

15-826: Multimedia (Databases) and Data Mining

Anomaly detection in large
graphs

Christos Faloutsos



Roadmap

- ➔ • Introduction – Motivation
- Unsupervised
 - static graphs
 - Time-evolving graphs
- Supervised: BP
- Conclusions

Fraud Detection: Graph Analysis Problem



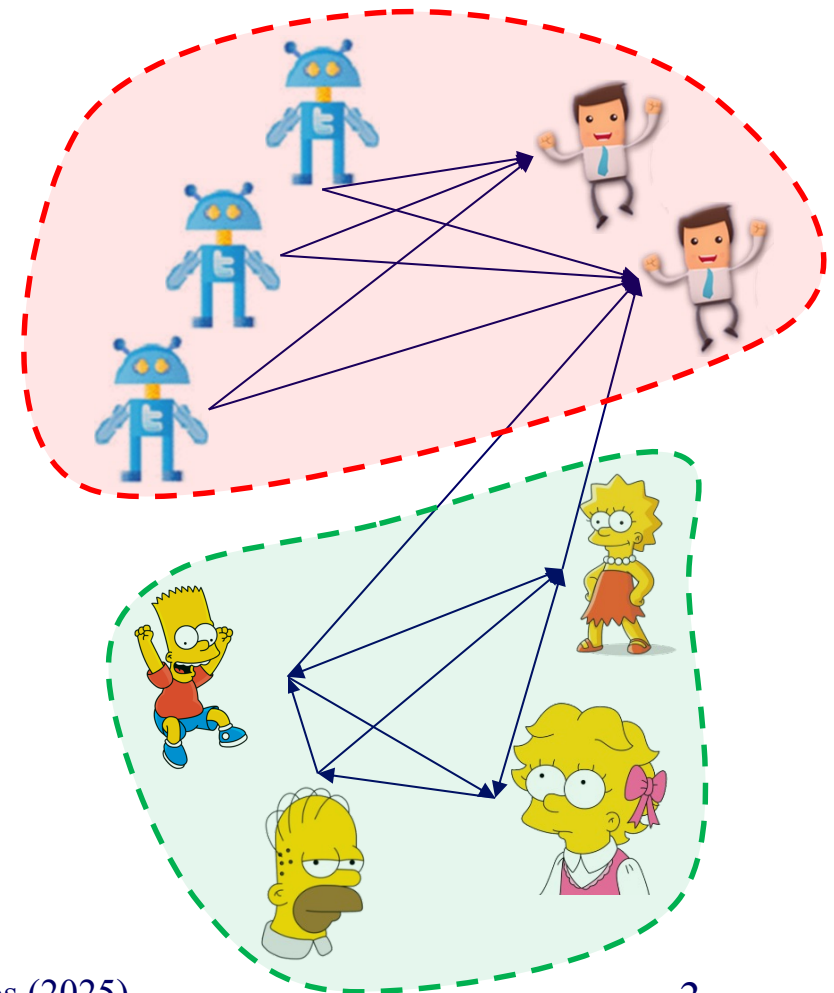
[www.buyfollowz.org]

5,000 FOLLOWERS	2,000 FOLLOWERS	1,000 FOLLOWERS	10,000 FOLLOWERS	20,000 FOLLOWERS
400 FREE	300 FREE	200 FREE	500 FREE	1000 FREE
\$69.99	\$29.99	\$15.99	\$119.99	\$229.99
Delivery within 3-4 days	Delivery within 2-3 days	Delivery within 1-2 days	Delivery within 4-5 days	Delivery within 5-8 days
Buy Now	Buy Now	Buy Now	Buy Now	Buy Now
VISA	VISA	VISA	VISA	VISA
Save + 3%	Save + 2%		Save + 14%	Save + 34%



[buymorelikes.com]

