

Network Analysis:

The Hidden Structures behind the Webs We Weave

17-338 / 17-668

Introduction & Course Overview
Tuesday, August 27, 2024

Patrick Park & Bogdan Vasilescu

Networks are old news

(networks: patterns of interconnections among a set of things)

Family tree of Marie de Medicis by Lucas Varsterman (1632)

Marie de Medici and her five
children

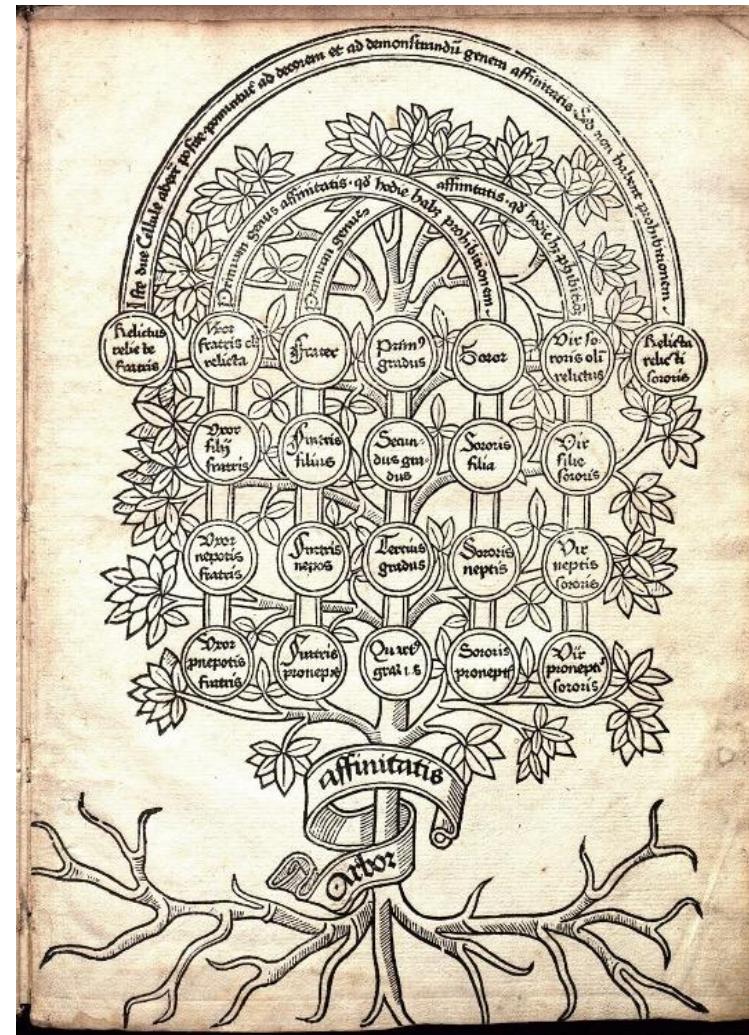


Reyne, dont les grandeurs vous rendent sans seconde,
Le Ciel a suettit la Terre sous vos Loix ;

Non pas en qualite de mere de trois Roy,
Mais pour gfer en vertu la merveille du Monde.

Tree of Affinity by Johannes Andreae (1270-1348)

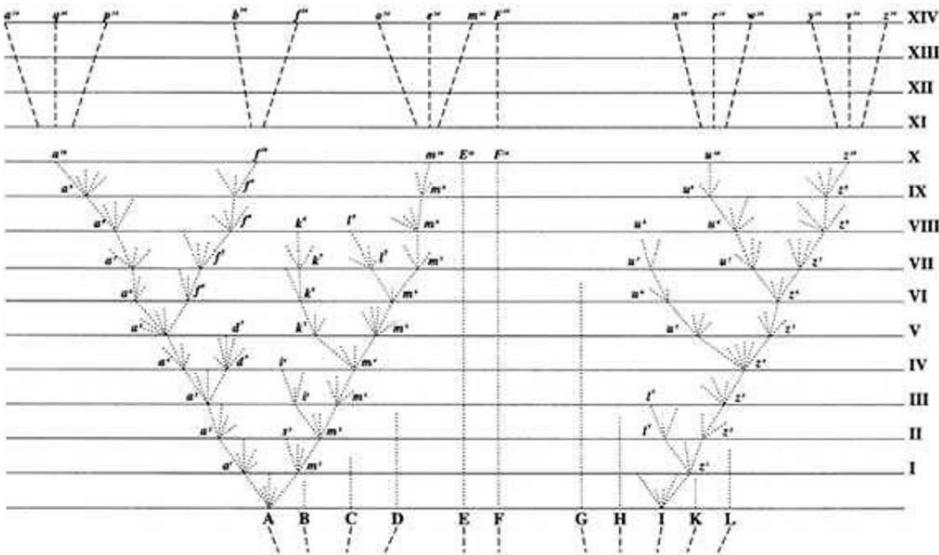
Maps laws and regulations on kinship and marriage decreed by the ecclesiastical authority of the Catholic Church.



Tree of Life by Charles Darwin in *On the Origin of Species*

“A demonstration of Darwin’s evolutionary thinking and the theory of universal common descent.”

(Lima 2013)



Mapping Past Societies

Formerly, the Digital Atlas of Roman and Medieval Civilizations

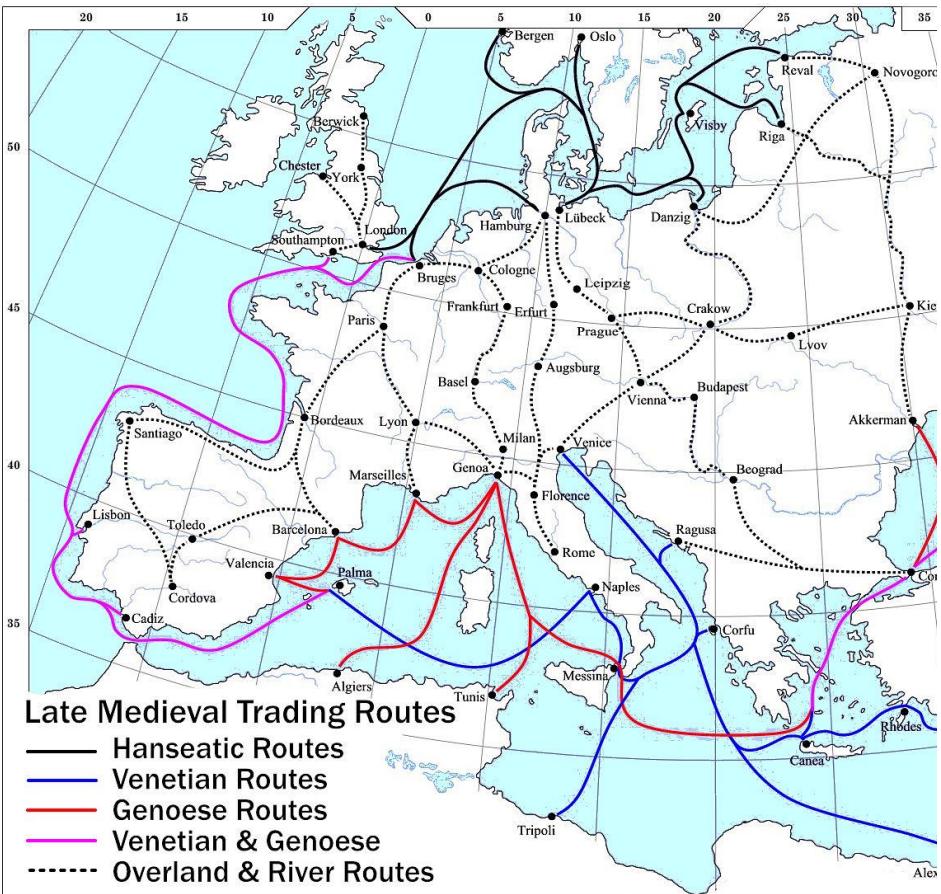
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Medieval trade routes in Europe.

