

Crisis in the Conspiracy: Watergate and the Limits of Brokerage

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Abstract

We use the Watergate scandal to model the social structure of political conspiracy and to predict which specific conspirators defect from Nixon's cadre. Block modeling the sociomatrices of the Watergate corruption reveals political conspiracies to be organized by decentralized cabals coordinating with a core cadre. We test the effects of two kinds of intermediating roles – representative and gatekeeper – and a standard measure of betweenness centrality on defection. We find that intermediating roles/positions and betweenness centrality predict defection as well as the probability of conviction in court and prison time served. Findings show that brokers both benefit individually from their structurally autonomous position, but the autonomy of the individual brokers is a liability for the overall group level conspiracy as it is the structural position of the broker where the conspiracy collapses. We conclude by noting the gains that structural sociology achieves over rational choice and game theory perspectives since these perspectives do not predict which specific conspirators defect in a political scandal while structural sociology does.

1 Introduction

In this research article we make three contributions to the literature on criminal networks. First, we empirically reveal the network organization of a major, perhaps paradigmatic, case of political scandal and corruption. Second, we theoretically explain and analytically model which specific actors defect in political conspiracy. Third, we demonstrate the dangers and limitations of brokerage in political conspiracy and illegal networks.

We make these contributions by examining the sociological significance of the break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters at the Watergate complex on June 17, 1972, that was ultimately revealed to be part of a conspiracy of wiretapping, spying, campaign sabotage, secret funds, interference with investigations, and cover-up reaching to the top of the administration, and which led to Richard M. Nixon's resignation on August 8, 1974. Analysis of these events reveal the network organization of major historical political conspiracy and the negative consequences for the actors who both carried out the role of broker and the structural position of broker.

Our structural model and theory of the social organization of the Watergate corruption depicts political conspiracies as a web of co-conspirators organized into a cadre and a set of clandestine cabals. Through this cadre/cabal organization conspirators attempt to corrupt the official government. To coordinate the cabals and to maintain the secrecy of the illegal actions, the cadre creates various social roles for the conspirators that govern the flow of communication between the cadre and the cabals. Expectations and responsibilities of who reports to whom are communicated from

the cadre to specific conspirators and constitutes the role assignment of broker. The role of broker is related to structural positioning between social groups – i.e., between the cabals and the cadre, and between the cabals themselves.

A broker is an actor who connects otherwise disconnected actors (Burt, 1976, 1992; Galaskiewicz, 1979; Marsden, 1982; Gould and Fernandez, 1989, 1994; Rider 2009). Brokers are explained to be at an advantage over non-brokers due to their access to information as well as their control over information (Burt, 1992). However, no theory exists highlighting the limitations, stresses, strains, and negative consequences that might accrue to brokers under certain social conditions.

A large body of research documents the social capital advantages due to brokerage (see Burt 2002 for a review). Compared to non-brokers brokers are more influential in policy domains (Fernandez and Gould, 1994), create more product innovations (Hargadon and Sutton, 1997), are more profitable (Burt, 1983, 1988), make more strategic alliances (Stuart, Ozdemir, and Ding, 2007), are better compensated (Burt, 1997, 2002), acquire more resources (Cook and Emerson, 1978), possess greater influence over community and political elites (Gould 1989; Padgett and Ansell, 1993), get better evaluations and organizational advancement (Burt, 2004; Podolny and Baron, 1997), and get deals done (Mizruchi and Stearns, 2001). Recent research has begun to investigate the process of brokerage and conditions under which its control benefits face constraints (Rider, 2009). Still, research has failed to document the limitations of brokerage under specific social situations. As a result the current literature paints an unrealistic picture of the social space of the broker as entirely beneficial, without risk nor negative possibilities and consequences.

Organizational sociology has been aware of the dangers that fall “middle men” for a long time (e.g., Jackall, 1988). Given organizational sociology’s awareness of the dangers of being a “middle man,” it puzzles us that the social network literature has only documented the positive benefits that accrue brokers. There is a curious absence of studies documenting a fuller, more realistic image of the social world of brokers who encounter both benefits and dangers. In this paper we show that brokers not only accrue strategic benefits, but brokers experience stresses and strains that have negative consequences for themselves as individuals and for the social organization of conspiracy as well.

Research into the role of brokerage in illegal networks is still in its infancy. Baker and Faulkner's (1993) classic study of illegal networks in the Great Electrical Conspiracy investigated a standard measure of brokerage – betweenness centrality – but found no significant effects between brokerage and verdict at trial and brokerage and sentence length. More recently Morselli has looked at the role of brokerage and crime scripts (Morselli, 2010). We continue the line of inquiry examining brokerage position and scripts, but we develop insights into the *dangers*, rather than the benefits, that accrue brokers, with specific emphasis on brokerage in illegal networks.

Network analysis of the Watergate scandal identifies a new dilemma of inter-mediation in conspiracies and the liabilities of the liaison. In terms of contributing to the coordination and secrecy of the conspiracy, brokerage plays a positive role for the social organization of conspiracy. However, from the perspective of cadre discipline and control, the individual autonomy that brokerage creates also creates the opportunities for brokers to break ranks and exploit the conspiracy for their own individual benefit. Moreover, brokers face an enormous amount of pressure and structural strain as their positioning between two or more groups often leaves brokers facing incompatible and contradictory demands. Thus it is the structural position of the broker that predicts defection from the conspiracy. The irony of brokerage is that in political conspiracies it facilitates the positive group contributions of coordination and secrecy while it simultaneously creates individual stress and individual autonomy that leads to broker defection and conspiracy collapse.

We show that Watergate tested the limits of the liaison role, putting its occupants under cross pressure and suspicion. It moved them from being at the crossroads of the subgroups, cliques and cabals into being in the crosshairs, thereby heightening their incentives for exit and implicating others.

Our structural model is, we believe, a vast improvement over rational choice and game theory models theorizing that all conspiracies are prone to defection due to each conspirator's self-interest. Such models and theories are nonspecific in terms of which particular actors defect from political conspiracies because they assume all conspirators are the same in terms of roles and social position. By modeling roles and social position, structural sociology gains the important insight about which specific social actors defect.

organization of political conspiracy. We test hypotheses of our theory using standard network analytics and statistical techniques. We conclude with a reflection on how a study of illegal organization is similar and different compared to overt, legal social organization.

2 Watergate

Early morning June 17, 1972 five men were caught burglarizing the national headquarters of the Democratic Party at the Watergate Hotel. Evidence immediately suggested connections to The White House and The Committee to Re-Elect The President (or CRP, pronounced like creep). One of burglars—James McCord—was on the payroll of CRP. Two other burglars were found with address books that had White House personnel and White House phone numbers listed in them.

The burglary itself was part of larger web of corruption that threatened the basic principles of democracy and the republic. The Nixon Administration planned to place loyal Nixonites at the heads of the government agencies that dealt with surveillance. Then loyal Nixonites in agencies like the C.I.A., the F.B.I., the I.R.S., and so forth, would use the tools of government to damage political opponents, securing Nixon’s successor as the next President. The Administration referred to this plan as “The Perpetual Presidency.” Watergate was thus part of what is called “big-time corruption” in white-collar crime studies. Watergate was much more than a burglary.

The historical context played an important role shaping the administrations ideology that the conspirators used to rationalize their criminal actions as serving a higher cause. Richard Nixon was a moderately conservative Republican President in a hostile political environment of a Democratic Congress and faced an active and more liberal and radical youth movement and anti-war activists. Some of the anti-war activists had resorted to terrorist tactics like bombing university laboratories. Other radicals had shot at National Guard forces, while others barricaded the White House itself. Members of The Nixon Administration came to deeply distrust their political opponents and were convinced that their opponents were either traitors or foolishly naive and would be dangerous if they influenced the government or, even worse, got hold of it.

The result of the Administration’s outlook and the social context of the time was a Presidential Administration that collectively saw themselves as the real patriots protecting America. They

labeled their political opponents “enemies” and “traitors.” The mixture of these outlooks of self-righteousness and deep contempt for the opposition made for an Administration that, in the words of Watergate conspirator Jeb Magruder, “didn’t get it” or “didn’t want to get it” when it came to ethical guides when dealing with Americans that they disagreed with (PBS, 2003).

The contempt for their political opponents led to the conception of “The Perpetual Presidency.” Nixon had won the 1972 election with the biggest landslide since FDR. Would he run for a third term? That would require a change in the Constitution, but his inner circle decided that a third term and constitutional amendment wouldn’t be necessary. According to the conspirators plans, Nixon would select the next President and then use the tools of government to make sure his selection would be the next President.

The Nixon White House first attempted the pursue The Perpetual Presidency under a plan drawn called “The Huston Plan.” J. Edgar Hoover, then director of the F.B.I. would not go along with the Huston plan. Without the cooperation of the F.B.I. the Nixon White House gave up on The Huston Plan. Instead the Nixon White House began organizing its own teams—or cabals—to carry out spy work against political opponents.

The cadre not only began establishing political espionage teams, they began setting up other clandestine cabals. Select personnel from CRP and The White House began to form a team to conduct political sabotage against Nixon’s opponents and “enemies.” This became known as the “dirty tricks” campaign. To fund the illegal espionage and sabotage cabals, select personnel from CRP and The White House began to form a team to deal with money laundering.

A shadow government of a cadre and its cabals had been formed in The White House. The cadre continued its plans to illegally influence legitimate government bureaus and agents for political purposes as part of “The Perpetual Presidency.”

