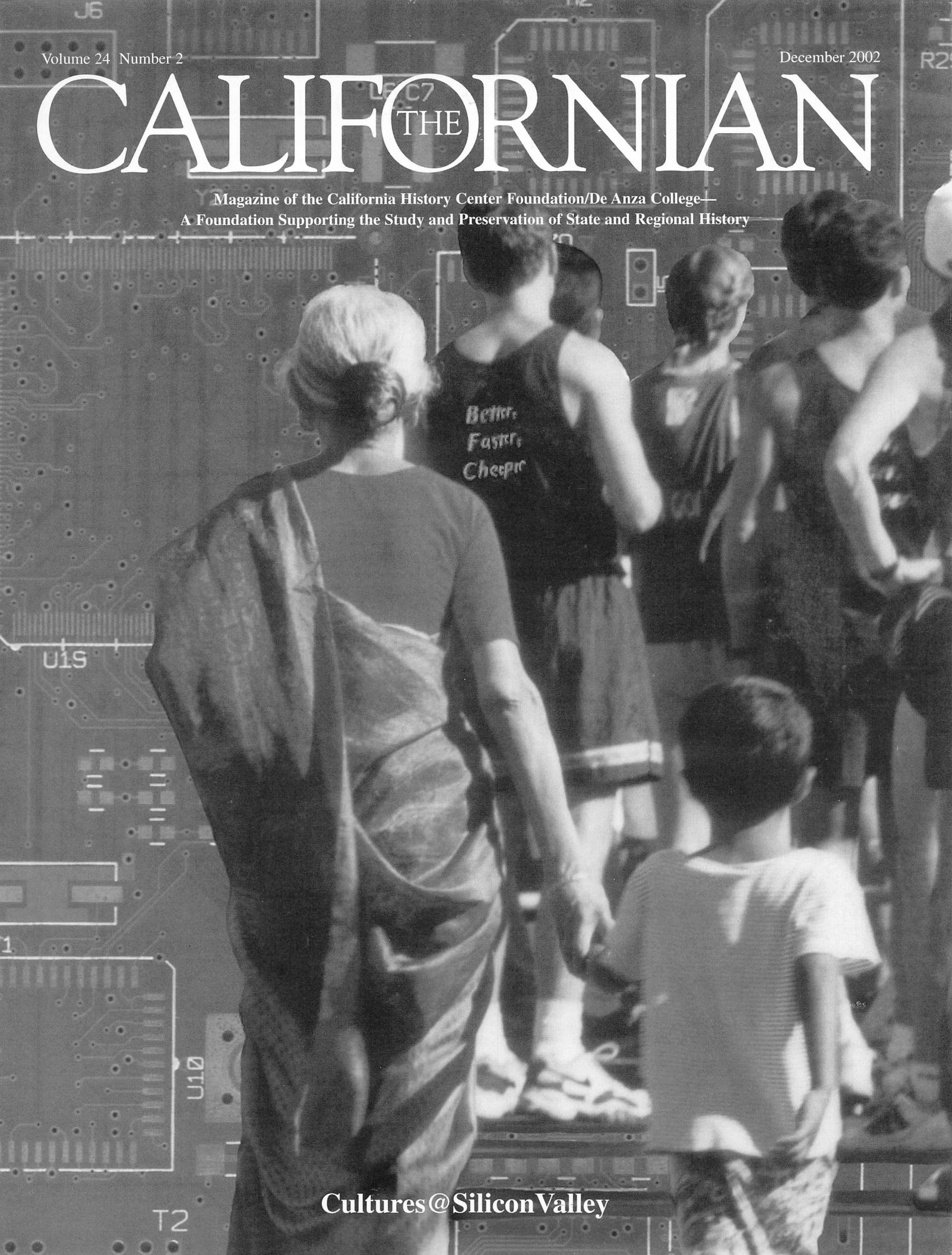


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# CALIFORNIA THE FORNIAN

Magazine of the California History Center Foundation/De Anza College—  
A Foundation Supporting the Study and Preservation of State and Regional History



Cultures@SiliconValley

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

## Heritage and California's New Ethnic Identity

One of the fastest growing categories of "ethnicity" here at De Anza College according to self-identifying questionnaires is that of "other." Rather than picking the traditional racial categories on the surveys and official forms, a growing group of students is seeking other identities. I hear young people of color argue among themselves about their individual and collective identities. Are they Mexican American, Chicano, or Latino... Asian, or Asian American... African, African American, or Black or...? The possibilities sometimes seem endless. Many feel that the categories "chosen" for them by the older generations and the powers that be are too rigid and "out of it." Even white students wonder what "white" is and whether their ethnic backgrounds count, or are they supposed to be something else? For me, listening to this debate is both fascinating and frustrating.

One part of me wants to ask these young people, "don't you know what people went through to create ethnic studies and affirmative action programs? What about the pitched battles and struggles against one of the most persistent and defining issues of our society—racism? Doesn't that history matter anymore or is everything so relative and individualized that we no longer need a collective past?"

But another side of me realizes that I am now part of the "older generation" that has traditions and a heritage young people are questioning. I realize that I am truly fortunate to witness this discussion unfolding before me. I am being offered a chance to take part in discussions that will shape the future of our state and society.

Some of this debate over identity is quite understandable given that many of these young people are of "mixed" cultural heritage from a dizzying array of backgrounds that span the globe. Others just don't feel that the ethnic organizations of their parents' (or the "older") generation are relevant to their needs. Still others feel that they have been mistreated by such organizations. Having faced off with ethnic organizations of my parents' generation in my youth, I understand their disgruntlement. But at the root of all this is a need to take a fresh look at what is promoted as heritage.

I believe there has been too much emphasis on heritage as one group's, or even in some cases, a generation's sense of entitlement to a neatly defined niche in history. Heritage can become a barrier, or in the worst cases, it can and has been used as a device of sorts to foment hatred against one group by another, or against a certain community by an entire nation. In this instance, heritage is made into something that it cannot be: a replacement for history and historical reality. I think heritage is something we create to save stories about ourselves—be they about a specific group, generation, organization, whatever is important to us—and to promote values

we think need to be passed on to others. For there to be a healthy and vibrant heritage, each community needs to commit itself to continual debate and discussion on what it believes best represents it and what it wants to offer to the rest of society as its "story." But most importantly, each group needs to establish an open-mindedness that can allow for the transmittal and reception of these stories and values no matter how different their backgrounds.

