Agenda

1. Administrative
2. Groups, organizations, & collectivities
3. Groups & individual behavior
4. Group structure

Today's reading

- I accidentally assigned the wrong article by John Levi Martin!
- Martin (1998) on Persuall, while interesting, is *extremely* technical
- The article I *intended* to assign is:
  Martin, John Levi. 2002. "Power, Authority, and the Constraint of Belief Systems." *American Journal of Sociology* 107 (4): 861–904.
- If you've done this reading, you will get credit for it, but if not *it will not count toward your final grade*
- For those of you who were assigned Martin 1998 for your Synthesis essay, I'll send an email this afternoon with options
  (You can stick with Martin 1998 if you like, but you'll have an alternative)

Groups, organizations, & collectivities
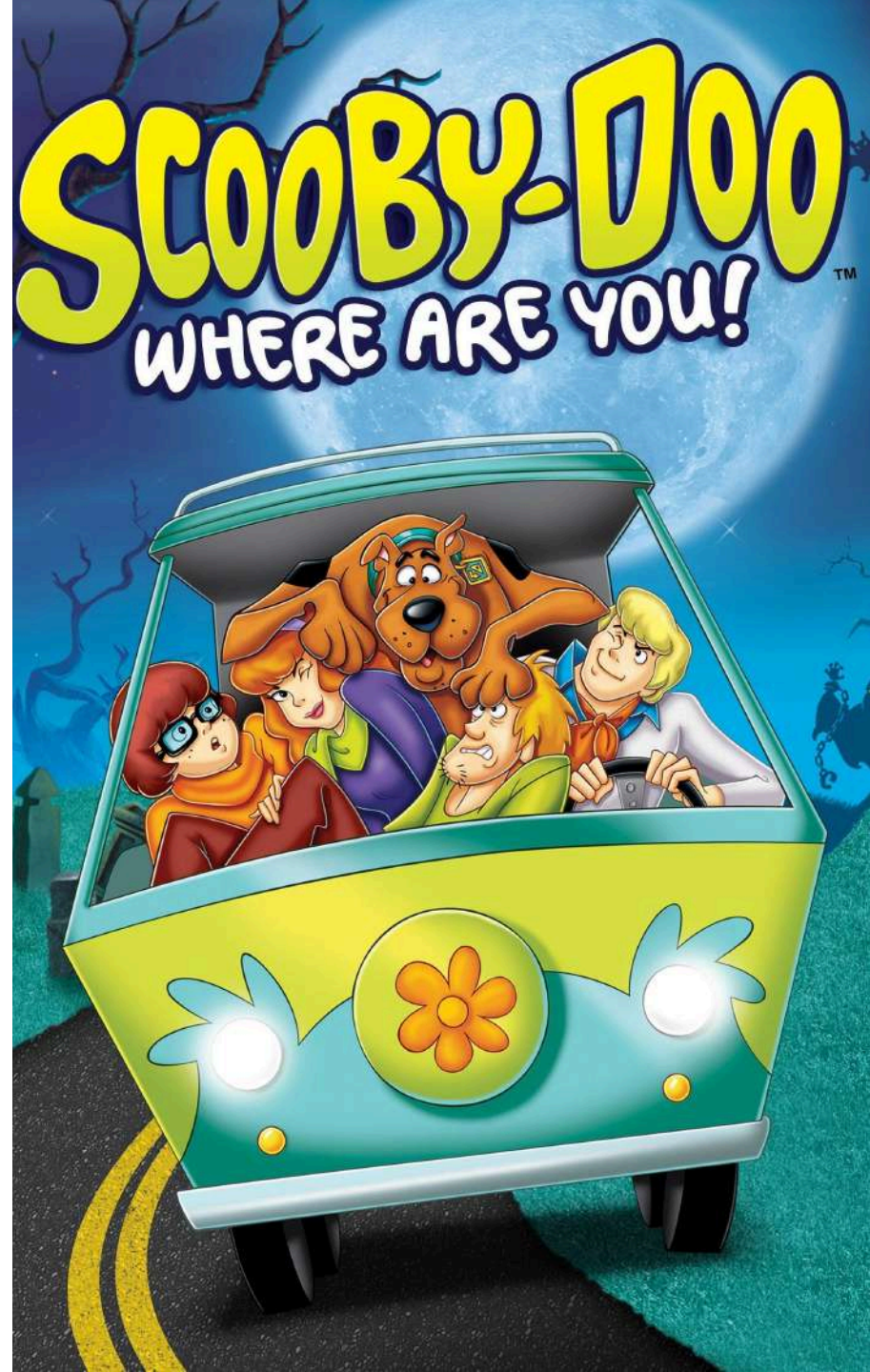
"Collectivity" is an umbrella term for any distinct grouping of people

We have talked a lot about (intersectional) *social categories* as collectivities.