The organization of the Watergate burglary itself got its start with The Pentagon Papers. Daniel Ellsberg, an employee of the RAND corporation, which provided research for the Pentagon, photocopied over 41,000 classified documents about the Vietnam war and turned the documents over to the New York Times. The Nixon Administration was furious; they referred to Ellsberg as “traitor” and “enemy.” The Nixon Administration tried to block the publication of the Pentagon

Papers, but the U.S. Supreme Court said the President had no authority to do so. The irony of The Pentagon Papers is that they only covered the preceding Johnson Administration; they did not document any wrongdoing on the part of the Nixon Administration. But the White House fury set in motion an illegal espionage campaign that would result in its ruin.

Nixon's fear was that if he couldn't stop the leaks, then he would lose control of his presidency. To stop the leaks The White House established a team to stop the leaks called "The Special Investigations Unit" that was supposed to investigate classified information given to the press.

This Special Investigations Unit's action morphed into illegal covert activity. The unit that carried out illegal covert activity is known as "The Plumbers." Among other things, the plumbers burglarized Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office in an attempt to find any unflattering information about Ellsberg. This sought information was meant for the purposes of a character assassination campaign against Ellsberg in the press—a craft that Nixon himself had perfected in his political career and now schooled his inner circle and proteges as part of The Perpetual Presidency.

One of the Plumbers, G. Gordon Liddy, put together a plan to conduct illegal espionage against political opponents. The plan was outlandish, involving fantasy-minded spy chase planes, prostitution rings to catch political opponents in "compromising positions," and more. John N. Mitchell — Attorney General of the United States and Director of the Committee to Re-elect the President — found the price tag for "Operation Gem Stone" too high and asked Liddy to come up with a more modest plan.

Liddy began to draw up plans to bug the Democratic National Headquarters at the Watergate Hotel. This operation was estimated to cost \$250,000.00. Mitchell approved of the plan.

Liddy was authorized \$250,000 to finance the plan. When he went to get some of the cash to pay his espionage crew, the manager at CRP took the cash out of the wrong pile of bills. One pile of bills had been "washed" through a bank in Mexico, which is illegal. Another pile had not yet been laundered. By accident the CRP manager gave Liddy money from the wrong pile. The bills he handed to Liddy could all be traced back to CRP.

Because the original plan had been rejected, Liddy had lost precious time. Liddy had to move fast to assemble a team. Liddy hired James McCord to be his "electronics expert" for the Watergate

job—he didn't have enough time to find someone else. McCord was also on CRP's payroll as a security consultant—another direct link to CRP!

McCord picked a lock on the door and entered The Watergate Hotel. Once inside, McCord taped the door's deadbolt to keep the door unlocked so the other burglars could get into the Watergate. McCord put the tape on the door horizontally instead of vertically. A security guard noticed the door taped open and discovered the burglary in process.

When the burglars were arrested they had the sequentially numbered 100 dollar bills in their business suits that Liddy was handed from the unlaundered pile of money at CRP. Another link to CRP.

An organizer of the burglary unit, E. Howard Hunt, believed the burglar team should be "taken care of" like spies are when they are caught by a foreign government—their families should be taken care of financially to honor their service to their country. Hunt demanded payment for "keeping quiet" about White House and CRP funding of the burglary. Nixon saw this as Blackmail. The White House saw Hunt's demands as extortion.

"Hush Money" was paid to Hunt, and then dispersed to the burglars. Campaign funds kept at CRP were used for the hush money. Dorothy Hunt, the wife of E. Howard Hunt, was used as a conduit of funds. Tony Ulascewicz (an ex-New York City cop), William Bittman (Howard Hunt's attorney) and Fred LaRue serve as conduits as well. Dorothy Hunt died in a plane crash in Chicago carrying hush money to the burglars.

On March 20, 1972 the burglars were found guilty. Initial sentences by Judge Sirica were harsh. Sirica gave Barker, Sturgis, Gonzalez, and Martinez 40 year prison sentences. Hunt received a 35 year prison term.

McCord, a man in his fifties with children, feared prison. McCord also burned with anger about The White House's plans to have the C.I.A. "take the fall." McCord had worked for over 20 years for the C.I.A. and his loyalty to the agency was fierce. McCord wrote a letter to Judge Sirica saying that "higher ups" in the White House were involved in the burglary; that the burglars were not the only conspirators; and that the burglary was not a C.I.A. operation.

The United States Senate Committee began hearings on Watergate. John Dean, Legal Council

to the Office of the President, testified that Nixon had approved of the hush money and other attempts to cover-up the the conspiracy.

The Committee then asked another witness – James Butterfield – if he was aware of any listening devices in the White House. Butterfield answered in the affirmative. The Committee then subpoenaed the tapes. Nixon originally refused to turn the tapes over, but the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that he must.

When the Committee listened to the tapes they heard a conversation in a meeting on June 23, 1972 between President Nixon and Chief of Staff H. R. Haldeman in which Nixon and Haldeman conspired to order the C.I.A. to tell the F.B.I. to stop investigating the Watergate case because it would jeopardize C.I.A. covert operations. This taped conversation between Haldeman and Nixon is the so-called “smoking gun” of Watergate—the President and his Chief of Staff were caught on tape plotting to use government agencies to halt a criminal investigation.

There was also an eighteen and one half minute gap on the tape of a meeting between Haldeman and Nixon held on June 23, 1972. The President claimed that as his secretary was typing the conversations the phone rang and as she turned to answer the phone her foot accidentally pushed the record pedal located on the floor, activating the recording mechanism and erasing the tape. The President claimed this action by his secretary caused the eighteen and one half minute gap on the tape. Almost no one believes the President’s account.

As impeachment proceedings went forward, Republican leaders in the Senate told Nixon there were enough votes against him to remove him from office if he stood trial in the Senate. To preempt his impeachment, Nixon resigned the Office of the Presidency. Nixon resigned the Presidency on August 9, 1974. President Ford pardoned Nixon on September 8, 1974

3 The Social Organization of Political Conspiracy

Political conspiracies are comprised of relations among social actors who are differentiated into social groups we refer to as cadre, cabal, and periphery. A cadre organizes a number of cabals to carry out illegal activity that must be kept secret from a periphery of actors. A cadre is a highly manipulable skeleton organization of trained agents; it is sustained by political combat and is linked

to a mass movement as its members become leaders of wider groups in the community (Selznik, 1952). A cabal (Burns, 1955) is an organizational subunit or team that is part of the overall organization of the cadre. The periphery is a set of actors that conspirators routinely interact with, but who are not themselves involved in the conspiracy. The cadre and cabals organize and enact conspiratorial roles, strategies, and tactics to illegally manipulate the official government and legitimate political processes. Members of the core cadre conceive of and assign mediating roles to key conspirators to facilitate conspiracy coordination and secrecy.

3.1 Cadre, Cabal, and Periphery

The cadre is an elite organization engaged in the continuous pursuit of power by illegal means. In the case of Washington politics, the goal is the perpetual presidency by the White House. The White Houses palace guard, aides, functionaries, allies and friends promote, defend, and extend state capacity through overreaching, unacceptable, and often criminal means. They reach into government agencies, bureaus, and departments, along with campaign groups, lobbyists, corporate contributors and other legal organizations involved in national politics.

In the Nixon White House it is known that Nixon John Ehrlichman and H. Robert Halderman, for example, formed part of the inner circle of the Administration—they formed the core of the Nixon Administration, what we are calling the cadre. Ehrlichman and Halderman were sometimes referred to as “The Berlin Wall” in reference to both their German surnames and the designed social barrier between them and the President. Haldeman and Ehrlichman erected the barrier and they acquired and maintained a power to exclude others as a result of using their exercise of domination—this is an example, by the way, of how the legal set up of the White House and the Chief of Staff controls access to the President. Its illegal manifestation is blocking access and stonewalling. Other White House officials like Charles Colson or John N. Mitchell, for example, also formed part of the core cadre of Nixon’s White House. It was this cadre that sought the assembly of the cabals to carry out illegal money laundering, espionage, and political sabotage.

The cadre devises ways to acquire power and meet its challenges. When disclosure of its strategies and tactics appears, its seeks to limit what information is subject to disclosure, shield

itself from investigations and probes into the conspiratorial work of its members, insulate the core-cadre network from the peripheral-cabal networks, stifle investigations into its “dirty” operations, cast blame elsewhere, strike adversarial postures with the news media and representatives of the legitimate government, and throw the protective shields of “national security,” “executive privilege” and other State ideologies around itself.

These tactics rest on the mobilization of cadre resources and critical cadre-cabal relations; they influence the direction and level of the coordination and compliance between the cadre and the various illegal cabal subgroups. This is because strategic decisions made by the central cadre and implemented at the cabal level shape and reshape the success of the political conspiracy, that is, its pursuit of power, the protection of its autonomy, and the deflection of threats from the outside.

A cabal is a clandestine team assembled to carry out political sabotage, espionage, and other illegal activity. An example of a cabal would be The Plumbers, whose members included H. Howard Hunt and G. Gordon Liddy. In political conspiracies the cadre seeks to overcome the resistance from members of the cabals, often relying on appeals to legitimate authority. Much of the relationship between the core cadre and the cabals revolves around power and legitimate authority. We rely on the classic sociological definitions of power and legitimate authority. Power is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance (Weber, 1922). Legitimate authority is the extent to which the cadre can claim that its power is based on right. The source of the cadres authority rests with the cabals’ perceptions and interpretations of the cadre’s orders serving a higher right. In the Watergate corruption the Nixon core cadre appealed to “National Security” to rally the cabals around a sense of the cadre’s legitimate authority.

