

British Journal of Industrial Relations public lecture

Transient Solidarities: commitment and collective action in post-industrial societies

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Suggested hashtag for Twitter users: **#LSEHeckscher**

LSE events



Transient Solidarities

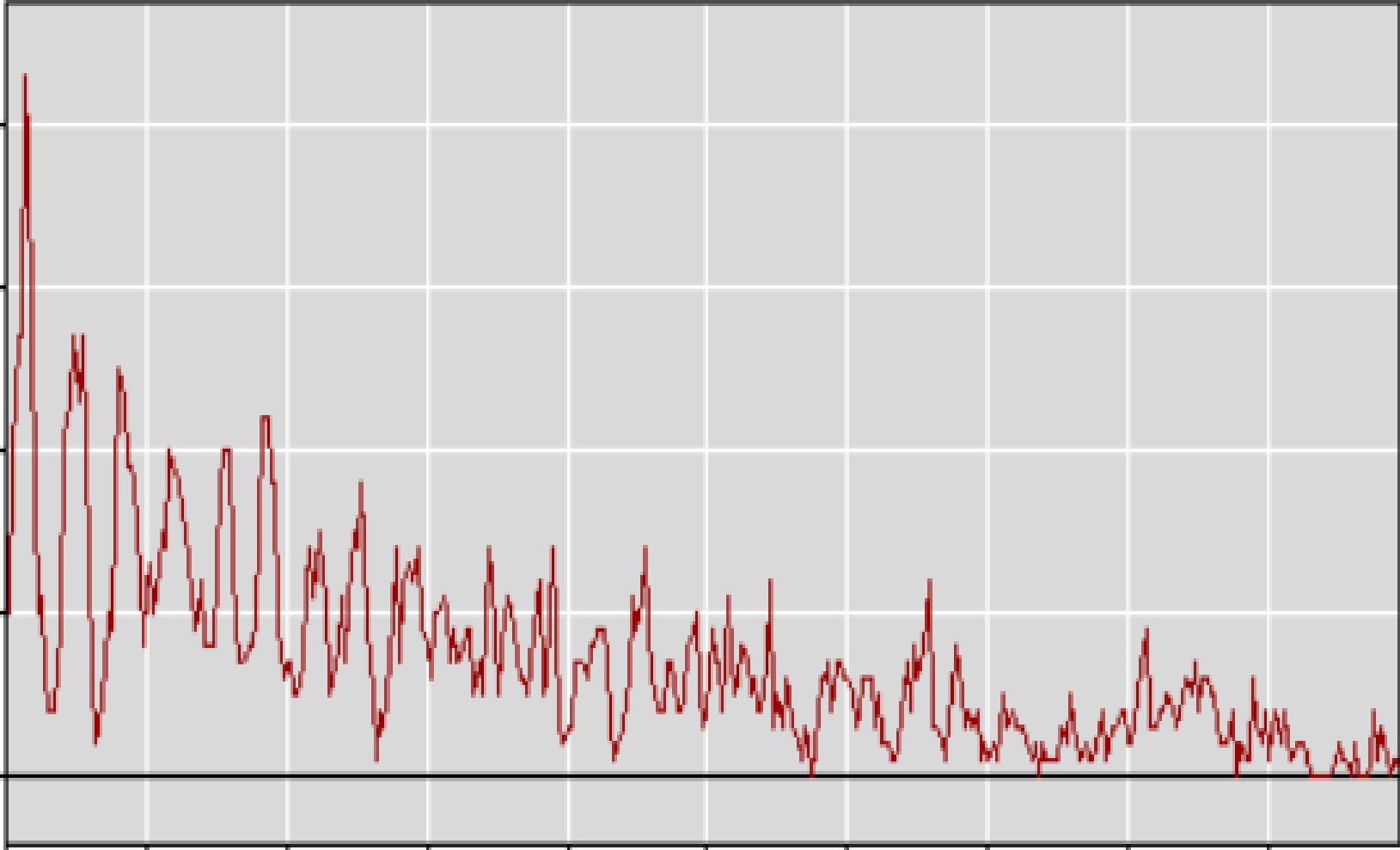
Charles Heckscher
January, 2014

Solidarity

Shared sense of obligation
to participate in collective action
for social change



Strikes





Theory

Solidarity

=

Relations

+

Ideology (moral appeal)

