

# Dark Networks as Organizational Problems

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Cambridge Colloquium on Complexity  
and Social Networks

March 9, 2006

# Global Governance Problems

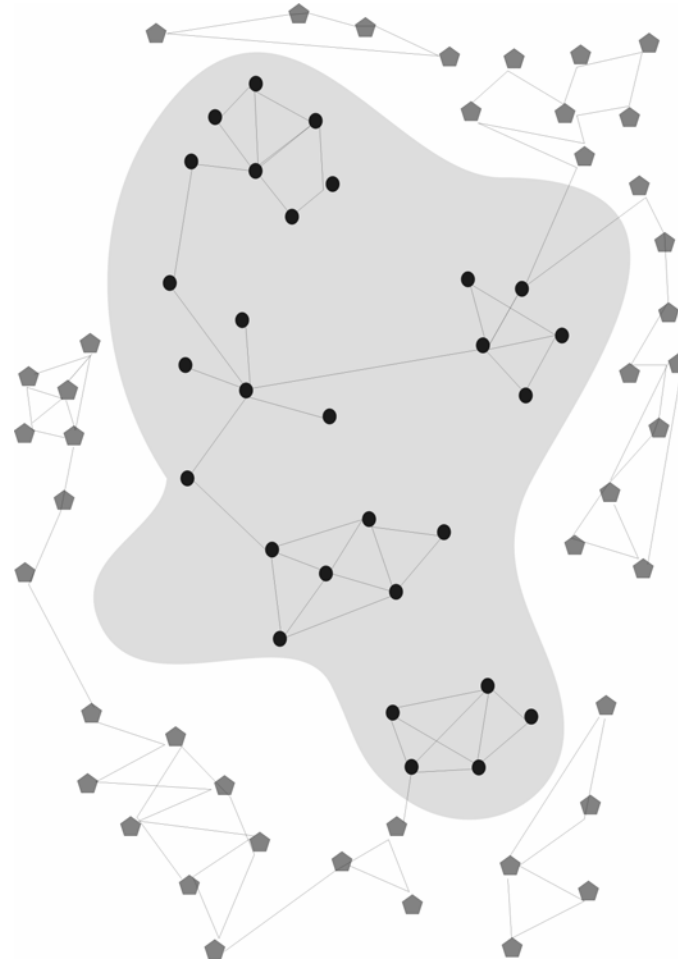
- Drugs
- Alien Smuggling
- Money Laundering and counterfeiting
- Intellectual Property
- Terrorism
- Human organs
- Stolen Art
- Sex Trafficking
- Arms Trafficking
- Nuclear Proliferation

# Global Governance Problems

- All are facilitated by the increasing interconnections among the countries and peoples of the world
- Most of the illegal activity is organized in network form
- States often play a limited or unwitting role in much of this activity but this varies
- These activities are part of the horizontal world of globalization

# Studying Dark Networks

- Research on dark networks creates difficult ethical and empirical problems
- The “ideal type” dark network is both covert and illegal
- In reality there are a lot of "gray" networks
- Assumes the things that make networks effective for legal activities also makes them effective for illegal activities
- Networks related in a strategic contingent way



## Dark Networks as Organizational Problems

# The Problem to be Explained

- The replication of dark networks in the face of massive efforts to destroy them.



# Proposition 1

- Dark networks must have hyper-flexible structures to survive.
- Can take many different forms
- Examples
  - Al Qaeda pre and post 9/11
  - Columbian drug cartels pre and post Pablo Escobar

# Al Qaeda: Form and Flexibility

- How is Al Qaeda best understood: as an ideology, a social movement, a network, several networks or a network of networks?
- Is Al Qaeda still a purposeful actor or is it an iconic global brand?
- Does a jihadist social movement that generates **cells** in Iraq and the Islamic diaspora replace a command and control network?