When the clandestine teams no longer see the cadre as serving a higher moral order but instead see the cadre as self-serving, then the clandestine teams are no longer characterized as cabals and are better understood as cliques (Burns, 1955). A clique is an organizational subgroup that is part of the cadre, but views its membership with the cadre with some degree of doubt and skepticism. Cabals are oriented toward improving positions in the allocation of power and resources by means of the cabal itself—they are still loyal to the cadre and seek the cadre’s approbation. A clique, on

the other hand, is oriented toward self protection and withdrawal from the realities of failure.

In sum, cabals see the cadre as having legitimate authority; cliques' have doubts. As the cabals deteriorate into self-doubting cliques – that is, as they no longer fully believe the cadre operates for a moral cause – the conspiracy moves close to coming undone and possibly collapsing as the cadre's legitimate authority weakens.

The cadre/cabal conspirators do not operate in a social vacuum; they are constantly surrounded by individuals who are not part of the conspiracy. Conspirators regularly interact with the overt government and its agents. We call this circle of overt, legitimate actors that the conspirators operate within “the periphery.” The periphery actors form an important environment of the conspiracy. Some periphery actors are targets of the conspiracy's strategies and tactics meant to illegally manipulate the covert, official government. An example of a target located on the periphery of the conspiracy is the FBI director that the Nixon White House illegally manipulated to impede the Watergate investigation under the ruse of the FBI possibly exposing CIA covert operations if the FBI continued its investigation. Other periphery actors are simply obstacles for the conspirators; they are people the conspirators must endeavor to keep the conspiracy secret. An example of such a periphery actor in the Watergate scandal would be Dr. Henry Kissinger. Kissinger was the Secretary of State, and was never indicted nor even accused by anyone of any serious merit of being involved in the Watergate corruption. Yet Kissinger interacted regularly with the cadre – some of the cadre who were indicted and convicted as part of the conspiracy. Another example would be Sally Harmony – the secretary of conspirator G. Gordon Liddy. Although Sally Harmony interacted with some of the conspirators, she was not part of the conspiracy. In either case, whether the actor is an actual target or an innocent by-stander from whom the conspiracy must be kept secret, we refer to actors that interact with the conspirators, but who are not part of the conspiracy, as the periphery. Of particular interest here are those illegitimate, illegal, and covert practices that may be deemed corrupt; for behaviors to be deemed corrupt, a larger audience, beyond those involved, must view the action as inappropriate by some standard.

The above conceptualization of the social organization leads us to our first hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Data on political conspiracies will show structurally similar blocs of actors that

resemble cabals, a core cadre, and a peripheral set of actors.

3.2 Brokerage

Political conspiracies rely on brokers between individuals and mediators between groups to integrate the cabals with each other and cabals with the cadre. Betweenness is mediating, brokering, and communicating between the cabals and cadre and is the responsibility of liaisons, gatekeepers, conduits, and representatives. A mediator is a social actor who brokers the relations of otherwise disconnected social groups of blocs of similar actors. In our definition a social actor is not limited to an individual, but could also be a legitimate organization, cabal or clique or the cadre. In the Watergate study the meditors are actors that connect the core cadre with the cabals, and connect the cabals with other cabals.

Differentiation into cabals provides the conspiracy with effective coordination and heightened, but not perfect, secrecy from detection. Differentiating the conspirators into blocs of actors with appropriate talents forms the cabals required for specific illegal tactics and strategies. For example, by grouping former agents from the FBI and CIA with others of similar expertise in espionage together on the Plumbers unit the cadre created an effective bloc of actors to carry out illegal espionage. Similarly by grouping professional accountants and financial managers together, the cadre created an effective money laundering unit.

Differentiation of conspirators into effective blocs of social actors not only facilitates coordinated action within the cabals, it also facilitates secrecy. By creating the cabals to do the “dirty work” the core members of the cadre are only indirectly associated with illegal activity—it is the cabal members themselves, not the core cadre, who directly engage in money laundering, espionage and political sabotage.

The differentiated cabals are integrated into a cohesive conspiracy – i.e., The Perpetual Presidency – designed to illegally manipulate the political order and official government. The cadre integrates the differentiated cabals by creating the social roles of brokers and mediators.

The Nixon White House used mediators to “glue” the cabals and individual conspirators together into a cohesive political conspiracy. In an interview some thirty years later John Dean

himself said his job was to work with personalities, and that he was the “glue trying to hold this together” (PBS, 2003). For example, “Dean acted as go-between between Haldeman-Ehrlichman and Mitchell-LaRue” (Woodward and Bernstein 1974: 319).

In Watergate, brokers mediated between cabal and cabal, and between the cadre and cabal factions. Mediation is designed to facilitate interorganizational or inter-network communication between cadre and the cabal through the use of brokers. We focus on two types of brokers: gatekeepers and representatives.

Gatekeepers are a special position whose work is to (a) buffer the cadre from the demands on time and energy from outside personnel (b) shield top level cadre personnel from outsiders, and (c) filter communications, deciding what stays outside and is not let into the cadre. Representatives are the counterpart to the gatekeepers, they too are a special position whose work is to (a) channel communications and demands from the cadre to the cabal, (b) shield cabal personnel from the inner-workings of the cadre, and (c) coloring the communications from the cadre to the cabal, making cadre orders simpler, more concise, more understandable from the viewpoint of the cabal, and hence easier to comply with. As representatives of the cadre they mediate from inside the cadre to the outside: they decide what flows from the inside to the outside. The representatives: achieve the following goal: brokering relationships between the cadre and the cabals. Specialized roles enacted into positions to go-between the cadre and the cabals, and the cabals themselves. Capacity to withhold and control information between the cadre and the cabals. Shielding the top members of the cadre from cabal activities and information from the outside so they can have deniability.

The conspirators themselves were well aware of their mediating and brokering roles. John Dean describes his critical position as “lynchpin,” running communications between the White House cadre and the leadership of Committee to ReElect The President, with its finance and campaign division of labor. His work involved in the “cover-up churned on through hundreds of such episodes, and did so quite successfully.” It brought him closer and closer into the inner circles of the cadre. “I carried messages back and forth between the Mitchell faction and the White House faction. There was no love lost between them in the first place, and the Watergate recriminations made things

worse. Neither side wanted to budge. Each side waited for the other to confess and shoulder the cover-up alone. The war of leverage dragged on.”

My sense of guilt was to deepened as I lost the few remaining rationalizations that I was acting as a low-level agent. Everyone betrayed a sense of guilt in meetings. I had managed for a while to evade it by contemplating the startling boost the Watergate had given me into the inner councils. My adult life had been calculated blindly and shrewdly, I had always thought. I was now reaching the pinnacle. I was not the source of authority for the coverup, yet I became its linchpin. I was the only one with the knowledge and personal rapport to reconcile the pitched camps at the White House and Re-election Committee. I could feel my power growing in every meeting and each conversation as I went back and forth resolving disputes between the warring factions and unwittingly linking and knitting them together in conspiracy (Dean 1977: 120-121).

It is important to note that brokerage and mediation is multidimensional. First, we note that in Watergate brokerage and mediation were assigned *roles* with responsibilities and expectations communicated from the core cadre to the individual mediator to bring together teams for money laundering, illegal espionage, and political sabotage. The mediators and brokers then enacted these roles in concrete social relations between groups and between individual conspirators. Thus the brokerage and mediation in Watergate involved a scripted role as well as a social position.

A final point we make here regards the positive contributions that brokerage and mediation make to the social organization of conspiracy. Brokerage and mediation enable political conspiracy to be differentiated into cabals that are simultaneously integrated into a web of conspiracies directed by a core cadre. Mediation and brokerage allowed Watergate to be organized as many conspiracies organized by one cadre pursuing The Perpetual Presidency. Mediation and brokerage allowed flexibility in the Watergate conspiracy. For much of the conspiracy brokers and mediators delivered “hush money” to keep conspirators from testifying against the cadre. Brokers and conspirators assembled illegal spy operations, keeping the core cadre distant from such activity, while providing a organized means to communicate the results back to the cadre. Brokers and mediators laundered money. And brokers and mediators sabotaged the political campaigns of Nixon’s enemies. To be

sure, brokerage and mediation worked for a long, long time in the Watergate corruption. But in the end, it was the brokers and mediators who defected.

3.3 Defection

The irony of political conspiracy is that tactics designed to further the goals of a power oriented cadre, to mobilize resources and to energize its cabals, and to protect them from threats from the outside may exacerbate their woes by hostility toward the cadres commands, by dithering on the delivery of money and support to the cabals, and by inept protection of the cabal from outsiders. The cadre may decline to fess up promptly to its commitments, casting blame elsewhere, sacrificing core participants, and striking adversarial postures with the public, government investigators and the news media. These techniques of containment end up undermining cadre and cabal alike. They stir up residual animosity among the conspirators, hostility that may have been dampened down. They exacerbate fractional disputes between cadre and cabal, and between subgroups of cabals. And this dissonance erodes loyalty to the conspiracy. Defensive measures, designed to protect the conspiracy, actually amplified the severity of the crisis leading to demoralization and defection in the cabal.