25,000 Facebook Likes	50,000 Facebook Likes	100,000 Facebook Likes	200,000 Facebook Likes
\$265	\$525	\$1,000	\$1,750
Lifetime Replacement Warranty	Lifetime Replacement Warranty	Lifetime Replacement Warranty	Lifetime Replacement Warranty
Dedicated 24/7 Customer Service	Dedicated 24/7 Customer Service	Dedicated 24/7 Customer Service	Dedicated 24/7 Customer Service
100% Risk Free, Try Us Today	100% Risk Free, Try Us Today	100% Risk Free, Try Us Today	100% Risk Free, Try Us Today
Order starts within 24 - 48 hours	Order starts within 24 - 48 hours	Order starts within 24 - 48 hours	Order starts within 24 - 48 hours
Order completed within 22 days	Order completed within 35 days	Order completed within 35 days	Order completed within 35 days



Fraud Detection: Graph Analysis Problem



[buycheaplikes.com]

PACK-1	PACK-2	PACK-3	PACK-4
YOUTUBE → \$5	YOUTUBE → \$9	YOUTUBE → \$13	YOUTUBE → \$25
150 Real YouTube Likes	300 Real YouTube Likes	500 Real YouTube Likes	1,000 Real YouTube Likes
\$ 5.00 (USD)	\$ 9.00 (USD)	\$ 13.00 (USD)	\$ 25.00 (USD)
Delivery within 24 hours Enter Your Video URL:	Delivery within 24-48 hours Please Enter Your Video URL:	Delivery within 24-48 hours Enter Your Video URL:	Delivery within 2-3 days Enter Your Video URL:
Current number of likes:	Current number of likes:	Current number of likes:	Current number of likes:
Add to Cart	Add to Cart	Add to Cart	Add to Cart



[reviewsteria.com]

It's easy to buy Amazon reviews. Just choose the number of reviews you would like to receive.

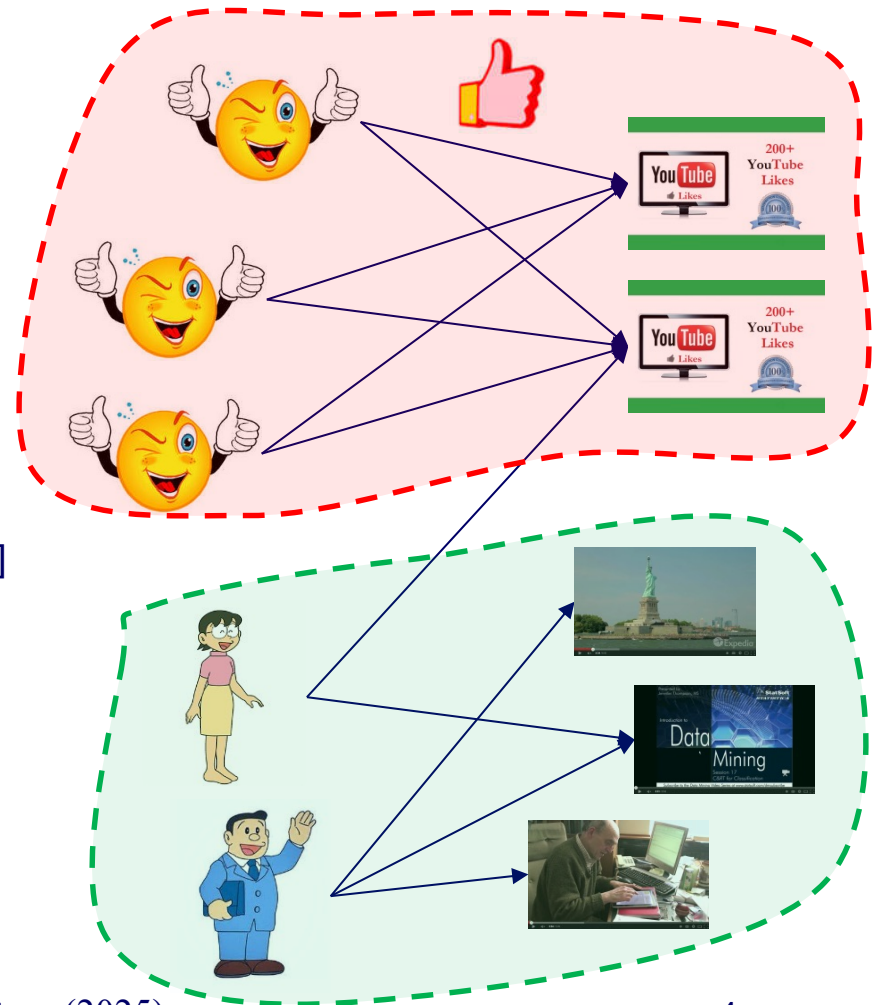
High quality reviews that customers love. 100% unique content by native speaking professional writers.