(Racial/ethnic; Class; Gender; Disability; …)

These social categories define shared experiences, cultural dispositions, societal expectations, opportunity structures, etc.

Groups and *organizations* are (usually) considered a different type of collectivity.

(Family; School; Friend group; Office; …)

Groups and organizations are made up of people who are oriented around a place or goal, and who are likely to interact with one another.

What is a group?

⋮ Members share some aspect of identity

⋮ Aligned interests and goals

⋮ Regular interactions

⋮ Shared orientation toward the group itself
It is a group because we consider it a group

TYPES OF GROUPS

One useful distinction (Charles Horton Cooley):
Primary versus *secondary* groups

Primary groups (expressive)
- Small
- Lasting
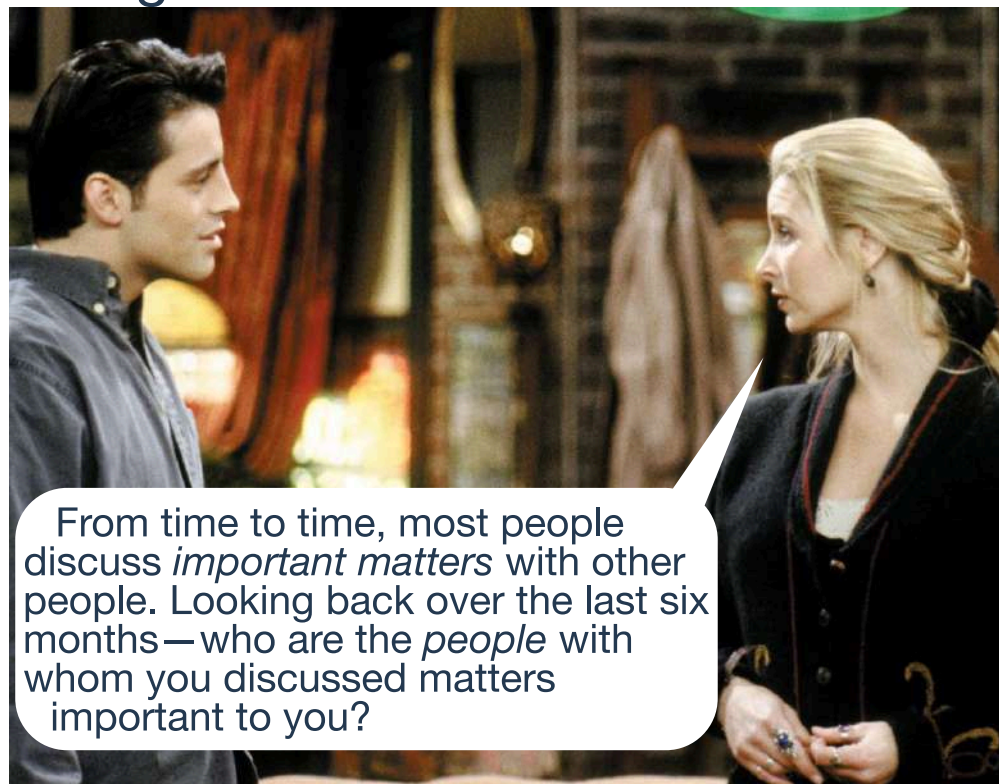- Close, emotional connections
- E.g. family, close friends
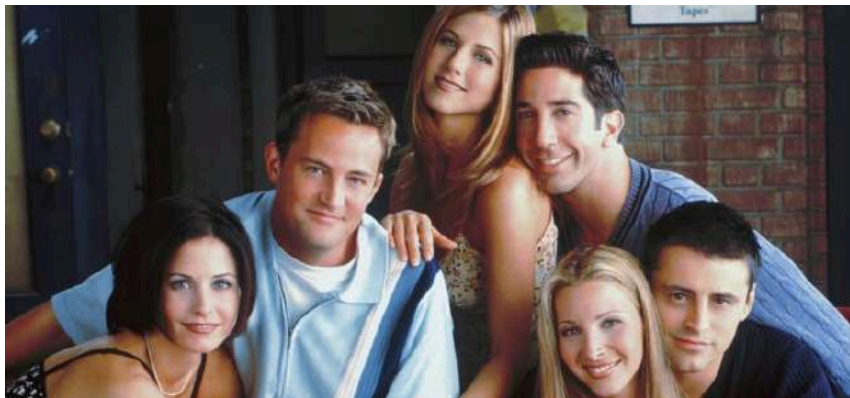
Secondary groups (instrumental)
- Varying size
- Goal oriented
- Formalized, pragmatic connections
- E.g. office, class

