



## Ties & Bonds

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### BBS [Barry's Bulletin-Board Service]

**Karen Pettigrew** now Asst Prof of Info Sci, U of Washington.... **Keith Hampton** (Soc, Toronto) starting 1/01 as Asst Prof of Technology and Urban & Community Sociology in MIT's Department of Urban Studies and Planning.... **Eric Klinenburg** (Ph.D, Berkeley) now Asst Prof of Soc, Northwestern U.... **Nancy Nazer** (Soc Toronto) now Assoc Dir of Organizational Development at Bell Canada, with a mandate to network the organization.... Former *Connections* Assoc Ed., **June Corman**, now Chair, Soc, Brock U (Canada).... **Jill Suitor** now head of Gender Studies at Louisiana State.... **Robert Perucci** and **JoAnne Miller** (Purdue) new co-editors of *Contemporary Sociology*.... **Robert Fernandez** moved from Stanford to Sloan Schl of Management, MIT.... **Alaina Michaelson Kanfer** has moved from the National Supercomputer Center in Champaign, IL to work in Minnesota, where her husband has a studio. Larry Kanfer is a renowned prairie photographer.... **Martina Morris** moved, Summer 00, to Soc, Univ of Washington, where she will be the Blumstein-Jordan Prof. of Soc & Stats. The Chair is named in part for Phil Blumstein, a wonderful person and researcher into sexuality and intimate relations who died young.... **Phillipa (Pip) Patterson** promoted to Prof at Psych, U Melbourne – that's a bigger deal than in North America – there are only 4 profs in the whole dept. (Modest Pip didn't tell me this, but I have sources!)

....**Richard Alba** (Soc, SUNY-Albany) has won a Guggenheim fellowship to study second generations in immigrant societies.... Gustavo Mesch and **Ilan Talmud** (Soc, Haifa) have received a grant from the Israeli Ford Fdn to study internet use among Israeli adolescents....

**Randy Collins** (Soc, U of Penn) nominated to run for AmSocAssoc Prexy; **John Hagan** (currently at Soc, Northwestern, but he always seems to come back to Toronto) nominated to run for ASA Vice-Prexy.... **Nan Lin** (Duke) elected chair of ASA's Mental Health section... **Phil Bonacich** (UCLA) elected chair of the ASA's Rational Choice section – certainly a case of the title fitting the deed.... **Doug Heckathorn** (Cornell) elected to the Rational Choice Council.... **Liviana Calzavara** promoted to tenured Assoc Prof at Public Health Sci, U Toronto. She's also Deputy Director of the HIV-AIDS research unit.... **Barry Wellman** has been elected to the Executive Committee of the Sociological Research Association honor society, with an inexorable 5-year rise to the Chairship.... He's also received an NSF grant with **James Witte** (P.I., Soc, Clemson), **Wendy Griswold** (Soc, Northwestern), **Keith Hampton** (Urb Studies, MIT), **Catherine Mobley** (Soc, Clemson) and **Pete Peterson** (Soc, Vanderbilt) to do the second study of National Geographic website visitors and Internet users/nonusers in 2001. **Vicente Espinoza** (Adv Studies, Santiago) will do the Spanish version.... **Barry Wellman** also gave the first keynote address at the 9/00 founding conf. of the Assoc of Internet Researchers.... **Stephanie Potter** (now a consultant in Ottawa) gave birth to her 3<sup>rd</sup> child, Evan Jackson Potter Murray.

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### John Sonquist Ticks the Ivories

John Sonquist was one of the first data-miners, inventing AID (Automatic Interaction Detector) decades too early to cash in on data mining, and coming up with nifty ways to think about social networks. (For example, see: James Mulherin, Hugh M. Kawabata and John A. Sonquist. 1981. "Relational Databases for Combined Network and Attribute Data Files: A SAS

Implementation." *Connections* 4 (1): 22-31.) John writes that problems with computers have changed. "It used to be, 'I think, therefore I am.' Now it's 'I'm a database, therefore I am.'" John is still consulting "and I still prefer branching search techniques as a preface to a general model." (email 29 June00).

