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Revisiting Adhocracy: From Rhetorical Revisionism to Smart Mobs

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Abstract

Bennis & Slater 1964 are credited with coining the term "adhocracy" to describe the emergence and rise of networks of diverse expert specialists assembled for specific projects by what Mintzberg 1979 would describe as the "strategic apex". With bureaucratic forms seen as too rigid to cope with accelerating social and technological change, adhocracy became the model of the emerging administrative norm as envisioned by Toffler 1970. "Adhocracy" has been, however, recently revised in some popular literature and in political rhetoric to describe a kind of unsystematic response by policymakers to emerging issues, generally centered around American fiscal policy and in foreign policy formation universally that resembles Lindbloom's "muddling through" metaphor than a flexible, but purposeful organizational form. This revisionism has blurred the concept prompting this revisiting of what adhocracy was, and is becoming in terms of a still viable form with applications that point to more diffuse applied networks. This work concludes with a basic descriptive review of "new adhocracy" and some emergent post-adhocratic forms.

Keywords: adhocracy, emerging organizational forms, mintzberg, new adhocracy, organizational change, organizational forms, smart mobs, types of organizations

Recent political rhetoric emanating from the floor of the United States Senate invoked the term "dhocracy", originally attributed to management scholar Warren Bennis and elaborated upon by futurists Alvin and Heidi Toffler, 1970 in their book, *Future Shock*.[1] The rhetoric revises the term to describe a purported state of unsystematic and unfocused crisis management; coping on a day-to-day basis by policy makers within the current administration. Below is an excerpt from a floor speech by Senator Kit Bond of Missouri:

> *I, for one, say no more throwing good taxpayer money down a rat hole, no more "adhocracy" where we look at the crisis of the day and throw money at some institution that has already depreciated significantly in value in hopes of keeping it afloat.*[2]

In another floor speech, Senator Bond repeated the refrain of "adhocracy" as a disjointed and arbitrary reaction to the banking crisis:

The real outrage is their ad hoc and knee-jerk reaction to the crisis. The administration's adhocracy amounts to spending billions-that is right, billions with a "b"–of good taxpayer dollars on the failing banks.[3]

Senator Bond would reference adhocracy in the same manner 4 times in 3 floor speeches from March 6 to March 25 of 2009.[4]

It is then puzzling or, better, bemusing, to encounter references to adhocracy as the style of the current administration, when, as an organizational form, it holds the promise of greater efficiency, cost-savings, and accountability in government.

More bemusing still is the extensive use of adhocracy in the form of Congressional task forces in the 104th Congress under then Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich.[5] To be charitable adhocracy has proven to be a muddied term, but to less charitable, the usage invoked for political purposes is sloppy at best and hyper-hypocritical at worst given the practices of their own leadership a decade earlier. So it comes to this, that we get better clarity about what adhocracy is and just as important-ly; what it is not.

The primary source of this deviant form of the concept appears to be inspired from a single reference by Barry Ritholtz, and his book, *Bailout Nation*.[6] In it he uses the term in relation to the federal interventions in the marketplace to avoid a deepening recession and even depression. Without implicating any part of Ritholtz's primary critique of current federal fiscal policy in America, something should be said about the revision of adhocracy and its subsequent use in partisan rhetoric.

The critique of the immediate fiscal policy by the Obama administration has been taken up by political opponents to infer an overarching pattern of assertive quick fixes over market-driven response in everything from energy policy to national security (especially the apparent stumble on the removal of terrorist suspects from Guantanamo Bay), to health care policy.

The problem is that adhocracy was never seen as an unsystematic response to social and economic policy challenges by those who originally conceived it. While the adhocratic model continues to grow and proliferate into a variety of response contexts they do not seem to be trending in that direction. It seems that some staffer to Senator Bond did not do their homework when they prepared his talking points.

While it is true that adhocracy is offered as an alternative to the high structure associated with orthodox bureaucracy, it is still an *organizational* form though not one of a fixed or specific structure. It is not descriptive of a process which is where recent political rhetoric has taken it. As a Weberian "pure type", it is results-driven, focused upon problem solving, and innovative in orientation. It is characterized by complexity and dynamic activity; configured to operate effectively in changing and uncertain environments. Much of adhocratic process does appear to be chaotic as observed from outside. It is analogous to watching a baseball game from directly over the field, say, 100 feet up. If one knew nothing about what was going on, one would have no way to make sense of the actions of the players, the role of the umpires, coaches, etc., and the dynamic of the game; its apparent rhythms of pitches, apparently arbitrary changes of

players during the game and eruptive chaos when a ball is hit; changes of teams from hitting to fielding... all of these seem completely unsystematic and undecipherable. Yet, if one knows the game with its highly specialized players and clear purpose and its well-established and consistent rules, it is elegantly designed.

"High Beam Research", an on-line compiler of print-media citations lists 12 magazine, newspaper, encyclopedia and dictionary references to the key word, "adhocracy".[7]

Robert Waterman in his revised and reissued book, *Adhocracy*, provides this overly simple definition:

> *Any form of organization that cuts across normal bureaucratic lines to capture opportunities, solve problems, and get results.*[8]

To be fair, this definition is subsequently elaborated upon by an entire book. Jonathan Grudin offers this more detailed definition:

> *[Adhocracies] are highly decentralized organizations of professionals deployed in small teams in response to changing conditions in dynamic, complex environments. The adhocracy is the organizational type that least adheres to traditional management principles, relying on constant contact to coordinate among teams.*[9]

Grudin recognizes that adhocracies are not anarchies and are effective insofar as the coordinating interactions between components are efficient and effective. He does not mention they are configured to accomplish specific goals, purposes, projects or missions.