Types of solidarity

	Relations	Ideology	Organization / collective action
Craft			
Industrial			

Craft solidarity

Relations

- Strong self-governing occupational communities
- Internally established status hierarchies

Ideology

- Universalization of ways of working: artisanal, independent, communal, local self governance

Collective action / organization

- Participative, continuous
- Status-dominated organization
- Small scale
- Multiple tactics, flexible
- Not essentially conflictual



Industrial solidarity



Industrial solidarity

Relations

- Similar jobs in large groups (factories)
- Constant friction with management

Ideology

- Extension of equal rights
- Balance of power
- Dualism / battle

Collective action / organization

- Centralized organization, large scale
- Focused demands
- Mass actions

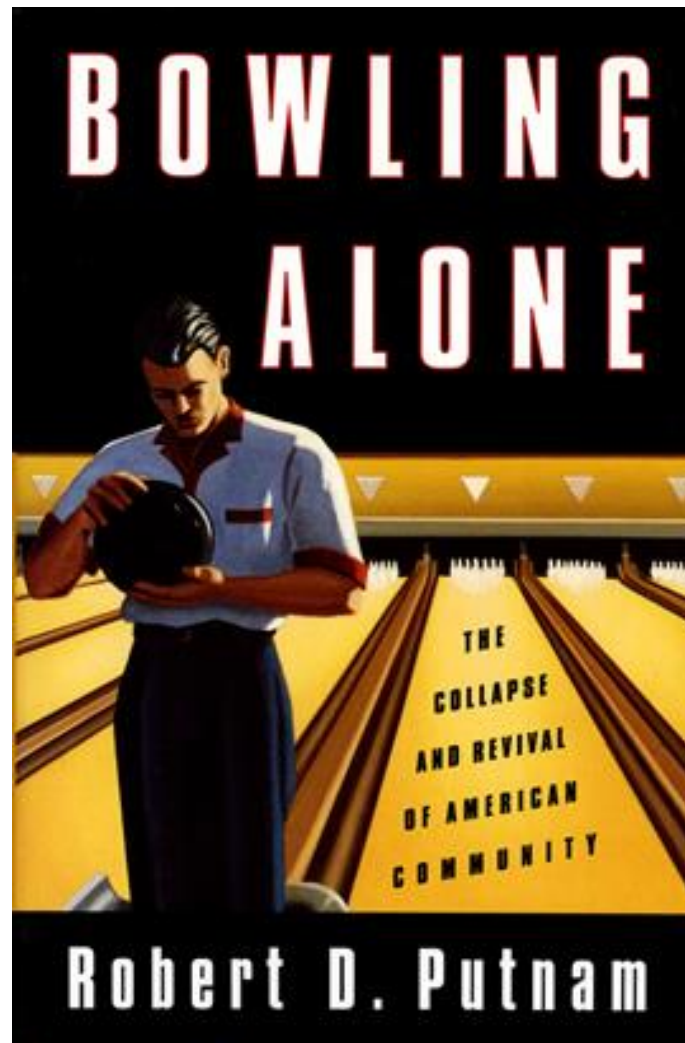
Industrial solidarity: organization



Types of solidarity

	Relations	Ideology	Collective action
Craft	Traditional, self-governing communities	Way of life; utopian decentralized community	Continuous, decentralized
Industrial	The factory: mass, oppositional	Extension of rights Confrontation	Centralized episodic, oppositional, simple focus
??	<i>New relations?</i>	<i>Attractive ideological appeals?</i>	<i>Types of action?</i>

What's happening with relations?