I truly believe that we do not have to live in a society in which we compete to see which heritage should rule over others and which is the most unique and important. While I realize that economic, political and historical forces have shaped and promoted certain kinds of heritage as the "dominant" stories and continue to do so, I am idealistic enough to believe we can make a difference through our actions as promoters of heritage and history education. I believe that organizations such as ours can instead, compete to create the most special and unique stories that resonate universally, and by their power to reach others, no matter how different culturally, no matter what the listener's age, have the potential to be "timeless" and "borderless."



Recently, CHCF published *Milestones: a History of Mountain View, California* written by Mary Jo Ignoffo, an excellent and well respected local historian and author. I was dismayed when the book received some very negative press, attacking the work as being racially insensitive because it did not include enough material specifically about African Americans. While others have the right to criticize and point out any perceived shortcomings in any work, I was depressed at the context in which these criticisms were set. I do not think that any work of local history can cover all the stories, or in this case, can deal with all matters of heritage as I discussed above. City histories by their nature present authors with insurmountable challenges: an author must walk a tightrope while fending off the demands of those who want to promote their city in a certain way, i.e. business and commerce, or the demands of groups promoting specific ethnic, family or social/organizational histories. Mary Jo did a masterful job of navigating this difficult and stressful process and has my complete respect.

—Tom Izu, Director

*COVER: Runners from a recent Silicon Valley Marathon transposed over a computer circuit board to illustrate J.A. English-Lueck's new book, Cultures@SiliconValley. See page 5 for excerpt from book. Photo by Joe L. Hertzbach; cover by Karl Lueck Designs.*



# CALENDAR

- Through December** “Too Much of a Good Thing”  
Book Duplicates Sale
- 
- Through January** “Olson Farm of Sunnyvale”  
Exhibit Open
- 
- Through Dec. 12** “Give a Little and Get a Little”—CHC  
**Membership Promotion.** Purchase a gift membership worth more than \$50 and receive a FREE CHC publication (softcover) of your choice.
- 
- Dec. 6** **Holiday Reception and Presentation**  
by Yvonne Olson Jacobson at CHC  
**1:30 p.m.** Light refreshments and reception for the current exhibit—“Olson Farm of Sunnyvale”  
**2:30 p.m.** “Enduring Values: Family, Community and History” Presentation by Yvonne Olson Jacobson
- 
- Dec. 16** **CHC Closes for Holiday Break**
- 
- Jan. 6** **CHC Reopens.** Winter Quarter Begins
- 
- Jan. 18** **Tailskids and Baling Wire: Pioneer Airports of the Bay Area** — Field Trip
- 
- Jan. 20** **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Observed**  
CHC Closed
- 
- Jan. 23** “Cultures@SiliconValley” Presentation by cultural anthropologist J.A. English-Lueck, 1:30 p.m., Conference Room A, Hinson Campus Center
- 
- Jan.25** **Tailskids and Baling Wire: Pioneer Airports of the Bay Area** — Field Trip
- 
- Feb. 2** **South Bay Historic Houses** — Field Trip
- 
- Feb. 8** **South Bay Historic Houses** — Field Trip
- 
- Feb. 13** **Day of Remembrance** to commemorate the incarceration of Japanese Americans during WW II-1:30 p.m., Hinson Campus Center, Conference Room B  
(See story on *Foundation Notes*, pages 14-15)
- 
- Feb. 14** **Lincoln’s Birthday Observed** — CHC Closed
- 
- Feb. 17** **Washington’s Birthday Observed** — CHC Closed
- 
- Feb. 15** **Courting California: Bids, Claims, And Intrusions By Rival Nation States** — Field Trip
- 
- Feb. 23** **Oakland Celebrates 150 Years** — Field Trip
- 
- March 1** **Courting California: Bids, Claims, And Intrusions By Rival Nation States** — Field Trip
- 
- March 8** **Oakland Celebrates 150 Years** — Field Trip
- 
- March 15** **Abolitionist Women in the Santa Clara Valley** — Field Trip
- 
- March 28** **Winter Quarter Ends**

## Stocklmeir Library/Archives Wish List

First, to fill in sizeable gaps in our periodical collection, the CHC’s Stocklmeir Library/Archives need:

■ *California Historical Society Quarterly* vols. 1-7, 11, 21-23.

■ *Pacific Historical Review* vols.10-15, 26-64.

We have current subscriptions to both of these journals.

Also, the following books would be welcomed additions to our collection:

■ *Abiding Courage: African American Migrant Women and the East Bay Community* by Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo. University of North Carolina Press. 1996. \$45

■ *Behind the Silicon Curtain* by Dennis Hayes. South End Press. 1989. \$40

■ *California-Mexico Connection* edited by Abraham Lowenthal. Stanford University Press. \$45

■ *California Pastoral* by H.H. Bancroft. 1988. (price varies)

■ *City Center to Regional Mall: Architecture, the Automobile and Retailing in Los Angeles, 1920-1950* by Richard Longstreth. MIT Press. 1997. (price varies)

■ *Painting the Towns: Murals of California* by Robin J. Dunitz. RJD Enterprises. 1997. (price varies)

■ *Triumph of the Right: The Rise of the California Conservative Movement, 1945-1966.* Right Wing in America Series. M.E. Sharpe. 1998. (price varies)

Finally, used bookshelves of all kinds are much needed.

Please call CHC Librarian Lisa Christiansen at 408/864-8987 or e-mail her at [info@calhistory.org](mailto:info@calhistory.org) if you are interested in donating or donating toward items on the above list.

# EDUCATION

## State and Regional History

The following courses will be offered Winter Quarter through the California History Center. Please see the California History Center class listings section of the De Anza College Winter Schedule of Classes for detailed information. For additional course information, call the center at (408) 864-8712. And don't forget, as a benefit of being a history center member, you can register for history center classes (CHC classes only, not other De Anza classes) at the Trianon building.

### TAILSKIDS AND BALING WIRE:

#### PIONEER AIRPORTS OF THE BAY AREA *Chatham Forbes*

In the early twentieth century, Bay Area military and civilian airports played an important part in the glamorous new field of aviation. Year-round flying weather attracted flyers and aeronautical scientists to the region. Transcontinental, trans-Pacific, and round-the-world flights were launched from local fields. This class will visit pioneer airfields which participated in fledgling accomplishments of that formative era.