Darrel Ince, defines adhocracy in a business context:

> *A term used to describe companies that do not rely on job descriptions, hierarchy, standards, and procedures; rather, workers in the company carry out tasks because they need to be done. Adhocracies have, in the past, mainly been found in creative industries such as advertising. However, they have started to appear in companies which are associated with the Internet. Computer networks encourage this form of working since information can be easily shared between staff, thus obviating the need for formal meetings.*[10]

Ince notes that the proliferation contemporary adhocracies are the product of the information revolution; particularly the automation of routine record keeping functions that used to require a large clerical staff in conventional bureaucracy. Overseeing a large staff required a proportionately large contingent of middle managers to oversee and report up the organizational chain. With the opening of information across departmental divisions and through hierarchical strata the need for middle management has diminished leading to a radical shift in their roles from supervisors and gatekeepers, to coordinators and facilitators. Their authoritarian overseer role has given way to that of orchestrator; which requires a much different set of skills. These skills while written on extensively in contemporary management literature, are captured succinctly in the concept of "emotional intelligence", the dimensions of which are:

- Self awareness
- Self management

• Social awareness
• Social skills[11]

These skills shift the role of supervisor from authoritarian overseer to authoritative coach; able to lead by a combination of expertise and skills in relating to others. The adhocratic supervisor can communicate effectively and work "with" as opposed to "on" subordinates. This kind of relationship between what used to be known as management and staff, requires a high-trust culture in which the skills and aptitudes of each member is not just recognized and given lip service, but is presumed and acted upon by all. Ideally decision-making is collaborative and transparent. The term "orchestrator" is especially apt given that musical ensembles of all types are themselves often adhocracies in form and function.[12]

Ince's definition actually better describes, "intrapreneurship" described by Gifford Pinchot III, in his aptly titled book, *Intrapreneuring*, 1985.[13] His basic thesis, again actuated by the advent of infomating technology[14], posited that every member of an organization can contribute to make it more intelligent.

Henry Mintzberg, a key figure in comparative organizational design in general and adhocracy in particular, offers this more highly detailed description:

In adhocracy, we have a highly organic structure, with little formalization of behavior. Job specialization that is based on formal training. A tendency to group the specialists in functional units for housekeeping purposes but to deploy them in small, market-based project teams to do their work. A reliance on liaison devices to encourage mutual adjustment. This is the key coordinating mechanism, within and between these teams.

To innovate, we must break away from established patterns. Therefore the innovative organization cannot rely on any form of standardization for coordination. Of all the configurations, adhocracy shows the least respect for the classical principles of management, especially unity of command. The adhocracy must hire experts and give power to them - Professionals whose knowledge and skills have been highly developed in training programs.

Unlike the professional bureaucracy, the adhocracy cannot rely on the standardized skills of these experts to achieve coordination, because that would cause 郤 tandardization instead of innovation. Rather, it must treat existing knowledge and skills merely as bases on which to build new ones. Moreover, the building of new knowledge and skills requires the combination of different bodies of existing knowledge. So rather than allowing the specialization of the expert or the differentiation of the functional unit to dominate its behavior, the adhocracy must instead break through the boundaries of conventional specialization and differentiation. Whereas each professional in the professional bureaucracy can work autonomous, in the adhocracy professionals must amalgamate their efforts. In adhocracies the different specialists must join their forces in multi-disciplinary teams, each formed around a specific project of innovation.

Managers abound in the adhocracy - functional managers, integrating managers, project managers. The last named are particularly numerous, since the project teams must be small to encourage mutual adjustment among their members, and each team needs a designated leader, a "manager." Managers become functioning

members of project teams, with special responsibility to effect coordination between them. To the extent that direct supervision and formal authority diminish in importance. The distinction between line and staff is not clear.[15]

Mintzberg covers the general characteristics of the adhocratic form and function at length above. It clarifies how adhocracies are manifestly distinct from bureaucratic forms particularly in the makeup and orientation of their project teams. However, adhocracies are not a completely novel organizational species. For Mintzberg, all organizations share the key components of graphically depicted below (see Figure 1):[16]
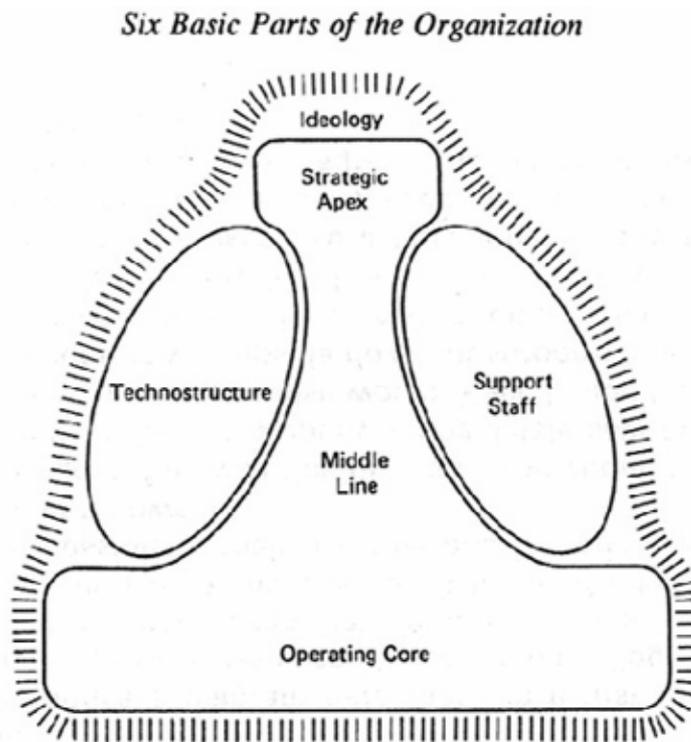