Since retiring from U Cal Santa Barbara Soc, he has had a "whole new second career as a professional pianist" (email, 26May00). John's the webmaster of the Chamber Musicians of Northern California ([www.cmnc.org](http://www.cmnc.org)). A 29June00 email told me that "I'm off to two weeks of chamber music workshops. Playing 14 hours a day for 2 weeks straight is about as close to have as I can get without having an out-of-body experience."

Another website notes that John is a "pianist, accompanist, arranger and chamber music coach, [with] musical interests including classical, folk, and jazz. He also plays guitar, 5-string banjo, and recorder." John "started playing piano at age 4 and studied with the noted Hungarian teacher Margit Varro. He has accompanied numerous singers and received acclaim for his role as jazz-pianist-big-band-leader 'Zoot' in Westmont College's 1995 production of the musical 'A 1940's Radio Show.'" These quotations come from [www.sevensouth.com/recordshop/WaveReb/ABisLib.html](http://www.sevensouth.com/recordshop/WaveReb/ABisLib.html). It's the site of John and vocalist Rebecca Wave's new Yiddish language CD, *A Bis'l Libe, Un a Bisdele Glik*, which (if I listened to my grandmother Sophie right means, "A Little Love and a Little Luck." John's always had a lot of both.

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### Just Desserts

**Chuck Tilly** (Soc, Columbia) won the ASA's Distinguished Scholarly Publication award (00) for *Durable Inequality*.

**Merrijoy Kelner** and **Beverly Wellman** with **Bernice Pescosolido** and **Mike Saks** have a new edited book filled with networks: *Complementary and Alternative Medicine: Challenge and Change*. It's the 1<sup>st</sup>-ever social science book to deal with the networks of who uses non-official medicine and why. Guaranteed to be a best-seller, so reserve your copy now from Harwood Academic

Publishers, Reading UK. Price: \$23; £15, €25.

**Everett Rogers** awarded the Int'l Comm Assoc's inaugural **ICA Fellows Book Award** (00) for *The Diffusion of Innovations*. This award is given to "those books that have made a substantial difference in the scholarship of the field of communication and have stood at least some test of time" (operationally defined as > 5 yrs).

**Vladimir Batagelj** and **Andrej Mrvar** (Ljubljana) won 1<sup>st</sup> prize 9/00 in a network visualization competition at the Annual International Symposium on Graph Drawing, Colonial Williamsburg, VA, USA. They've won in at least 1 category in each GD Contest since 1995. The contest report will be published in the conference proceedings, to appear in Springer-Verlag's *Lecture Notes in Computer Science* series, late 2000. Details at [www.cs.virginia.edu/~gd2000/](http://www.cs.virginia.edu/~gd2000/) and [www.infosun.fmi.uni-passau.de/GD2000/index.html](http://www.infosun.fmi.uni-passau.de/GD2000/index.html)

**Vicente Espinoza** (former *Connections* Associate Ed.) has received the 1999 Best Researcher of the Year Award from the Universidad de Santiago de Chile.

**Tim Rowley** and **Stan Li** (Mgmt, U Toronto) won the Best Paper Award for the 2K Academy of Management Conf in the Business Policy & Strategy Division.... **Tim** and **Joel Baum** (also Mgmt< Toronto) received a \$105K grant from Soc Sci & Hum Res Council of Canada to study "The Organizational Economy of Financial Markets."... The beat goes on: **Joel Baum**, **Brian Silverman** and **Tony Calabrese** (Soc, Utoronto) had their paper, "Patent Races, Capital Races, Learning Races, and Partnering Races in Canadian Biotechnology 1991-1997" nominated for the 2K McKinsey Strategic Management Sty's Best Conf. Paper Prize.... All by himself, **Joel Baum** received the Dean's Award for Research Excellence.