**Lectures:** Thurs., January 16 and 23: 6:20 to 10 p.m., CHC

**Field trips:** Sat., January 18 and 25, Bay Area early aviation sites

### SOUTH BAY HISTORIC HOUSES *Betty Hirsch*

From Ohlone homeland to Mission outpost to ranchland to the high tech of today's Silicon Valley, the South Bay has grown with its various personae, but fortunately, has some remaining homes that are representative of the various eras and their occupants. From very early times San Jose has the Peralta Adobe, home to Luis Maria Peralta, and the Fallon House, home to San Jose's first mayor, Thomas Fallon. Mountain View has the Rengstorff House, now restored and relocated to Shoreline Park. The beautiful Spanish Renaissance Hayes Mansion has been lovingly turned into a conference center. The Duveneck Ranch, Hidden Villa, has become an ecological preserve and youth hostel. The Fremont Older house in Cupertino is now a part of the Midpeninsula Open Space District. James Phelan's Villa Montalvo is a Center for the Arts, as stipulated in his will. The Harris-Lass house in Santa Clara is representative of the farm era. We will also take a walking tour of the original Stanford Professorville in Palo Alto. We will discuss and view some of these homes and others — their times and owners.

**Lectures:** Thurs., January 30 and February 6: 6:20-10 p.m., CHC

**Field trips:** Sun., February 2 and Sat., February 8: 8:30-6 p.m.

### COURTING CALIFORNIA:

#### BIDS, CLAIMS, AND INTRUSIONS BY RIVAL NATION STATES

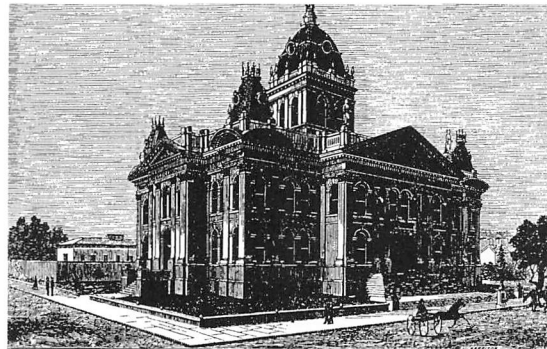
*Chatham Forbes*

The encounter of California by sixteenth-century Spanish explorers was the first in a long history of explorations and investigations by foreign powers. Ultimately, seven nations laid claim at various times, or bid to gain sovereignty, or actually intruded upon California. Diplomatic intrigue, economic activity, outright invasion, and *de facto* occupation all played a part in the maneuvers by covetous nation states.

**Lectures:** Thurs., February 13 and 27: 6:20 to 10 p.m., CHC

**Field trips:** Sat., February 15 and March 1,  
Crissy Field, Oakland, and San Carlos

Photo: Centennial Year Book of Alameda County, Calif., 1876



*Alameda  
County  
Courthouse,  
Oakland,  
Calif.*

### OAKLAND CELEBRATES 150 YEARS *Betty Hirsch*

From Luis Maria Peralta, holder of the Rancho San Antonio, its first land grant to its founding father and first mayor, nefarious Horace Carpentier to its beloved mayor, Dr. Samuel Merritt, to today's mayor, Jerry Brown, the City of Oakland has had some colorful, complex leaders, some more interested in their own lives than those of Oakland's citizens. The sleepy little town across the Bay has become a thriving major port of Northern California. Oakland definitely has some there there. (Gertrude Stein once said of Oakland, her home town, "there is no there there." Today she would be pleasantly surprised at all the there there.) Class will include trips to some of the following: Mills College, Dunsmuir House, Claremont Hotel, Paramount Theater, Cohen-Bray House, the Greek Orthodox Church, Oakland Zoo, Downtown Walking Tour and the ArtShip.

**Lectures:** Thurs., February 20 and March 6: 6:20-10 p.m., CHC

**Field trips:** Sun., February 23, and Sat., March 8: 8:30-6 p.m.

### ABOLITIONIST WOMEN IN THE SANTA CLARA VALLEY *Jean Libby*

The story of John Brown at Harpers Ferry, his life and death to abolish slavery in the United States, does not end with his execution in December, 1859. His widow, Mary Day Brown, and her surviving children came to California by wagon train, eventually settling in the Santa Clara Valley. Daughters Sarah Brown and Ellen Brown Fablinger were pioneers in the community, as teachers and fruit orchardists and cannery workers. This class goes to the Saratoga Historical Society, Hakone Gardens, the Madrona Cemetery, the "John Brown Farm" that was purchased by Mary with subscriptions from Californians who read of her poverty in the newspapers, and to the site of the Fablinger home, now the Civic Center of Cupertino. After the field trip on March 15 we will share a potluck dinner as would have been served in the 1880s at the farm home of Mary Brown.

**Lectures:** Wed., March 12 and 19: 6:20-10 p.m., CHC

**Field trip:** Sat., March 15: 9:00 -4 p.m.



# FEATURE

## Cultures@SiliconValley

The following is excerpted from *Cultures@SiliconValley*—a new book by J.A. English-Lueck (© 2002 by the Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University, with the permission of Stanford University Press). Based on 10 years of research, the book is an anthropological expedition into the everyday lives of people living in and connected to the Santa Clara County technological hub known as Silicon Valley. English-Lueck is professor and chair of the Department of Anthropology at San José State University.

### Author English-Lueck to Discuss Silicon Valley Cultures on Jan. 23

Cultural Anthropologist J.A. English-Lueck, author of *Cultures@SiliconValley*, will discuss her new book at De Anza College on Thursday, Jan. 23.

The CHC-sponsored talk will begin at 1:30 p.m. in Conference Room A of the Hinson Campus Center. It is free and open to the public.

English-Lueck, professor and chair of the Anthropology Department at San José State University, received her Ph.D. degree from the University of California, Santa Barbara, studying social change and community among alternative health practitioners. This research resulted in the book *Health in the New Age: A Study in California Holistic Practices*.

She went on to investigate visions of the future among science and technology workers in the People's Republic of China and Hong Kong, which became the book *Chinese Intellectuals on the World Frontier*.

Since 1991, she has been working with Chuck Darrach and James Freeman at San José State on the Silicon Valley Cultures Project (SVCP). In the course of this research, she has investigated the complex dance of work, home and community life in Silicon Valley. The SVCP is partially funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and the National Science Foundation. A research affiliate of the Institute for the Future, English-Lueck and her colleagues are working on several more books.