The cadres techniques for overcoming cabal resistance result in the devaluation of its power. The cadres rhetoric of esprit de corps is revealed as self-serving or devoid of interests other than those related to the consolidation and protection of cadre interests. The cadres mystic fades as it makes clumsy and heavy handed demands on the cabals and is viewed as meddling in their local, organizationally based, professional affairs. Members of a cabal not only become disenchanted with the cadres orders, they become more distrustful of those in other cabals, and antagonistic toward the brokers and buffers at the interstices between their own cabal and the White House cadre, labeled derisively The Praetorian Guard, The Palace Guard, or because of the formidable influence of Robert Haldeman and John Ehrlichman, The Berlin Wall. The Praetorians were named after the elite soldiers who assumed great power and control over the political life of late classical Rome.

And critical for the overall integration of the conspiracy, conflict and dissonance between the cabal networks and the Praetorian cadre increases at the same time that conflict and discontent

within each cabal network decreases. The later projects a shifting rationale for a cabal to remain loyal to its own members and may undermine their alliances with brokers from other cabals and the undercut the attempts of agents from the cadre to influence them and have them automatically obey orders without resistance. The so-called zone of indifference, or the radius of acceptance by the cabal of the cadres premises of (tactical) action, begins to shrink. This contraction in turn renders cadre power more precarious, as it discovers the problem of overcoming potential resistance by resentful and recalcitrant cabal participants. Cabal members may stop obeying orders and sabotage the efforts of the cadre. They may defect, and go over to the other side, cooperating with prosecutors and investigators, implicating their co-conspirators in illegal and criminal action, and betraying others by revealing team secrets of the cadre. Most dangerously for the cadre, they may not only point fingers but also reveal the web of connections within the conspiracy, the conduits, brokers, gatekeepers, money routes, couriers, payouts, payoffs, and policies for the accumulation of power.

At the same time, the cadre is fighting another battle on another front. In Watergate, the White Houses global justifications for its actions on the basis of “national security” and “executive privilege” result in stepped up legal challenges by legal scholars and constitutional experts, revelations in the press and news media about the Watergate burglary, the authorization and use illegal campaign funds, and attempts to cover-up the conspiracy. The subpoenas soon arrive. Investigators interrogate cadre and cabal members, grand juries ask them questions, and senators and their lawyers bring the glare of national television onto presidential aides and personnel from the White House. A wide net of accusation and allegation also includes top and middle level staff at The Committee to Reelect The President, officials from The Federal Bureau of Investigation, personnel from The Central Intelligence Agency, and other Washington based bureaus and departments.

But before the legal challenges, accusations, media attention, and parade of personages before the nations television cameras there is the internal erosion of the political conspiracy: the fraying of trust between conspirators, the undoing of fragile work relationships between a White House cadre and its cabal network, the breakdown of the liaisons linking these networks, and the defection of once loyal and dedicated cabal members.

Defection in a political conspiracy is a final response by cabal networks to specific cadre policies of power and their implementation. In hindsight, the cadre worsened its problems by failing to immediately disclose the origins of the burglaries, breakins, and wiretappingsawful parts included- which forced it into more coverup, interference in the workings of Washington bureaus and agencies (FIB, CIA, IRS), continuous backtracking with the news media, and a slide into the death spiral of lost credibility with judges, investigators, and congress leading to the loss of legitimacy for the cadre and The President.

The meaning of centralization of network power is found in its implementation. Leadership is, for the cadre, never simply ideological or symbolic; it is always concrete and centralized. The core of conspiratorial activity is achieved through the maintenance of lines of authority, communication between cadre and cabal, and secrecy or concealment, which is to say, organization. These arrangements and practices are characterized by a. the cabal networks involved, b. the level of communication between the parties and their mutual dependence, c. the information, money, and resources they mobilize, and c. the ties of sentiment and homogeneity of outlook they require. When networks, communication, money, and homogeneity break down, as in situations of internal conflict over how to respond to a crisis, the continued existence of the conspiracy is imperiled. The cadre is exposed, promises are broken, internal dissonance is up, resources are squandered or misused, and co-conspirators even turn on another, seeking guarantees of immunity for pointing fingers at and implicating their former cabal and cadre friends and enemies.

The cadre faced exposure of its policies of total power and interconnections between the White House cadre and the network cabals involved in burglary, wiretapping, campaign sabotage, bureau and agency penetration, money laundering, and secret payoffs. The cooperative system of the conspiracy experienced: (1) a charge of meddling and interference by the cadre in the professional affairs of Washington agencies, bureaus, and departments, (2) a negative typecasting of buffers and brokers mediating the relationships between networks, (3) a rise of disagreement and dissent among the cabals, combined with (4) a decay of the conspiracys overall esprit de corps or sense of we-ness, culminating in (5) a breakdown in the capacity of cadre leadership to orchestrate control over the cabal networks. The interdependent and additive effects of these led to a breakdown in

the integrity and autonomy of the cadre, a rise in the defection inside the cabals, and the eventual disintegration of the Watergate conspiracy.

3.4 Broker Stress and Defection

Most sociological studies document the positive returns to mediators. Mediating position is a source of information access and control for other mediating actor. However, when dealing with a powerful and at times punitive cadre, mediation may be a dangerous social position. Mediation can be a liability in some social contexts.

Sociologists studying formal organizations have noted the dangers of being “the middle man.”

.... the pushing down of details creates great pressure on middle managers not only to transmit good news but, precisely because they know the details, to act to protect their corporations, their bosses, and themselves in the process. they become the “point men” of a given strategy and the potential “fall guys” when things go wrong (Jackall, 1988).

Network studies have recently looked at how actors brokering within groups strengthen “localism” or loyalty to a local community rather than a national network (Hillman, 2008). As Hillman notes, “the political danger of playing this position lies in brokers may become victims of the perception that they lack commitment to one block or subgroup and therefore cannot be trusted by either side” (Hillman: 295, 2008). A case in point: Howard Hunt’s request that the cadre “take care of” the burglar’s families financially – which is a custom for CIA agents apprehended for spying in foreign countries. Hunt’s request was perceived by the Nixon White House as nothing but blackmail. “The President himself has been blackmailed. When Hunt became involved, he decided that the conspirators could get some money for this. Hunt started an extortion racket of the rankest kind” (Woodward and Bernstein 1974: 318).

The mediating position is also a source of strain for the mediators due to the often contradictory demands to serve both the cadre as well as the cabal while expected to be a guise for each of these blocks simultaneously. An apt example of broker stress occurred in the containment stage of the conspiracy when the core cadre needed more “hush money” for the burglars. The money raisers

at CREEP were asked once again to ask political supporters for more money. The money raisers at CREEP saw themselves as abused by the cadre, and were also embarrassed when trying to explain to the corporate donors why they needed more money and what it was being used for. The brokers stressed under the interaction with donors as they were exposed to unsavory tactics and the clandestine conduit and money trails. These tactics exacerbate the unrest in the conspiracy. The consequence was a backlash among the conspirators LaRue, Mardian, and other money people at CREEP.

Mediators can be used as pawns to manipulate the cabals at the mediators' expense. Mediators can be used as symbolic buffers and decoys sacrificed for the cadre as the core cadre seals itself off from external exposure to wrongdoing or political controversies. John Dean, a broker by all accounts, was aware of being a scapegoat for the cadre during the conspiracy's containment phase, and that is one of his reasons for defecting and offering testimony to the Senate investigative committee. Another example: Howard Hunt, a representative mediating between the core cadre and burglary cabal, after talking to Colson and knowing that Colson taped the call and had it transcribed, wrote: "I hung up feeling that the White House had not only thrown us to the wolves but bated us so that we would be a more tasty treat."

Brokers are typecast, negatively, as "too cagey" which is an accusation of their becoming not only highly active, but also having a tendency to place their own self interests ahead of the interests of the cabal. Dean spoke about the dangers of the broker role in his autobiography, where he describes using the counsels office as a platform for exerting cadre influence into bureaus and agencies. "We asked to be designated the official White House liaison office for all the regulatory agencies. We added a lot of clearance functions, legal functions, legal power, and perquisite (Dean 1977:145)

As the conspiracy enters its containment stage, it is the brokers that are likely to be cut from communication lines with the core cadre. In Watergate the cadre called this "circling the wagons." The unintended consequence of circling the wagons is the alienation and resentment from the cabal members who once relied on the broker to relay information about their relations with the cadre. With communication lines cut, cabal members struggle to make sense of what's going on, and their

frustration grows into suspicion of the broker and the core cadre. A case in point: When LaRue left a considerable amount of “hush money” for the burglars, they were not relieved. Instead they interpreted the money to be “just enough” to keep them quiet until after the election – later, after the election, they thought, they would be “thrown to the wolves.” A chorus of “commitments not honored” by the White House began in the burglar unit as they sat at trial, and then at sentencing.

Hypothesis 2: Data on political conspiracies will show conspirators structurally located between other conspirators and groups of conspirators to be vulnerable to defection and legal liabilities.

4 Data

Numerous books have been written by historians, journalists, and the principals themselves about Watergate, especially about the intrigues that marked Richard Nixon's White House staff and operations (Colson 1976; Dean 1977; 1982; Haldeman 1978, 1994; Ehrlichman 1982; Safire 1975). In every historians description of this administration, in every journalists depiction of the break-in and cover up and in biographies of Nixon there is a more or less explicit account of the coalitions, cabals, and alliances as well as the loyalties and betrayals (Black 2007; Kutler 1991; Perlstein 2008, Summers 2000; Sussman 1974; White 1975; Woodward and Bernstein 1975). Fortunately for scholars of the minutiae of critical interaction and events among the participants, there are also extensive transcriptions of taped conversations between the White House principals Nixon, Dean, Colson, Ehrlichman, Gray, Halderman, Peterson, and others (Kutler 1997).