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### Networks of Science

**A Structuralist Competitor for the NSF?** Some US sociology of science folks are establishing a new age-ish *American Science Foundation* to "compete with the NSF and NIH for funds on the basis of documented accomplish-

ments in supporting effective and influential research.” A structuralist line appears in their manifesto: “Differ from the NSF by not privileging one direction of integration between the molecule and other levels of organization.” (p. 2). However, given the name of the new body, national boundaries are being maintained [Source of quotations: Tom Gieryn, “From the Section Chair,” Amer Soc Assoc Science, Knowledge and Technology section newsletter, Su 2000: 1-2].

**Interview with a Networking Vampire:** “Many biologists believe that human social organization has also favored genes for intelligence. Our species, for example, has ‘reciprocal altruism.’ We are designed to feel warmly toward people who do favors for us, to return the favors, and thus to forge mutually beneficial relationships – friendships. What’s more one kind of favor we swap is social support. That is, we are a ‘coalitional’ species; groups compete with each other for status and influence. Reciprocal altruism takes brainpower – to remember who has helped you and who has hurt you. And the coalitional variety takes more brainpower, since strategic plotting and communication among allies are vital. Here again, the basic ingredients are not peculiar to us. Vampire bats have reciprocal altruism; they’ll donate painstakingly gathered blood to a needy friend, who will return the favor when fortunes are reversed.... As for the richer form of reciprocal altruism, coalitional contention, it turns out not to be confined to such famously political animals as chimpanzees. Bottle-nosed dolphins even form coalitions of coalitions. Team X of male dolphins will help team Y vanquish team Z, and later, team Y will return the favor. Since victory brings sex, skill in coalition-building is an obvious candidate for an arms race among dolphins.” Robert Wright, “Why Stephen Jay Gould is Bad for Evolution.” *New York*, 2000: 56-65.

**Solace for Writing Blockers:** It took Charles Darwin 20 years from when he was schlepping around the Galapagos avoiding iguana droppings to writing *The Origin of the Species*. The data were there; the theory came more slowly. [Carol Kaesuk Yoon, “Riches Hidden in Plain Sight,” *New York Times* 20Jun00: D1, D4].

**Networked Memory:** PERL inventor Larry and Gloria Wall together are “a happy example of what psychologists call transactive memory. In the middle of a story, Larry will pause to ask Gloria, ‘How did I feel about so-and-so?’ ‘You liked him!’ she’ll reply with characteristic ebullience. There’s a network interface built right into the core of Larry’s thought processes.” [Steve Silberman, “Scripting on the Lido Deck,” *Wired*, Oct 00: p. 152].

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#### From INSNA to NASCAR

Not only did I get to go backstage for the Toronto Molson Indy July 2000 with Pam Popielarz (Yay for fellow network gearheads with crew chief brothers). David Rosenfeld (RAND) has written an article "Social Science at 190 MPH on NASCAR's Biggest Superspeedways" that uses social network analysis in general and cites Wellman-Berkowitz *Social Structures* in particular. It's in *First Monday*, a refereed online cybersociety journal, 5, 2 (Feb 7 2000). Here's the abstract:

"In aerodynamically intense stock-car races like the Daytona 500, the drivers form into multi-car draft lines to gain extra speed. A driver who does not enter a draft line (slipstream) will lose. Once in a line, a driver must attract a drafting partner in order to break out and try to get further ahead. Thus the effort to win leads to ever-shifting patterns of cooperation and competition among rivals. This provides a curious laboratory for several social science theories: (1) complexity theory, since the racers self-organize into structures that oscillate between order and chaos; (2) social network analysis, since draft lines are line networks whose organization depends on a driver's social capital as well as his human capital; and (3) game theory, since racers face a "prisoner's dilemma" in seeking drafting partners who will not defect and leave them stranded. Perhaps draft lines and related "bump and run" tactics amount to a little-recognized dynamic of everyday life, including in structures evolving on the Internet."