Figure 1. Six basic parts of the organization[17]

He goes on to catagorize, describing a total of 6 types of organization (Machine Bureaucracy, Professional Bureaucracy, Division Organization, Adhocracy, Entrepreneurial Startup/Simple Structure, and Political Organization). He would later include "Idealistic Organization" to describe social service non-profit organizations. These organizational forms can be arrayed on a structure and process scale ranging from "pure type bureaucracy" to "anarchy" with ad-hocracy the dominant counter-weight to bureaucracy. Mintzberg's typology can be further collapsed into two broader categories, those being primarily bureaucratic and primarily ad-hocratic (see Figure 2):
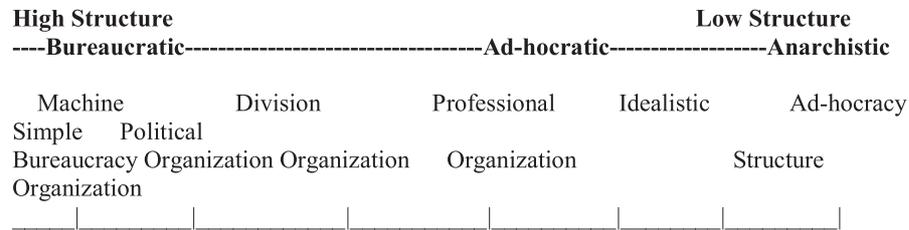
High Structure **Low Structure**
----Bureaucratic----------------------------------Ad-hocratic-------------------Anarchistic

Machine	Division	Professional	Idealistic	Ad-hocracy
Simple	Political			
Bureaucracy Organization Organization		Organization		Structure
Organization				

_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|

Figure 2. Array of Mintzberg's organizational types

"Machine Bureaucracy" is self-evident in its rigid adherence to the fundamental characteristics of Weberian-style bureaucracy still a preferred model in stable environments with routinized operations. Division organization is essentially a confederation of structures under an orchestrating umbrella. It is best represented by the large corporate manufacturing corporation and franchise operations; particularly in the food industry from McDonalds, to Starbucks. Professional organizations, also called professional bureaucracy are loose associations of professionals bound under a formal bureaucratic core that impose and administer a licensing and regulating function (standardization of skills).[18] Idealistic organizations are usually configured around a founding ideology or principle, but generally lacking fully professional staff and often reliant on volunteers. Simple structure is associated with entrepreneurial startups and small consulting operations typified by single individuals often performing or supervising many functions. Depending on the organizational skills of the entrepreneur, its organization can range from relatively ad-hocratic to relatively anarchistic. As a practical matter Mintzberg's typology arrayed on this scale of organizational types is intended to clarify the larger trend away from bureaucracy and towards ad-hocracy.[19]

Another essential attribute of adhocracy is its modular configuration. It is comprised of specialized units (except for its administrative core and strategic apex) assembled to accomplish specific project missions and dismantled upon a given project's completion. Construction projects, major surgeries, disaster response, government task forces, active military operations, theater and movie productions are all adhocratic operations. Ideally, each component gets in, accomplishes their specific missions, and gets out, often before a given project or operation is formally completed.

These components perform under very clear plans that are coordinated by project managers under the direction of the strategic apex. Construction managers have blueprints, orchestra leaders have scores, and theater/movie directors have their scripts and screenplays. In short, adhocratic organizations do not "make it up as they go along." However, they are quite flexible in the service of achieving their goals. To paraphrase an architect colleague, no building was ever constructed to the exact specifications found on the blueprint. Wiring and electrical boxes, ducts, pipes, and even walls are often moved, added, redesigned or removed on site in order to make the building work functionally, or aesthetically.

This capability is in stark contrast to bureaucracy, which even from Weber's time was known for its highly structured form and institutionalized regulatory functions. Its strength as a stable organizational form compared to the dynastic forms that preceded it was also recognized as a bane, especially in contemporary times where some agencies (not as prevalent as many people think because of new information technologies and ongoing budget pressures) are still anachronistic, and bereft of their original purpose and function. This is not necessarily an either/or proposition. Some organizations are better configured as bureaucracies. British and American judiciaries are clearly bureaucratic with rigid foundations built upon precedent, stability and consistency of outcome. Lawyers on both sides might argue for special consideration, citing mitigating or aggravating circumstances, but generally return to precedent in their arguments as their strongest suit; knowing that this is the primary standard to which judges hew. The education systems of France and of East Asia are also still bastions of bureaucratic form and function. They are bedrock institutions for determining social merit and as such are highly resistant to reform given the fact that the elites largely charged with carry out such reforms are themselves the beneficiaries of the system.[20]

Still, in terms of overall trends, there is a comprehensive shift in organizational orientation from standardized function to project work. The staff/line relationship of the classic bureaucratic model was built upon a top-down one-way flow of information, manifesting a culture best described as the bureaucratic orientation.[21] Those acculturated to the bureaucratic orientation are focused on their performance within the narrow confines of their particular organizational function with little reflection on process outcomes. Even when outcomes appear to reflect effectiveness, there is generally little incentive or resources to critically evaluate. For instance, long-term client satisfaction or keeping up with their needs such as in training or in incorporating best practices developed elsewhere. What is more telling is the shift of routine bureaucratic functions to automated systems that free personnel from such an orientation and towards a professional focus.