(Easley & Kleinberg, 2010; image by Lampman, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons)



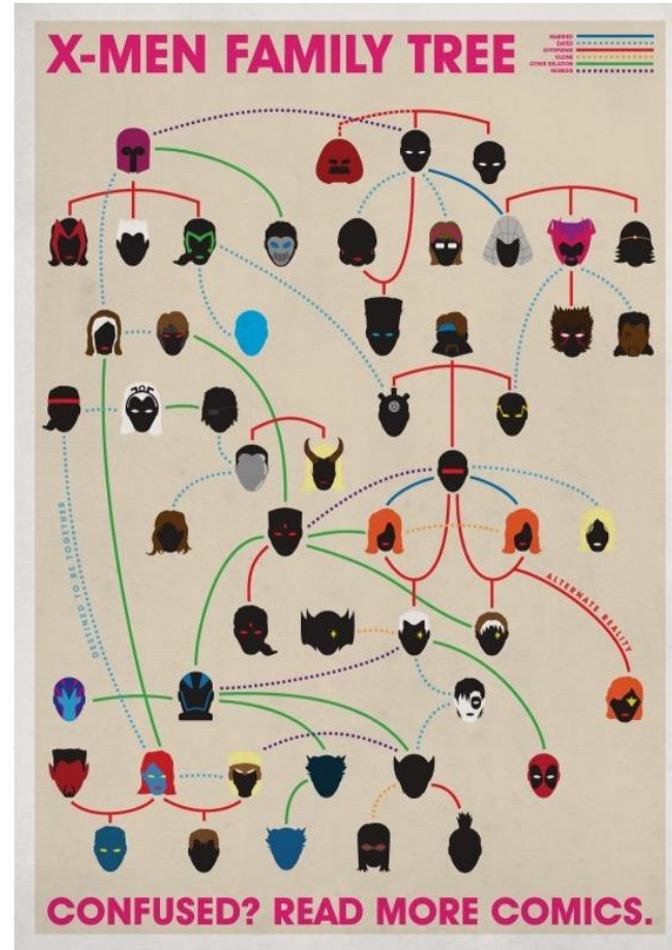
But networks are also recent news!

... sometimes for fun and art

X-Men Family Tree by Joe Stone

"An enticing and playful family tree charting the many convoluted relationships – romantic, genetic, or otherwise – of the X-Men characters from Marvel Comics."

(Lima, 2013)



nature

150 YEARS OF NATURE

A web of multidisciplinary
research and discovery



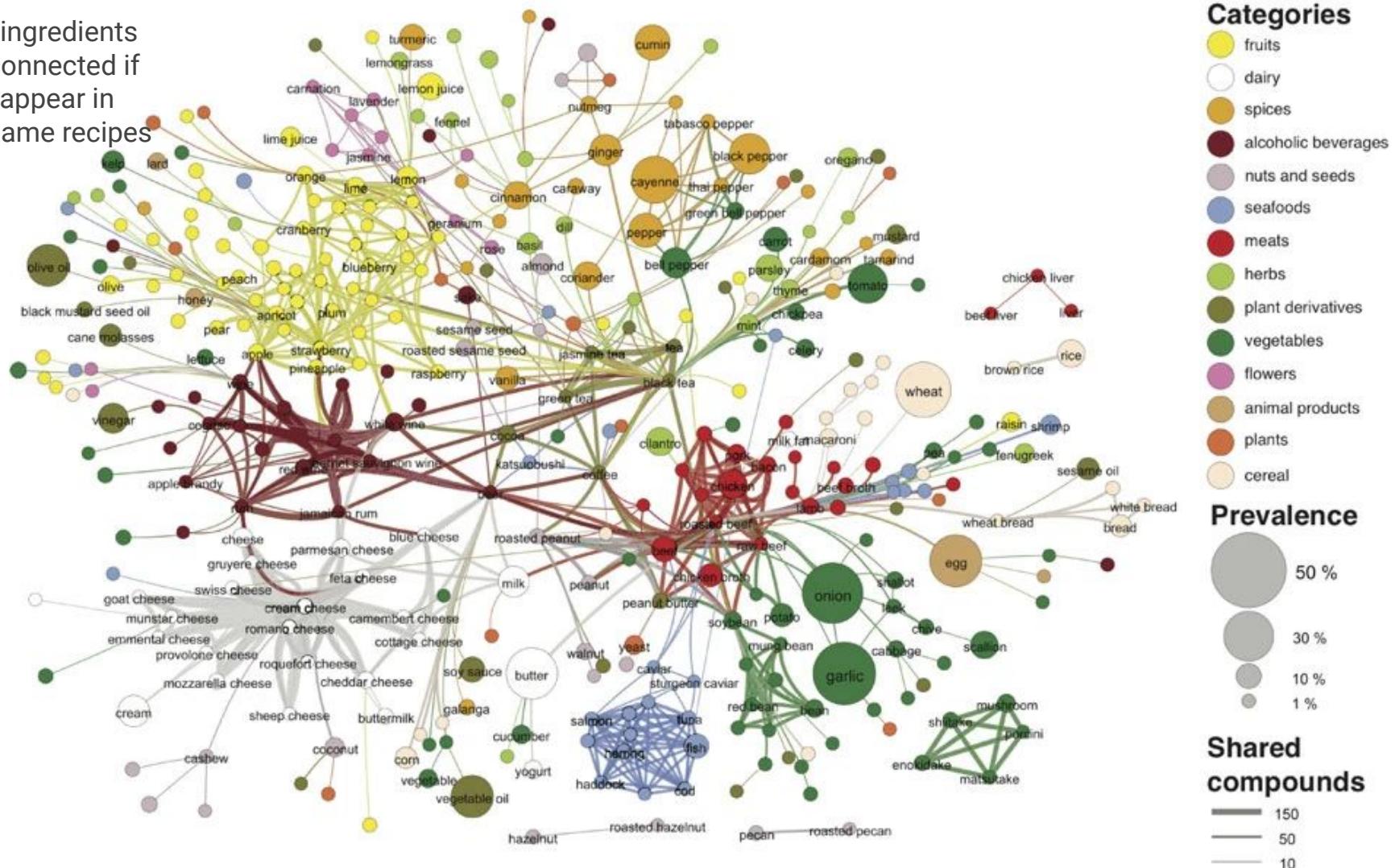
EXPLORE
INTERACTIVE
NETWORK

NATURE'S CO-CITATION NETWORK

Here, more than 88,000 papers published by *Nature* since 1900 are each represented by a dot, coloured by discipline. Papers are linked if another scientific paper cites both; the dot size reflects the number of these co-citation links. The complex network reveals the relationships between papers and captures the multidisciplinary scope of the journal.

- Arts
- Biology
- Biomedical research
- Chemistry
- Clinical medicine
- Earth and space
- Engineering and technology
- Health
- Humanities
- Mathematics
- Physics
- Business and management
- Psychology
- Social sciences

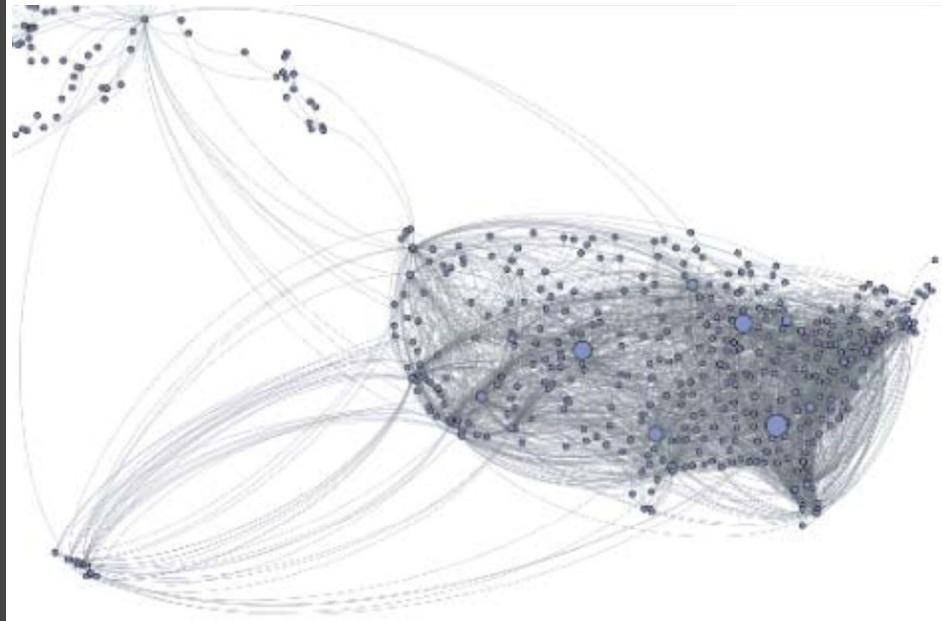
Two ingredients
are connected if
they appear in
the same recipes



... but mostly for serious applications

The US air transportation network.
Note the “hub and spoke” structure:
a few hubs have huge numbers of
links, while the majority of nodes
have few connections.