The URL is: [www.msrl-racing.com/Super\\_Speedway\\_Series/190\\_MPH\\_on\\_Superspeedways.htm](http://www.msrl-racing.com/Super_Speedway_Series/190_MPH_on_Superspeedways.htm)

This is also true for bike racing. Consider not only the same-team support and break-aways, but the intimate relationship reported by Lance

Armstrong and Marco Pantini July 12, 2000 towards the end of their epic Tour de France climb up Mont Ventoux. Details at: news.excite.com/news/r/000713/11/sports-cycling-tour-dc. Pantini reciprocated on July 16, joining with Armstrong to minimize wind drag (*Toronto Star* 17July00: E10). However, the uninstitutionalized exchange was unstable, with Pantini denouncing Armstrong a few days later, reportedly piqued that Armstrong had so obviously “let” him win the July 12 stage.

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### Movie Magic

**Could The Titanic Be Marx’s Revenge?** Harvard Soc Rel vets of the 1960s fondly remember Mike Schwartz’s wonderful guides to old movies. While such guides are common now and the movies are often available on videotapes, they were rare in the 1960s except on late-night TV and the Brattle Theater. Mike was the 1<sup>st</sup> person I knew of to take them seriously. (Yes, there was intelligent life before Leno/Letterman). Mike has kept his passion up. In addition to being a leading Soc prof at SUNY-Stony Brook (remember Mintz & Schwartz on corporate interlocks?), Mike and 2 other sociologists founded Market-Cast, a market research company that uses sophisticated modeling techniques to design and evaluate marketing campaigns for feature films. The company grew to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest in the business, and was bought 1/00 by *Variety* (the folks who publish the trade newspaper by that name.) Mike is on the 1<sup>st</sup> year of a 3-year leave of absence, working with the company.

**Strange Recreational Habits of Sociologist:** I put out on SocNet the excitement of seeing “Cannibal Women in the Avocado Jungle of Death” starring a Stanford-ish anthropologist (*Maude*’s one-time daughter Adrienne Barbeau in 1 of the worst movies ever made). Also starring Bill Maher and Shannon Tweed. A Princeton sociologist (whose name I withhold) then told me that “Splatter University” is “to my knowledge the only movie that features a sociologist as its protagonist.... The scenes in which she lectures her classes are priceless, and the conclusion, while unfortunate and saddening, will ring peculiarly true at an allegorical level to many academic-sociologist viewers.” As *E! Online*

notes, “Student bodies start piling up, victims of a psycho slasher, some to question why they are attending a college called “Splatter University” Stars Francine Forbes, Ric Randig, Cathy Lacomare R-Rated, 1984.

If you type “slasher, university, sociologist, movie” into the Google search engine, *Pierre Bourdeau* comes up in the first item. At least on Nov 5, 2000, 1830 EST.

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### Networked Life

**Networking Albie:** Toronto sociologist Tony Calabrese writes to the SocNet list (2June00), “Is it possible that *Time* magazine’s man [surely he means “person” in these PC times] of the millennium is actually a forgotten exponent of a network view of society? “ In “Why Socialism” (1<sup>st</sup> issue of *Monthly Review*, 5/49), Albie writes [also un-PC]:

“Man is, at 1 and the same time, a solitary being and a social being.... As a social being, he seeks to gain the recognition and affection of his fellow human beings, to share in their pleasures, to comfort them in their sorrows, and to improve their conditions of life.... The abstract concept ‘society’ means to the individual human being the sum total of his direct and indirect relations to his contemporaries and to all the people of earlier generations.”

Calabrese notes that this approach makes an argument similar to Charles Tilly’s argument that thinking of society as a thing apart is a “pernicious postulate.” [In *CT’s Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons* (1984).]

**Quantum Mechanics, Quantum Networks, Quantum Computers:** “Classical computers work on classical logic and can be viewed as an embodiment of classical physics. Quantum computers, on the other hand, are based on the superpositional logic of quantum mechanics, which is an entirely different paradigm. Conventional explanation sees consciousness arising as an emergent property of the classical computations taking place in the circuits of the brain, but this does not address the question of how thoughts and feelings arise. If brains perform quantum processing, this might be the secret behind consciousness.” [Hayn Hirsh, *Comp Sci*,

Rutgers, "A Quantum Leap for AI," *IEEE Intelligent Systems*, 7/99: 9].