Adhocracies are especially focused on client needs and best practices. They thrive under conditions in which the service providers have a professional orientation. As the name implies, organizations with a professional orientation are self-evidently specialized, and tend to take a more comprehensive, holistic view of their clients compared to the myopic case-centric paradigm that is associated with the bureaucratic orientation. Adhocratic professionals serve client needs in realizing their interests that require unique skills or legal authorization or certification. Such skills and certification can range from recovery from injury or sickness such as in the medical context, or the construction of an appropriate structure in architecture, securing financial investment advice or acquiring insurance coverage, or the writing of an optimal program in software application design. The client is treated as an individual with unique needs and desires. The professional then leads to solution in the name of the client legitimized by being endowed with authority and expertise.

As Mintzberg points out, not all organizations with professionals in their ranks are adhocracies. Highly institutionalized organizations such as legal, medical, architectural, insurance, and financial services include senior professionals in their operating core as opposed to adhocracies which tend to contract with professionals for specific

projects. It is a perverse contradiction in the medical-industrial complex that the "professional" practitioner, like his or her client are obliged to undertake considerable paperwork required by bureaucrat insurers of both the private and public varieties. On-line medical billing software has relieved this burden only slightly. The medical-industrial complex is "complex", to a great extent, because it complicates the client-professional role by imposing bureaucratic screens (or gates). Professional organizations exist in both the public and private sectors. In the public sector they are concentrated in the regulatory, accountability and research functions. In the private sector the primary example would be in law firms and insurance companies who effectively govern through litigation or threat of litigation, or, with insurers, imposing requirements to attaining coverage. Such interventions shape the behavior of practitioners, through, for instance, risk management, compliance, licensing and certification and malpractice insurance requirements.

Machine bureaucratic forms have a different focus. They are oriented towards the standardized processing of cases and not clients. The intention is to offer fairly distributed, standardized and efficient services. Oddly though, bureaucracies often exclude those who might be most in need of services and creates inefficiency by offering one-size fits all services. It is exemplified in "the form" to which one must conform. Lack of proper documentation is usually automatic grounds for refusing service. This is another generic feature of the bureaucratic orientation in that there tend to be criteria for acceptance to be served. One must qualify by meeting various metrics and thresholds to receive entitlements from unemployment benefits to library services. It is still very much a world dominated by certifications, licensure, and verification of status.

Other significant distinctions between adhocracy and bureaucracy are that the former is oriented towards transparency and collaboration while the latter is oriented towards ascribed authority often held and maintained through secrecy, resistance to innovation and turf defense. This is in sharp distinction to the aforementioned trend towards access and the democratization of project strategies in policymaking aided by information systems largely available to its community of professionals. Most institutions are not configured to respond to unique and novel ways to accomplish goals necessitated by volatile environments. Bureaucracies, less capable of dealing with change, often resort to resistance to it. This strategy may slow but does not stop the forces of organizational change. In fact, it is difficult to find pure-type bureaucracy in most settings; the functions having been largely automated and submerged into systems and removed from most interfaces with clients. Thus we can hypothesize that the pace of organizational change from the bureaucratic to the adhocratic is a function of technological change leading to cultural value shifts and environmental volatility. The greater the instability of an organization's operational environment, the more appropriate it is to adopt adhocratic structures and processes. Even the most "stable" routinized functions of say, the postal service and mass transit systems are under technologically led challenges. For the former it is largely the shift in interpersonal and inter-institutional communications, from written hardcopy ("snail mail") to electronic modes (email). As the parenthetical references imply, traditional carrier mail, for the most part, cannot compete with messages that are sent at the speed of light. The resultant diminishing of volume of mail revenues has catastrophically impacted the postal serv-

ice, built for the routine and systematized high-volume processing of physical printed matter. In the latter case, the largely routinized scheduling and maintenance of a municipal bus or rail system is under steady pressure to extend lines, adopt comfortable and dependable buses and trains, increase ridership, and reduce travel times by increasing speeds. Add to these forces the development of alternative energy power plants for buses and trains, demands for inter-modal and handicap accommodations (bicycles and wheelchairs) and sophisticated safety systems like computerized speed controls, platform shields to prevent accidental or suicidal falls and hazard detectors, route maps with real-time GPS tracking of buses and trains, and the environment becomes very dynamic indeed. Even such traditionally bureaucratic bastions like the U.S. Department of Agriculture, (the oldest department in the American executive cabinet, finds itself having to overhaul operations in such fundamental areas as policies to address the environmental impacts of farms and ranches in everything from climate change to non-point source pollution (pesticide and fertilizer runoff into watershed), to reassessing and possibly shifting the subsidizing of commodities (animal feed) to support incentives for farmers who are actually growing food. Recent concerns with food safety after salmonella outbreaks and tainted imports from China have also impacted the department to shift emphasis and resources to ensuring food safety literally at the field level.

