities as they reflect on larger issues (Woodruff et al., 2007). Without apparent prompting from the interviewers, participants spontaneously discussed the conflict between technology and rest, and associated technology with stress, worry, and family disconnection although these same participants intentionally employ technology to accomplish Sabbath goals of rest and spiritual reflection (Woodruff et al., 2007). In many communities, these daily activities are also sometimes accomplished by a *Shabbos Goy*, non-Jew willing to do certain tasks on Sabbath that observant Jews cannot do, including turning on the air conditioner when it is hot or the furnace when it is cold, or rushing pregnant women to the hospital. Whether the development of new smart technologies and corresponding rabbinical law will replace the need for the *Shabbos Goy* remains unstudied by academics. Although ostensibly teaching Jewish religious and cultural concepts, debates about technology, the *Shabbos Goy*, and Sabbath keeping are explored in *Shabot6000*, a comic strip about a robot purchased to perform the duties of a *Shabbos Goy* who decides he is Jewish and therefore cannot fulfill his duties on the Sabbath (see <http://www.shabot6000.com/>).

Woodruff and colleagues (2007) acknowledge that skeptics might argue that the presence of automation technology to make technology (that is, lights, appliances, and other domestic technologies) more hidden is hypocritical subterfuge or self-deception. As rabbinical debates continue about the appropriateness of technological automation in accomplishing Sabbath commandments to refrain from any act of creation or work, the emphasis by the participants and the researchers focuses on the fundamental purpose of Shabbat: reflection on God and surrender of control over mundane activities (Woodruff et al., 2007). As such, automation is typically considered by the study participants to be an external process that cannot be controlled in the moment, providing value in its "inability to control," and is consistent with other Sabbath practices: one can prepare food before the Sabbath, so too can one prepare, that is to say automate, the lights and heat in the residence.

These paradoxes, the use of technology to provide the illusion of less technology (Woodruff et al., 2007) and automation or control as a means of demonstrating lack of control, suggest a more complex interplay between technology

and spiritual practices. Technology can enhance or detract from spiritual practices. Some religious individuals want both more and less technology to accomplish their goals of Sabbath keeping. Technology offers control that enables spiritual practice while spiritual practices offer freedom from technology that is controlling. In contrast to secular Sabbaths addressed in popular literature, which in addition to imposed rest, suggest a goal of regaining individual control (from, for example, technology addiction), Jewish Sabbath keeping focuses on the relinquishment of control. However, both seem to recognize the illusion of control offered by technology, and members of both groups suggest that technology, rather than the individuals themselves, is in control of everyday life outside of religious or secular Sabbaths.

So why do some people co-opt spiritual practices to resist the pressures seemingly imposed by technology while others exploit technology to meet their religious commitments? Although the intersection of religious practices and technology provides a useful example of how technology does not determine particular social outcomes, the intersection of the secular (technology) and the sacred (religion) suggests something more.

Time and Rhythm in Contemporary Society

Contemporary secular societies, that is, societies without a religious mandate or religious governance, typically lack the religiously imposed rhythms that regularize and control the rhythm of social life (Durkheim, 1912/1995). According to Durkheim, rhythm is essential to social functioning. Although "society cannot revitalize the awareness it has of itself unless it assembles... it cannot remain continuously in session" (p. 353). Religious rhythms express the rhythm of social life. This is consistent with Judaism, the source of many contemporary ideas about Sabbath practices. Renowned Jewish scholar Abraham Joshua Heschel (1975) asserts that

Judaism is a religion of time aiming at the sanctification of time.... Jewish ritual may be characterized as architecture of time. Most of its observances—the Sabbath, the New Moon, the festivals, the Sabbatical and the Jubilee year—depend on a certain hour of the day or season of the year. It is, for example, the evening, morning, or afternoon that brings with it the call to prayer. (p. 8)

So too with Islam's *adhan* and *salat*, in which the daily call to prayer orients Muslims by time of day and space (facing east), Friday is the day of gathering, and Ramadan is determined by the lunar calendar. Catholics and Protestants have Lent, Easter, Christmas, and mass or Sunday services, with Easter and Lent also determined by the lunar rather than the Gregorian calendar. There are periods of gratitude and gathering, abstinence, and self-examination. Every religion divides the calendar into sacred rhythms in

contrast or discord with other secular rhythms of semesters, sports seasons, and fiscal quarters.