**Remembrance of Networks Past:** Einstein wasn't the only one working to incorporate long-ago ties into contemporary networks. André Gide's *The Counterfeiters* (1926) "reads like a dark metaphysical riff on the more benign Proustian discovery that social life disperses the self among other people – that it is only thru the courtesy of friends and gossips that we somehow exist at all." [Anthony Lane, "The Man in the Mirror," *New Yorker* 75 (22), Aug 9, 1999, p. 77.]

**Networking Alone:** "Individualism is a calm and considered feeling which disposes each citizen to isolate himself [another non-PC] from the mass of his fellows and withdraw into the circle of family and friends; with this little society formed to his taste; he gladly leaves the greater society to look after itself." [Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 1833, quoted in Peter Ward, *A History of Domestic Space*, Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999].

**The New Migration:** Having finished his PhD thesis at Soc, UCLA, **Michael Francis Johnson** visited China to do a feasibility study for his next research project on the role of social networks in funneling young rural migrant women into the commercial sex industry. [BW: Watching *Sex and the City* on US TV, it seems like networks are highly active for assortive coupling on this side of the Pacific as well. Those of you who missed the network size episode 9/00 failed to learn that "Miranda" has had 42 recent lovers – clearly a Laumannian-Morrisite heroine.] Am I right in recalling that "42" was also the answer to the key Q in the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Universe: "what is the meaning of life?"]

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### Corporate Links

**Mentoring Manager** is the job title in this help-wanted ad in the *NY Times*, 15Dec99. "Our client – a market leading high-growth e-commerce business ... seeks professionals to train its clients in the use of its proprietary business knowledge system." The position entails "developing and tailoring mentoring programs...."

### Corporate Secrets:

It's not  
who you know.  
It's what  
who you know  
knows.

[Full-page ad in *NY Times*, 5Oct00: C28 by the "Well Connected Company, Morgan Stanley Dean Witter" (stockbrokerage and investment bankers).] Thanks to Stan Wasserman for knowing this.

**Networking as Corporate Process:** "The commanding heights of business have come alive to the power of networking as a pervasive way of doing business," says Richard Roscitt, prexy of ATT's Business Services group. The Internet is pumping "the lifeblood of the organization. The stakes are much higher." [Fred Andrews, "It's Not the Product That's Different, It's the Process." *NY Times*, 15Dec99: C14].

**How is London Like Nashville?** Peter McDermott, marketing director for *Invest UK* (a government agency that promotes foreign investment) says corporations choose Britain as a Euro base because of logistics and transport: "From Heathrow airport, you can get to 90% of the world's [GDP] on direct flights." *Toronto Globe and Mail*, 7Jul00]. Still haven't figured out how London is like Nashville? *Hint 1:* Path length; *Hint 2:* Fedex. But there's also *Fallacy 1:* Britain isn't London; *Fallacy 2:* British (especially London) traffic is somewhat more difficult than Nashville's.

**Exploiting Structural Holes in Football:** David Winner argues in *Brilliant Orange* that Dutch football [soccer to North Americans] works best by exploiting structural holes. "Rather than sticking to their allotted places, like their peers from other more boring countries (e.g., Germany), the Dutch drift around the field looking for space (if they have the ball) or trying to destroy it (if their opponents do). And in forming these pretty sporting patterns, they say a great deal about their own country's art, history and geography.... The arrival of total football [in the 1960s] coincided with Amsterdam's transfor-

mation from being one of Europe's most boring cities to a dope-smoking capital of free love." [from *The Economist's* review, 24June00: 97].  
**BW:** Yes, but what if Johan Cruyff had been born in Belgium? And why the semi-final, goal-less loss to the hyper-defensive Italians in the 2000 Eurocup?