# Pablo's World

- Hierarchical Network
  - Vertically integrated drug cartels involved in all aspects of the cocaine trade

# Post Pablo: Form and Flexibility

- Lessons from the war on drugs.
  - Why didn't "killing Pablo" slow down the Columbian drug trade?
    - Drug smugglers learned organizational lessons.
      - From wheels to chains
    - The problem (the demand for drugs) didn't go away
    - Corporate knowledge migrates with midlevel managers
    - Criminal entrepreneurship

# Form and Flexibility: Nuclear Proliferation

- “A nuclear network like Khan’s is not a rigid structure that can be shattered and shut down but rather, something more like the Internet – a vast and informal web of flexible connections, capable of reshaping itself with ease.”
  - William Langewiesche

# Postmortem on Prop 1

- In both cases, differentiation and integration seem to be more logical explanations for survival than flexibility alone.
- Massive attempt to control may destroy the original network but transforms the remaining elements into new network structures

# Prop 1 is Subsumed by Prop 3

- Overt and covert networks face similar challenges in terms of differentiation and integration ... (but) they have to find different answers to these challenges because ... their activity is under constant risk of detection (and destruction).

# Proposition 2

Dark networks need a territorial base to be effective. These bases are usually in regions torn apart by civil war and dominated by current or former warlords and where no state with a legitimate monopoly of coercive power exists.

# Different Types of State Failure

- Areas where central government has no control
- Legally autonomous regions
- Failed state
- Collapsed state
- Functional state failure
- Iraq as a special case of state failure

# Beyond the Failed State

- Why focus on failed states? Dark networks operate just as well in non-failing states like China and Mexico
- focus on **resources** dark networks need to function and survive
- Beyond the state - to what degree is a dark network embedded in territorial space vs. cyberspace?

# Dark Matter

- Resources
- Nodes
- Linkages
- Drivers and facilitators of problems

# Resources are Necessary but not Sufficient Conditions

- Territory
  - Failed and failing states, etc.
- Technology
  - The internet, cell phones, etc.
- Social Movements
  - Religious and secular liberation movements
- Finances
  - State sponsors, charities, illegal activities, etc.
- Weapons
  - Small arms and munitions
- Law
  - Freedom of speech
  - Freedom of confession

# Human Agency and Activation of Dark Networks

- Linkages between nodes are facilitated by
  - Slack Resources
  - Trust
  - Reciprocity
- Human Agency
  - Task Specific Expertise
  - Network entrepreneurship essential to overcome the costs of organizing
  - Entrepreneur brings “money, mission and market share” (Stern, 2003)

# Dark Network Entrepreneurs



# What Creates a Dark Network's Nodes?

- Supply of personnel
  - Zeitgeist
  - Repression fuels sense of anger and injustice
  - Prisons as recruiting centers
- Demand for personnel
  - Preexisting groups with ability to recruit, train, and supply new members (requires a high degree of organization)
  - Technology as substitute for structure in recruitment, training, and motivation?

# Problem Drives the Replication of Network Linkages

- Even in the face of massive control efforts, new nodes and linkages are ***driven*** by
  - Drugs
    - Demand
    - Profit margin
  - Al Qaeda
    - Iraq Occupation
    - Palestine

# The Problem Facilitates Network Linkages

- Even in the face of massive control efforts, new nodes and linkages are **facilitated** by
  - Al Qaeda
    - Limited integration of the Islamic Diaspora in Europe
    - Lack of opportunity in the corrupt/autocratic regimes in the Middle East
    - Sense of injustice that flows from Western economic and military hegemony
  - Drugs
    - Conflicting goals of US in drug growing regions
    - Corrupt regimes
    - Opportunity provided by failing states

# The Dark Networks Project

- We want to explain the replication of dark networks in the face of massive control efforts
- We want to understand the relation of networks to problems
- We want to compare networks over time as they differentiate and integrate
  - Islamic jihadist networks
  - Drug trafficking networks
  - White hate networks

# Dimensions of Comparison of Dark Networks

- Differentiation/integration
  - Flexibility/stability
  - Persistence/Capacity
  - Designed/emergent
  - Resilient/brittle
  - Holy mission/criminal motive
- How do dark networks balance these imperatives?