Choose the number of reviews and click Buy Now button to ramp up your Amazon business NOW.

Choose the number of reviews:

20

[Buy Now](#)



Other applications:

- Cyber-security (DDoS attacks – distributed denial of service)
- Abnormal individuals / social groups
 - dysfunctional departments in a company
 - Onset of depression/hijacking wrt a FB user
 - ...



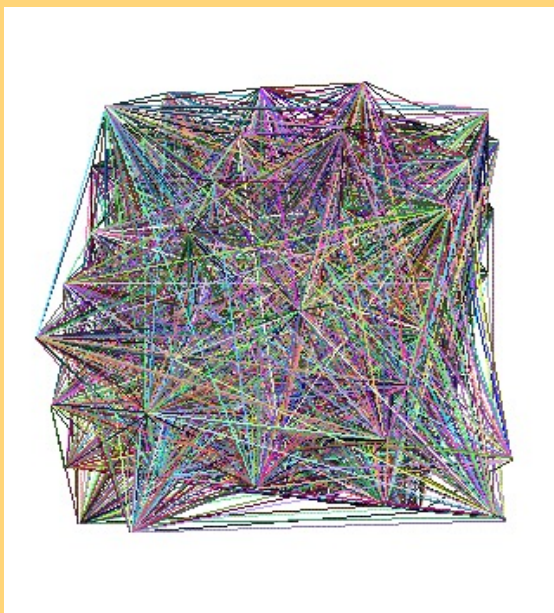
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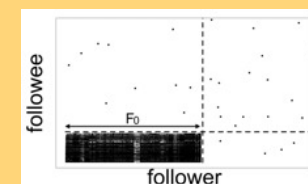
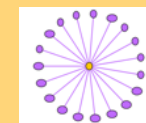
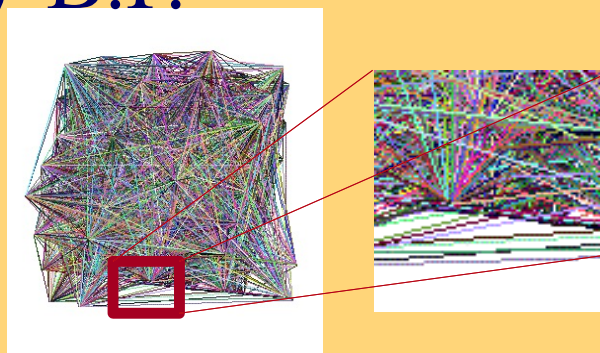
Problem

Given:



Find:

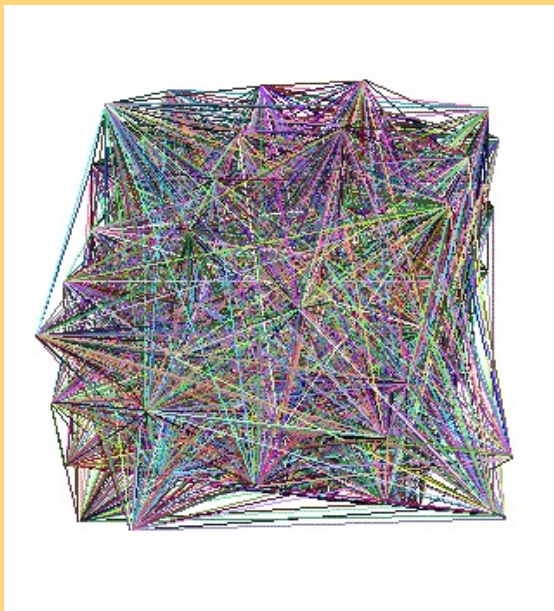
- 1) Outliers
- 2) Lock-step
- 3) B.P.





Solutions

Given:

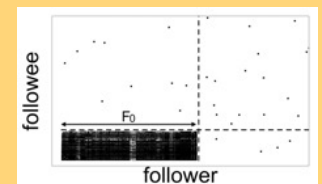
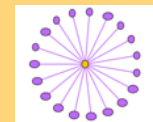
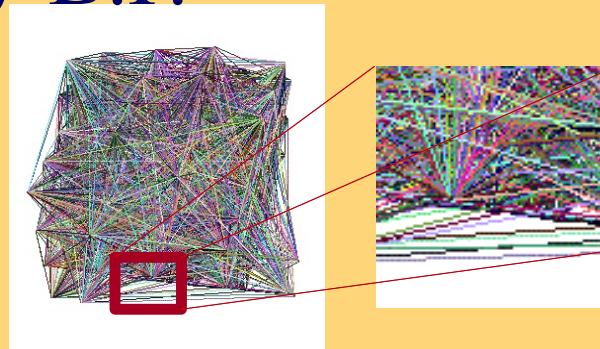


Find:

- 1) Outliers
- 2) Lock-step
- 3) B.P.

OddBall

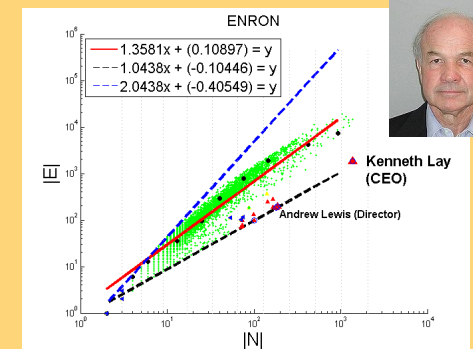
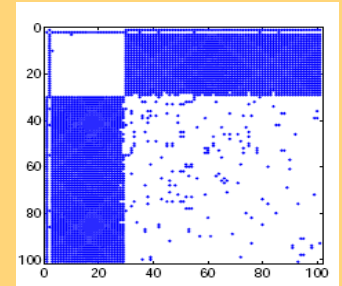
SVD



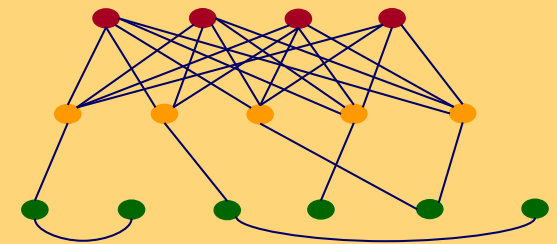
Solutions, cont'd



- un-supervised
- Spectral/tensor methods: spot lockstep behavior
 - OddBall: strange, single nodes



- semi-supervised
- BP: good for the supervised setting (ie., some labels are given)



EigenSpokes



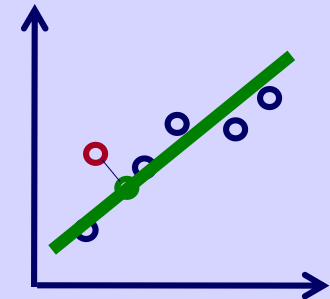
B. Aditya Prakash, Mukund Seshadri, Ashwin Sridharan, Sridhar Machiraju and Christos Faloutsos: *EigenSpokes: Surprising Patterns and Scalable Community Chipping in Large Graphs*, PAKDD 2010, Hyderabad, India, 21-24 June 2010.