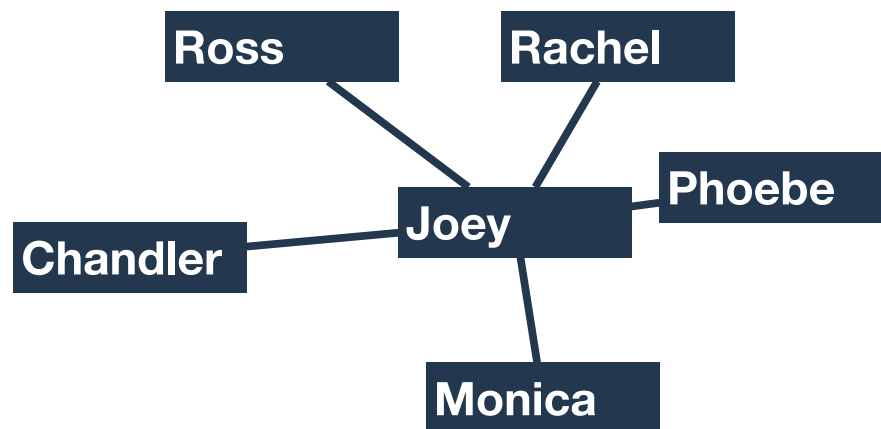## Core discussion network
(Peter Marsden)

⋮ Common survey instrument to identify *primary groups*

⋮ Asks about who we discuss "important matters" with

⋮ Asks about those people's relationship with each other and with respondent

⋮ Can track changes over time

From time to time, most people discuss *important matters* with other people. Looking back over the last six months—who are the *people* with whom you discussed matters important to you?
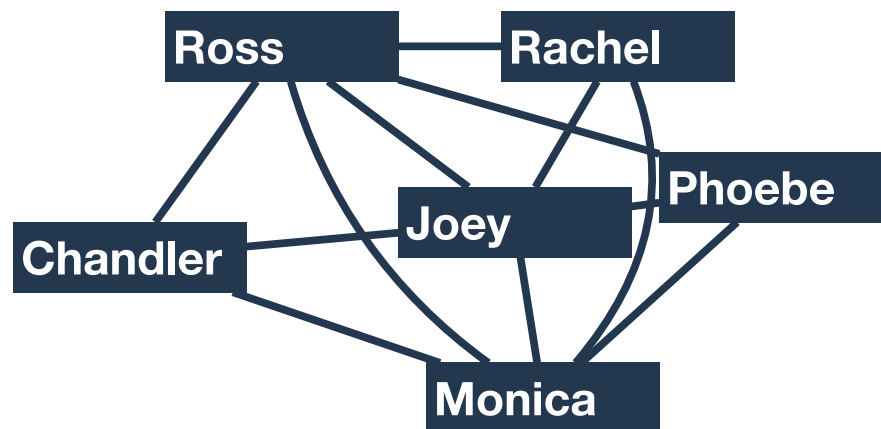
TYPES OF GROUPS
Core discussion network
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Ross   Rachel

Phoebe

Joey

Chandler

Monica

TYPES OF GROUPS

Core discussion network
(Peter Marsden)