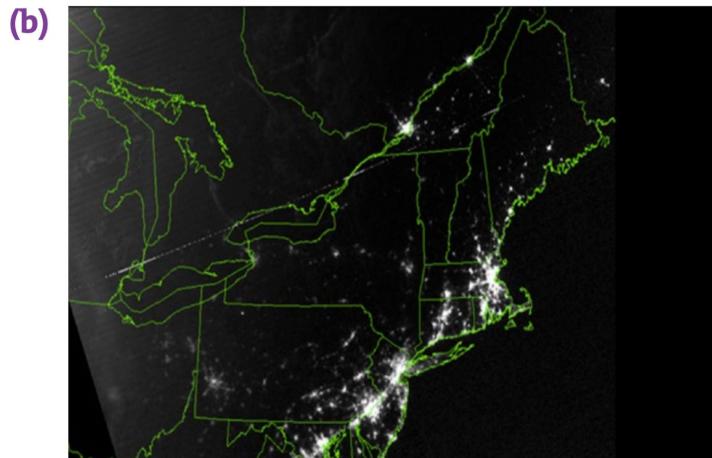
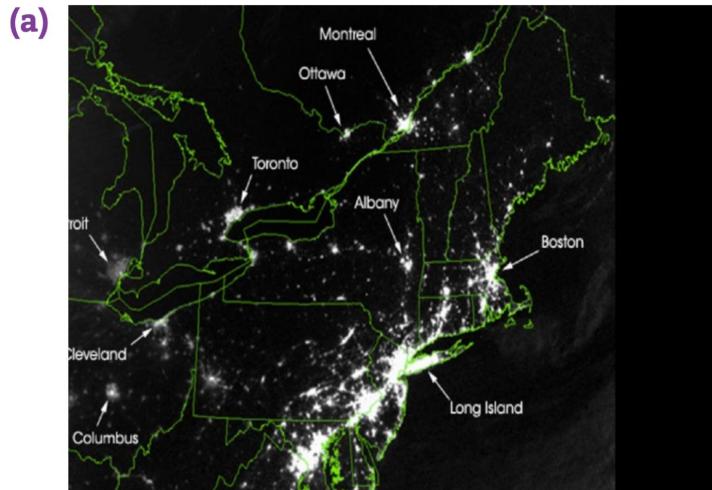
(Menczer, Fortunato, & Davis, 2020)



The 2003 Northeast blackout that left without power an estimated 45 million people in eight US states and another 10 million in Ontario.

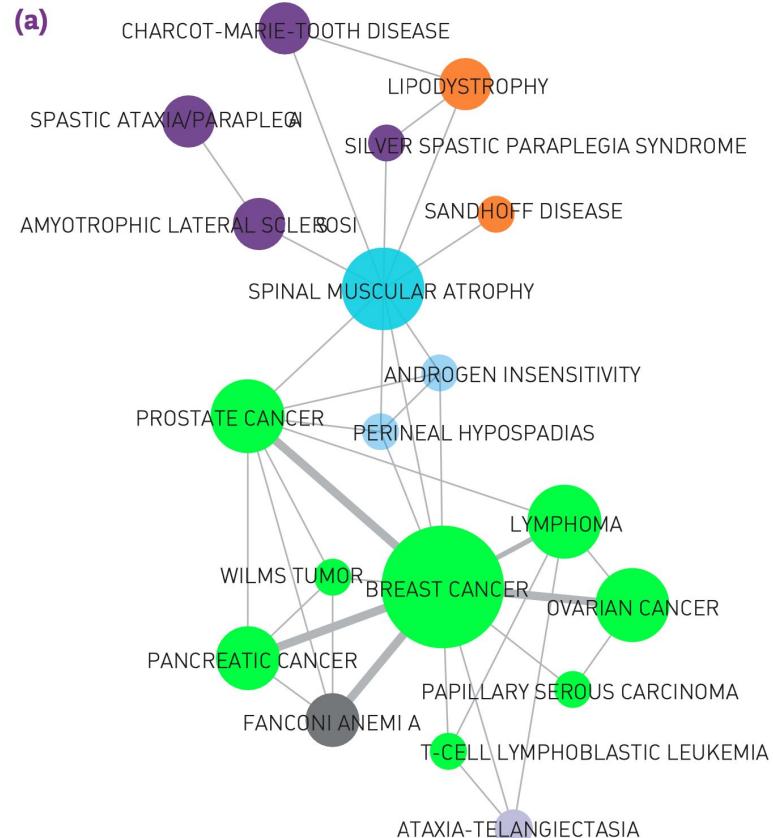
- (a) Satellite image 20 hours before
- (b) ... and 5 hours after

(Barabasi, 2016)



A subset of the “diseaseome,” i.e., a network where two genes are connected if they are associated with the same disease.

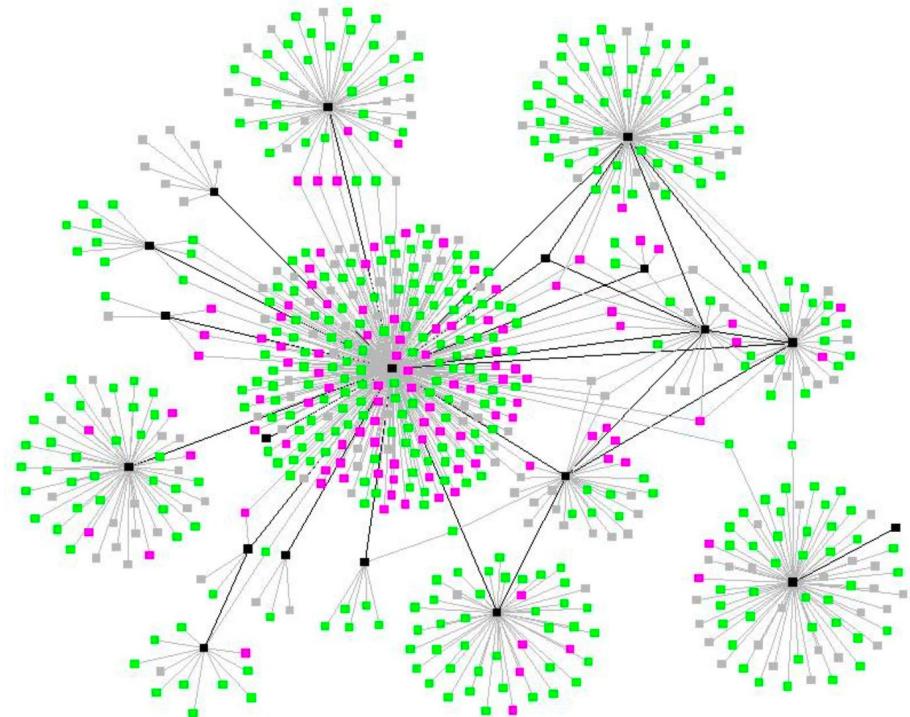
(Barabasi, 2016)



HUMAN DISEASE NETWORK

The spread of a tuberculosis as a form of *cascading behavior* in a network.

(Easley & Kleinberg, 2010)



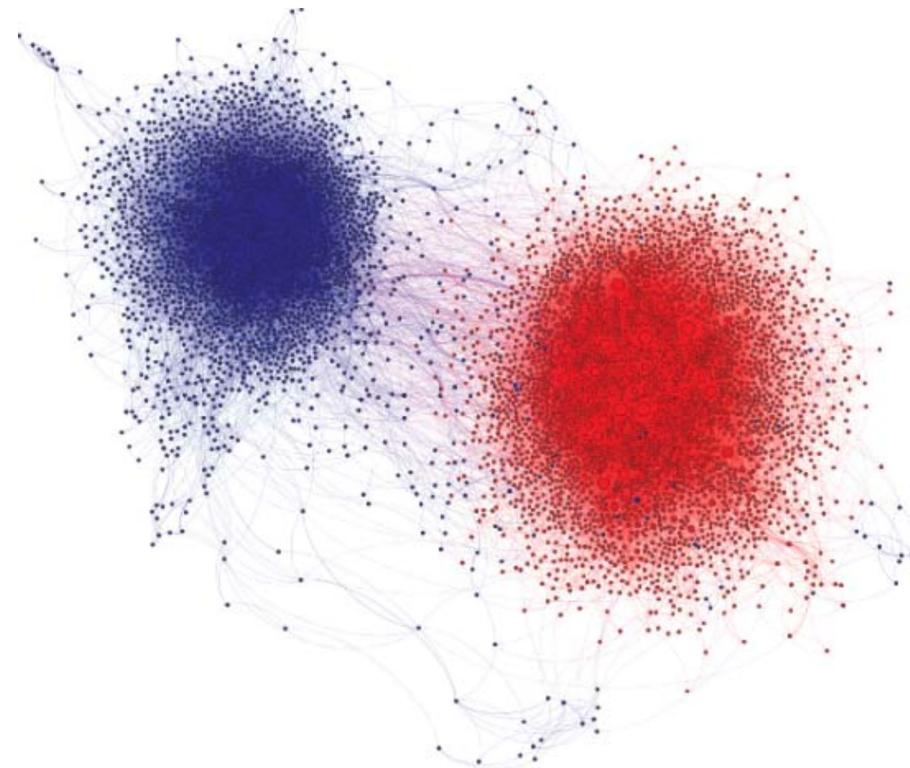
“Wood-wide web:” Trees transmit danger messages and nutrition through fungi connections.