**Cuba Si, Tourism Better:** Many of us had an early political economic intro. to networks in US foreign policy via ex-agent **Phil Agee's** book, *Inside the Company: CIA Diary* (NY: Stonehill, 1975). Agee's been in exile for many years, in bad US apparat graces for revealing the names of agents. He's now developed a web-site to market packaged tours to Cuba, [www.cubalinda.com](http://www.cubalinda.com). His niche market: embargo-busing American vacationers. Agee says the site aims "to create a fund to promote projects that bring Cubans and Americans together." He uses his CIA skills in his new job: "We get out there and get to know the people [involved with] the various activities that we are promoting, such as skydiving ..." He dreams of showing Cuba to one of his most ardent enemies, former prexy & CIA chief, George (non-W) Bush. [David Wallis, "Agee's New Company," *Financial Post (Toronto)*, 1Sept00: C3]

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### Computer Networks <=> Social Networks

**Missing Links:** Franck Jeannin, CEO of UK-based *Link-Guard*, estimates that there has been a major rise in broken links between internet sites. He estimates that in 1998, 5% of all links were broken, 7% in 1999, and 10% "now". Of course, [www.linkguard.com](http://www.linkguard.com)'s business is monitoring web sites for broken links and notifying subscribers. [Jake Kirchner, "Big Numbers, Big Times." *PC Magazine*, July 2000: 89].

**Networking as Internet-Utopian Corporate Faith:** "Relationship, along with service, is at the heart of what supports all sorts of other modern, though more anonymous 'knowledge workers.' Doctors are economically protected by a relationship with their patients, architects with their clients, executives with their stockholders. In general, if you substitute 'relationship' for 'property,' you begin to understand why a digitized information economy can work in the absence of

enforceable property law. Cyberspace is *unreal* estate. Relationships are its geology." (P. 242). "The more connected we become, the more obvious it is that we're all in this together. If I don't pay for the light of your creation, it goes out and the place gets dimmer. If no one pays, we're all in the dark. On the Net, what goes around comes around. What has been an ideal becomes a sensible business practice." (P. 252). Electronic Freedom Frontier founder **John Perry Barlow** on why Napster-like appropriation of Intellectual Property will fail. ["The Next Economy of Ideas: Will Copyright Survive the Napster Bomb? Nope, but Creativity Will." *Wired* Oct00]  
**BW:** I've only seen 1 potential *Napster* user stopped by the fact that using the program avoids paying for the IP. (I confess, too.). The people I deal with don't see *Napster* as a moral issue. They just use it because it is free and handy. My belief is that because the IP is intangible, as opposed to a book or a CD, taking it isn't seen as a crime.

**Gnutella, The Next Step After Napster:** *Gnutella* does away with the central directory server of *Napster*, to allow people to share files directly with each other. Peer-based searches for files go thru snowball networks of linked computers. The program was developed as an AOL rogue operation, since shut down, but is now widely-available. It is not yet clear if peer-based searches will be effective and accepted. For schematics of how they work see *Wired*, Oct00: 236-37.

**The Danger of Asymmetry:** Another problem with file trading is that it's asymmetric: For example, a few people have large music libraries. Most others, just download from them rather than truly sharing. "Thus, network costs and responsibilities fall disproportionately on those who do offer files." In a startup software company, *Mojo Nation*, traders earn currency ("mojo"): the more you offer, the more you can download. Details in: [www.salon.com/tech/view/2000/10/09/mojo\\_nation/index.html](http://www.salon.com/tech/view/2000/10/09/mojo_nation/index.html)

**Sherpa Ears:** This small Nashville-oriented dot.com approached Lin Freeman, Mark Granovetter, myself, and virtual-community guru Howard Rheingold to be on its Board of Technical Advisors. The idea was to use social

network techniques to link music creators and their audience, involving friends of friends. It was an interesting anthropological experience to deal with dot-comers, but unfortunately they found it a frustrating experience to deal with venture capitalists. The company is closed although the site is still up ([www.sherpaeers.com](http://www.sherpaeers.com)).

