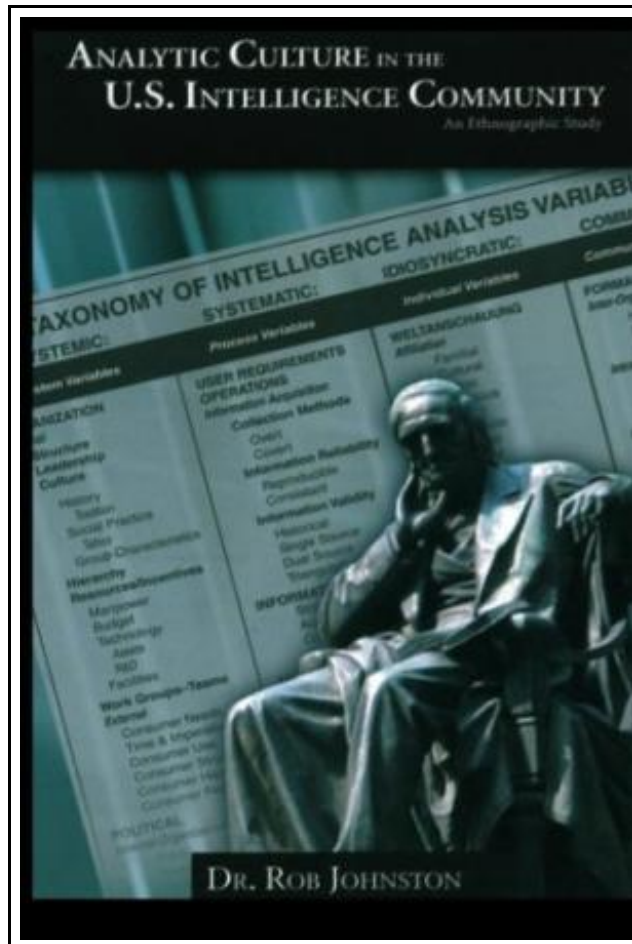


Analytic Culture in the U.S. Intelligence Community: An Ethnographic Study



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(Alana McCullough)

ANALYTIC CULTURE IN THE U.S. INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY



CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. Paperback. Book Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. Paperback. 182 pages. Dimensions: 8.9in. x 5.9in. x 0.6in. It is a rare season when the intelligence story in the news concerns intelligence analysis, not secret operations abroad. The United States is having such a season as it debates whether intelligence failed in the run-up to both September 11 and the second Iraq war, and so Rob Johnstons wonderful book is perfectly timed to provide the back-story to those headlines. The CIAs Center for the Study of Intelligence is to be commended for having the good sense to find Johnston and the courage to support his work, even though his conclusions are not what many in the world of intelligence analysis would like to hear. He reaches those conclusions through the careful procedures of an anthropologist conducting literally hundreds of interviews and observing and participating in dozens of work groups in intelligence analysis and so they cannot easily be dismissed as mere opinion, still less as the bitter mutterings of those who have lost out in the bureaucratic wars. His findings constitute not just a strong indictment of the way American intelligence performs analysis, but also, and happily, a guide for how to do better. Johnston finds no baseline standard analytic method. Instead, the most common practice is to conduct limited brainstorming on the basis of previous analysis, thus producing a bias toward confirming earlier views. The validating of data is questionable for instance, the Directorate of Operations (DO) cleaning of spy reports doesnt permit testing of their validity reinforcing the tendency to look for data that confirms, not refutes, prevailing hypotheses. The process is risk averse, with considerable managerial conservatism. There is much more emphasis on avoiding error than on imagining surprises. The analytic process is driven by current intelligence,...



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