(Steidinger, Crowther, et al, 2019)



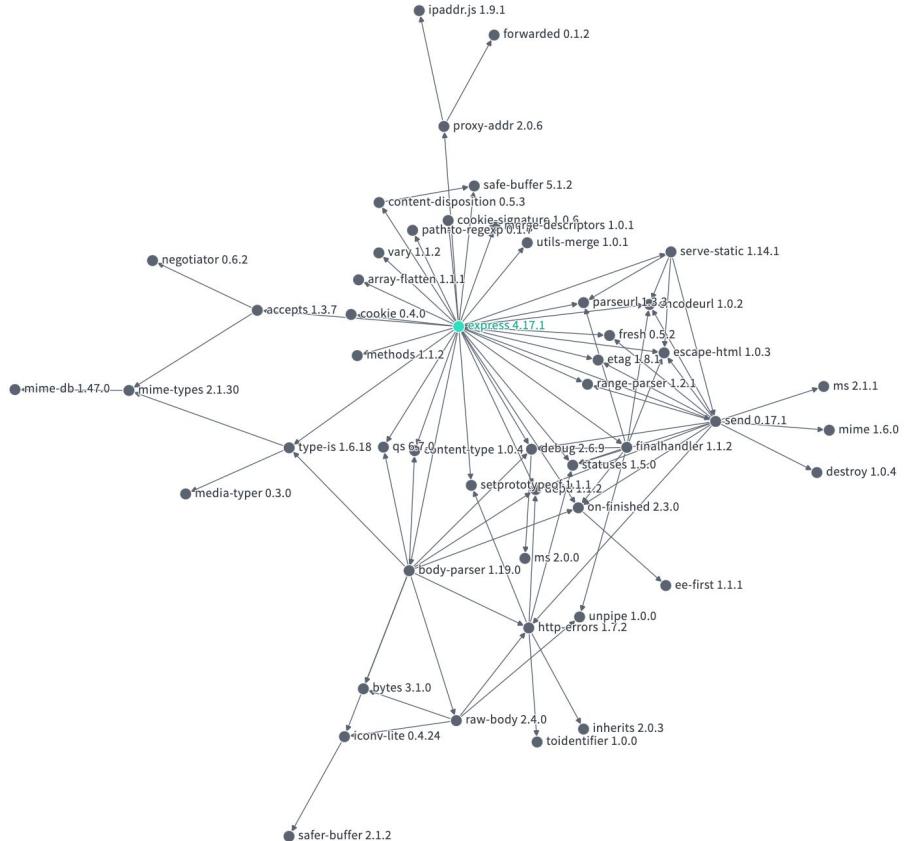
A retweet network on Twitter, among people sharing posts about US politics. Conservative users (red) mostly retweet messages from other conservatives, and vice versa.

(Menczer, Fortunato, & Davis, 2020)



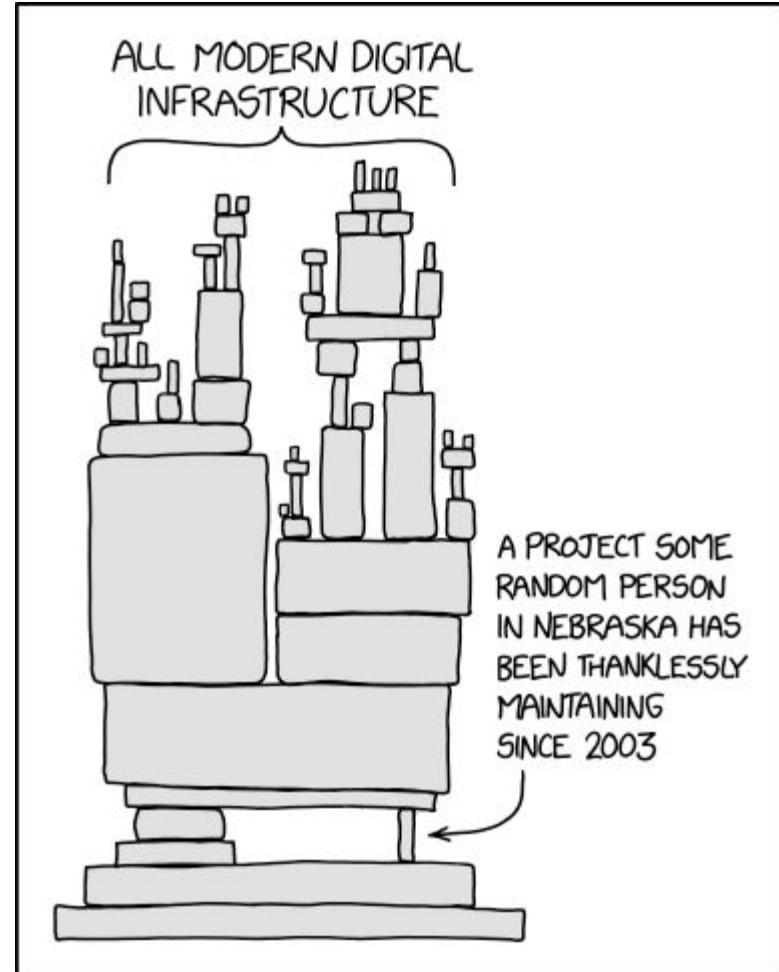
Dependency graph for the open source framework express 4.17.1.

(Google Open Source Insights Project 2021)



How resilient and sustainable is the overall open source ecosystem?

(xkcd 2347: Dependency)



Networks

Are everywhere.

Complex systems (social, economic, technological, biological, etc).

These systems are difficult to understand and their behavior increasingly difficult to reason about.
Are risky to tinker with.

Network Science

Has a long history of scholarship.

Has become a mature interdisciplinary area that helps to explain many real-world phenomena and solve many real-world problems involving networks.

Computer Science

Mathematics

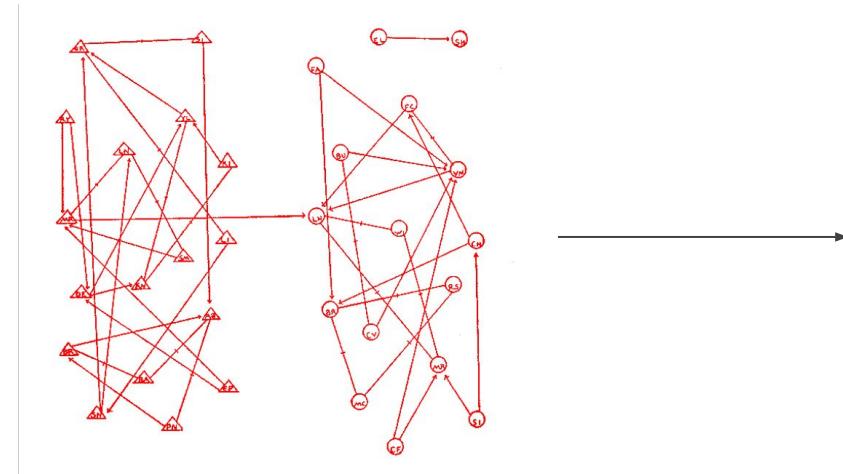
Physics

Social Science

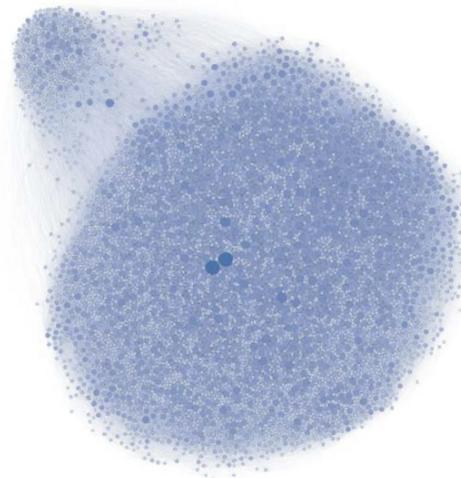
Statistics

Modern network science is propelled by computational power

Network maps



Hand-drawn friendship ties of a classroom (Moreno 1934)