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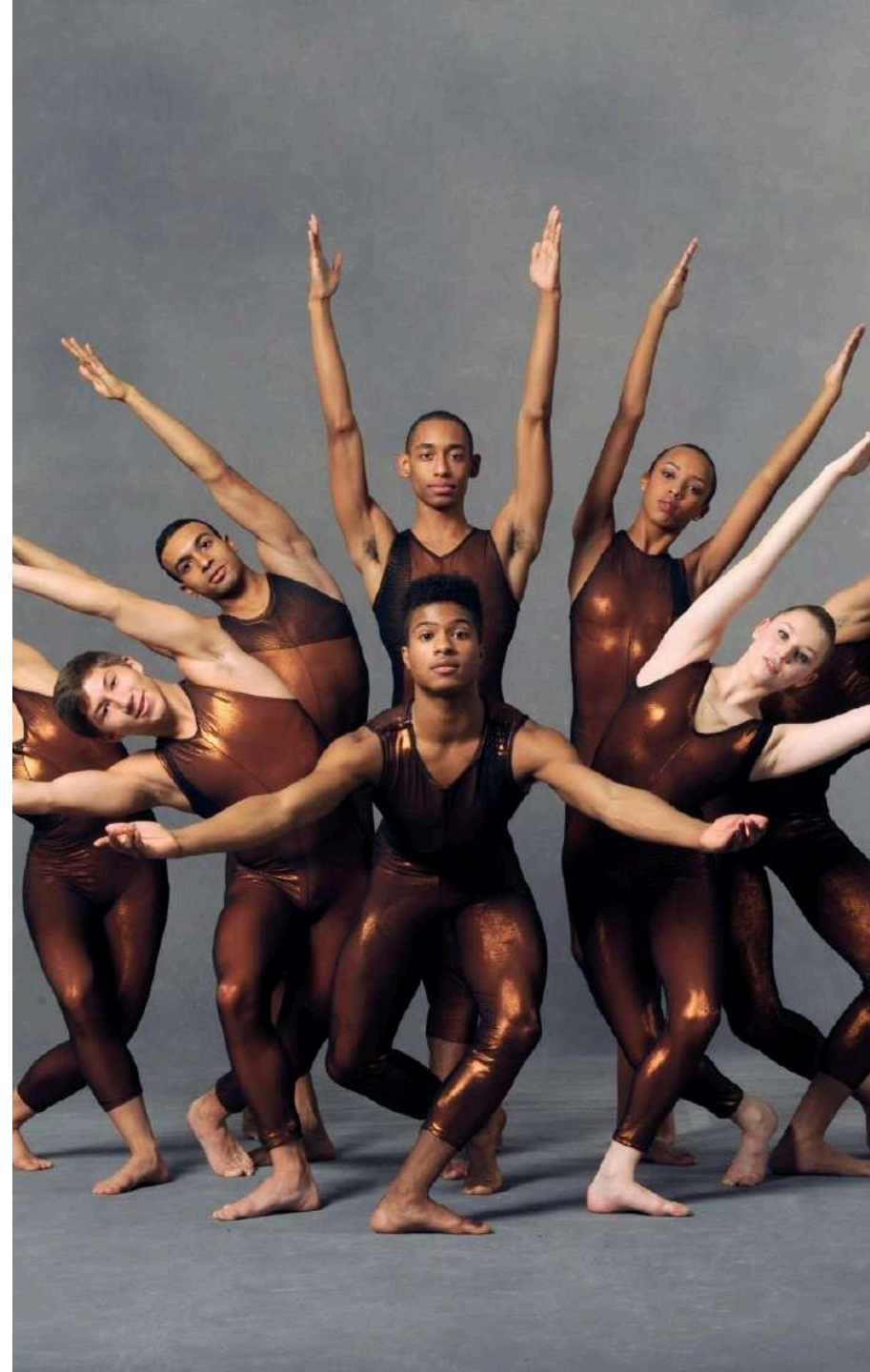
- Can track changes over time

Formal organizations

- Widespread example of *secondary groups*

- Membership and relations between members are *formalized*
  Rosters, roles, responsibilities, regulation