Transient relations

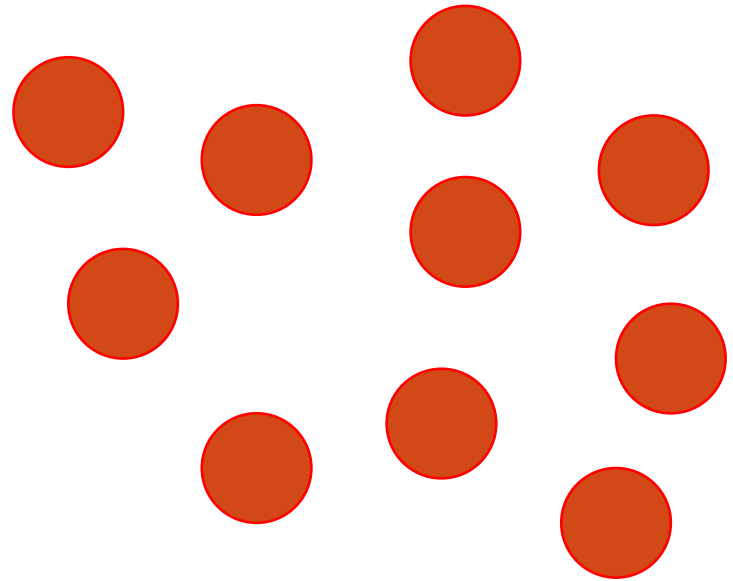
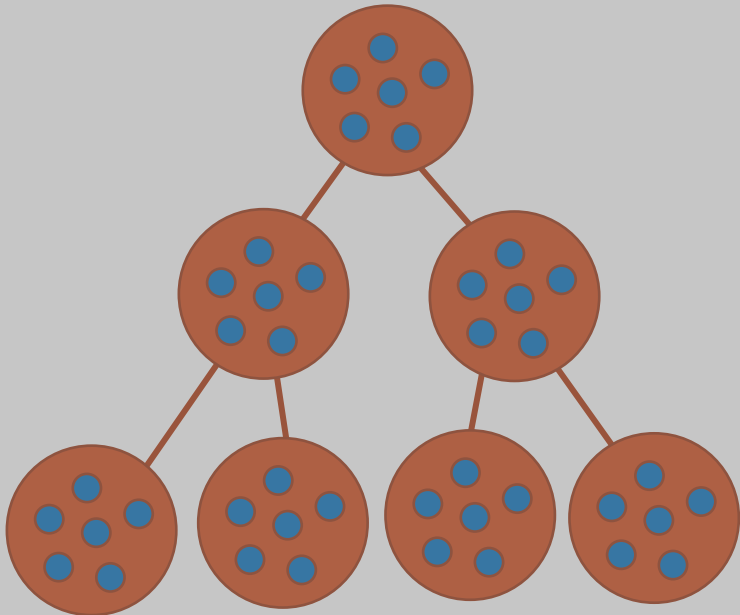
At work