Photo: Sharon Hall

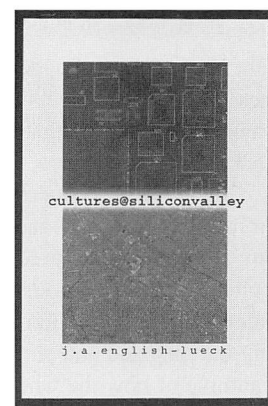
### The Double Helix

What is the effect of technology in the lives of Silicon Valley people who are both the producers and consumers of that technology? How does culture, or rather the interplay of many cultural identities, matter in this place? Silicon Valley's culture, like DNA, takes the form of a double helix. In living organisms, DNA consists of two polynucleotide chains, running in opposite directions, that are wound around a central axis. It controls the synthesis of specific organic products and is the "transforming factor" that marks one strain of organism from another. New culture is made in Silicon Valley as two strands of cultural life intertwine. Cultural ideas and practices about technology form one strand. They are inexorably intertwined with a less obvious strand of cultural richness reflecting diverse interacting identities.

Technological presence is so dramatic in Silicon Valley that it is easy to overlook the second, more subtle, impact of cultural complexity. Yet that second strand is well recognized by some of those who live entwined in the double helix. Eugene, a retired mechanic and Asian-American church administrator, notes: "On the one hand you see the high tech, and sometimes that's where it stops, because that's all people tell you about. But you also see the other side of it. You see the humanity." Heidi, a young native of the area, understands this in her bones when she remarks, "I just kind of get this image of this area...when I think of Silicon Valley, I think of diverse technology, and diversity within people, so, I just think of diversity, but technology is kind of booming in the background."

Rachel, a business editor and journalist, voices the same conclusion, adding:

I really think that you can define [Silicon Valley] by technology, but...then you only hit one slice of this place and if you factor in the diversity you actually then begin to hit much more of a whole. [My friend] did this story which to me is like the ultimate Silicon Valley story...about the Santa Clara Cricket Team. And that to me was like the most perfect and amazing story....



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These people changed the Santa Clara Cricket Club from this moribund, horrifying, “Will we ever win? We just play cricket kinda bad,” to this cricket powerhouse which, you know, is doing all these different [community activities]. They were lured here by technology for the most part, which is why they came here. But in coming here they have changed this place.

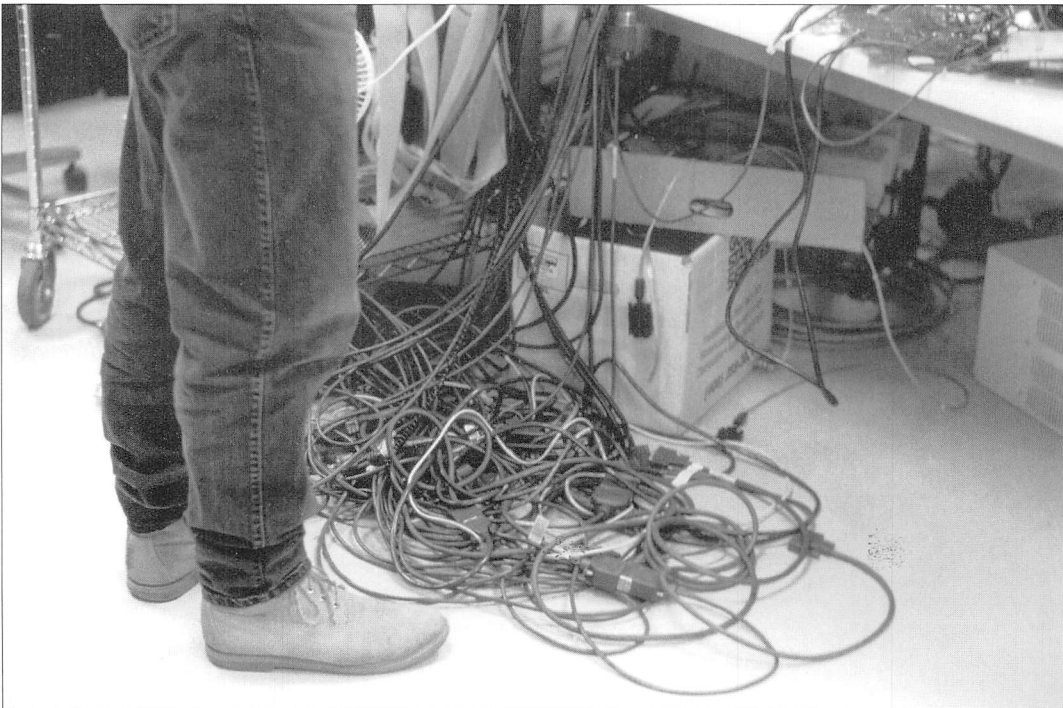
But how do they change this place? The influence of cultural richness and identity diversity on the high-tech lifestyle is a central mystery to be investigated. What is the difference that culture makes?

To answer this question meant rethinking how culture functions in communities radically different from the ones studied by my anthropological predecessors. In a village town in Indonesia, culture is created through the complex interactions of interpersonal obligations, social appearances, and individuals acting out unstated and shifting rules and roles. In a stunning example of how the whole can be viewed through the part, the anthropologist Clifford Geertz analyzed a Balinese cock fight, unraveling how the activities of the event expressed deep cultural premises (1990: 113-21). He demonstrated how viewing the “public culture” gave the anthropologist a window into the underlying premises of that culture. I had to locate the Silicon Valley equivalent of such cock fights. Evidence of public civic culture

can be found in the political, economic, and artistic arenas. Public ritual is expressed in Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network forums and celebrations of the Tech Museum of Innovation. Yet it is the theater of everyday life that is intriguing—when a person buys a gift shirt at Sears, tracks down a thorny technical problem at work, and plans the day’s logistical contacts while commuting. An event in public life need not be grandiose to embody cultural premises.

These mundane examples can be found in Fresno or Des Moines, not only in Silicon Valley. So what is different about Silicon Valley? Silicon Valley produces technology. Its denizens are predisposed to use high-tech devices, providing ample opportunity for anthropologists to study a culture in which “public” interaction happens in electronic spaces. Faxes, voice mails, telephone calls, pages, e-mails, and web-based communications together create a device-mediated “public space” rich in cultural premises. Important cultural work is conducted through the use of electronic communications technology—reshaping social roles, constructing meaning, creating tacit agreements about which parts of a person’s birth culture will be emphasized and which aspects will be overshadowed by common concerns. As electronic public space increases in scope and importance, it shapes a society in which technology is deeply integrated into all of life, in both gross and subtle ways. Technology defines the interactions of the

Photo: Thomas J. Bouries



*People work amidst a morass of cables.*

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day, and shapes the metaphors of the larger civic sphere. What do we have to learn from such technologically saturated communities? What can Silicon Valley tell us about the ongoing creation of new culture, which anthropologists refer to as ethnogenesis?