Software-generated network visualization of Facebook friends at a university

Modern network science is propelled by computational power

Mathematical abstractions, algorithms, and software tools to compute on large networks of millions of nodes

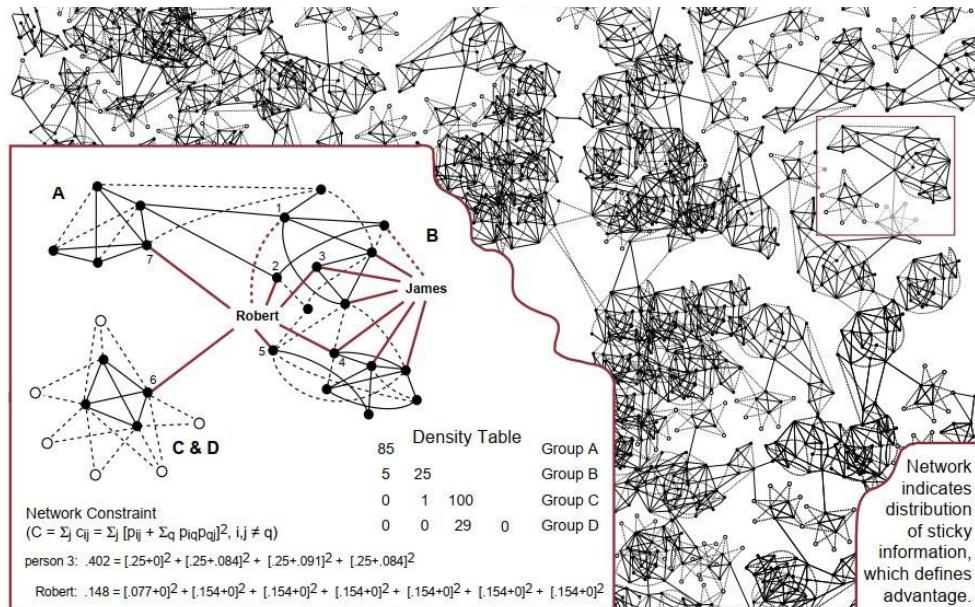


Figure 1. Network Bridge and Cluster Structure

Adapted from Burt (2005:14).

We are going to learn about, and practice using,
many of them!

Main abstraction: Networks as graphs

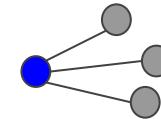
Node (or vertex, "N"): An entity (person, airport, neuron, etc.)



Edge (or link, "L"): Connection between two nodes



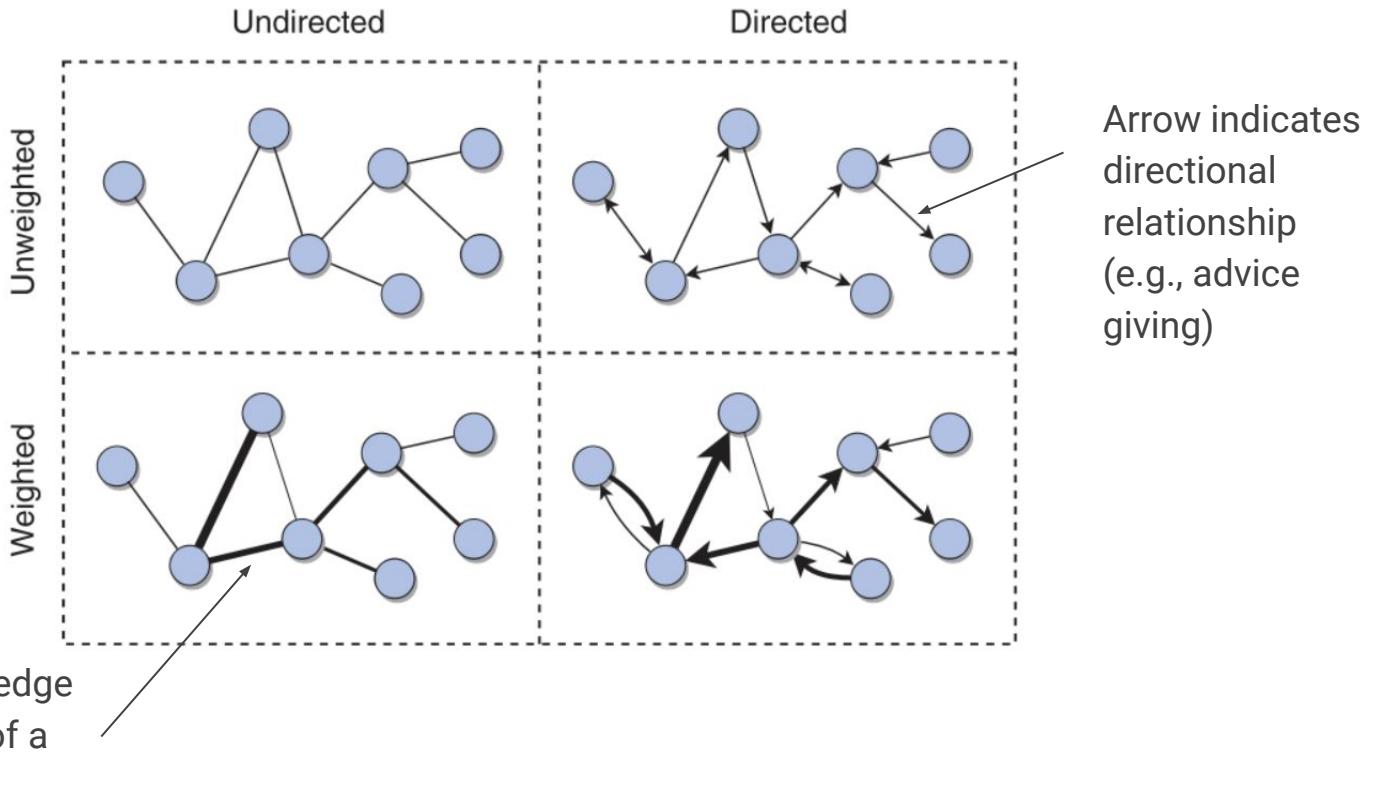
Degree ("k"): Number of edges that a node has to other nodes



Density: Number of edges (L), relative to the maximum possible edges

- Maximum possible edges: $N(N-1)/2$
- Density = $L / (N(N-1)/2)$

Graphs of interest: Four types



All sorts of relationships can be represented this way!

| NETWORK | NODES | LINKS | DIRECTED UNDIRECTED | N | L | $\langle k \rangle$ |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| Internet | Routers | Internet connections | Undirected | 192,244 | 609,066 | 6.34 |
| WWW | Webpages | Links | Directed | 325,729 | 1,497,134 | 4.60 |
| Power Grid | Power plants, transformers | Cables | Undirected | 4,941 | 6,594 | 2.67 |
| Mobile Phone Calls | Subscribers | Calls | Directed | 36,595 | 91,826 | 2.51 |
| Email | Email addresses | Emails | Directed | 57,194 | 103,731 | 1.81 |
| Science Collaboration | Scientists | Co-authorship | Undirected | 23,133 | 93,439 | 8.08 |
| Actor Network | Actors | Co-acting | Undirected | 702,388 | 29,397,908 | 83.71 |
| Citation Network | Paper | Citations | Directed | 449,673 | 4,689,479 | 10.43 |
| E. Coli Metabolism | Metabolites | Chemical reactions | Directed | 1,039 | 5,802 | 5.58 |
| Protein Interactions | Proteins | Binding interactions | Undirected | 2,018 | 2,930 | 2.90 |

(Barabasi, 2016)

Class Philosophy

Focus on networks involving humans:
“The Hidden Structures behind the Webs
We Weave”

Pragmatism: Prioritize analysis and hands-on experience with theoretical guidance from different fields
“Network ~~Science~~Analysis”

Unapologetically at the confluence of two historically disconnected schools of thought:
Social science ~~vs~~ and Natural science