- Decentralization
- Instability / fluidity

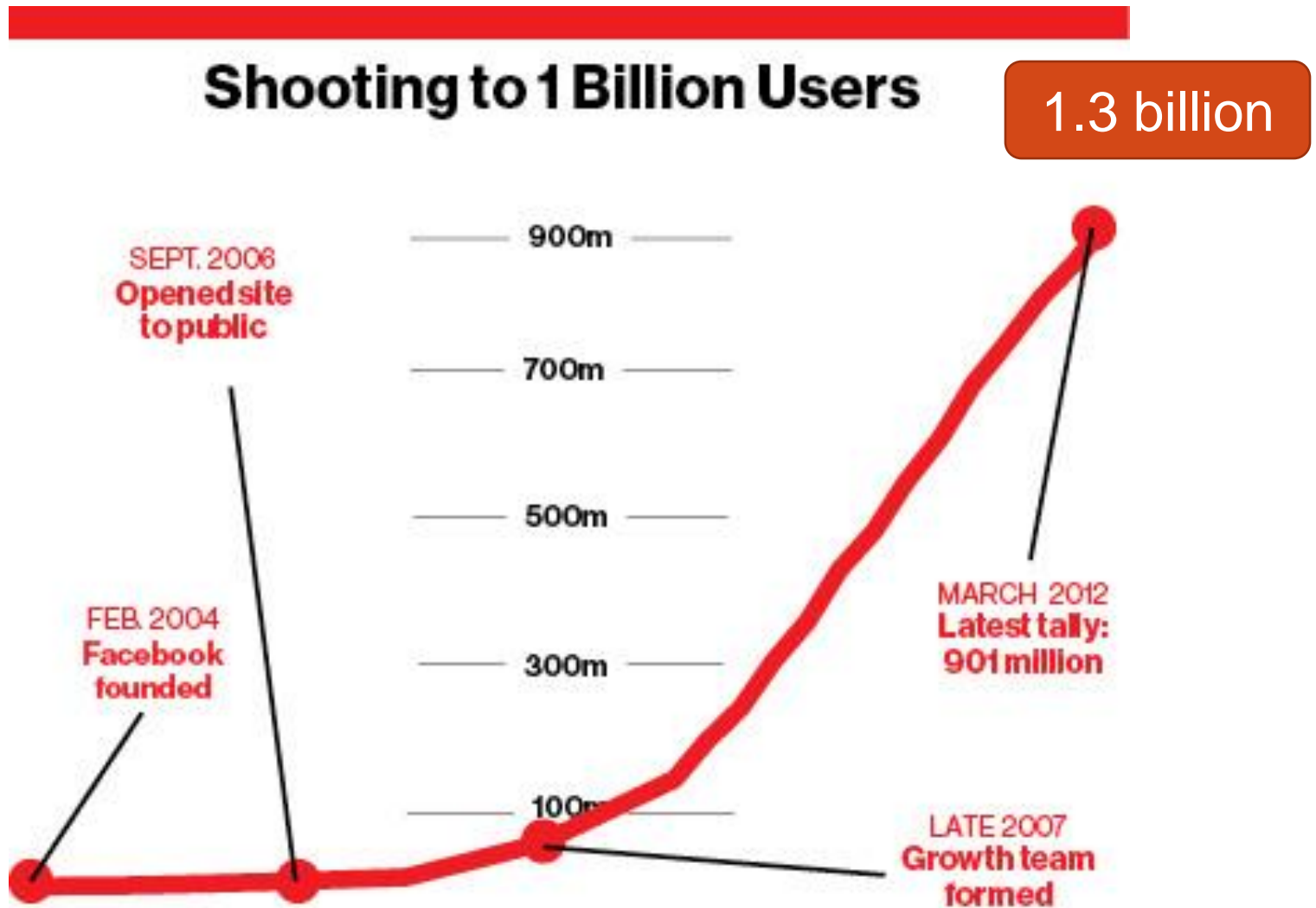
In society

- Personal entertainment
- Self-enhancement
- Weakened loyalties

Small world



But ...





facebook

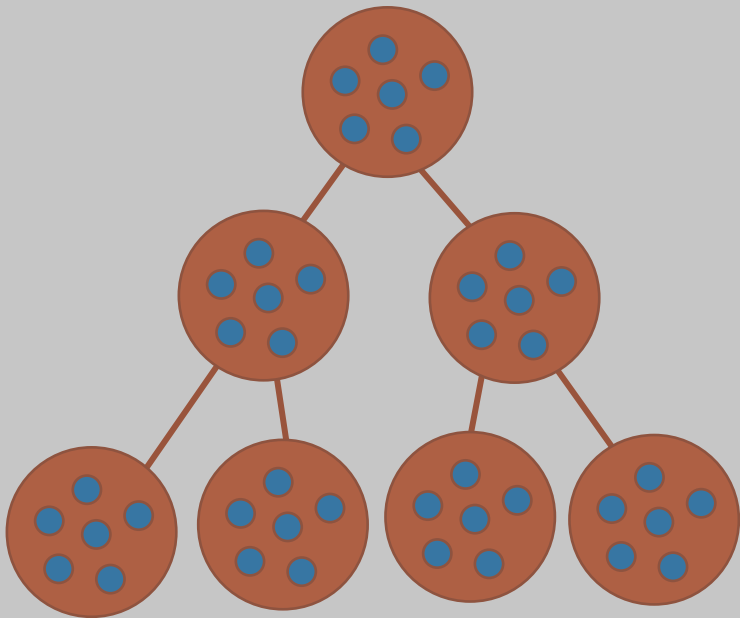
Transient relations: “Friending”