Not only does the technology shape the actions of the individual and the community, but, in addition, the political economy of technology production has an additional, unanticipated effect. The expertise for technological production is not local, but taps into global sources. That expertise is imported by electronic messaging or by actual migration in and out of Silicon Valley. People with diverse identities interact, and create new identities. The resultant cultural complexity poses a dilemma. While the high-tech economy cannot thrive without world-wide connections and continued global interaction, there is a certain amount of resistance and ethnocentrism on the part of Santa Clara natives and among immigrants as well. Cultural differences have always posed a problem in human interaction.

Ethnocentrism refers to the feeling that one's own culture is the "center of what is reasonable and proper in life" (Brislin 2000: 44-45). Assuming that one's home culture defines the only

proper way to act, however, is at the heart of many distasteful and even violent intercultural interactions. Colonial history abounds with snap judgments and heavy-handed interventions. Classical ethnocentrism emerges from a sense of certainty, a "gut feeling" that what is familiar is inherently proper and what is unfamiliar is somehow suspicious. However, in a complex society it gets much harder to distinguish between "us" and "them," as identities overlap and cultural practices are drawn from many sources.

Ethnocentrism itself becomes a more subtle process, reflecting unease and uncertainty, rather than certainty. People in such circumstances cannot assume that the people they meet share the same cultural premises about work, family, time, honor, or fairness. They cannot necessarily predict that those premises are not shared, either. This ambiguity, the uncertainty of sharing common assumptions, is the "new ethnocentrism" (see Geertz 2000: 86, 224). Philosophers and psychological anthropologists endeavor to understand how a society can work when its members share shifting and varied premises.<sup>1</sup> What do people have to do to overcome this "new ethnocentrism" and create a meaningful plural community and a productive work space? Silicon Valley's historically

<sup>1</sup> The philosopher Charles Taylor writes extensively on the role of common intersubjective meanings in creating a functional polity. He defines consensus as the "convergence of beliefs on certain basic matters" (1985: 36), and contemplates the implications of multiple centers for countries such as his own culturally plural Canada. This cultural definition of consensus does not mean that everyone in a society shares the same opinions, but that they share a "common understanding of symbols" that permits civic discourse (see Levine 1984: 68). His work has been influential to anthropologists such as Clifford Geertz.

Photo: Thomas J. Bouries

*A worker uses a dissection microscope in a prototype development rework station.*





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generated cultural complexity provides a stage for viewing the consequences of identity diversity.

The saturation of technology into daily life generates new social traps—cultural problems in which short-term and immediate solutions inadvertently generate long-term problems. Information technologies are adopted to create efficient, asynchronous, global communications. It seems so simple and

**High-tech work in general, and global work in particular, is deeply social.**

convenient to e-mail project instructions to a subcontractor in Ireland from home before breakfast. However, while using devices may overcome the immediate technical difficulties of crossing time and space, this use has long-term social consequences that may prove problematic. The interactive “public” communities that are created by electronic media are distant, often conveying only partial or imperfect communications, and to maintain them requires a fair amount of invisible work in the form of frequent contact and redundant communications. Device-mediated communication initially masks cultural differences, creating the illusion that the people on the other end of the phone or keyboard are “just like you”—at least until people discover they have quite different ideas of what constitutes such culturally

loaded concepts—as “timely” or “responsible.” Even finding the right person to talk to about a decision may become a time-consuming and culturally laborious task for a project manager in Dublin who needs to talk to a counterpart in the United States. Who is in charge? When she finally locates that person, should she be assertive, or deferential? How can she convey the right attitude over e-mail?

Pervasive technology also sets up another problem. When information is mobile—either because of the widespread use of mobile communications devices or easy access to stationary personal computers and telephones—how do people use the old environmental cues of workplace and household to divide the social realms of work and home? When a parent is generating human resources reports on a laptop while attending a child’s sporting event, is that person acting as a worker or a parent? The enactment of social roles has been associated with place since the Industrial Revolution (see Nippert-Eng 1996: 19). Increasingly, people must invent new ways of managing their social selves.

High-tech work in general, and global work in particular, is deeply social. People must work together to exchange information, pass tasks to specialized workers, and learn their organizational culture. Information and communications devices facilitate the technical connections. But they also facilitate a wider net of connections to friends, family, and former coworkers,

Photo: Thomas J. Bouries



*The company provides dinner after hours during a “crunch time.”*

strengthening the salience of the person's overall network and weakening the power of the immediate employer.

The demand for specialized workers from all over the world has created a cultural complexity that makes it impossible to simply assume that everyone around you is just like you. Once again, there are unintended social consequences to this identity diversity. The short-term need to extract the technical elite from a global

**...there are  
unintended social  
consequences to  
this identity diversity.**

talent pool is solved by importing labor from India or Boston, but the importation results in greater cultural complexity. Some of the people with whom one is interacting may be housed in distant parts of the world. Other people who are culturally different may be at the next desk, or dropping their children

off at one's children's school. This is a social state that is rife with potential cultural mistakes. A simple shopping expedition may require effort in developing cultural sensitivity.

In this book, I must describe a region where life is saturated by technology, and where identities are problematical on account of the complexity of cultural interactions. There are places in the world that share aspects of Silicon Valley's technological penetration and identity diversity. Each of these conditions also has

ramifications for other kinds of communities, those that are not identified with technology, or which, at least on the surface, seem culturally less complex.

### User Guide

As a cultural anthropologist, I am prey to a lifelong fascination with the details of daily life, and a predilection to see any culture as but one among many. I have been trained to look for ethnocentrism in myself, to constantly question my tendency to think of my home culture as the natural one. Tempocentrism—viewing my own time as the default setting for normality—can also lead me into error. I did not grow up in a reality dominated by hyperactive electronic activity. I must resist the temptation to assume that any culture, including any in Silicon Valley, is inherently flawed or favored, particularly while I am in the process of trying to understand it. That does not mean I cannot detect bigotries and contradictions, or note particularly creative cultural solutions to dilemmas, but my training inhibits me from ranting either in praise or condemnation. Yet, I too am thoroughly enmeshed in the Silicon Valley system. I live and teach in Silicon Valley. My children think of it as home. I grumble at the traffic and grimace at the inequalities, just as other Silicon Valley workers do. I am subject to occasional bouts of “technolust,” going to Fry's Electronics just to gaze longingly at the latest digital device, sure sign of my

Photo: Thomas J. Bourres

*Cubicle land where  
work spaces are  
customized to  
facilitate work and  
remind people of their  
own “lives.”*



having “gone native.” Yet my experiences in different cultures, and decades of exposure to the study of diverse cultures, help me place Silicon Valley in perspective. Hence, throughout the book, I draw parallels with, and distinctions from, other cultures.