- Expressed purpose or goal

- Often bureaucratically organized
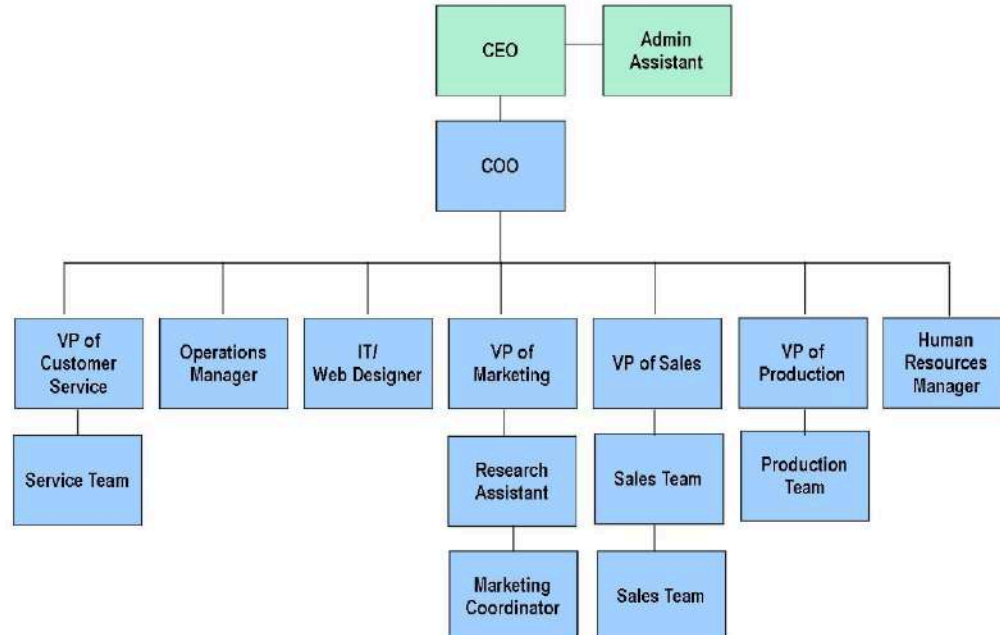
Groups
& individual
behavior

How do groups affect their members?

- One reason to study groups specifically is to understand how they constrain/enable their members' behavior

- Groups and organizations adopt and promote certain *practices*.

- Related to *frames* discussion last week.
  What are the goals of a group?
  What are the appropriate means to achieve those goals?
  What are the expectations of behavior/interaction?

- Sometimes predetermined …
  E.g. practices of soldiers in the military

- Sometimes arising organically …
  E.g. dorm-mates meeting for the first time

Reference groups

- Groups can have informal influence over individuals' behavior if it is used as a *reference group*.

- Reference groups provide an example against which to compare one's own behavior.

- Reference groups can influence behavior of non-members.

Institutional logics
(Patricia H. Thornton, et al.)

- Different possible organizing "logics" exist that groups and formal organizations can adopt to shape and justify their actions

    - Market (capitalist)
    - Professional
    - Family
    - Religious
    - Community
    - …

- Shifts in institutional logics used to explain change in behavior of groups and individuals within those groups
  E.g. shift in universities' logic from science to market motivations (Elizabeth Popp Berman)