Developing since (at least) 1960s

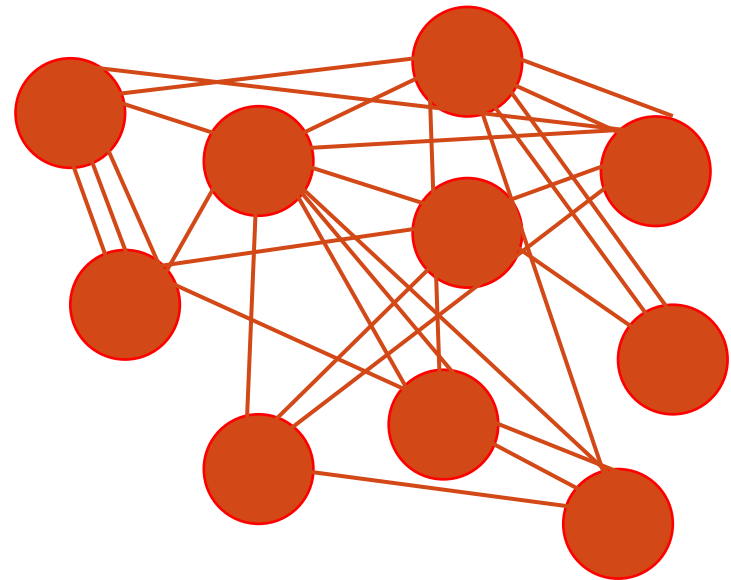


- Deliberate (conditional)
- Complex
 - Diverse, multiple intersections
 - Wide scope
 - Many levels of intensity
- Seeking understanding

Small world



Cohesive small world



Who are these “frienders”?

- 1/3 – 1/2 of (US) population
 - 44% say they join diverse groups to learn about themselves
 - 40% say they are active in web discussions
- Not heavily young or educated
- Embrace classic ethic of hard work and individual responsibility

Social media users (research)

- Equally or more engaged in community and politics
 - Maintain “real world” friendships and relations
 - Act on political messages, transmit them to wider circles
- Have diverse extended circles
- Not limited to those with high social confidence

Cohesive small world



Ideology (vision of desirable society)

- Diversity
- Openness
- Sharing
- Mutualism
- Learning
- Contribution

Collaborative solidarity: the Mozilla mission

We're building a better Internet

Our mission is to promote openness, innovation & opportunity on the Web.

At Mozilla, we're a global community of technologists, thinkers and builders working together to keep the Internet alive and accessible, so people worldwide can be informed contributors and creators of the Web. We believe this act of human collaboration across an open platform is essential to individual growth and our collective future.



Collaborative solidarity: MozFest

“more hack less yack”
“more hammer less yammer”