Though there are now virtually ubiquitous forces influencing the shift from bureaucratic to adhocratic forms, is critically important to understand that adhocracy is not antithetical to bureaucracy and that there is convergence on many points. Both forms are comprised of specialized components, and emphasize accountability. Both also value efficiency; although there can be variations in how efficiency is measured. For instance, both tend to hew to merit-based performance as the guiding principle for advancement, though the standards skew towards performance of process with bureaucracies and towards outcomes in adhocracies. Both are also not immune from corruption despite mechanisms put in place to mitigate it. Adhocracies can also vary greatly in overall effectiveness, though they can benefit from a learning curve made possible by networked relationships that can provide a collective experience; a database from which to draw from lessons learned. Where organizational effectiveness tends to deteriorate over time with bureaucracies, in periods of environmental change they tend to trend upward in adhocracies as outlying professional units are smaller and adapt more easily to change.

Another important point is that not all project undertakings are primarily adhocratic, military systems and NASA being chief examples. They are not adhocratic per se because their inception and implementation are carried out by a highly bureaucratic central command structure, and what Mintzberg calls an administrative core. This is due to their organizational vintage as well as the singular nature of their missions. They involve developing cutting edge technologies unique to specific missions and strategic scenarios, and are subject to constant testing and evaluation. This emphasis on systematic and centralized planning in design of projects that can and does take years to develop. It marginalizes an adhocratic approach although there is a rising tide of evidence that it need not be so. The X-prize, a $10 million dollar was awarded to SpaceShipOne's space journey five years ago. Most recently is Richard Branson's

Virgin Galactic project, now booking passengers for scheduled space trips.[22] This "Big Science" model thus is not particularly adhocratic, but can be undercut by adhocratic modes. Medical and empirical research efforts, while often collaborative tend to be channeled through a grant writing and evaluation process that favors deliberation by committee, incrementalism, and little cross-disciplinary collaboration, particularly at the federal level. This is not to say that adhocracies are not capable of employing extensive planning and evaluation protocols. They can, but the difference is on the weight given to formalized contingency planning in the bureaucratic model and the more fluid process in adhocracies where operational changes are generally done in the field in response to the situations that might arise on site (weather, supply delays, and other unexpected events). This shift in contingency planning from administrative core to the field operations is indicative of a high-trust culture essential for adhocracies to function. This shift from forms that were clearly bureaucracies towards more adhocratic behaviors underscores the point they are not necessarily discreet organizational types. Organizations can and do fall into a continuum between "pure bureaucracy" and "pure adhocracy".

To better address this range of forms, Mintzberg creates two distinct adhocratic types: operational adhocracy and administrative adhocracy with the former something of a pure-type and the latter, a kind of retrofit. Below (See Figure 3) is an illustration of how he sees the distinction:
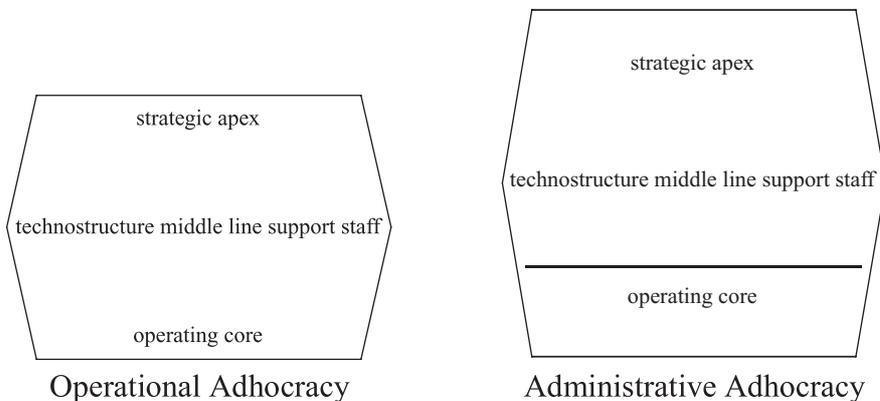

Operational Adhocracy   Administrative Adhocracy

Figure 3. Operational and administrative adhocracies
Note: Figures from Sunje, et al, "Operational Adhocracy as Basic Organizational Configuration – Case "Sumaprojekt" Sarajevo", http://www.sgsb.edu.ba/faculty_research/files/ Operational Adhocracy As Basic Organizational Configuration - Case Sumaprojekt Sarajevo.pdf (retrieved August 17, 2009).

Administrative adhocracies feature an autonomous operating core; usually an institutionalized bureaucracy, like an existing government department or standing agency. In their most common form, administrative adhocracies manifest as interdepartmental, or cross-organizational "task forces". This was how former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich used them often to circumvent the highly entrenched standing committee system within the U.S. House of Representatives. One can also plausibly see the system of research and project grants to independent research or social service agencies as adhocratic in design and function. Another example would be the appointment of special prosecutors to investigate high government officials as in the probe of former Presidents Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton, or incidents such as the Iran-Contra affair.

Variations on Adhocracy

There are also organizational variants that are not seen as adhocratic per se such as the Japanese model of long internal deliberation, consensus building and fast implementation. This Japanese organizational process is known as "J form".[23] As implied in the term, the J form organization is associated with Japanese culture, characterized by collective decision making requiring close consultation and consensus. It worked well in Japan where the culture is uniquely focused on communalism and not individual identity. The J form's principle characteristic according to Lam is its enhanced collective learning capability. Before action is taken, there is a period of specialist tutorials to orient and confirm roles as they pertain to the project at hand. Adhocracies, in contrast, are marked by skilled individual components brought in for specific project tasks under the direction of an operational core which orchestrates roles.[24] The operational core staff plans and coordinates with consultative input by the specialized members but without the involvement of the entire project components. The J form has fallen out of favor recently given its failure to deal effectively with the domestic financial crisis that began nearly 2 decades before the larger global financial crisis. The J form, while effective in providing a strong consensual basis before initial project startup, was apparently especially prone to that most insidious tendency shared by most organizations of all types, that of lying to itself. This tendency is mitigated in adhocracies because they are less insular and more open to best practices adopted by its components out of competitive necessity.