There are numerous accounts written on or about the legal and illegal activities of conspirators working at The Committee to ReElect The President (Magruder 1974, 1978; Mardian 1995; Rosen 2008; Stans 1985; Ulasewicz 1990), the burglar and wiretapping cabal and the illegal work of Hunt, Liddy, McCord and the so-called Five Cubans (Hunt 1974, 2007; Liddy 1996) including details about the multiple break-ins, illegal dirty money campaign funds, dirty tricks pulled on the Democratic candidates, plus the tactics of containment and coverup (Lukas 1976; McCarthy; Adler 1976; Sussman 1974; Weissman 1974). The Senate Select Committee also provided documentation of both legal and illegal campaign activities (Senate Watergate Committee volumes 1973, 1974).

And Mark Felt at The Federal Bureau of Investigation was of continuing fascination for Watergate investigators and historians in his role as Woodward's confidant, Deep Throat (Felt 1979, 2006; Garment 2001; Hougan 1984; and Woodward 2005).

Background to Watergate scandal and the Nixon years can be found in a number of sources (Abrahamsen 1977; Alexander 1988; Emery 1994; Fremon 1998; Gray 2008; Lukas 1976; McCarthy 1978; Olson 2003; Sirica 1979; White 1975; Woodward and Bernstein 1974,1975).

As we carefully read and watched each of these historical narratives and artifacts we made careful notes of *who did what with whom*. Notes were made with a structured code sheet. From these structured notes we constructed a number of sociomatrices of watergate action.

Our data scores high on reliability. The two researchers agreed 100% of the time on codes of which actors worked with whom on illegal Watergate activity. This internal consistency between the coders meets the standards of high reliability. Moreover, we believe our coding to meet the criterion of face validity because almost all of the claims of the conspirators about who did what with whom were also cited by another Watergate co-conspirator or a journalist covering Watergate. For example, it is reported enumerable times that Baldwin was the “look out” on the burglarly.

4.1 Sociomatrices

For this research article we coded two sociomatrices, which we refer to as:

1. The Working Web of Watergate;
2. The Sociomatrix of Who Testified Against Whom at Trial.

The sociomatrices are reported in the Appendix.

The first sociomatrix — The Working Web of Watergate — was constructed by simply putting a 1 in the sociomatrix if the two corresponding co-conspirators worked together on illegal espionage, sabotage, or money laundering. If the two conspirators did not work together on illegal activities, then we entered a 0 in the sociomatrix at the point where the column and row of the two conspirators intersect. This first sociomatrix essentially maps out who worked with whom in the illegal action of Watergate.

The second sociomatrix — The Sociomatrix of Who Testified Against Whom at Trial — was constructed by putting a 1 in the sociomatrix if the conspirator in the row of the matrix testified against the conspirator found in the column of the matrix. If the conspirator in the row of the matrix did not testify against the conspirator in the column of the matrix, then a 0 was entered in the sociomatrix at the point where the column and row of the two conspirators intersect. This matrix is a key map of one important part of conspiracy defection.

We made graphs of the the sociomatrices, which we report below.

4.1.1 The Working Web

Figure 1 graphs the social relations of the Working Web of Watergate action. The conspirator's name is placed in a blocked label, and a line running between two conspirators indicates that they worked together on illegal activity.

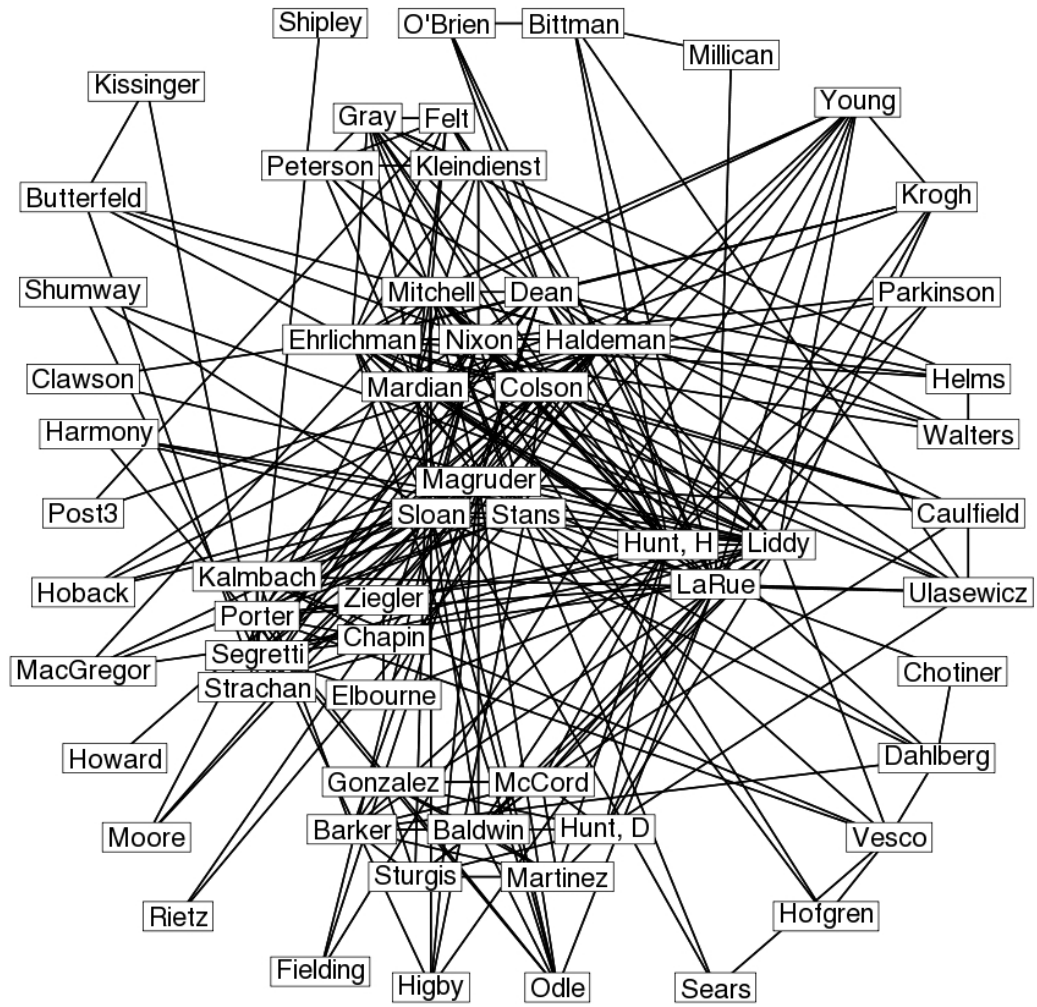
4.1.2 Who Testified Against Whom at Trial

Figure 2 graphs the social relations of who testified against whom at trial. The graph shows the conspirators name placed in a blocked label. The lines are directed, as indicated with an arrow, signifying that the conspirator with the arrow pointing away testified against the conspirator the arrow points toward.

5 Measures

A number of the hypotheses can be investigated by simply examining the graphs discussed above with the hypothesis in mind. Other hypotheses will be pursued by looking at what predicts the variance of a dependent variable.

Figure 1: The Working Web of Watergate Action



5.1 Dependent Variables

We use a number of dependent variables and sociometric measures to investigate the above hypotheses. Primary and secondary defection form two important dependent variables for this study. We define defection as an act that symbolizes, communicates, and carries out an actor's breaking from the organizational goals of in the conspiracy. There are two types of defection. We simply refer to the types of defection as primary and secondary defection.

Primary defection is an act of defection that breaks off commitment to the goals of the conspiracy through a variety of means, but the means of breaking off from the conspiracy fall short of a direct report to external regulators, prosecutors, judges, grand juries, and/or Senate investigative committees. Primary defection can involve purposeful shirking. Primary defection can involve the following defection strategies:

- Defection by complaint: The conspirator secretly complains to outsiders.
- Defection by opportunism: The conspirator secretly misappropriates valuable resources.
- Defection by exit: The conspirator voluntarily and publicly relinquishes his or her role in the organization.
- Defection by extortion: The conspirator threatens to reveal organizational or team secrets to external regulators, prosecutors, judges, grand juries, and/or Senate investigative committees.
- Defection by sabotage: The conspirator undermines the work of the conspiracy by supplying subordinates, superiors, and peers with inaccurate, incomplete, and untimely or stale information.
- Defection by covert alliance: The conspirator secretly allies with one or more elements of the opposition, or rival factions outside the conspiracy, without the consent or control of the secret organization.

Secondary Defection is act of defection that breaks off participation in the goals of the conspiracy by means of testifying to prosecutors, grand juries, judges, or special investigative committees. In a

nutshell, secondary defection involves subversion and rebellion or resistance. Examples of secondary defection include:

- James McCord’s public testimony during The Watergate Senate hearings;
- Jeb Magruder’s public testimony against John N. Mitchell and John Ehrlichman;
- John Dean’s public, televised testimony implicating President Nixon, his chief of staffs, aides, and others involved in the conspiracy.

The determinants of defection are revealed in its covert, unofficial and illegal networks (i.e., secret projects and their people involved in burglary, break-ins, wire-tapping, campaign sabotage, and cover-up). The determinants of defection are revealed in the networks of disaffection, distrust, and negative attributes accompanying the overlap of the overt and legal actions of a conspiracy with the covert and illegal actions of the secret society as a going concern.