Philippines



Holland



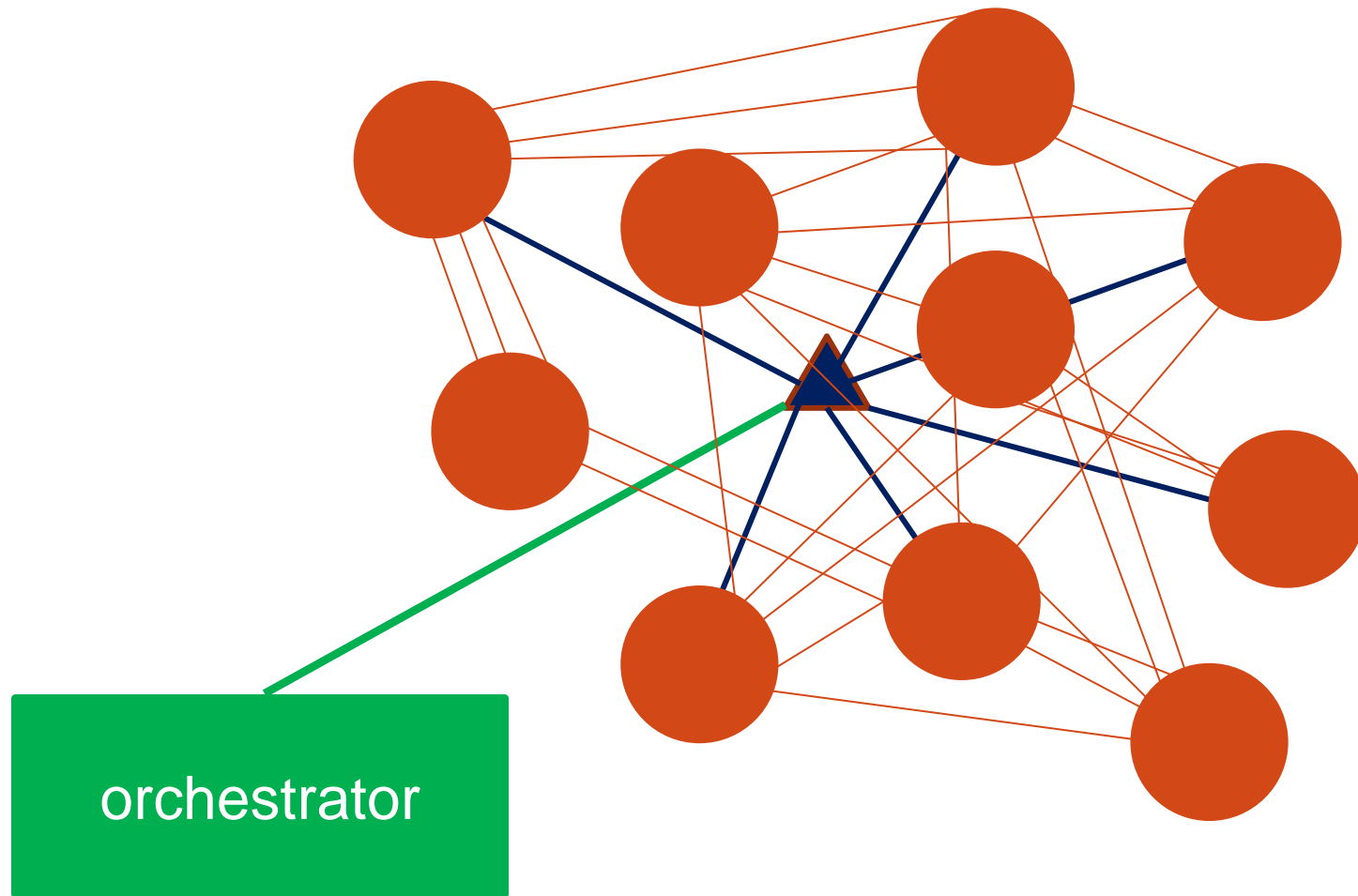
Malaysia



London



Organizing a cohesive small world



Orchestrating the new relations

1. Purpose

Image of a desirable
shared future

2. Platform

Tools
Data
Connections

3. Process

Celebrating successes
Enforcing norms
Focusing campaigns

Focused (conflictual) action: Swarming



(not a mass)

“systems in which
autonomy, emergence and distributedness replace
control, preprogramming and centralization”

Swarming: examples

- Disabilities movement (US)
- Zapatistas
- Anti-SOPA mobilization
- Wal-Mart campaign?
- Banking campaign?

	Relations	Ideology	Collective action
Craft	Traditional, self-governing communities	Way of life; utopian decentralized community	Sustained self-protective organization Millennialism
Industrial	The factory: mass, oppositional	Extension of rights Manichean opposition	Episodic, oppositional uprisings, simple focus
Collaborative	Networked "friending" (Cohesive small world)	Openness, diversity, understanding	Orchestrated "projects", swarms

Collaborative solidarity

- Multiplex
- Coordinated projects
- Reflexive (connection to purpose)
- Not essentially conflictual

Workers of the world: hack! network! swarm!



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