The "new adhocracy"

Bilton describes a "new adhocracy" based upon accelerating innovations primarily in the creative arts, though clearly generalized from there.[25] He draws upon the experience of the British music industry writing:

> *Major companies in the creative industries are able to thrive partly because they draw upon a pool of minor organizations and individuals who supply them with product. As the major companies become increasingly concerned with distribution, their reliance on an informal or "independent" producing sector becomes more pronounced.*[26]

The new adhocracy has a long association with the arts that possibly operated as far back as the Renaissance with artists and artisans in service to their patrons in much the same way artists are now in service to recording companies, movie studios and marketing firms. What is more, the new adhocratic model appears to be moving into other areas, notably professional sports and journalism.

The sports industry is an easy example with a now global pool of athletes available to professional sports leagues. Major professional leagues now have the entire planet to draw their athletes and many have done so with startling effect. Where one might have been able to count the number of foreign players in baseball on one hand, there are, according to Vass, 2003, there are players from 31 countries on current major league baseball rosters.[27] Foreign-born baseball players are estimated to comprise about half of the rosters of major league teams. Major League Baseball (MLB), reports that 24 percent of 2007 MLB rosters are non-U.S. citizens.[28] Basketball has been radically internationalized with many of its superstar players from other nations such as Steve Nash (Canada), Yao Ming (China), Tony Parker, (France), and Dirk Nowinski (Germany) to name but a few. In soccer, the English Premier League currently holds 233 foreign national players out of 580 available slots (just over 40 percent).[29] These leagues feed from a steady supply of new talent of literally millions of aspirants, most of whom, while competent players, will never see a paycheck for playing.

The journalism industry has come to the new adhocracy more recently. In the face of now two decades of volatility in the industry due to shifts in information delivery systems to electronic and on-line media, the long established networks of correspondent journalists is now falling to a virtual army of witnesses to events voluntarily sending videos and even their own narratives into news organizations directly from their cell phones. The citizen reporter model (CNN calls them "ireports") is a survival strategy by old-media network news organizations and newspapers. They have seen a steady decline in readership and viewers to alternative blogs and news websites of all sorts. They have come to recognize that it is useless to fight the trend and have decided to jujitsu it, or better, surf the wave instead.[30] The advantages are that they can still trade on their established brands as bona-fide news organizations while tapping into the voluntary contributions of people at the right place at the right time and willing to share what they recorded. Both old and new media get content and the contributors get an intrinsic reward, a 15-minutes of fame moment and validation by still universally recognized news institutions or their up and coming "off Broadway" counterparts. They also get the warm glow of knowing that their credited reports will be seen by millions if not billions of others.

So the adhocratic model is itself rapidly evolving as an organizational form with subspecies emerging in a variety of environmental niches. An heir apparent to adhocracy is manifesting itself thanks to a blend of web technology, charisma and collective vision in the form of "smart mobs". These are the avant garde thinkers and artists who have always been with us, but now have greater access to showcase their works and develop followers thanks to internet and the new media. The administrative core, a key feature of adhocracy, is diminished often to a single individual and a hard-drive. These include, "techies" who may or may not be themselves practitioners. Their

linked blogs are their guilds and work primarily on a best-practices model of continuous innovation. What is yet to be determined in this new, call it, post-adhocratic order, is whether these communities run towards global integration or insular tribalization, or both?

Clay Shirky, 2005 suggests something along the lines of "all of the above", noting that the new forms tend to adhere to the 80/20 rule in which there are about 20 percent of participants who account for 80 percent of the production making them a core of professionals whether institutionally affiliated or not.[31] Clay Shirky presents the new form manifested in social networking and specialty file sharing sites like Flickr where, thanks to tagging, one can draw upon a global pool of images and not be constrained by the catalogs or portfolios of professional photographers. Shirky has observed that in these open yet coordinated communities, the "80-20" rule appears again and again. The 80-20 rule refers to the skewed distribution of community members in which 80 percent of the content or production is accomplished by 20 percent of the community members. That 20 percent can be characterized as being the "professionals" with the remaining 80 percent of contributors seen as "amateurs". Shirky points out that institutions are generally fine with hiring and benefiting from the top 20 percent, but for Shirky, the question is, why lose that long tail of the remaining 80 percent when one doesn't have to, particularly when they need not be "hired" for their contributions that they've freely contributed to a larger community? This is the logic of open source software and iPhone/iPad apps. What administrative core that is left is there to nominally regulate as gatekeepers what comes into their hardware. They verify and validate the utility of the contributions in return for a cut of the sales, if any. Again this virtual coordinated community model is in the "Wild-West" phase, but the model has shown vitality, versatility and sufficient persistence to be a new species of adhocratic organization.