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### Degrees of Separation – and Linkage

**The Original Play:** “I read somewhere [*BW: Stan Milgram!*] that everybody on this planet is separated by only six other people. Six degrees of separation. Between us and everybody else on this planet. The president of the Untied States. A gondolier in Venice. Fill in the names. I find that [A] tremendously comforting that we’re so close and [B] like Chinese water torture that we’re so close. Because you have to find the right six people to make the connection. It’s not just big names. It’s anyone. A native in a rain forest. A Tierra del Fuegan. An Eskimo. I am bound to everyone on this planet by a trail of six people. It’s a profound thought. How Paul found us. How to find the man whose son he pretends to be. Or perhaps *is* his son, although I doubt it. How every person is a new door, opening up into other worlds. Six degrees of separation between me and everyone else on this planet. But to find the right six people.” [“Ouisa” to the audience, *Six Degrees of Separation*, John Guare, playwright (1990). This from the Vintage Press 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1994, p. 81].

**Not Kevin Bacon:** The most connected actor of all time is Rod Steiger, according to Malcolm Gladwell’s *The Tipping Point* (Little Brown, 2000) – the book that also brought Mark Granovetter to the masses. But I digress. When links are defined as movies in which 2 actors have appear, the average actor is 2.887 [5Nov00] steps from the legendary Kevin Bacon. Gladwell says the reason for Steiger’s success is his range: 38 dramas, 12 crime pix, 12 comedies, 8 action flicks, 7 Westerns, 6 war movies, 4 documentaries, 3 horror films, 2 sci-fi’s, 1 musical. “He has managed to move up and down and back and forth among all the different worlds and subcultures and niches and levels that the acting profession has to offer.” [From the *San Francisco Chronicle*, 23Mar00: C18]

Gladwell cites a Univ of Virginia study which you can browse at: [www.cs.virginia.edu/oracle/](http://www.cs.virginia.edu/oracle/). When I asked for help on SocNet about finding the movie network site, John Roberts wrote, “this study is described at length in Duncan Watts’ *Small Worlds*”. He, and Danyel Fischer, Alexandra Marin, Bob Putnam, and Edward Vielmetti, and Caroline Haythornthwaite pointed me to the web site and the unreferenced statements on pp. 47-48 of Gladwell’s book. [Fisher was first, which is only fitting being he is a Berkeley computer science student who spends more time fingering a keyboard than not, but on a senior-handicapped basis, Putnam is impressive.] Mark Ryan supplied the actual p. 47 quote from Gladwell: “Recently, a computer scientist at the University of Virginia by the name of Brett Tjaden actually sat down and figured out what the average Bacon number is for the quarter million or so actors and actresses who have played in television films or major motion pictures and came up with 2.8312 steps.”

For scholarly follow-up, Mark Newman provided some recent references:

D. J. Watts and S. H. Strogatz, “Collective dynamics of small-world networks,” *Nature* 393, 440-442 (1998).

L. A. N. Amaral, A. Scala, M. Barthelemy, and H. E. Stanley, “Classes of small-world networks,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 97, 11149-11152 (2000).

**Epidemic Networks:** Gladwell says in a *Tipping Point* press release that he thinks of life as an epidemic, where little changes can make a big difference. He got the idea from covering the AIDS epidemic for the *Washington Post*. “I’m convinced that ideas and behaviors and new products move through a population very much like a disease does... I’m talking about a very literal analogy.... A meme is a idea that behaves like a virus.... No one ever tries to define exactly what they are, and what makes a meme so contagious.... There’s a whole section of the book devoted to explaining the phenomenon of word of mouth,... something created by 3 very rare and special psychological types, whom I call Connectors, Mavens, and Salesmen.” [[www.gladwell.com/books2.html](http://www.gladwell.com/books2.html); 4Jan00].

***The Man Who Loved Only Numbers*** is a nice book about Paul Erdős, the world's most prolific, peripatetic, and collaborating scholar. [Written by Paul Hoffman, published by Little Brown.] (I have an Erdős number of 3 via Ove Frank.) Here are some neat things from the book:

"A mathematician is a machine for turning coffee into theorems." Erdős. (P. 7) Erdős was a coffee and amphetamine addict, who definitely would have been barred from the Olympics.