EigenSpokes

- Eigenvectors of adjacency matrix
 - equivalent to singular vectors (symmetric, undirected graph)

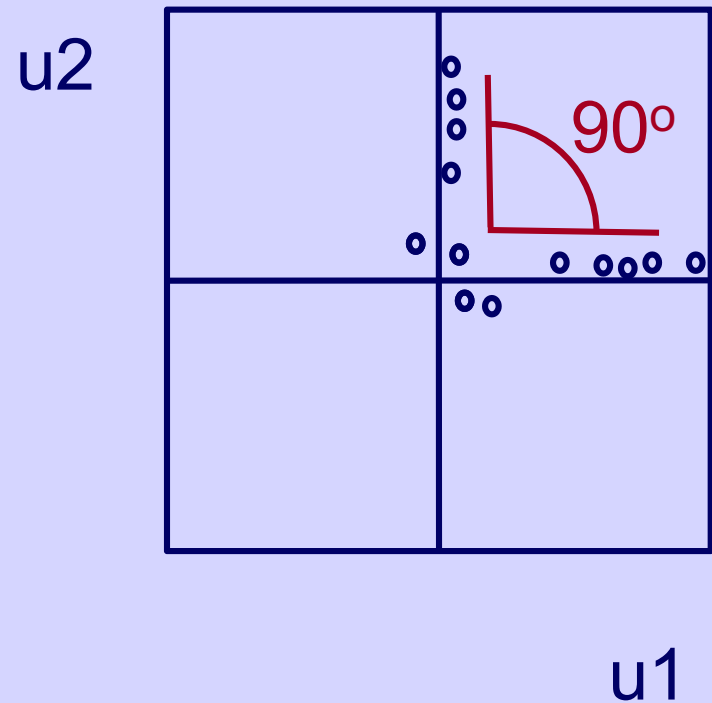
$$A = U \Sigma U^T$$

$\vec{u}_1$ $\vec{u}_i$



EigenSpokes

- EE plot:
- Scatter plot of scores of u_1 vs u_2
- One would expect
 - Many points @ origin
 - A few scattered
 - $\sim$ random

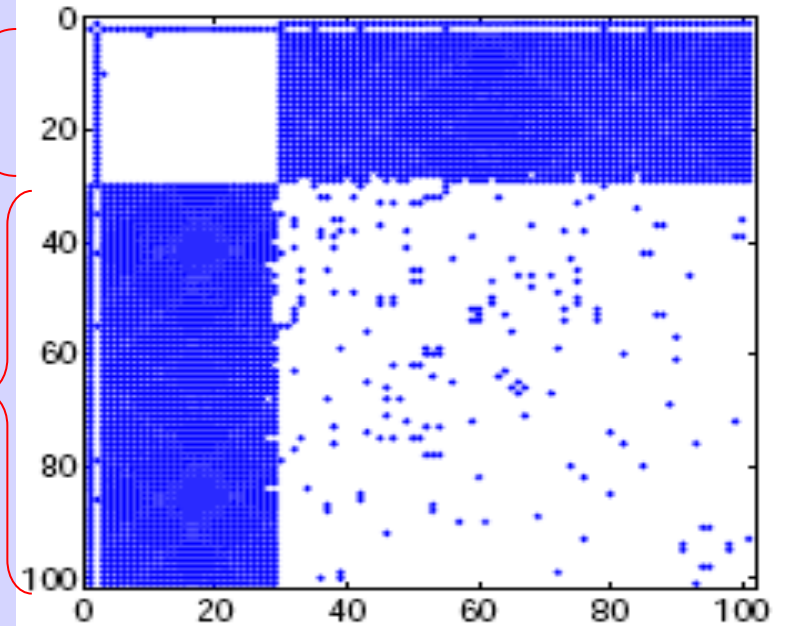
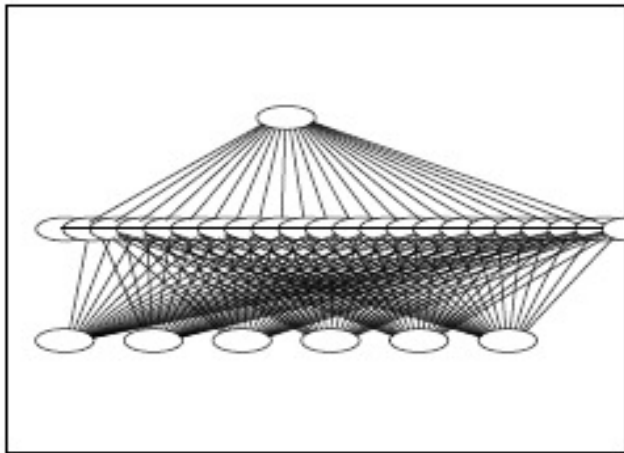