Structure of organizations & groups
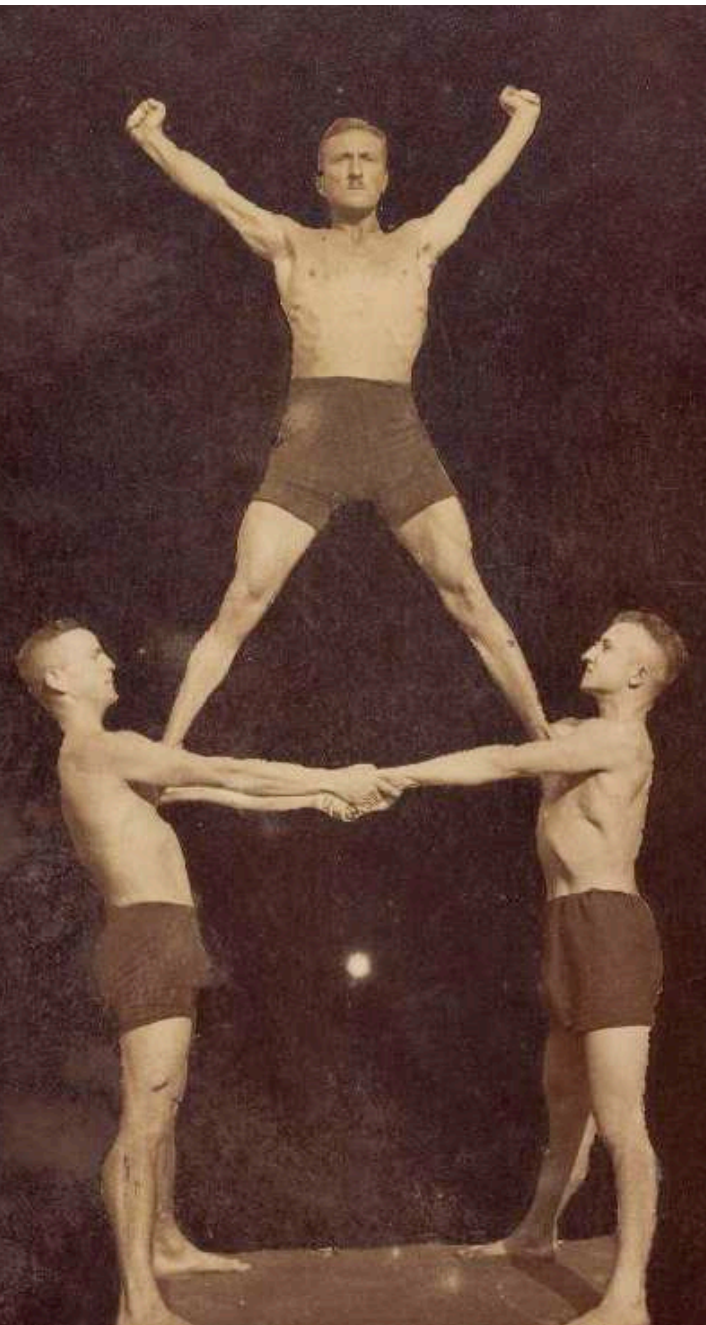
What do we mean by "structure"?

- Groups consist of a collection of individuals situated in *relation* to one another.

- Relations can be *formal* (military hierarchy, team membership) or *informal* (social ties, shared interests)

- Taken together, the set of relations can be understood to define the structure of a group

Leadership structure

- Groups very frequently have leaders (formal or informal)

- Different modes of relation of leader to rest of the group

- Compare, e.g., the top-down leadership of Mormon church to distributed, horizontal structure of the Quakers

Leadership structures in communes
(Martin, John Levi. "Power, Authority, and the Constraint of Belief Systems."
American Journal of Sociology 107, no. 4 (January 1, 2002): 861–904.)

- Examined beliefs and relations of power among members of 60 different communes (naturally occurring intentional communities)

- Looking for relationship between beliefs held by members and the overall leadership structure of commune

- Found that groups with stronger and more explicitly articulated power relations were more likely to have aligned beliefs
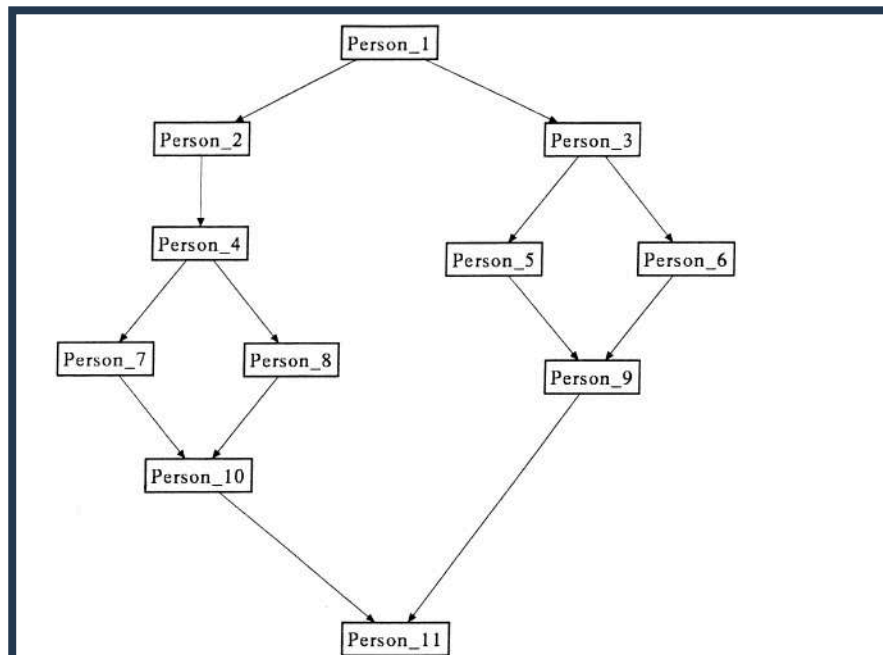

Fig. 1. A differentiated status structure.