As we read the Watergate material discussed in the data section, we coded the conspirators as either carrying out primary or secondary defection. If a conspirator was a primary defector, the conspirator was coded with a 1 (one) on the primary defection variable, 0 (zero) otherwise. Similarly, If a conspirator was a secondary defector, the conspirator was coded with a 1 (one) on the secondary defection variable, 0 (zero) otherwise.

An additional two dependent variables are derived from the matrix of who testified against whom at trial. The row sums of this matrix count the number of times conspirator i testified against other conspirators. The column sums of this matrix count the number of times conspirator j was testified *against* by other conspirators.

Finally, length of sentencing at trial and verdict at court form our final dependent variables. We measure the length of “time served” for each conspirator in months. We measure guilt at trial through a indicator variable where 1 is guilty and 0 is not guilty.

5.2 Independent Variables

We used the standard network measure of betweenness centrality to measure the extent to which a conspirator connected other actors—or lay between two actors in the Sociomatrix of the Web of

Watergate action. By “betweenness” what is meant is the number of actors a given actor brokers, mediates, or lies between in the communication network. The standard index of betweenness centrality is given by:

$$C_B(n_i) = \sum_{j < k} g_{jk}(n_i) / g_{jk}. \quad (1)$$

The above index is a sum of the probabilities that an actor is between each of the other actors of the sociomatrix. The index has a minimum of zero when an actor connects none of the others. The index has a maximum of the number of pairs of actors in the sociomatrix. We standardized the index so that it has a minimum of zero and a maximum, which the following equation yields:

$$C'_B(n_i) = C_B(n_i) / [(g - 1)(g - 2) / 2]. \quad (2)$$

As the above index approaches one, the more the conspirator brokered the relations of other conspirators. Index scores closer to zero mean that the conspirators brokered relatively few, or perhaps none, of the relations between the other conspirators.

We not only measure the brokerage between individual conspirators, we measure the mediation of groups by individual conspirators. The key groups in the conspiracy are the espionage cabals, the political sabotage cabals, the core cadre, and so on. We coded each conspirator according to whether they played a mediating *role* between these groups.

First we coded each conspirator in terms of whether they played a gatekeeper role mediating their cabal or core cadre members with other cabals. A gatekeeper serves to buffer contact from those outside the core cadre. The easiest examples of gatekeepers are perhaps H. R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman. Haldeman and Ehrlichman were famous for keeping outsiders away from the President; they were nicknamed “The Berlin” wall for doing just that. For each conspirator we considered all their relations with the other cabals and core cadre. If the conspirator played a gatekeeper role we scored the conspirator with a 1 (one) for the variable and 0 (zero) otherwise.

Next we coded each conspirator in terms of whether they played a representative role mediating their cabal or core cadre members with other cabals. A representative serves to actively contact those outside their core cadre or cabal. An example of a representative would be E. Howard Hunt.

Hunt made the case for the burglars to the core cadre, explaining to the core cadre that they needed cash assistance for their families while they served prison time. For each conspirator we considered all their relations with the other cabals and core cadre. If the conspirator played a representative role we scored the conspirator with a 1 (one) for the variable and 0 (zero) otherwise.

6 Methods

Our hypotheses are tested using historical sociology to uncover the patterns of interaction in the Watergate scandal, standard sociomatrix measures, block modeling, logistic regression and QAP analysis.

6.1 Historical Sociology

We heed Goulds call for the use of network methods in historical research (Gould 2003; Gould 1991), and employ a textual analysis and coding of key words-events (Carley 1993; Franzosi 1989; Ghaziani and Ventresca 2005; Weber 1990) and communication patterns (Bavelas 1948, 1950; Freeman 1979; Wasserman and Faust 1994) among the core and peripheral conspirators (Arquilla and Ronfeldt 1986; Davis 1981; Morselli 2009; Petraeus and Amos 2007; Sparrow 1991). Of particular interest in developing our narrative about cohesion and disintegration of Watergate (Abbott 1992; Alexander 1988) was our interest in uncovering the multiple and overlapping groups in the conspiracy (Epstein 1974).

Popular thinking about the events and people involved in Watergate is often so fraught with myth, tradition, and nostalgia that it is useful to apply network techniques and social science concepts to it. The complementary content of biographical and autobiographic writing and sociological concepts makes the analogy productive. Contrary to the views of some journalists and historians there was never a “single,” “overarching,” or “monolithic” conspiracy. Rather, it was a variegated and diverse set of cells (Selznick 1952), clique formation (Tichy 1973), and cabals (Burns 1955). As portrayed by the participants themselves, the so-called overall conspiracy was held together by (a) loose and permeable boundaries (see Lukas 1976; Kutler 1991; Cf. Laumann, Marsden and Prensky 1983), (b) bridges and go-betweens (Ulasewicz 1990; Hunt 2007; Magruder 1978; Cf. Burt 2002,

1992, 1977; Padgett and Ansell 1993), (c) covert antagonism and enmity (Colson 1976; Dean 1982, 1977; Liddy 1996; The Watergate Transcripts 1974; Cf. Hughes 1971, 1964; Frank and Yasumoto 1998), and (d) a continual making and breaking of cooperative relations (Rosen 2008; Magruder 1974; Hunt 2007; House of Representatives 1973; Gray 2008; Richard G. Kleindienst and Louis Patrick Gray III Hearings; Cf. Gambetta 1988; Gellner 1988; Baker, Faulkner, and Fisher 1998).

6.2 Blockmodelling

We do not assume social structure. We instead empirically investigate social structure by recovery of the naturally occurring social networks of blocs via biographical and autobiographic writings. The autobiographic and bibliographical information provides rich data of who did what with whom in the Watergate corruption. Virtually all of the information of who did what with whom for the major events of Watergate corruption are cross-validated by these sources. Distilling the social architecture of who did what with whom is greatly facilitated by blockmodelling (Arabie, Boorman and Levitt 1978; Bearman 1993; Faulkner 1983; White, Boorman, Breiger 1976; Winship 1988).

Blockmodeling is a multivariate statistical technique that identifies actors who have common patterns of interaction with other actors. Blockmodeling uses a clustering algorithm to group conspirators together based on their *relations with other conspirators*. Conspirators who share similar relations – those who worked with similar others – are clustered together into similar groups. The visual depiction of these clustering enables the social researcher to discover the social structure of conspiracy, rather than to assume it. We used the Ward clustering algorithm for these data.

6.3 Regression Modeling

Logistic regression modeling is suitable for dichotomous dependent variables. We will model the probability of a conspirator defecting as we have defined both primary and secondary defection. We also use a logistic regression to predict guilt or innocence the conspirators at trial, whether a conspirator testified against co-conspirators, or whether a conspirator was testified against *by* other conspirators.

6.3.1 QAP Analysis

Quadratic assignment analysis is a boot strap method that measures the level of association of two sociomatrices. Of particular interest is to see if the finger-pointing at trial matrix is related to the other sociomatrices of watergate relations and action. QAP analysis takes two matrices in question and calculates a coefficient measuring their association and then uses an empirical sampling distribution to assess the coefficients probability. Mechanically speaking, the interpretation of the procedure is something like interpreting a correlation coefficient and then assessing the probability of the coefficient using a p-value.

7 Findings

Hypothesis 1 predicts that data on political conspiracies will show conspirators to be socially organized into distinct teams of clandestine activity. Figure 1 clearly shows this. In Figure 1 we organized the nodes or actors according to the results of the cluster analysis—a standard procedure of blockmodeling. Figure 1 shows five structurally equivalent groups — which is equivalent to the role structure of the conspiracy. Figure 1 shows the core cadre of Nixon, Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Mitchell, Colson, and Dean. Next, Figure 1 shows how the block modeling grouped together Felt, Peterson, Kleindenst. This group represents the agents of government bureaus that the core cadre attempted to manipulate in the coverup and as part of the plans of The Perpetual Presidency. Another structurally equivalent group is seen among the conspirators Kalmbach, Porter, Segretti, Strachan, Ziegler, Chapin, and Elbourne. These conspirators formed the political campaign group, many of whom drifted into unethical and sometimes illegal “dirty tricks.” The blockmodeling also groups together Magruder, Sloan, and Stans. This group formed the finance group of the official White House and participated in illegal money laundering for the cabals and cadre. The burglars themselves are seen in the group labeled Gonzalez, McCord, Barker, Baldwin, Hunt (Dorothy), Sturgis, and Martinez—this is essentially the burglar team as caught in the Watergate, plus Dorothy Hunt, who was a conduit of “hush money” for the burglars. The group Hunt (Howard), LaRue, and Liddy are the organization leaders of “The Plumbers” and the burglary team. The cluster

analysis grouped together a number of peripheral actors – we organized these conspirators as a group circling the true conspirators in Figure 1.

In Figure 1 clearly shows that the conspirators organized themselves into structurally distinct clandestine teams or cabals. Figure 1 also shows a core cadre and a periphery of actors which the conspirators regularly interacted with. Figure 1 is also consistent with the historical record of the conspiracy. Hypothesis 1, stating the conspiracy would be organized by blocks of cabals, a periphery, and a core cadre is clearly supported by these data.