Two approaches to Network Science: universality vs. variation

Natural sciences (e.g., physics, CS, mathematics) typically focused on

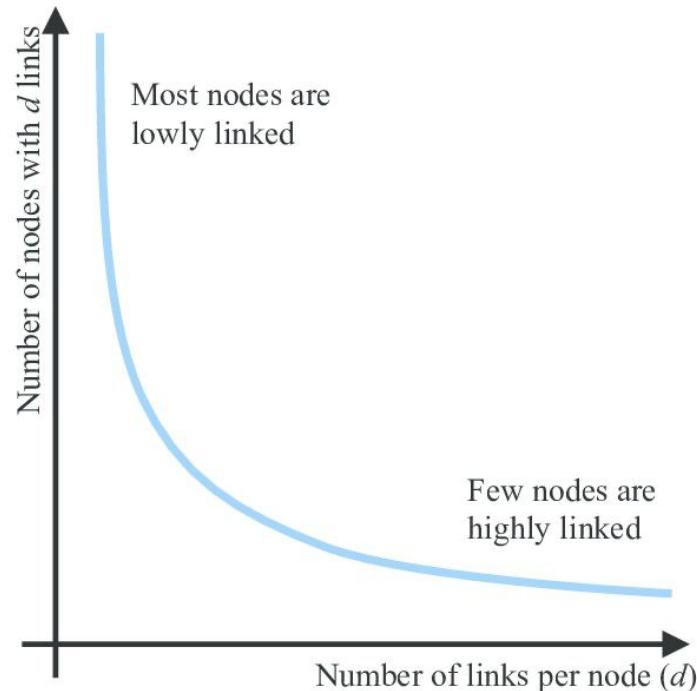
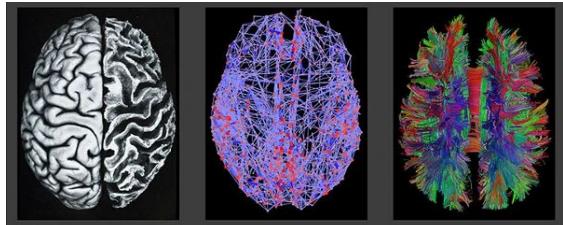
- Universality: search for common organizing principles across domains
- Level of analysis: entire network
- Study the networks as complex systems



A key discovery of network science is that the architecture of networks emerging in various domains of science, nature, and technology are similar to each other, a consequence of being governed by the same organizing principles. Consequently, we can use a common set of mathematical tools to explore these systems. (Barabasi 2015)

Example of universality

Understand “universal” characteristics common to networks in different domains



Two approaches to Network Science: universality vs. variation

Social sciences (e.g., sociology, political science, economics) typically focused on

- Connections between people through role relations (e.g., kinship, friendship)
- Variation: in network structure and social contexts that explain differences
- Level of analysis: Individual (node), social tie (edge), entire network



*The social network approach is grounded in the intuitive notion that the patterning of social ties in which actors are embedded has important consequences for those actors. Network analysts, then, seek to **uncover various kinds of patterns**. And they try to determine **the conditions under which those patterns arise** and to discover **their consequences**.* (Freeman 2004)

Example of embracing the variation

Distinguishing among different kinds of dyadic links both analytically and theoretically.

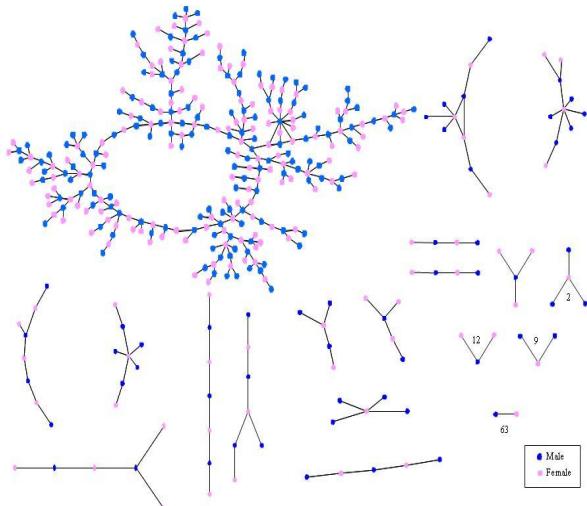
| Similarities | | | Social Relations | | | | Interactions | Flows |
|--|--|---|----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Location | Membership | Attribute | Kinship | Other role | Affective | Cognitive | e.g., | e.g., |
| e.g., Same spatial and temporal space | e.g., Same clubs Same events etc. | e.g., Same gender Same attitude etc. | e.g., Mother of Sibling of | e.g., Friend of Boss of Student of Competitor of | e.g., Likes Hates etc. | e.g., Knows Knows about Sees as happy etc. | e.g., Sex with Talked to Advice to Helped Harmed etc. | Information Beliefs Personnel Resources etc. |

(Borgatti, 2009)

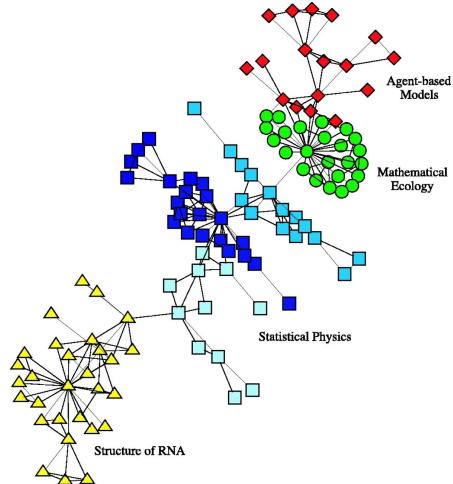
Course Objectives

In addition to **universality**, understand how **social context** is critical for constructing networks and interpreting results from network analysis: Know your nodes and edges!

Adolescent romantic relationships



Coauthorship relations among scientists



Course Objectives

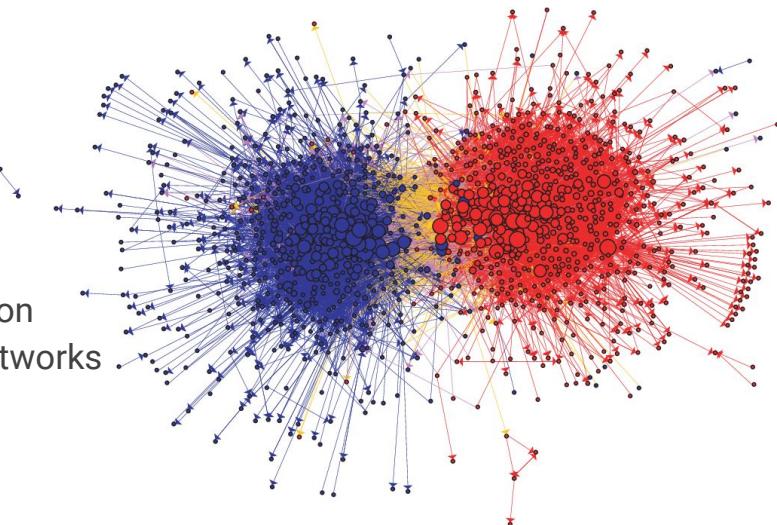
Use network analysis to **describe** or **understand** puzzling social phenomena

Why does political polarization intensify?