Martin, John Levi. "Structures of Power in Naturally Occurring Communities." *Social Networks* 20, no. 3 (July 1998): 197–225.

Experiments in network structure

- Sociological experiments support the importance of these types of network structures

- Experiment in behavioral influence
  Centola, Damon. "The Spread of Behavior in an Online Social Network Experiment." *Science* 329, no. 5996 (September 3, 2010): 1194–97.

- Online health-focussed community

- Users paired up with other users ("health buddies"), whose relevant behavior they could see
  Specifically: registration on another forum website

- Experiment put each user in treatment or control group
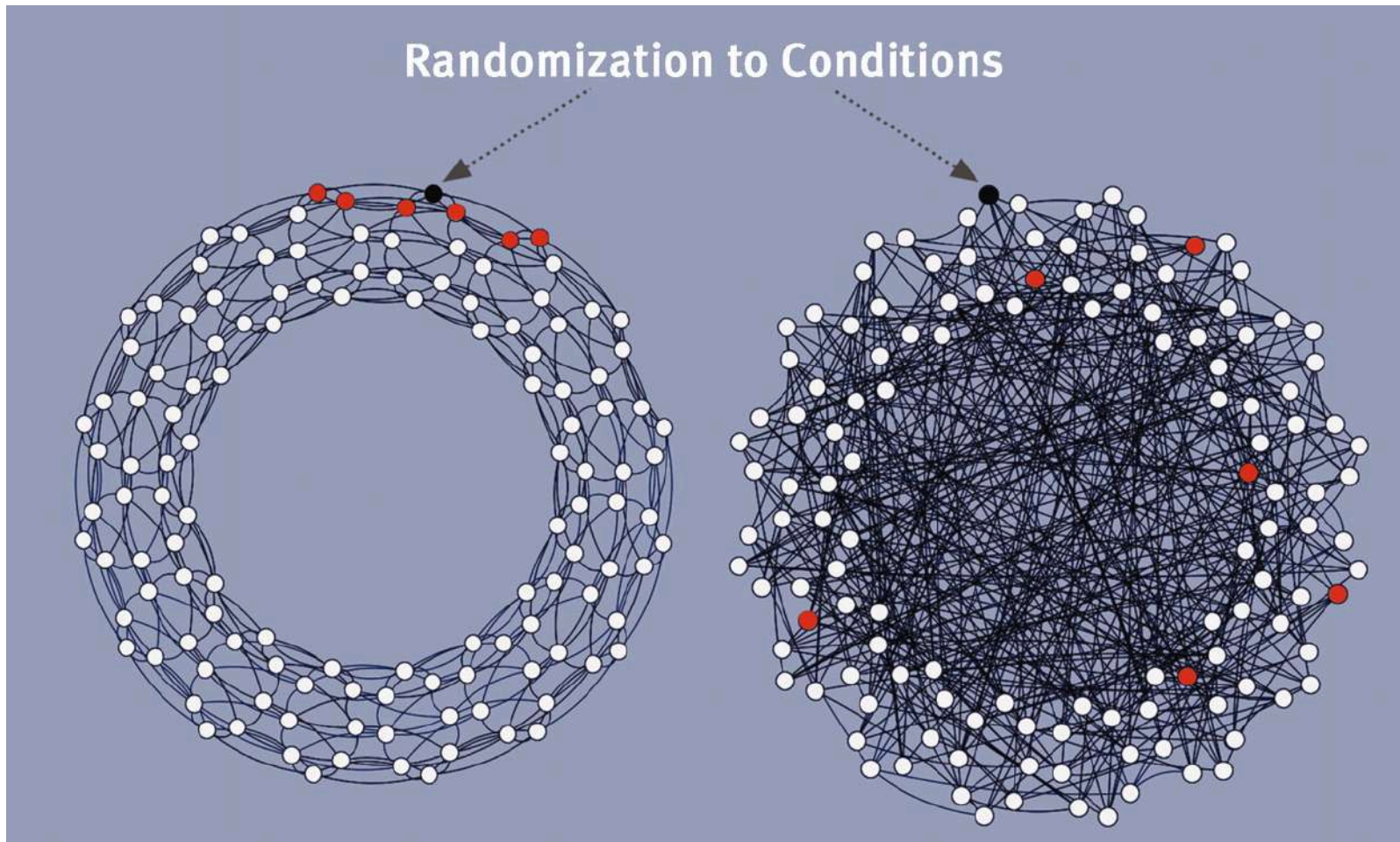
Clustered lattice (treatment group)