Prior to globalization in the mid- to late twentieth century, individual religions tended to have a greater influence on cultural practices in secular societies, including imposing temporal rhythms in terms of defining workweeks and national or organizational holidays. Holidays and the calendar associated with Christianity remain predominant in much of the Western world, including the U.S., and those associated with Islam remain predominant in large parts of the Middle East. However, in countries where pluralistic tolerance for various religious practices or nonpractices has emerged and/or where international companies and work are desired, some of the architecture of time or temporal rhythms of work and life have been eliminated. For example, in many Islamic countries the typical workweek ranges from Saturday to Wednesday, with weekends falling on Thursday and Friday. For organizations and individuals that conduct business internationally, this only allows three workdays' overlap of "regular office hours" with Western organizations that typically have a Monday to Friday workweek.

Our notions of days for work, for rest, and holidays emerge from religious and cultural assumptions. Starting in colonial times; blue laws, which prohibited commercial activity on Sundays in countries such as the U.S. and Canada, provided an architecture of time that forced the religious and nonreligious to observe sacred rhythms together. In the 1960s, most blue laws in the U.S. were repealed, with the exception of some laws that continue to ban the sale of alcohol. Contemporary movements toward religious tolerance and acceptance encourage more flexibility in holiday schedules, religious days off, and even floating holidays, which offer individuals the choice of when and for what purpose to take a day off work. Floating holidays allow organizations to limit the number of designated holidays offered to all workers, but provide the flexibility for a range of religious and otherwise motivated holidays for employees. Although clearly in countries like the U.S., the influence of Judeo-Christian religious holidays tends to predominate in work calendars, in particular with Christmas holidays; other countries, such as Oman, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates, base work or national holidays on the Islamic calendar events, including Eid al-Fitr, the feast celebrating the end of Ramadan, and Eid al-Adha, the feast of sacrifice that celebrates Abraham's obedience to Allah.

Religious structures are not the only factors influencing cultural rhythms and notions of time. Different economic systems also influence social rhythms. For example, an agrarian economy, like that which was typical during colonial periods of U.S. society and is still evident within small rural farming communities, tends to follow the seasons and the associated planting and harvesting cycles, whereas an industrialized society, as manifested in manu-

facturing centers like Detroit at the height of the Industrial Revolution, would be more inclined to follow the patterns of shift work in which groups of employees rotate into factories throughout the day to allow for 24-hour production. In both situations a combination of economy and religion constructed periods of work and nonwork by weeks, months, and seasons.

It is important to remember that time is a social construct, not an absolute, even though the structure of days, hours, minutes, and seconds makes it appear to be an objective reality (see Anton, chapter 5). Time is not something that necessarily is the way it is understood. The clock and our notion of time is as much a social construction as the rhythm of religious calendars. Different types of clocks (for example, water clocks, candle clocks, sundials) were invented or used by religious orders such as the Benedictine monks as a means of maintaining the rhythm of daily religious activities (Dohrn-van Rossum, 1996). Standardized time was imposed by the railroads as a means of encouraging efficient and accurate transportation.

Before the 1850s, the time of day was determined locally (Bartky, 2000). People would check the clock in the local church steeple, which in turn was set based on local solar time. It was difficult for trains to travel from one location to another safely given lack of standardization, and following some large train accidents, the enforcement of standardized times was encouraged. Time zones were not accepted until 1884 at the International Prime Meridian Conference, with the 24-hour standard time encouraged by Sir Sandford Fleming who became interested in the topic in 1876 when he missed his train because of a misprint of p.m., instead of a.m., on his ticket (Bartky, 2000).

My intent is not to encourage a return to a singular religious (or other) calendar and its rhythms or to argue that one rhythm is better than another. Rather, I am suggesting that in contemporary society, many people are searching for an architecture of time in a space that lacks one, or at least lacks one that is recognizable. The mid-twentieth-century movements in some countries toward greater pluralistic tolerance and acceptance of religions and beliefs, as well as toward an information economy like that of the U.S. and other industrialized countries, do not, either independently or together, provide a clear, broadly understood rhythm for work and nonwork or leisure. (I hesitate to use the terms "work" and "life" in opposition because of the inherent implication that work is therefore not life, but we currently lack a viable alternative.) In noninformation economies like Mexico and South Africa, and in some occupations, like manufacturing, construction, and agriculture, work still occurs in a physical place and physical manner, creating a tangible demarcation between work and nonwork. But a lot of work in an information economy occurs in our heads and on computers and cell phones. Work

comes with us wherever we go, no longer clearly separated in space or time from nonwork.