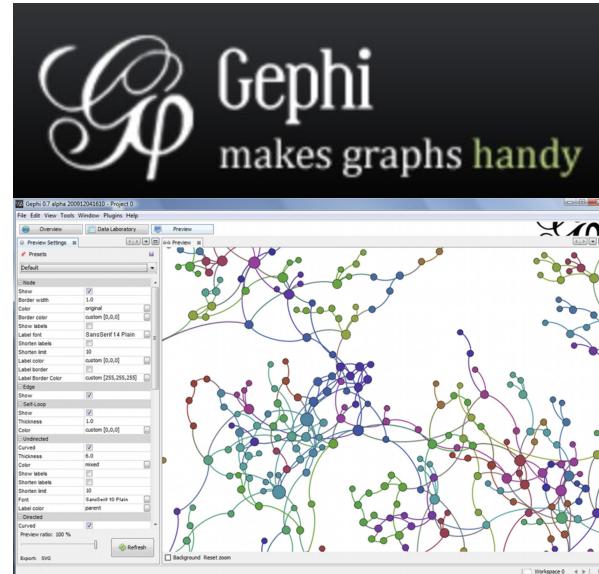
Opinion dynamics on
communication networks

Network of political blogs



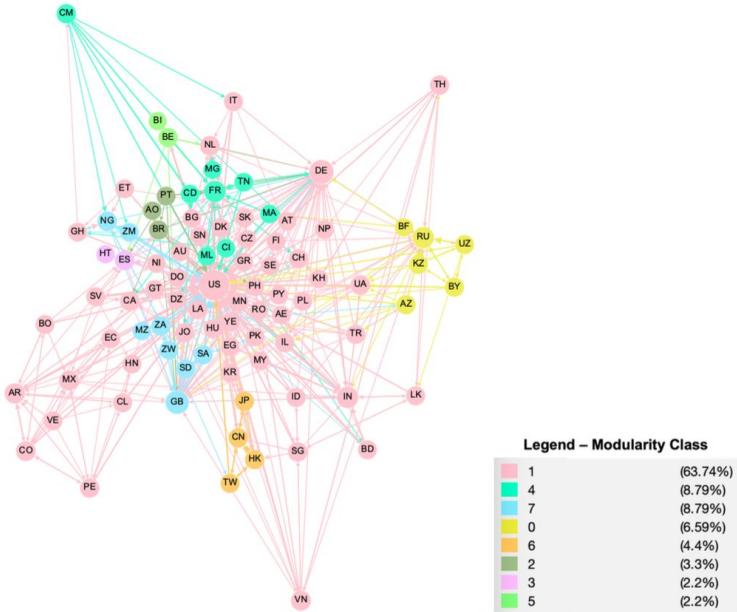
Course Objectives

Proficiently analyze empirical network data using network analysis and visualization software

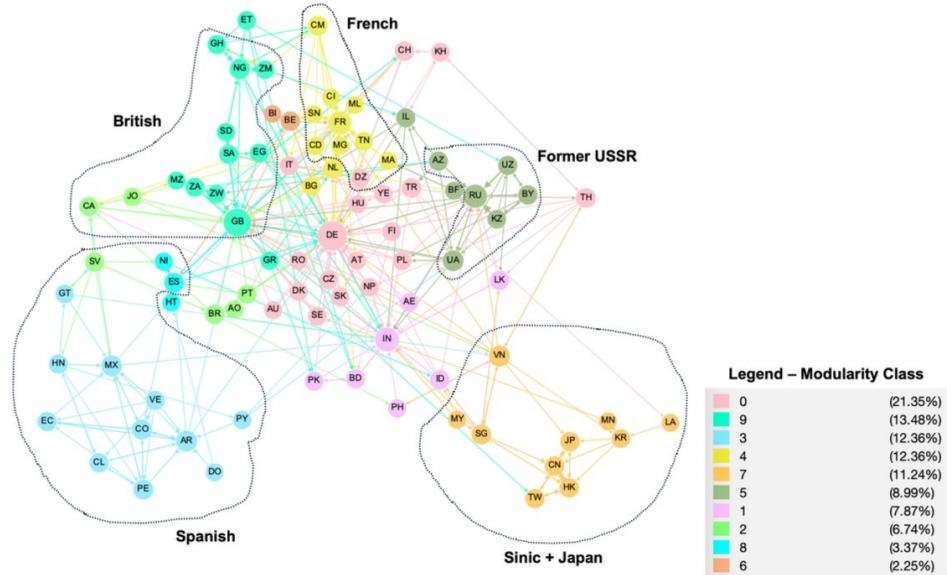


Course Objectives

Have fun learning together and from one another!



(b) Visualization with all nodes, colored by modularity class



(d) Visualization without the US, colored by modularity class

Logistics

Overview of topics

Graph theory basics

Edges vs. social ties

Degree correlation and homophily

Random networks: setting the baseline

Scale-free networks and preferential attachment

Power and centrality

Building blocks of social groups: Triads and clustering

Detecting communities

Small-world networks: clustering and short paths

Structural basis of advantage: diversity and closure

Ethical Issues in network research

Information diffusion

Social contagion

Structural equivalence

Network of affiliations (2-mode network, bipartite graphs)

Structure of online communities

Network mechanisms of political polarization

Guest lectures

Class format & grading

Lectures Tue / Thu 10%

Slides on the class website: <http://bvasiles.github.io/networks>

Assignments on Canvas <https://canvas.cmu.edu/courses/43625> 20%:

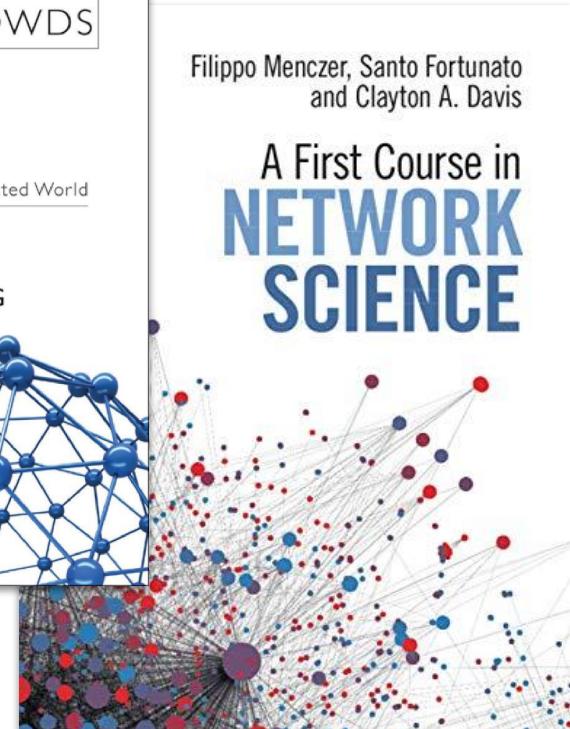
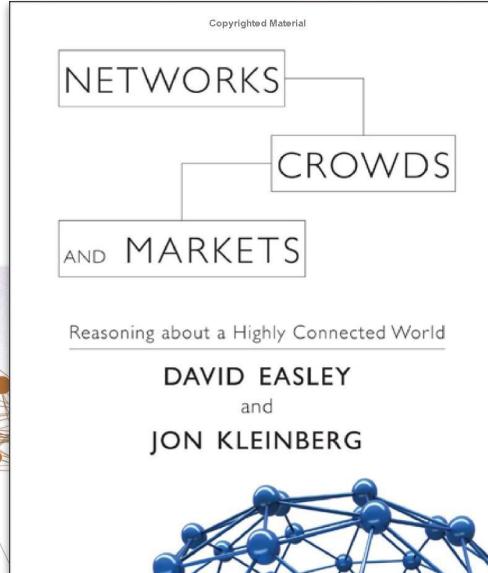
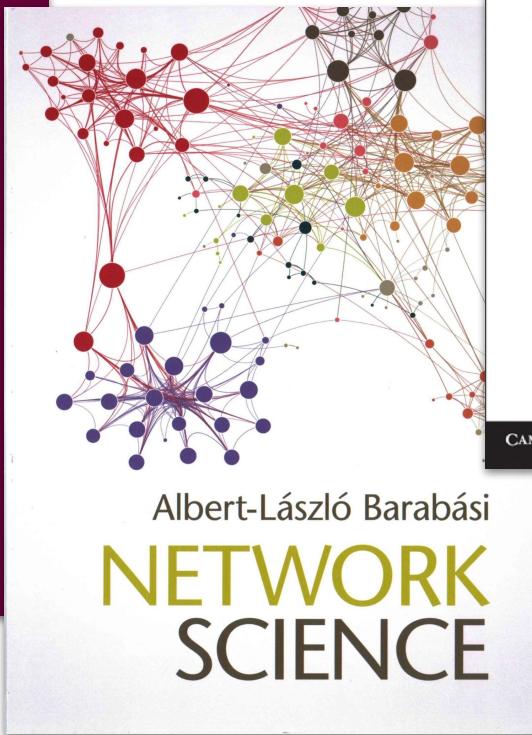
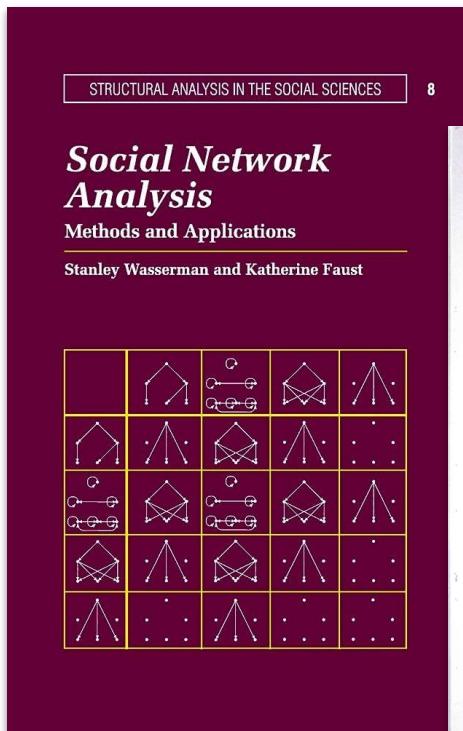
- Required Readings
- Homework problems: coding, analysis, visualization of real-world datasets
- Quizzes on lecture material and readings