Hypothesis 2 states that conspirators who are mediators or are high in betweenness centrality will be likely to defect. A number of regression models offer support for this hypothesis. We also conducted a QAP analysis — which takes into account the autocorrelation among the sociomatrices — and that analysis shows that The Sociomatrix of the Web of Watergate Action is correlated with The Sociomatrix of Who Testified Against Whom at trial with coefficient of .183, with a probability of this coefficient being due to sampling chance of $p \leq .0000$. The result of the QAP analysis provide some triangulation of the data, since multiple methods show an association between network properties and defection. In the end, we believe that our regression models are informative regarding the hypotheses.

We model the effects of the independent variables measuring types of mediation—betweenness centrality, gatekeeper and representative—on the probability of defection, guilt at court, and jail time served separately because the independent variables are highly correlated or colinear since they are derived from a inter-related network or relations.

Table 1 reports the results of logistic regression using betweenness centrality to predict the probability that a conspirator testified against another co-conspirator at trial. The coefficient is positive and significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. As betweenness centrality increases, the probability that a given conspirator testifies against another co-conspirator increases as well, which is consistent with Hypothesis 2.

Table 2 reports the results of logistic regression using betweenness centrality to predict the probability that a conspirator was testified against – was the object of testimony – by another co-conspirator at trial. The coefficient is positive and significant at the $p \leq .001$ level. As betweenness

Table 1: Logistic Regression: Betweenness Centrality Predicting Testimony Against Others at Trial

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-2.5081	0.5462	-4.59	0.0000
Betweenness	0.0124	0.0059	2.12	0.0339

centrality increases, the probability that a given conspirator is testified against by another co-conspirator increases as well, which is consistent with Hypothesis 2.

Table 2: Logistic Regression: Betweenness Centrality Predicting Being Testified Against at Trial

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-1.5694	0.3909	-4.02	0.0001
Betweenness	0.0260	0.0076	3.42	0.0006

Table 3 reports the results of logistic regression using betweenness centrality to predict the probability that a conspirator engaged in primary, or Type I, defection. The coefficient is not significant at the $p \leq .1$ level.

Table 3: Logistic Regression: Betweenness Centrality Predicting Type I Defection

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-1.6502	0.4061	-4.06	0.0000
Betweenness	0.0060	0.0053	1.13	0.2584

Table 4 reports the results of logistic regression using betweenness centrality to predict the probability that a conspirator engaged in secondary, or Type II, defection. The coefficient is positive and significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. As betweenness centrality increases, the probability that a given conspirator engages in Type II defection increases as well, which is consistent with Hypothesis 2.

Table 5 reports the results of logistic regression using betweenness centrality to predict the probability that a conspirator was found guilty in court. The coefficient is positive and significant at the $p \leq .001$ level. As betweenness centrality increases, the probability that a given conspirator was found guilty increases as well.

Table 6 reports the results of ordinary least squares regression using betweenness centrality to

Table 4: Logistic Regression: Betweenness Centrality Predicting Type II Defection

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-2.5224	0.5490	-4.59	0.0000
Betweenness	0.0127	0.0059	2.16	0.0310

Table 5: Logistic Regression: Betweenness Centrality Predicting Guilt in Court

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-1.4955	0.3823	-3.91	0.0001
Betweenness	0.0235	0.0070	3.35	0.0008

predict the length of sentence served for the conspirators. It should be noted that the regression model includes only conspirators that were found guilty at trial – it does not include the peripheral actors. The coefficient is positive and significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. The regression model shows that as betweenness centrality increases, so too did the length of sentence.

Table 6: OLS Regression: Betweenness Centrality Predicting Prison Time Served

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
(Intercept)	5.4714	3.6071	1.52	0.1467
tmp.dat\$between	0.0878	0.0341	2.57	0.0193

Table 7 reports the results of logistic regression using gatekeeper status to predict the probability that a conspirator testified against another co-conspirator at trial. The coefficient is positive and significant at the $p \leq .005$ level. Gatekeeper position between the cabals and the cadre increases the probability of testifying against another conspirator at trial, which is consistent with hypothesis 2.

Table 8 reports the results of logistic regression using gatekeeper status to predict the probability that a conspirator was testified against *by* another co-conspirator at trial. The coefficient is positive and significant at the $p \leq .001$ level. Gatekeeper position between the cabals and the cadre increases the probability of testimony against a conspirator at trial, which is consistent with hypothesis 2.

Table 9 reports the results of logistic regression using gatekeeper status to predict the probability that a conspirator engaged in Type I, or primary, defection. The coefficient is positive and significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. Gatekeeper position between the cabals and the cadre increases the probability

Table 7: Logistic Regression: Gatekeeper Status Predicting Testimony Against Others at Trial

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-3.8067	1.0110	-3.77	0.0002
Gatekeeper	3.6731	1.1358	3.23	0.0012

Table 8: Logistic Regression: Gatekeeper Status Predicting Being Testified Against at Trial

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-1.2809	0.3575	-3.58	0.0003
Gatekeeper	2.2925	0.6846	3.35	0.0008

of Type I, or primary defection, which is consistent with hypothesis 2.

Table 9: Logistic Regression: Gatekeeper Status Predicting Type I Defection

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-1.8971	0.4378	-4.33	0.0000
Gatekeeper	1.4917	0.6852	2.18	0.0295

Table 10 reports the results of logistic regression using gatekeeper status to predict the probability that a conspirator engaged in Type II, or secondary, defection. The coefficient is positive and significant at the $p \leq .001$ level. Gatekeeper position between the cabals and the cadre increases the probability of Type II, or secondary defection, which is consistent with hypothesis 2.

Table 11 reports the results of logistic regression using gatekeeper status to predict the probability that a conspirator was found guilty at trial. The coefficient is positive and significant at the $p \leq .001$ level. Gatekeeper position between the cabals and the cadre increases the probability of being found guilty at trial, which is consistent with hypothesis 2.

Table 12 reports the results of ordinary least squares regression using gatekeeper status to predict the length of sentence for those conspirators who either plead guilty or were found guilty at trial. The coefficient is not significant at the $p \leq .1$ level.

Table 13 reports the results of logistic regression using representative status to predict the probability that a conspirator testified against another co-conspirator at trial. The coefficient is positive and significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. Representative position between the cabals and the cadre increases the probability of testifying against another conspirator at trial, which is consistent

Table 10: Logistic Regression: Gatekeeper Status Predicting Type II Defection

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-3.8067	1.0110	-3.77	0.0002
Gatekeeper	3.6731	1.1358	3.23	0.0012

Table 11: Logistic Regression: Gatekeeper Status Predicting Guilt At Trial

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-1.5581	0.3890	-4.01	0.0001
Gaktekeeper	3.4299	0.8534	4.02	0.0001

with hypothesis 2.

Table 14 reports the results of logistic regression using representative status to predict the probability that a conspirator was testified against *by* another co-conspirator at trial. The coefficient is positive and significant at the $p \leq .01$ level. Representative position between the cabals and the cadre increases the probability of testimony against a conspirator at trial, which is consistent with hypothesis 2.

Table 15 reports the results of logistic regression using representative status to predict the probability that a conspirator engaged in Type I, or primary, defection. The coefficient is positive and significant at the $p \leq .1$ level. representative position between the cabals and the cadre increases the probability of Type I, or primary defection, which is consistent with hypothesis 2.

Table 16 reports the results of logistic regression using representative status to predict the probability that a conspirator engaged in Type II, or secondary, defection. The coefficient is not significant at the $p \leq .1$ level.

Table 17 reports the results of logistic regression using representative status to predict the probability that a conspirator was found guilty at trial. The coefficient is positive and significant at the $p \leq .1$ level. Representative position between the cabals and the cadre increases the probability of being found guilty in court proceedings, which is consistent with hypothesis 2.

Table 18 reports the results of ordinary least squares regression using representative status to predict the length of sentence for those conspirators who either plead guilty or were found guilty at trial. The coefficient is not significant at the $p \leq .1$ level.

Table 12: Logistic Regression: Gatekeeper Status Predicting Length of Sentence

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
(Intercept)	9.7500	4.2908	2.27	0.0356
Gatekeeper	4.5417	5.5395	0.82	0.4230

Table 13: Logistic Regression: Representative Status Predicting Testimony Against Others at Trial

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-2.3979	0.5222	-4.59	0.0000
Representative	1.5870	0.7961	1.99	0.0462

8 Discussion

The empirical findings show that betweenness centrality is related to Type II defection and testifying against other conspirators at trial. Betweenness centrality also increases the risk of being testified against at trial, as well as increasing the probability of being found guilty at trial and the length of sentence.

The empirical findings also show that gatekeeper status between the cabals and the cabals and core cadre is related to both Type I and Type II defection, testifying against other conspirators at trial, and to being testified against *by* other conspirators at trial. Gatekeeper status also increases the probability of a Watergate conspirator being found guilty at trial.

The empirical findings further show that representative status between the cabals and the cabals and core cadre is related to both Type I and Type II defection, testifying against other conspirators at trial, and to being testified against *by* other conspirators at trial. Representative status also increases the probability of a Watergate conspirator being found guilty at trial.