Shirky is quick to point out that these coordinated communities are value-neutral. Al Qaida is a coordinated community. Political movements, including terrorist groups can plausibly by described, as new adhocracies particularly in volatile regions where shifting alliances are a norm. In the case of terrorist groups, their small and diffuse administrative cores make them difficult to neutralize by orthodox military institutions. Their rise is largely tied to a uniting ideological base that explains the ills visited upon their societies in a simple message of the "evil other". The message is simple but compelling as it ennobles people who feel are alienated from governing institutions that they see as illegitimate, corrupt and unholy. It offers both an explanatory narrative and a template for an alternative based upon an ideal order sanctified by God.[32] What makes these communities functionally effective is their integrating and coordinating communications infrastructure. This species of "new adhocracy" points to another feature that typifies its design and its ascendancy, that being a high capacity for reading and adjusting to dynamic environments. The ideology acts as the raison d'être. It is firm, dogmatic and unyielding, but its expression as a terrorist movement is left to its adherent communities. It can absorb loses of bases in Sudan, the Philippines, Afghanistan or Pakistan. It can withstand de-funding and military defeat. It can be denied the capacity to hijack aircraft, or plant large bombs in the centers of their enemy's homelands. However, what it can continue to do is recruit dedicated followers

and utilize their creative capacities to strike, often with little or no effect as in the "underwear bomber"; but sometimes with enormous impact as with the Mumbai attacks. In this, new adhocracy evokes the line from *Jurassic Park*, it, "finds a way".

Political opposition movements from Iran to Thailand also incorporate the traits of new adhocracy. The American "Tea Party" movement likewise operates along new adhocratic lines. They coordinate their operations from fund-raising to rally site selection largely beyond the gaze of the institutionally affiliated officials who then find themselves reacting to what otherwise appears to be spontaneous outbreaks of protest.

Pedophile and racist networks, as well as pirate music and movie download sites are also mutant forms of new adhocracy. Such is the challenge of where to draw the lines and perhaps clean up the messy bits of this form.

Hopefully this review brings some greater clarity as to what adhocracy is, what it is not and where it might be going. Adhocracy is not amorphous "make it up as one goes along" management. It is strongly associated with project work as opposed to routine operations. It relies on professionalized managers generally contracted for specific functions and then set at liberty upon completion of their duties. It is highly flexible in scale and can be hybridized to existing institutional forms such as the news media, the military and emergency response. It is highly variable in scale, scope and structure. It thus does not conform to a "pure type" in the Weberian sense of the term. It has arguably been around for millennia in the areas of architecture, the arts (visual and performing) and warfare. It features an administrative core of greater or lesser magnitude. This administrative core is distinctive in relation to those found in other organizational forms in that they are not exclusively the brains of the operation. The administrative core is more like its limbic system, handling the largely routine tasks of coordination and direction that maintain the corpus. It features a high degree of sensory capability, diffused and distributed through its neural network to extend the organic analogy. It is growing as an organizational form due to technological developments and greater social and marketplace volatility. One can plausibly argue for a "new adhocracy" and even "smart mobs" as the logical extension of the adhocratic premise. It is entirely consistent with the "survival of the fastest" observation by the Tofflers, the seminal figures in anticipating the rise of this organizational form. The new adhocracy features high fluidity in scanning, identifying and promoting innovations and innovators in shifting market and market segment environments. It is especially suited to virtual environments where blogs, search engines and wiki sites have helped to automate the process of identifying market winds. This is yet another function traditionally reserved for analysts within the operating core, but made more efficient by search engine keywords (tags).[33] To be sure, the organization of social and cultural innovations and movements via the web may be significantly distorted by marketing firms manipulating search results on Google, or entries on Wikipedia.

As with any shift, there is a kind of "Wild-West" phase of experimentation where exploitation, incompetence and outright fraud occur. The unintended consequences become manifest, the lessons are learned and regulation of some kind is created from either within or imposed from without. There is also a concentric expansion of savvy from innovators to first-adopters and then outward to the public-at-large, norming and institutionalizing the adhocratic form as a natural part of our social landscape.

It is important to revisit adhocracy because it is the basis of the new organizational landscape with new variations on its form and processes continuing to manifest. "New Adhocracy" is a result of the acceleration of history aided and abetted by enhanced data processing and communications technologies. Certainly, a standing cadre of specialists physically located on an organization's property is no longer required. Maintaining them in a highly standardized organizational form (bureaucracy) is likewise of marginal utility in an age of volatile environmental change. The paradigms are now more global and nuanced. It is not just a matter of having a larger organizational toolbox, but of having the right tools for the right contexts. Bureaucracy is still a viable organizational form though the informational forms are more and more digitized and easily shared across platforms, reducing and often eliminating the need for intervention and management by a clerical staff.[34] Adhocracy is increasingly the normative form for endeavors in a constant state of becoming and not compatible with institutionalization. However, the next wave; the new adhocracy; describes a radically altered set of relationships between institutional operational cores, with an eliminated or flattened middle line and a highly fragmented support staff and techno-structure often contracted individuals and entities not otherwise formally affiliated with a particular organization.

That challenge will come as its full potential comes to be appreciated. For now it is enough to describe its roots and declare that the adhocratic form heralded by Bennis and the Tofflers has not only arrived, but has settled in and is raising a family.

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Notes

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2. Congressional Record, March 6, 2009, Senate S2871. Retrieved July 29, 2009 From CongressionRecord. com, (http://www.congressonrecord.com/page/S2871)

3. Congressional Record, March 17, 2009, Senate S3132. Retrieved July 29, 2009 From CongressonRecord.com, (http://www.congressonrecord.com/page/S3132)

4. Congressional Record: March 25, 2009 (Senate), p.S3752. Retrieved July 29, 2009 From CongressonRecord.com (http://www.congressonrecord.com/page/S3752)

5. Walter J. Olezek, The Use of Task Forces in the House, CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, Order Code RS20421. Retrieved December 28, 1999

6. Ritholtz, Barry, Fleckenstein and Task, *Bailout Nation: How Greed and Easy Money Corrupted Wall Street and Shook the World Economy*, John Wiley and Sons, 2009, p. 178.

