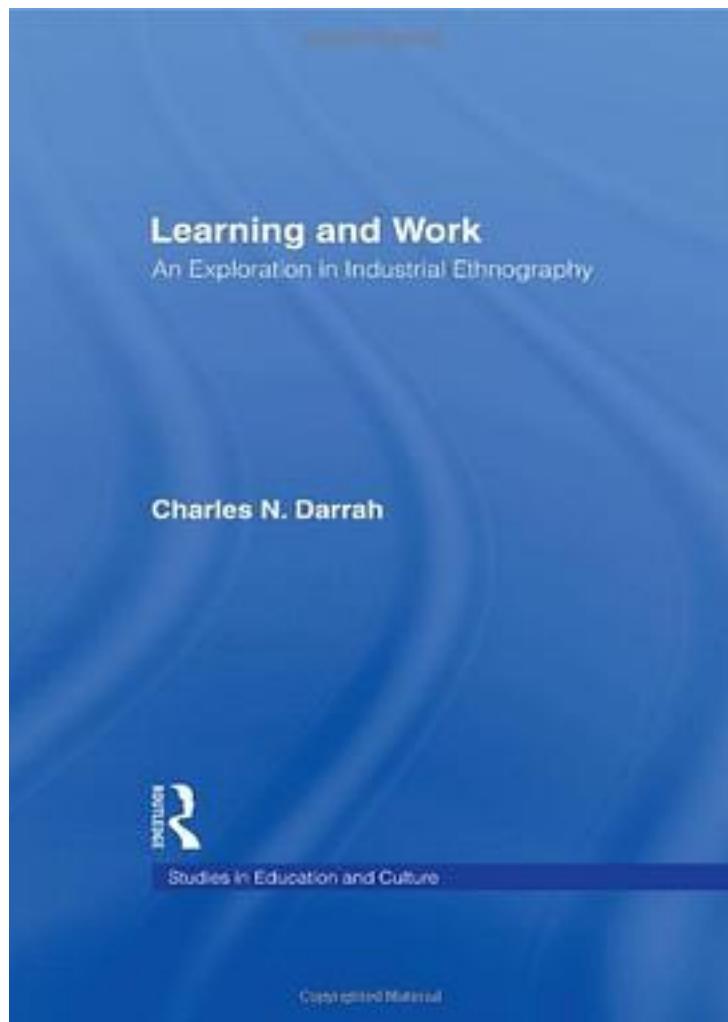


Learning and Work



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This volume examines how employees in two manufacturing concerns perceive and

perform their jobs, and how the workplace influences employees thinking. Based on extensive fieldwork, the book describes and explores the experiences of daily work. Workers are observed as they interpret instructions, and deal with often contradictory expectations and ambiguous information. The study shows that this process is far more complex than the one portrayed in discussions of skill requirements by managers, expert analysts, and many educators.

The book demonstrates that workplaces impart lessons that are at least as powerful as those conveyed in training programs and other official activities. It explores how people acquire an organizational world view that enables them to interpret the rules of the workplace and to perform appropriately. The book also examines how the new worker becomes part of a dynamic community of co-workers. Ethnographic descriptions document variations in the experiences of different workers and the strategies they adopt. The picture that emerges challenges widely held assumptions about the importance of skill requirements at work and the presumed inadequacy of ordinary people to work effectively. This book is especially timely as the nation seeks to reform education to better meet the demands of increased competition, and to address domestic concerns about preparing people for employment. A bibliography of references is included.

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