The Social Network

What is it about humans that makes us associate with the people we associate with? Yes, humans are social creatures, but what is it that makes us decide that this person or group of people is worthy of friendship? It is the commonalities between us that bind us together, like links in a network. To go along with this simile, you and every other individual would be a “node” and we would all be connected through the links of our relationships, common interests, and even circumstance. The bond between two nodes could have several links together as they may have numerous things in common with one another, which would strengthen the bond. In a like manner, there could be groups of people who gather together that share a common interest, a subnet, if you please. A “bridge” would be a node that connects at least two different subnets together to form a larger network. This combination of links, bridges, and nodes makes up a much larger network called society. Society is a social network, and through this social network, we can analyze limited information to find even the faintest links between people or bridges between groups (e.g., entertainment, education, workplace, and even Department of Homeland Security bios). Different information found in DHS bios could be used to examine the bridges and links between nodes in the department.

Let it not be forgotten that one’s social network is influenced by his or her work and education histories. The workplace is perhaps the most common location for one’s majority of social links to be found. Agents Pigg, Atkison, Duncan, and Mhire were all formerly working for the FBI. These agents were all coworkers, so the bonds between these individuals are strengthened as another link has been established. Agents Atkison and McKevitt and Pigg had all worked for the CIA, another infamous intelligence agency. Both Agent Pigg and Agent Atkison have the same two former employers, not only reinforcing the bond between the two, but also acting as bridges between the two agencies.

What better way to connect with other agents than being alumni of the same school? Agents Gourd and Hummel are graduates of Carnegie Mellon University; Rufleth and Tims of Purdue; Tims and Gourd of Stanford; Turner and Mhire of the University of Munich; and Tims and Atkison of Mississippi State University. Agent Gourd is joined with both Carnegie Mellon and Stanford, uniting other agents and the universities. Agent Tims, with an apparent love for college (as he attended it three times with fellow agents), acts as a bridge between several agents and universities.

By comparing different information found in the DHS bios, a small network comprised of nodes, links, and bridges was formed between several agents. Analysis of a social network can yield important information about the nodes, or in some cases, potential culprits. Social networking not only gives us insight into who we are as people, but also helps us not to forget who we are.