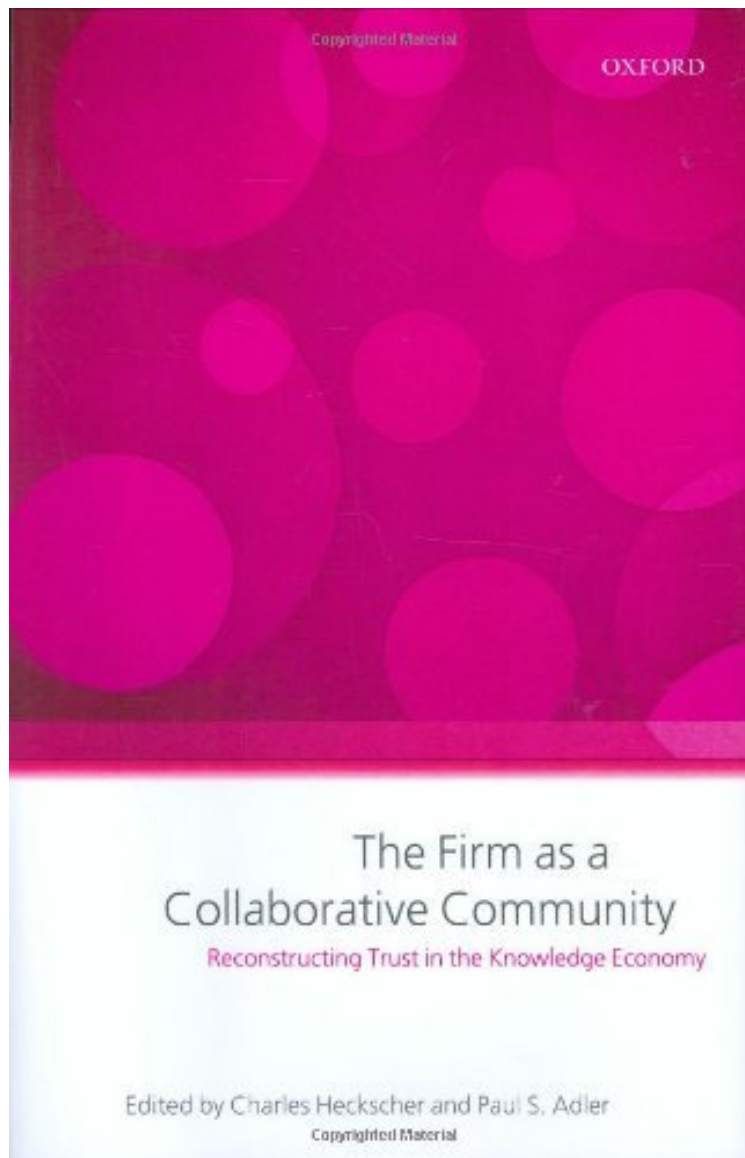


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The Firm as a Collaborative Community: The Reconstruction of Trust in the Knowledge Economy

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This volume explores the changing nature of community in modern corporations. Community within and between firms--the fabric of trust so essential to contemporary business--has long been based on loyalty. This loyalty has been largely destroyed by three decades of economic turbulence, downsizing and restructuring. Yet community is more important than ever in an increasingly complex, knowledge-intensive economy. The thesis of this volume is that a new form of community is slowly emerging--one that is more flexible and wider in scope than the community of loyalty, and that transcends the limitations of both traditional *Gemeinschaft* and modern *Gesellschaft*. We call this form 'collaborative community'. The trend towards collaborative community is difficult to detect amidst the ferocious forces of market and bureaucratic rationalization. But close analysis of some of America's most successful corporations reveals three dimensions of the emerging form: middot; A shared ethic of interdependent contribution: distinct from the uneasy mix of loyalty and individualism that prevailed for so long; middot; A formalized set of norms of interdependent process management that include iterative co-design, metaphoric search, and systematic mutual understanding: distinct from both rigid authority hierarchies and informal log-rolling; middot; An interdependent social identity that supports these organizational features: distinct from both dependent, traditionalistic identities and the independence of the autonomous self that is often associated with Western culture. This volume is a collaborative effort of leading scholars in organization studies to delineate the new form of community and the forces encouraging and constraining it's growth. The contributors combine sociology and psychology theory with detailed analysis of business cases at the firm and inter-firm level.

"This is a heroic work by contemporary standards. Not only does it mount a wide-ranging argument connecting many contemporary changes, but... it is exceptionally well-integrated, in start contrast with many edited collections these days.... A highly integrated volume that ties together a wide range of subjects in a way that would be well beyond the means of any single scholar."--Industrial and Labor Relations About the Author Charles Heckscher is a professor in the Department of Labor Studies and Employment Relations at Rutgers University. His research focuses on organization change and its consequences for employees and unions, and on the possibilities for more collaborative and democratic forms of work. His books include *The New Unionism*, *The Post-Bureaucratic Organization* (Sage, 1994), *White-Collar Blues* (Basic Books, 1995), and *Agents of Change* (OUP, 2003). As Director of the Center for Workplace Transformation he is leading research into the development of collaboration in local unions and corporations. Before coming to Rutgers he worked for the Communications Workers' union and taught Human Resources Management at the Harvard Business School. Paul S. Adler is Professor of Management and Organization at the Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California. Educated in Australia and France, he came to the US in 1981. Before joining USC in 1991, he was affiliated with the Brookings Institution, Columbia University, the Harvard Business School, and Stanford's School of Engineering. His research and teaching focus on organization theory and design. He has published widely in academic and managerial journals both in the U.S. and overseas. He has also published three edited volumes: *Technology and the Future of Work*; *Usability: Turning Technologies into Tools*; and *Remade in America: Transplanting and Transforming Japanese Management Systems*, all with Oxford University Press.