Bipartite Communities!

patents from
same inventor(s)

`cut-and-paste'
bibliography!

magnified bipartite community





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Inferring Strange Behavior from Connectivity Pattern in Social Networks



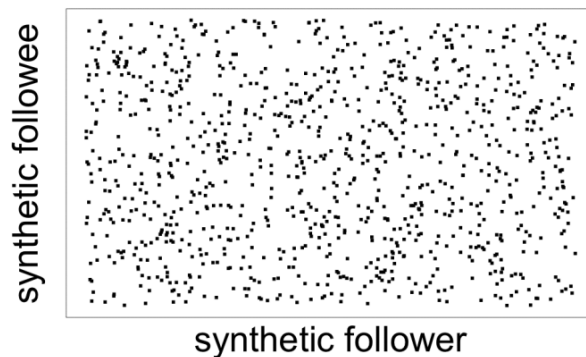
Meng Jiang, Peng Cui, Shiqiang Yang
(Tsinghua, Beijing)

Alex Beutel, Christos Faloutsos (CMU)

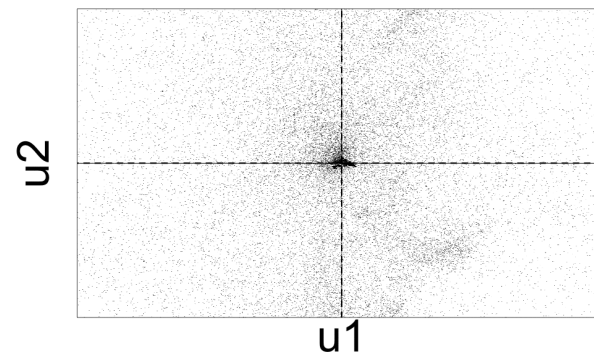
Lockstep and Spectral Subspace Plot

- Case #0: No lockstep behavior in random power law graph of 1M nodes, 3M edges
- Random $\longleftrightarrow$ “Scatter”