Anthropology is a discipline rich in metaphors. In my particular kind of anthropology, we are keen to understand the context of a person’s life, and we toy with the idea that “the metaphors by

which people live and the world-views to which they subscribe mediate the relationship between what one thinks about and how one thinks” (Shweder and Bourne 1984: 189). In the early days of the field, we labeled the gross characteristics of a culture with metaphors. Ruth Benedict extracted

the imagery of Friedrich Nietzsche to label the Zuni “Apollonian,” and psychoanalytic metaphors to highlight the “paranoid” aspects of Dobuan culture (1989). In the postmodern turbulence of the latter twentieth century, culture was viewed as “text,” and “interpretive” analysis made the use of metaphors as a communicative tool a common practice (Geertz 2000: 16-17). In addition to looking at political economies and social organization, studying metaphors allows anthropologists to glimpse the underlying moral

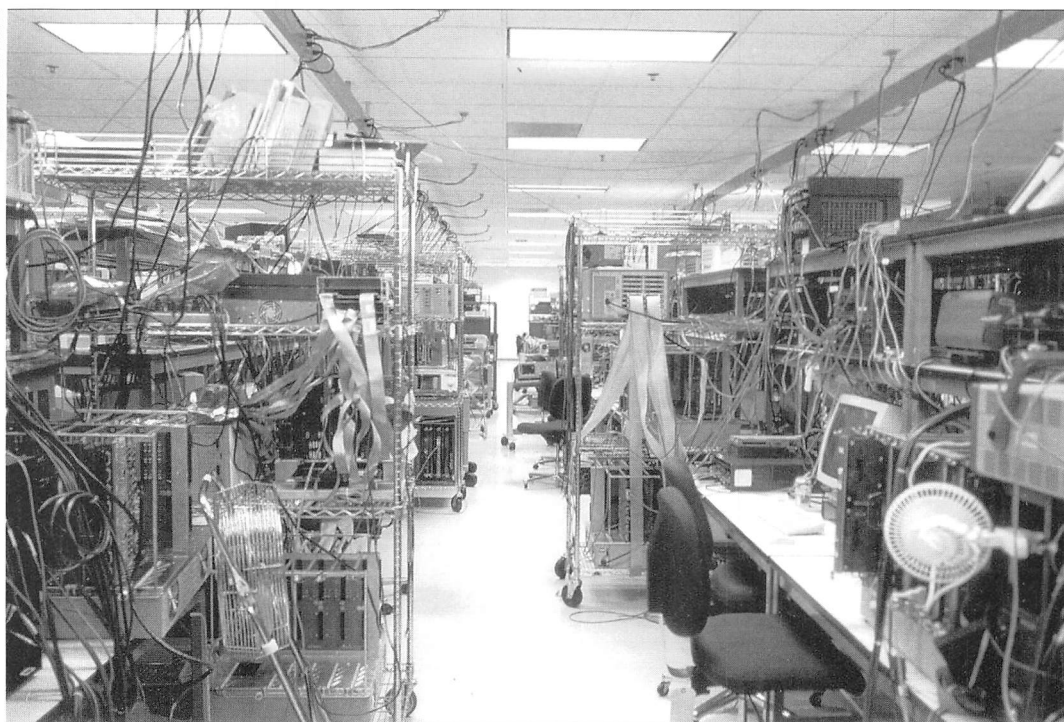
reasoning of the members of a culture.

The very name “Silicon Valley” is a technological metaphor. The people use a variety of metaphors, often drawn from high-tech life in day-to-day discourse. In this book, I add my own technological metaphors, invoking analogies in chapter titles and headings to set the stage for the content of each chapter.

The people of Silicon Valley do not form a single, undifferentiated entity. In our research, we listened to many voices in Silicon Valley, ranging from those of the technically elite “digi-rati” to those of the janitors who clean the school hallways. But this is not a book just about the hyper-affluent, or the clearly abused underclass, but about the vast middle ground in between. In portraying the experiences of such a range of people I was confronted with a challenge. There are many characters in the story of Silicon Valley, enough to make a classical Russian novel seem simple. The identities of those people must be kept anonymous. I wanted to keep true to the voices we heard, while not betraying any identities. Thus, pseudonyms were assigned to the various people who informed this study. But merely letting people “speak” in quotations carefully matched to their alter egos robs us of the richness of their experiences. People live in a world of artifacts, actions, and interactions that cannot always be represented in speech alone. To convey that richness, each of the subsequent chapters will begin with a vignette that illustrates the ideas dis-

## **The very name “Silicon Valley” is a technological metaphor.**

Photo: Thomas J. Bourne



*Inside the world of high-tech work, networking hardware dominates the scene—an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) product development laboratory.*



cussed later in the chapter. These scenarios will take you through a day in Silicon Valley, beginning with the morning commute, and ending with the setting sun. Direct quotations in the vignettes come from real people in Silicon Valley and other “silicon places,” but their identities are masked. Some characters in the vignettes are fictional composites whose behavior is based upon hundreds of observations and interviews. The composite characters

**The magnet of high-tech work has created a new population influx.**

are created to enliven widely observed actions and to create fictional integrity in the scenarios. The detailed vignettes are themselves fictional composites. The words and deeds in them were said and done, but by a number of different people.

Conceptually, two ideas dominate this book—technological saturation and identity diversity. Silicon Valley showcases changes in daily life that come directly as a result of the pervasive use of technology. The region also embodies changes in demography, and highlights the complex cultural interactions that accompany participation in a global high-tech economy. Hence the book is divided into two parts.