The above findings show the negative consequences of brokerage and mediation for the brokers and the mediators and for the conspiracy. But our point of this research is not merely to suggest that brokerage and mediation are simply negative in political conspiracies. We have mentioned earlier that historical record of Watergate shows that in the early stages of the conspiracy brokerage and mediation enabled the conspirators to carry out many of the plans of The Perpetual Presidency in secrecy and in coordinated action. Brokers and mediators successfully planned out illegal espionage,

Table 14: Logistic Regression: Representative Status Predicting Being Testified Against at Trial

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-1.0986	0.3333	-3.30	0.0010
Representative	1.9095	0.6872	2.78	0.0055

Table 15: Logistic Regression: Representative Status Predicting Type I Defection

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-1.7677	0.4090	-4.32	0.0000
Representative	1.2977	0.7016	1.85	0.0644

“dirty tricks” and political sabotage, and laundered and distributed hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of dollars to cabal members. Our point is that brokerage is a social tool and it can be used to destroy as well as build social organization.

The findings raise the question: What are the mechanisms by which brokerage yields advantages and disadvantage in a political conspiracy? There are two mechanisms that we believe help explain the dynamics of brokerage in terms of whether brokerage is positive or negative for the conspiracy. The first contingency is the status of the cadre’s authority over the brokers – do the brokers perceive the cadre as acting with authority or acting in terms of sheer power? Second, for political conspiracies the issue of who exactly controls the brokerage position is a crucial contingency – is it the broker or the core cadre that control the brokerage position? These two issues are interrelated.

When the brokers perceive the core cadre as holding legitimate authority the brokers follow the scripts assigned to them by the cadre to be the “glue” holding the conspiracy together. However, when brokers began to question the authority of the cadre, they used their brokerage position to their advantage. In Watergate the core cadre was extremely sensitive about their being perceived as legitimate and developed their own argot to communicate concerns that their authority had lost its hold over the conspirators. For example, the core cadre frequently used the phrase “off the reservation” to communicate concerns about a wayward conspirator. And the cadre’s concerns were justified.

Being set up as “fall guys” and scapegoats, and worries about being “thrown to the wolves” ruined the perception of the cadre holding legitimate authority once held by the brokers themselves.

Table 16: Logistic Regression: Representative Status Predicting Type II Defection

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-2.1518	0.4725	-4.55	0.0000
Representative	0.9478	0.8103	1.17	0.2421

Table 17: Logistic Regression: Representative Status Predicting Guilt in Court

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
(Intercept)	0.2917	0.0681	4.28	0.0001
Representative	0.2468	0.1476	1.67	0.0998

In the end the cadre learned that the brokerage position gave brokers the structural resources to act autonomously through defection. Brokers were in the thick of the conspiracy and had a lot to offer prosecutors in plea deals when the Watergate ship began to sink. Nothing could be a more profound statement of autonomy than defecting from the cadre, and brokers stated their autonomy by defecting. The brokers used their structural position of betweenness to turn the tables on the cadre – from the cabal/cadre crossroads they placed the cadre in the prosecutor’s cross hairs. When authority vanished from the brokers’ perceptions of the cadre, the brokers used their structural autonomy due to their betweenness to play the cadre off against the legal system. This “playing one side against the other” was possible because they were in the middle of the Watergate action and had witnessed the inner workings of the conspiracy.

Much of the network literature on brokerage assumes that the broker as ego is in control of the social action at the brokerage position. In entrepreneurial situations or markets, the actor at the position of broker is a free agent acting on the actor-as-broker self-interest. But for political/authority relations, it is not clear – at least – whose goals the actor at the brokerage position is carrying out because political action is often authoritative or involves authoritative scripts or directions. For example, John Dean, for the most part, did not carry out his own self-direction but was following directions from Ehrlichman, or Haldeman, Mitchell or some other core cadre member. Dean may have been the author of some acts in his brokerage role, but the main contours of his actions in his brokerage role were tightly scripted by clear directions communicated by the core cadre to Dean. Dean was instructed to bring together the cabals, he was not instructed, nor given

Table 18: OLS Regression: Representative Status Predicting Length of Sentence

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
(Intercept)	9.3846	3.1996	2.93	0.0089
tmp.dat\$rep	8.8297	5.4082	1.63	0.1199

the choice, to play one cabal off against the other to gain his self-interest. Political conspiracies thus operate under scripted brokerage. In political conspiracies brokers are not the full authors of the scripts they enact at the structural location of broker. In political conspiracies there is an overlapping of a cultural script or expectations and responsibilities with structural position.

This scripting of the brokerage role means the brokerage position is vulnerable to stress and strain because the broker as actor is limited in his/her autonomy by the script. On the other hand, structurally – in the social *position* sense – the broker has autonomy or the *potential* for autonomy. There is a large literature cited at the beginning of this essay that documents how the structural position of mediation or betweenness allows brokers to act “robustly,” to “play one faction off against the other,” which are different ways to say brokers are somewhat more autonomous than other actors. So on the one sense the broker role-assigned actor with a script is limited in autonomy by the core cadre’s authoritative directions and communications, but on the other hand the broker as structural position has a great potential for autonomous action. When the cadre has authority over the broker – when the broker views the cadre in terms of legitimate authority – the script holds and the broker enacts the directions from the cadre. However, as authority slackens – as the brokers perceive the cadre as working in self-interest and not for a just cause – the efficacy of the script weakens. This is when the potential for autonomy – which is based on the structural position of the broker – strengthens. The Dean’s of the conspiracy — as brokers — become interested in talking to the investigative committees and tell all that they have seen – and they have seen a lot because of their structural position. And by defecting the broker is acting autonomously and using the structural advantages of brokerage.

So one of the mechanisms producing the the disadvantages of brokerage to the conspiracy is due to the stresses and strains produced from a script to glue together cabals. This script is an assigned script from the cadre. The broker is carrying out a role assignment of expectations and

responsibilities. The ego advantages for autonomous action lie as potential as long as the script has hold over the actor at the brokerage position. As long as the broker sees the mission and the core cadre as serving a wider cause, then the brokerage script governs the actor as broker more powerfully than the brokerage potential for autonomy due to structural position.

In political conspiracy there is a duality of brokerage script (role assignment) versus brokerage as a structural position. One limits the brokers autonomy – and thus builds the stress, strain, and legal danger. The other yields a potential for structural autonomy, which can result in real structural autonomy – i.e., defecting – if authority weakens and the cadre’s script is no longer enacted.

9 Conclusion

Our findings of multiple blocs and their mutual antagonism tells us a lot about how political conspiracies of a central cadre and multiple blocs work. The crisis in the cabal is set in cabal to cabal struggles and cabal to cadre struggle.

The dominant way of thinking about political conspiracies in social science is to view the entire system from the top down as if there were only a single group—or bloc, or leadership cadre—dictating and regulating everything. The Watergate conspiracy did have a single leadership group lead by all the President’s men; but, by contrast, there were individual blocs or cabals involved in different tasks, struggling among themselves and with the White House for extended periods trying to find methods and tactics that would meet their needs.

The dominant way (as portrayed Bernstein and Woodward’s book *All The President’s Men*) is overly simplified. It is essentially a one-level representation of a multileveled world.

The perverse view is that the WoodStein’s (as Woodward and Bernstein were referred to by their colleagues at the Washington Post) and political/economic analysts see only the cadre or “the government” as the key actor. They ignore the dense networks, their complex organization of differentiation and mediating roles integrating the cabals, and the “struggles” as we have noted above, and then the solution which is the cadre imposed a solution, as if they are the all-controlling actors who manage and control everything. Yes the cadre did try to control the crisis in the

conspiracy, but the cadre's solution and its policy of "containment" only backfired — in fact the cadre's solution exacerbated the situation and made it worse. The result was mutual antagonism and disaster in the long run. Individuals in the blocs tried to cope with various problems, and that includes the mediators or brokers between the blocs. Our network analysis draws attention to the compound constituency or numerous blocs with delegated work or tasks (burglary, wiretapping, campaign sabotage, money procurement, money transfers, etc.). They faced internal divisions, dyadic discontent, and troubles with communication across to other blocs.

Economists game theory models and sociologists working within rational actor assumptions predict that political conspiracies succumb to defection as state authorities detect wrongdoing and threaten punishment. Although strategic action is part the defection process, we contend that game theory and rational actor assumptions and analysis do not offer a model predicting which specific actors defect in political conspiracies. We argue that the assertion of the economist's abstract, deductive, game theoretic framework is distinct from understanding the conditions that foster or suppress the collapse of conspiracies. Developing a more contingent conception of collapse of illegal economic and political conspiracies, forms of clandestine cooperation that attempt to subvert markets or political, democratic processes through illegal means, will give sociology a deeper understanding of organizations under stress, criminal networks, and antagonistic cooperation in them. This paper represents one step in that broad agenda.

The extant literature on defection deals with it as a feature in the cooperation or defection prisoner dilemma game; this is an abstract, deductive, and very general approach. The game theory approach predicts why certain characteristics place individual conspirators in the position of either cooperating or defection, it does not explain why specific individuals are involved in defection. Conspiracies make rules and infraction of which constitutes defection. Put another way, the typical study overlooks the simple fact that the vast majority of individuals in a political or economic secret society or conspiracy never become involved in defection. So while an accumulation of risk factors, as proposed in game theory, may "explain" why a conspirator defects while others cooperate—and hence the rewards, etc.—this game based approach provides limited insight into why a specific individual in a conspiracy is involved in defecting.

Thus the deductive and abstract game theoretic approach ignores the ways in which people are empirically connected to one another in and through dyads and blocs and how those connections influence the propensity for “defection.” We show that defection is predicted by those occupying in-between positions in a social network are exceptionally prone to defection and increases the likelihood of one person testifying against another at trial.

We have shown how structural sociology overcomes these limitations and have shown that structural sociology predicts which specific individuals are likely to defect in political conspiracies.

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10 Appendix

