Visualizing Social Networks

In this paper, it was interesting to see how the early visualization was represented by the graph. By representing the actor or human as the dot and linking them based on their social linkage patterns, it was interesting to see how the dots were connected and easy to see the pattern of who recognizes whom. Moreover, by looking at the graphs, it reminds me of the network graph where each node represents the point and the linkage amongst the nodes. By starting from the simple graph, as time goes by, the visualization for social network become more complicated with more information.

One sociogram that I liked the most in this paper was “Grant’s Drawing of a Target Sociogram of a First Grade Class.” What I liked the most of this sociogram was it was simple compared to other sociogram and also the circles within the circle was very easy to understand who is popular and who is not. Also the little faces that represent the first grader was somewhat cute and give more live view of the actors within the social network. Compared to other sociograms, by having the face for each actor within the social network, it definitely give more friendliness and also easy to understand sociogram.

Throughout this paper, I liked most of the visualizations from this paper, but I didn’t like Figure 21: “Images of Social Links in Canberra Australia.” It shows a lot of circles which represents individuals in Canberra, Australia. But somehow, it didn’t gave me any idea except that it is very complicated and it was even hard to recognize which individual is linked to what. I think the idea of representing the social network in 3D is innovative in that time, but not understanding how this visualization represents and even hard to find the connections were somewhat difficult to perceive and understand.

Overall, I liked this paper in a sense that I could see the social visualization throughout the time period. It was interesting to see how in the 1930s, the social network visualization was represented in a small scale graph and as time goes by, the information flourished which expanded the visualization to have multiple information in the visualization.
The Network Community: An Introduction

In this paper, it was interesting to see the idea of loss of community in the later 1900s. I have never thought of whether people were being isolated or losing their own community or neighborhood. This might be because I was living in a foreign nation where the major population is not Korean so the remaining Koreans can unify more easily and form their own community. But the idea of losing community actually feared me by thinking what if I have nobody to talk to or to interact with, it might be devastating.

I agree with the author’s point of “community ties are narrow, specialized relationships, not broadly supportive ties.” Most of the community that I have been part of, members have special relationship and also the pool of the community is not so big. It is rather hard to find the people with same interest that can lead to special relationship. Which I think will lead the community ties are narrow. However, unlike my family or real close friends, people within that community do not have a broad supportive ties. To add on to this point, I also agreed with author’s point of “People are not wrapped up in traditional densely knit, tightly bounded communities but are maneuvering in sparsely knit, loosely bounded, frequently changing networks.” One of the reason that people are not tightly bounded to the community is options to choose the community has been large. People can choose not only real life communities that they want to belong, but also the option of choosing the online community or social networks. Plus, if some people are part of many communities both online and offline, it is rather difficult to them to actively participate or tightly bounded to one specific community.

I agree with most of the points that the author made in this paper. However, it would be interesting to see if the author updates this paper with current technology such as text messaging, sharing videos through online, and etc. Another point I somewhat agree or disagree with the author was “Communities have moved out of neighborhoods to be dispersed networks that continue to be supportive and sociable.” To my experience, or my friends, people who used to belong to one community in local, tended to get along well and supportive to each other. However, once one member leaves, for certain period of time, the person who left the community tended to communicate and try to keep up with his/her previous community. However, if some times passed, it is very difficult to see a person who actually still maintains his/her relationship with the community. My friend for example, he tended to be active inside the community that both of us belong to. However, after few months, he doesn’t ask any question about his previous community but I rather have to tell him about the new updates since I’m still the member of that community. By this experience, I believe the author’s point is somewhat right and wrong. But I think author’s point would be right if the community that author is describing is online community. Unless the Internet is down or to some particular reason that the member does not need to leave the community, the members within that community can be supportive and sociable.
The Strength of Weak Ties

In this paper, it was interesting to see how the weak tie relates to groups and the analysis of segments of social structure. I usually thought that only the strong ties can form a more dense and supportive group and weak tie is more like isolation. However, it is good to see that weak tie can be seen as an individual’s opportunities to integrate into communities.

I think the two common sources of weak ties, formal organizations and work settings, is an important connection amongst the people. Although this tie can be less effective compared to the ties with friends and family, but I think it can further develop into the strong ties as discussed in this paper. Many people inside the work force, tends to be friend or they just keep it as a co-worker. However, whether to become a friend within the working community, depends on the individual.

Also I agreed with whatever is to be diffused can be traverse greater social distance when passed through weak ties rather than the strong tie. Because if you have a strong tie with the other person, then it might be difficult to spread the rumor. However with weak tie, whether you are close or not close, it can spread out much fast compared to others because you don’t have a strong bonding with other members. Plus, whether you know the person or not doesn’t really matter because you will spread the words anyways. I think it’s kind of weird into some degree that people tend to be careful more with the people that they are having a stronger relationship. Also less cautious with people with weak relationship. However, like the spreading rumor or gossips, if one’s friend or members of the community has a strong tie, then spreading of rumor or gossip will not likely to happen.

Also I agreed with the point of different parts of ego’s network may have different density. Some network may have a strong tie and sociable within the network. However, some might just barely goes on. Like close friend or just a person we know, I think the network wise, there is a strong density network compared as the one with weak density network.