Adjacency Matrix



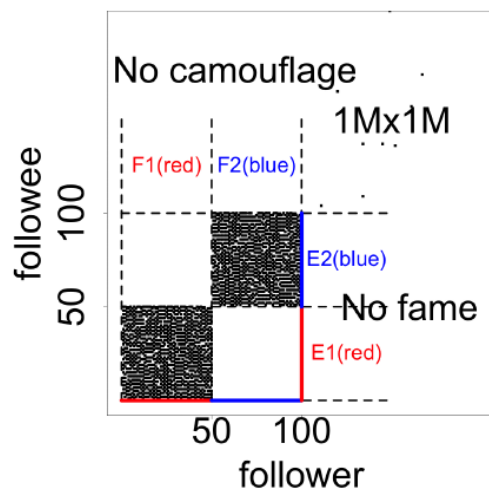
Spectral Subspace Plot



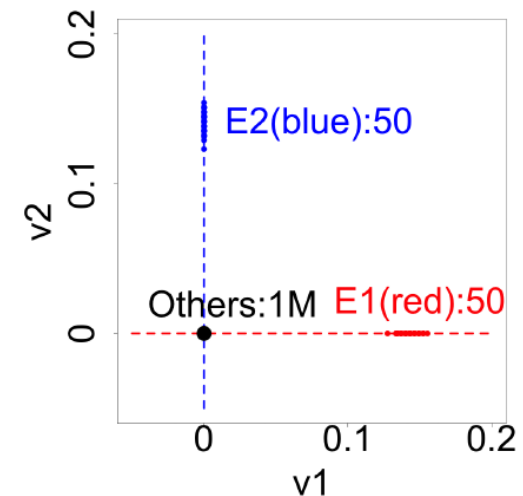
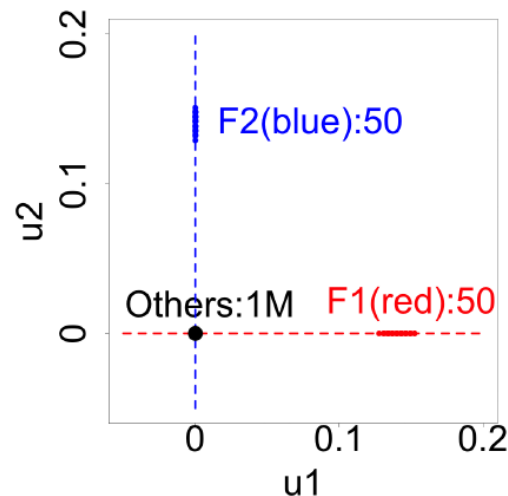
Lockstep and Spectral Subspace Plot

- Case #1: non-overlapping lockstep
- “Blocks” $\longleftrightarrow$ “Rays”

Adjacency Matrix



Spectral Subspace Plot

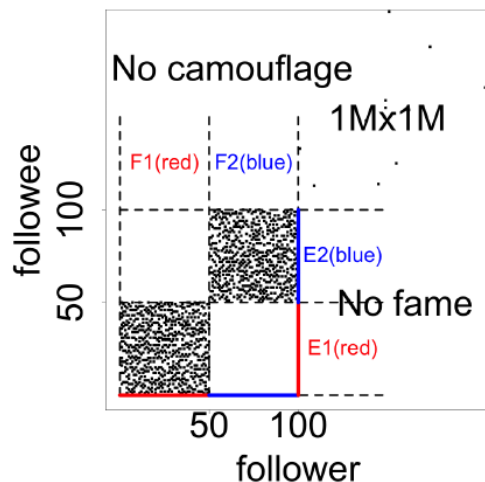


Rule 1 (short “rays”): two blocks, high density (90%), no “camouflage”, no “fame”