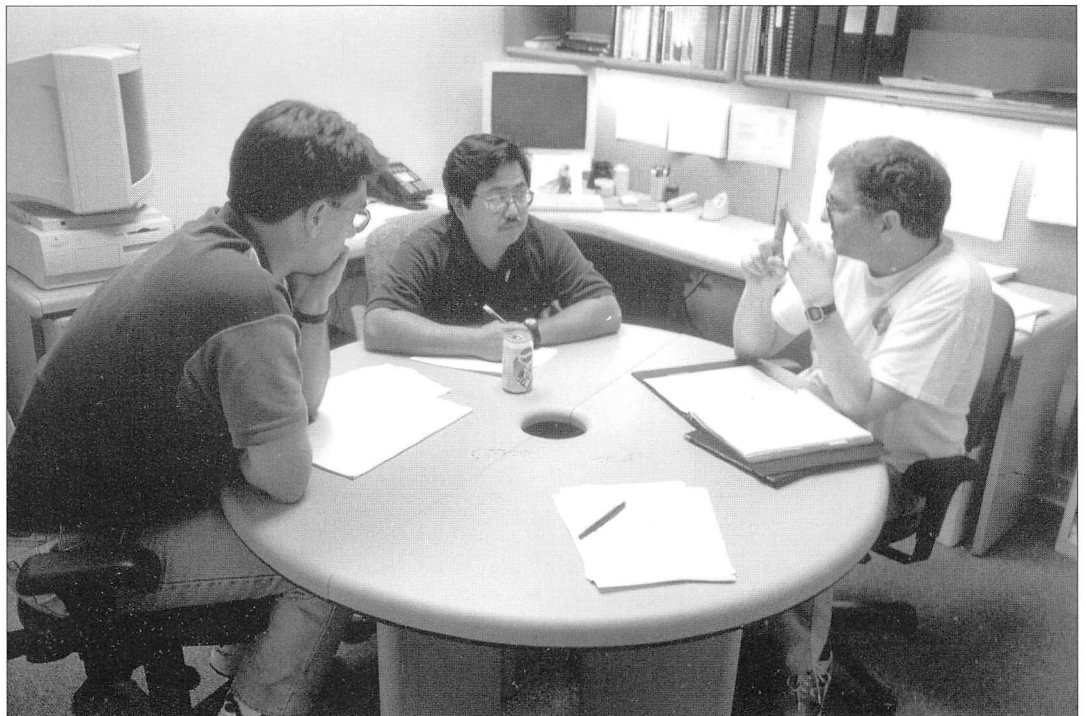
The remainder of this book explores the intertwining strands of Silicon Valley, as the prototype of a community that is suffused

both with many technologies and many identities. The economic specialization of the region has drawn people with great technological expertise to the community in unparalleled density. Technology permeates everyday life and provides the metaphors of community identity. The magnet of high-tech work has created a new population influx. Historically steeped in agrarian-based ethnic diversity, Silicon Valley has drawn different populations from within and beyond the United States into its high-technology economic engine. The array of cultures in the region fueling the workforce ranges from Cambodian culinary entrepreneurs to Midwestern process engineers. International ties emerge not only from immigrants and economic sojourners but also from the social bonds that are made and repeatedly reinforced through emerging electronic technologies. The region is not only a bellwether of technological research and production but also a laboratory for the creation of a complex society that contains diverse identities. Individual identities emerge, engage, erode, and are recreated to produce a larger community of communities in which people interact in schools, workplaces, and homes.

The two strands of technological saturation and identity diversity intertwine to produce many different choices in uses of technology, work practices, community connections, and family relationships. One dominant pattern emerges from these choices—instrumentality. Instrumental reasoning—the kind of

*High-tech work involves collaboration. This software development team is having a team meeting in a manager's office.*

Photo: Thomas J. Bouries



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reasoning that calculates the relationship of means to ends—is integral to producing and using technology. Life is managed. How does that reasoning affect the way in which we live as social and cultural beings? What happens when people make cultural identity itself into a tool, an instrument that is a means to an end? How do we manage identity complexity in an increasingly global culture? Once anthropologists traveled to distant islands in the

**Networks dominate  
how people  
structure  
meaningful groups.**

South Pacific to test the validity of established gender roles or socialization patterns. Today we recognize that life in Silicon Valley is a laboratory for the integration of consumer technology and transnational migration, reflecting larger American, and even transnational, cultural trends.

The first part of the book emphasizes the consequences of technological saturation. In “A Technological Place” I have considered the impact of technology on daily and community life in Silicon Valley. In the chapter you are now reading, “Culture Version 1.x: A Technological Community,” I have introduced the outlines of life in Silicon Valley, both familiar and exotic. In Chapter 2, “Compressing: Using Digital Devices to Shape Space and Time,” I look at what it means to be “technologically saturated” in

everyday life, and how technology use affects the choices people make and the consequences, often unintended, of those choices. Here I discuss the significance of “work,” a commonly used English word, but one that takes on a distinctive metaphorical meaning in Silicon Valley. Chapter 3, “Networking: Building Community in Silicon Valley,” discusses the social organization and public life of Silicon Valley. Networks—a form of social organization that is facilitated by technology—dominate how people structure meaningful groups. Technological metaphors influence Valley language and create a distinct public culture. Community is “designed,” “invented,” “reinvented,” and “refreshed.” Civic activities include “NetDays,” when high-tech volunteers install an infrastructure to bring the internet into public school classrooms, and the development and celebration of the Tech Museum of Innovation. I examine how the identification with technology is used by people within Silicon Valley, and in other technologically saturated regions, to create a “value-added” community.

The second part of the book is centered on the interaction of diverse identities. In “Trafficking in Complexity,” I track the global movements of people that have shaped the cultural complexity of the region. In Chapter 4, “Input/Output: Emerging Global Culture,” the evolution of Silicon Valley’s global dimensions is revealed in detail, highlighting the complex mixture of ancestral, national, and corporate cultures that flow through the