Random (control group)

Centola, Damon. "The Spread of Behavior in an Online Social Network Experiment." *Science* 329, no. 5996 (September 3, 2010): 1194–97.

Reach versus reinforcement

- ### Participants in the control group had longer network "reach"
  More likely to have a buddy who has a buddy who exhibits a particular behavior
  Fewer degrees of separation

- ### Participants in the treatment group had greater network reinforcement
  More likely to see multiple buddies exhibiting the same behavior

- ### Results: treatment group much more likely to see behaviors spread to the entire community
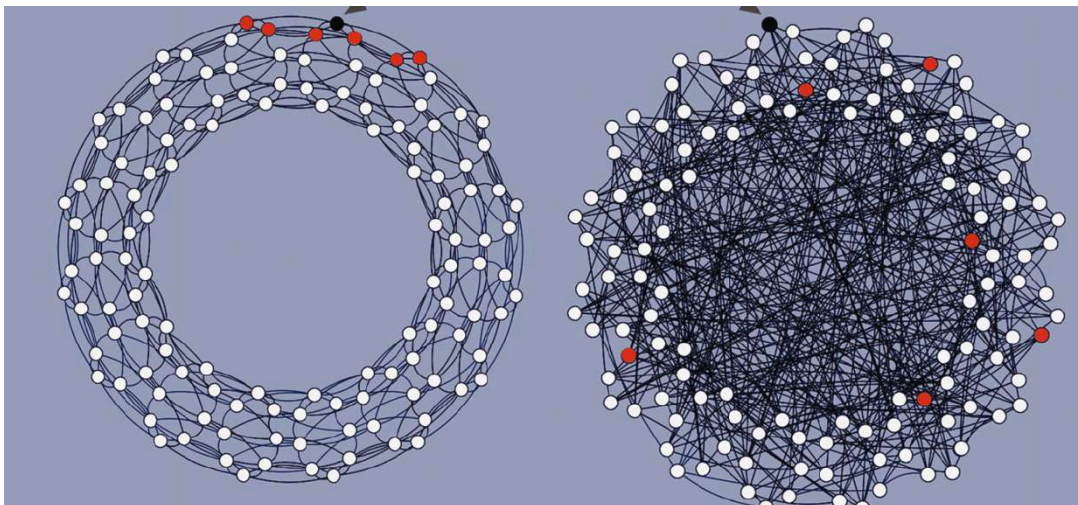
Image credit

Panel from Marvel's Avengers Vol 8 55, via marvel.fandom.com.
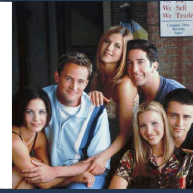

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Photo from Combined Military Service Digital Photographic Files
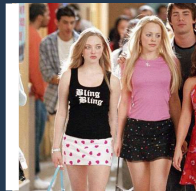

Photo by Museums Victoria

Photo: Alamy via Daily Mail

Promo image for the TV show Friends (1994)
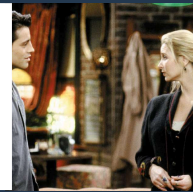

Photo: Verena Dahmen

Screenshot from the TV show Mad Men (2007)

Screenshot from Mean Girls (2004)

Screenshot for the TV show Friends (1994)

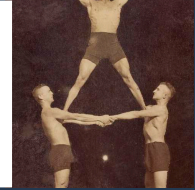# Image credit

Still from [The Hollywood Squares](#) via
[clickamericana.com](#)

Photo: [Wellcome Collection](#)