7. Retrieved July 29, 2009, from http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O12-adhocracy.html

8. Robert Waterman, *Adhocracy: The Power to Change*, W Norton & Co Inc., 1992.

9. Jonathan Grudin, "Groupware and Cooperative Work: Problems and Prospects" in Brenda Laurel, ed., *The Art of Human-Computer Interface Design*, Addison-Wesley, 1990 (page 183)

10. Darrell Ince. "adhocracy." A Dictionary of the Internet. 2001. Retrieved July 17, 2009 from Encyclopedia.com: DARREL INCE. "adhocracy." A Dictionary of the Internet. 2001. *Encyclopedia.com*. (December 27, 2009). Retrieved July 18, 2009, from http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/ 1O12-adhocracy.html

11. "Emotional Intelligence" was popularized by Daniel Goleman (1998), but was preceded by work in the multiple intelligences theory associated primarily with Harold Gardner, (1983).

12. The musical ensemble as adhocracy is true more for formal orchestras and perhaps recording industry "session" players. As will be detailed later, freelance musicians who might form or join bands and then move on to other groups are better described as part of the "new adhocracy".

13. Pinchot, Gifford III, *Intrapreneurship: why You Don't Have to Leave the Corporation to Be an Entrepreneur*, Harper and Collins, 1986.

14. The term, "infomating technology" was coined by Shoshana Zuboff, Associate Professor at the Harvard Business School in her book, *In the Age of the Smart Machine.* 1988. She was one of the first to write on the liberating potential of technology in organizational contexts, its threat to traditional middle management and its inevitable dominance in assuming not only the routinized tasks of bureaucratic process, but its power in guiding decision-making and of ultimately opening greater imaginative latitude in organizational behavior.

15. Retrieved July 19, 2009, from http://www.12manage.com/methods_mintzberg_configurations.html#userforum

16. Graphic downloaded from 12manage website: http://www.12manage.com/methods_mintzberg_configurations.html

17. Figure from, http://www.12manage.com/methods_mintzberg_configurations.html

18. See, http://www.valuebasedmanagement.net/methods_mintzberg_configurations.html

19. I sought verification of the paragraphs above pertaining to Mintzberg's definitions and my interpretations of his typology by contacting Dr. Mintzberg directly with a draft of this piece. His response indicated agreement with my premise that adhocracy has developed the patina of being derogatory never intended by the scholars who coined and developed it as a concept. He went on to comment on my sports analogy with this: "I must, however, complain about baseball. That strikes me as the professional bureaucracy, football as machine bureaucracy, rugby as adhocracy, and our beloved hockey as (sometimes) a political arena."

20. Recent efforts at post-secondary education reform in France were resisted not only by educators and university administrators, but by students as well leading to the initiative being abandoned. Retrieved July 18, 2009, from http://www.france24.com/en/ 20090210-teachers-students-march-against-education-reforms-france-paris. It is a testament to the institutional might of what can be called, The educational-industrial complex, that reform is so difficult.

21. For a fuller elaboration on the bureaucratic vs. professional orientations, see Blau and Scott, *Formal Organizations: A Comparative Approach*, Stanford University Press, 2003, pp. 60-74. (Originally published by Chandler Publishing, San Francisco, 1962)

22. Bookings are being taken at, Retrieved July 16, 2009, from http://www.virgingalactic.com/

23. Lam, Alice, Two Alternative Models of Learning and Innovative Organizations: "J-form" vs. "Adhocracy", in Fagerberg, Mowery, Nelson, *The Oxford Handbook of Innovation*, Oxford University Press, 2006, p.127.

24. Ibid.

25. Bilton, Chris, "The New Adhocracy: Strategy, Risk and the Small Creative Firm", Centre for Cultural Policy Studies, University of Warwick, CV4 7AL, 1999.

26. Ibid. p.17

27. Vass, George, "The wide world of baseball: foreign-born players are filling major league rosters, showing the true measures of global talent in the American pastime", *Baseball Digest* February 1, 2003.

28. Schrag, Peter, "Baseball and Immigration", *California Progress Report.* Retrieved July 9, 2009, from http://www.californiaprogressreport.com/2007/10/schrag_baseball.html

29. Count of foreign players active for the 2009-2010 season listed on the Wikipedia site for foreign born players (those not from England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland or Ireland), divided by the active roster capacity for each of the 20 premier league teams. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_foreign_Premier_League_players

30. For a fuller treatment of new media journalism a good point of departure would be Reingold, Harold, *Smart Mobs: The Next Social Revolution*, Pegasus Books, 2002.

31. Clay Shirky's presentation on institutions versus collaborative communities. Retrieved August 7, 2009, from http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/clay_shirky_on_institutions_versus_collaboration.html

32. While this sounds as though it is explicitly describing Islamic fundamentalism, it can be just as plausibly applied to the underlying narratives underlying Christian or Vedic fundamentalism as well.

33. It is hopefully not lost on the linguistically inclined that "wiki" sites were so coined by programmer Ward Cunningham from the Hawaiian word for "quick".

34. A particularly good example of this is TED.com; a site of video presentations by leading thinkers and cutting-edge masters of their crafts. Their presentations are posted often within days with subtitles ranging from Arabic to Chinese (simplified and traditional).