This perhaps is the appeal of secular Sabbaths and media fasts: people desire an architecture of time with its intervals of self-examination, rest, and reflection, and a clear distinction between work and nonwork. Globalization and the information economy, along with the technologies that underlie them, have changed our notions of time. This is not a new realization. In an era of 24/7, always-connected technologies, there seems to be no punctuation. There seems to be no recognizable rhythm. However, it may not simply be that there is not a clear rhythm to work and nonwork or leisure, but that separation between work and leisure (nonwork) is not as objective or inherent a division as we articulate and seem to believe.

More Than a Turn of Phrase: Implications of Secular Sabbaths and Internet Fasts

Are the adoptions and/or co-optations of spiritual practices through secular Sabbaths and Internet fasts simply linguistic (or incidental or marketing) turns of phrase, or do more fundamental motivations and implications underlie these terms and practices? What do these engagements, disengagements, and intersections of information technology and religious practices say about our rhythms of work and leisure today? Here are some preliminary thoughts.

First, the intersections between spirituality and technology discussed in this chapter offer useful vantage points from which we can explore contemporary Discourses of technology and Discourses of work and leisure. Examining how and why individuals employ religious language and practices to resist technology can help us to better understand the complicated architectures of time in contemporary society and how these impact human behavior and meaning in everyday life.

How does the seeming co-optation of religious language and practices as forms of resistance affect notions and meanings of work and nonwork, if at all? Are people using language and practices to maintain the received social order of past generations? Or, are they (re)creating an architecture of time more suitable than the one offered (or not offered) by the culture of efficiency, or one more suitable to the demands of the culture of efficiency? Are they simply attempting to demarcate different human activities such as work or nonwork? Are they resisting or adapting to the culture of efficiency? How do spiritual Discourses affect meaning(s) of work and life in the culture of efficiency, including our connections and disconnections with one another? How might interpolations and intersections between spirituality

and technology like those discussed here alter dominant notions of technology (as instrumental), work (as oriented toward efficient production), and leisure (as reward or instrumental means of accomplishing production)?

Examining the relationship between religion and technology might offer insight into ways people are resisting or co-opting aspects of the culture of efficiency symbolized or enacted in its particular equipment: either repurposing its fundamental information and communication technology tools to accomplish unique ends, such as devices like GPS-enabled cell phones to enable periods of prayer and reflection, or as in the case of the Old Order Amish, resisting technology use that disrupts community connection and rhythms with the values and pressures of the culture of efficiency, or perhaps by limiting use periodically, as in the case of secular Sabbaths and Internet fasts.

Conclusion

An intriguing cultural shift is taking place, and we seem to lack language to describe it. In the language of software design, a mash-up involves the combination of data and/or applications from two different or even competing Web sites or software to create something new. It is, according to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, "the mixture or fusion of disparate elements" (Simpson & Weiner, 1989). In the culture of efficiency, where boundaries between work and nonwork become blurred, a mash-up of religion and technology has developed. Acts of technology resistance like secular Sabbaths and technology fasts might offer insights into the explicit nature of this phenomenon as well as how it is influenced by and influences dominant Discourses and underlying ideas about work, leisure, time, and technology within and outside of a culture of efficiency. We need a new way of talking about work, leisure, nonwork, technology, and time so we can understand and make good decisions for sustainable and meaningful (in every sense of the word) lives. Exploring the motivations and processes behind the mash-up of religion and technology may provide a way.

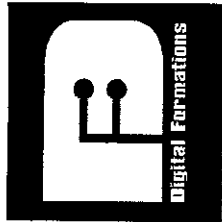
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*Dedicated with love
and admiration to my parents,
Arthur R. Kleinman (1926–2008)
and Elaine Caplan Kleinman*

THE CULTURE OF EFFICIENCY

Technology in Everyday Life



by
Sharon Kleinman