Photo: Thomas J. Bourtes



*Products are quality tested by placing them in thermal burn-in centers.*

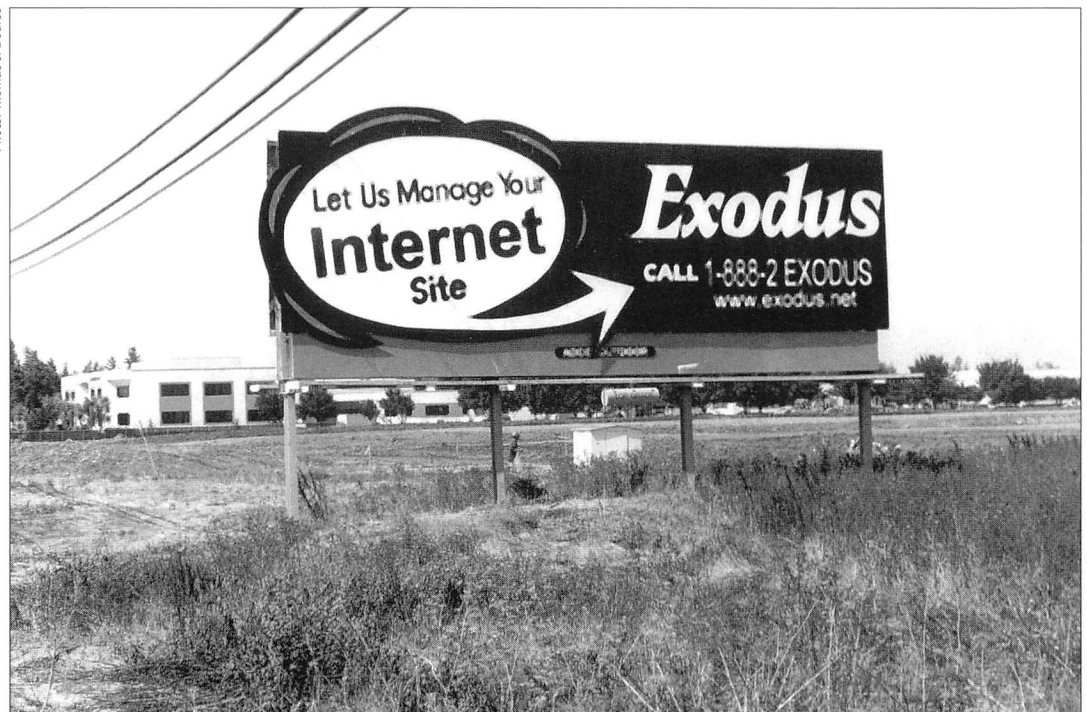
Valley. In it, I must unravel the role of culture and the function of identity. The fifth chapter, “Executing: Culture at Work and Home,” explores how culture is viewed, identified, and used at work and at home. When is one’s birth culture invoked? When is it avoided? Especially noteworthy are the strategies used by workers to “manage culture,” although management of culture is not confined to the workplace. The limits and creative solutions families make to adapt to different ancestral and corporate cultural expectations reflect another way that culture is used. These choices are expressed in courtship, child-rearing, and interpersonal relationships. In “managing culture” Silicon Valley denizens engage in the ultimate metaphorical act of instrumental reasoning: turning cultural identity and cultural competence themselves into tools. Finally, in the last chapter, “Reformatting: Creating Useful Culture,” we consider the co-existence of technological saturation and identity diversity, and the implications of combining these two forces. What are the challenges inherent in living in such a rich technological and cultural ecosystem, with so many choices and possible interactions? What are the tools people are creating to manage this complexity? How does it change how they organize their lives and relationships? How do the symbols, metaphors, and values of a community—so heavily identified by technology—shape civic life? Ultimately, what can we learn from the natural experiment known as Silicon Valley?

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Photo: Thomas J. Bourne

*In Silicon Valley, even the highway billboards emphasize technology.*





## FOUNDATION NOTES

### Olson Farm Exhibit On Through Jan. 31



*A cherry tree provides a pool of shade when a worker takes a break for lunch, 1980.*

“The Olson Farm of Sunnyvale,” a photographic exhibit based on county native Yvonne Olson Jacobson’s book, *Passing Farms, Enduring Values—California’s Santa Clara Valley*, will be on display at the history center through Jan. 31.

The CHCF recently published a second edition of her award-winning book that chronicles the rise of the orchard period of our valley up to the modern day growth of Silicon Valley and decline of local agriculture. The original book was published in 1984.

The photo exhibit documents her family’s former farm in Sunnyvale.

### CHCF Welcomes New Board Member

Rowena Tomaneng Matsunari has joined the CHCF Board of Trustees. “We are fortunate to have Rowena join us this year on the board. She has a tremendous amount of energy and enthusiasm, and is well respected by all of those lucky enough to have worked with her,” stated CHCF Executive Director Tom Izu.

Matsunari has been an instructor of English and Women’s Studies at De Anza College for the past seven years and has served as chair for Women’s History Month and Asian Pacific American Heritage Month events on the campus. In addition, she remains active in the local community, working with a variety of civic organizations.



Photo: Jean Libby

*Rowena Tomaneng Matsunari*

Currently, she is the director of development of FOCUS (Forward Opportunities for Community Uplift and Service), a non-profit organization committed to economic development and preservation of the rights of immigrant workers and their families.

### Center Redefines Its Mission Statement

This year the Board of Trustees of the California History Center Foundation revised the center’s mission statement as follows:

“The mission of the California History Center Foundation is to serve as the trustee and steward of the Foundation’s Stockmeir Library and Archives, to oversee and administer the Center’s publications program, to be an advocate for historic preservation on the De Anza College campus and in the community at large, and to provide guidance and support to the Center and its programs.

“The mission is accomplished through strategic planning, policy development, community outreach, fund raising, and fiduciary administration that are grounded in the values of community participation and ownership, institutional continuity, credibility, commitment, and responsibility.”

## CHC to sponsor 'Day of Remembrance'

Throughout the state and nation, Japanese American communities commemorate Feb. 19, 1942, as the beginning of the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II.

On that date over 60 years ago, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which authorized military officials to remove any and all groups deemed a security threat to the nation from the West Coast. This set into motion the removal and incarceration of 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry and what is now considered to be one of the most significant violations of constitutional and civil liberties caused by a single act in our country's history.

Alarmed by the current situation facing our nation and the on-going debate regarding civil liberties vs. national security, staff and student organizations have expressed interest in hosting a campus program to mark this important date. In response, CHC, in collaboration with stu-

dent organizations and interested faculty and staff are planning an event that will feature speakers and discussion on the internment. The event will focus not only on the history of the World War II incarceration, but also on its significance for today as we face similar constitutional and civil liberties issues during the "war against terrorism."

"It is my hope that we can use this historic event to help the campus community reflect on the need to actively protect constitutional rights. I would like to see this become an annual event that staff and students look forward to doing each year as a way of publicly affirming their civic duties and responsibilities," explained Tom Izu, CHC executive director.

The commemoration is set for Thursday, Feb. 13, 2003, at 1:30 p.m. in the Hinson Campus Center, Conference Room B.

For more information, contact Izu at (408) 864-8986.

Photo: Nihonmachi Outreach Committee



*Then Congressman Norman Mineta addressed the 1984 Day of Remembrance in San José's Japantown.*

## New Members

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A special thank you to the De Anza College staff and faculty who renew their memberships monthly through a payroll plan:

Susan Bruch	Kathleen Kyne
Judy Coleman	Judy Miner
David Howard-Pitney	Pauline Waathiq

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Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. The value of goods received as a benefit of membership must be deducted from the amount of all contributions claimed as a deduction. CHCF members receive tri-annual issues of "The Californian" magazine and members who contribute at the \$50 level and above also receive a yearly Local History Studies publication.

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