Midterm exam (open book) and project proposal 30%

Final project 40%

- Research report (Replication study or new study)
- Open source network software code contribution

Textbooks

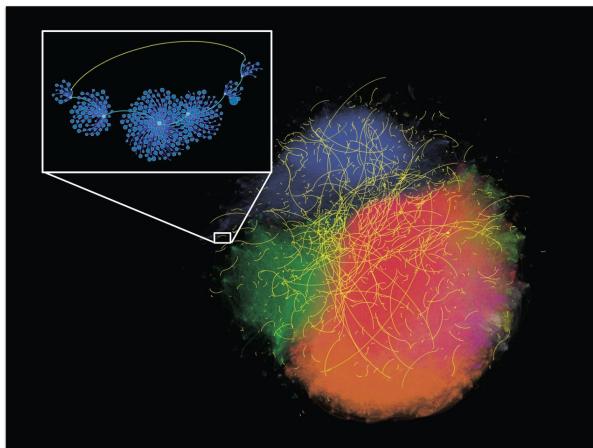


Instructor Patrick Park's background



Assistant Prof. Software & Societal Systems Dept.

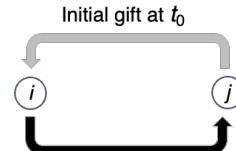
Research areas: Network science, computational social science, online communities



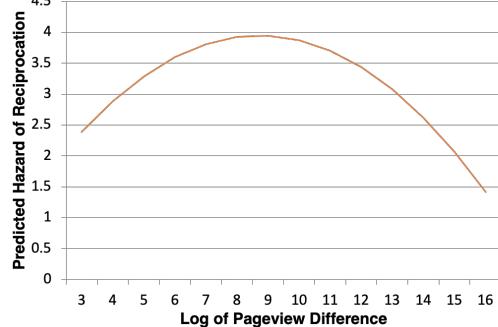
Why socially distant ties can be relationally strong



Gift exchange records from Cyworld



Dependent variable:
Time to reciprocation



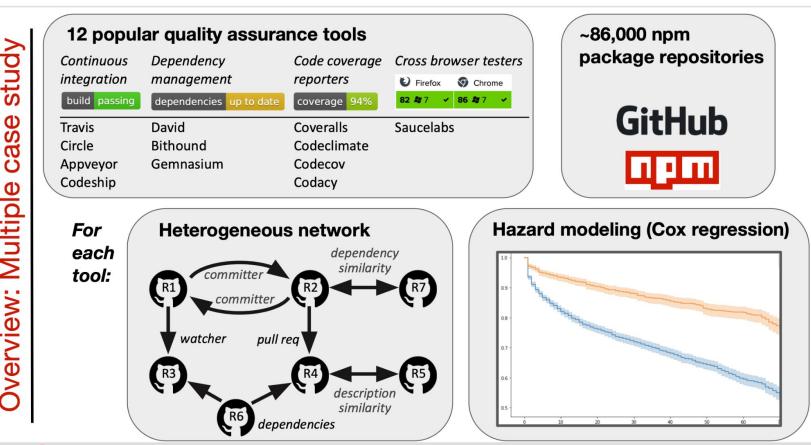
Co-instructor Bogdan Vasilescu's background

Associate Prof., Software & Societal Systems Dept.

Quantitative & mixed-methods empirical research in software engineering and online communities.



Overview: Multiple case study

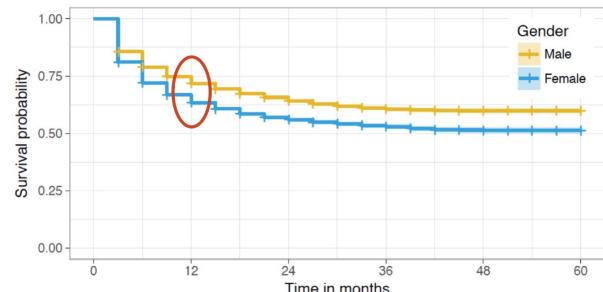


How do tools and practices spread through GitHub? (Lamba et al, 2020)

How does social capital explain OSS contributor participation? (Qiu et al, 2019)

On GitHub, women disengage earlier than men

After one year ca. 70% of men are still active but only ca. 60% of women

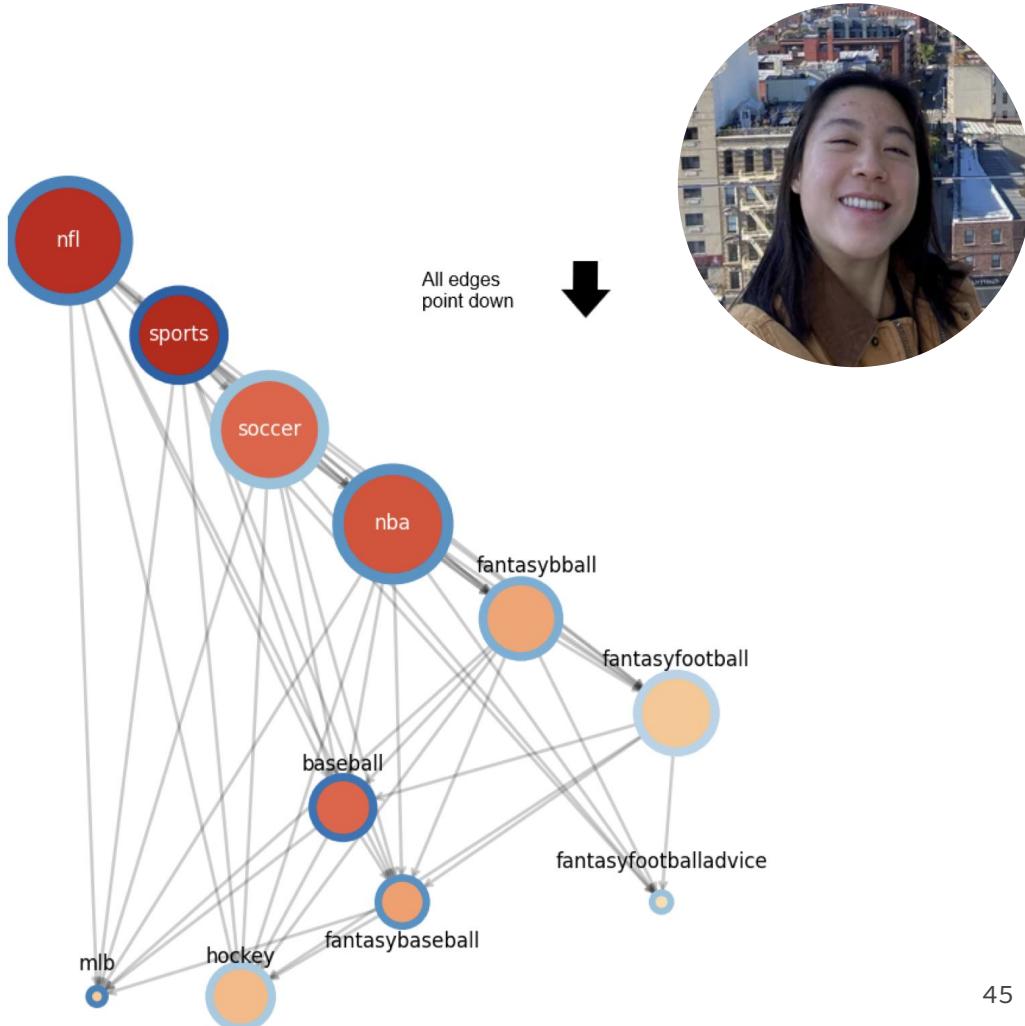


TA Meryl Ye's background

Cornell CS; 1st year PhD student
in Societal Computing (S3D).

Research: User behavior and
information movement in online
social networks.

<https://merylye.github.io/>



Who are you?
What drives your interest in networks?