"He existed on a web of trust." Collaborator Aaron Meyrowitz about Erdős (P. 9).

"Budapest cafes were "hothouses... of illicit trading, adultery, puns, gossip and poetry, the meeting places for the intellectuals and those opposed to oppression." From a Hungarian journalist. (P. 105).

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### Short Schticks

***Networked Millionaires:*** My cousin Lloyd has a friend who is gearing up to go on the "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" quiz show. In this show, you are allowed to call a friend for help with a key answer. The friend he'll call will have mobile phones open to a dozen other friends, all sitting at their computers connected to various reference sources. With luck, one will come up with the answer. I guess it beats 1,000 monkeys.

***In the Wake of the Hoof:*** "Learning to ride on horseback had drastic consequences for Indian communities that accepted the new animals and embraced a nomadic way of life built around hunting bison all year round. At least some Indians soon came to recognize costs as well as gains for according to Cheyenne tradition, when neighboring Comanches first offered horses to the tribe, a priest consulted their chief god, and reported back: 'If you have horses everything will be change for you forever. You will have to move around a lot to find pasture for your horses. You will have to give up gardening and live by hunting and gathering.... And you will have to come

out of your earth houses and live in tents.... You will have fights with other tribes, who will want your pasture land or the places where you hunt. You will have to have real soldiers, who can protect the people. Think, before you decide.'" [Quoted in Andrew Isenberg, *The Destruction of the Bison*, Cambridge Univ Pr, 1999, by William H McNeill, "Goodbye to the Bison," *New York Review of Books*, 27Apr00: 23].

***The Writer's Block Calendar*** is published by the University of Victoria English Dept's Kim Blank and Michael Cullen. (That's in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada). Here are some thoughts for the day from a recent version [Source: University Affairs, 12/00: 7]

"A bunch of little words in a row often means some can go"

"When you edit your work, pretend it was written by someone you don't like."

"If things happen on a daily basis', it means they happen daily"

***Ron Burt's Sources Revealed:*** Did the wise ones in ancient China understand structural holes? From the Tao Te Ching, # 11

Thirty spokes join together in the hub.

It is because of what is not there that the wheel is useful.

Clay is formed into a vessel.

It is because of its emptiness that the vessel is useful.

Cut doors and windows to make a room.

It is because of its emptiness that the room is useful.

Therefore, what is present is used for profit.

But it is in absence that there is usefulness.

[Source: Valdis Krebs' email to SocNet, 18Dec 00]  
Translation by Charles Muller. [www.human.toyogakuen-u.ac.jp/~acmuller/contao/laotzu.htm](http://www.human.toyogakuen-u.ac.jp/~acmuller/contao/laotzu.htm)





July 19, 2000

Royal Hotel, Durban

Inside, suited scientists seminar,  
 discuss, network, and decry  
 the spread of HIV across the globe  
 and the stalling of prevention against it,  
 and nightly journey to gorge fish or curries,  
 riding certified cabs through streets emptied by fear.  
 In the daytime, nearby streets teem with stalls  
 replete with spices, cloth, and carrying bags,  
 and with brothers and sisters, hands outstretched at ages from thee to ten,  
 asking money, food, or a trinket to sell.

As I walk these markets, my mind repeats two litanies:

One out of three, and one out of two,  
 one out of three, and one out of two,  
 one out of three, and one out of two,

and scanning the faces of the traders,  
 I cannot tell, cannot descry,  
 which are the third housing the virus,  
 the third destined to die in five years or ten,  
 flesh flushed away, lungs gasping, life gone;  
 nor can I nor anyone foretell which of the kids,  
 among those of the outstretched hands  
 or of those helping parents in stalls,  
 will be in the half forecast for the virus  
 and which will be in the half who strive to survive,  
 perhaps even to have lives,  
 in a land of beauty transformed  
 to a nation of funerals,  
 famine,  
 collapse.

Sam Friedman