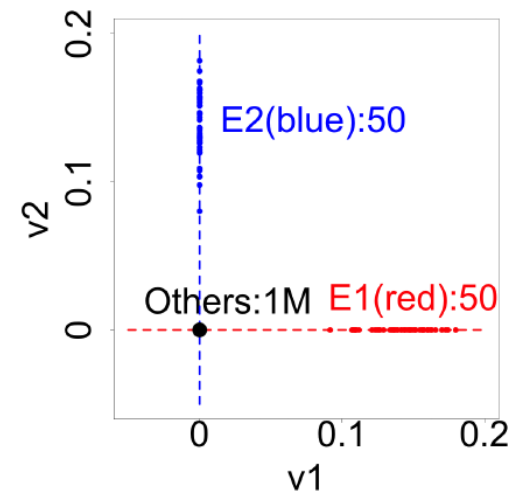
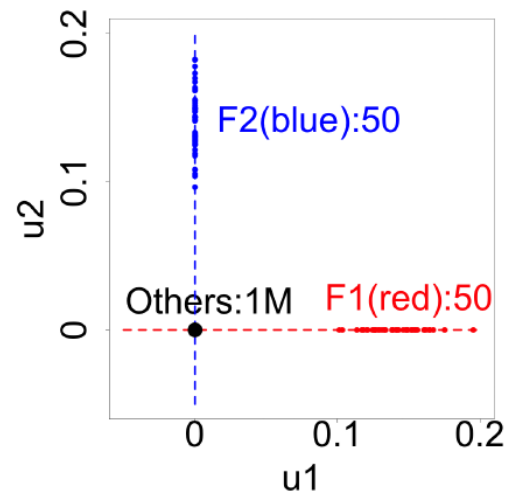
Lockstep and Spectral Subspace Plot

- Case #2: non-overlapping lockstep
- “Blocks; low density” $\longleftrightarrow$ Elongation

Adjacency Matrix



Spectral Subspace Plot

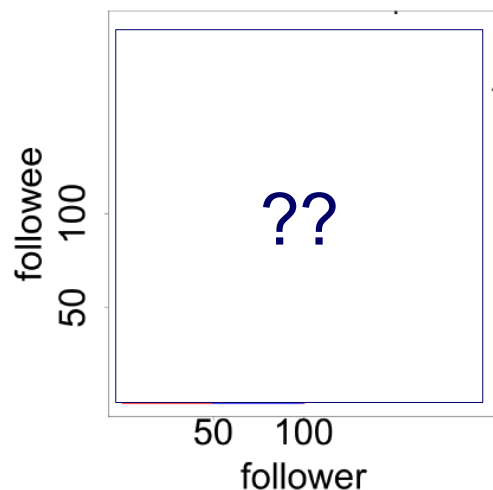


Rule 2 (long “rays”): two blocks, low density (50%), no “camouflage”, no “fame”

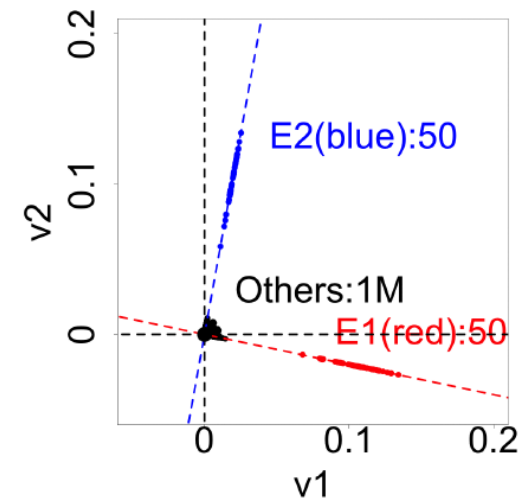
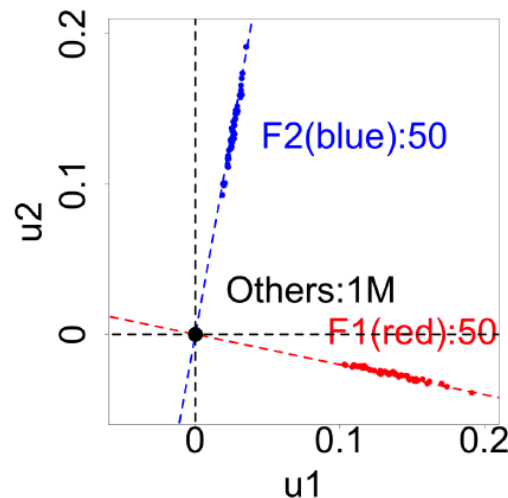
Lockstep and Spectral Subspace Plot

- Case #3: non-overlapping lockstep

Adjacency Matrix



Spectral Subspace Plot

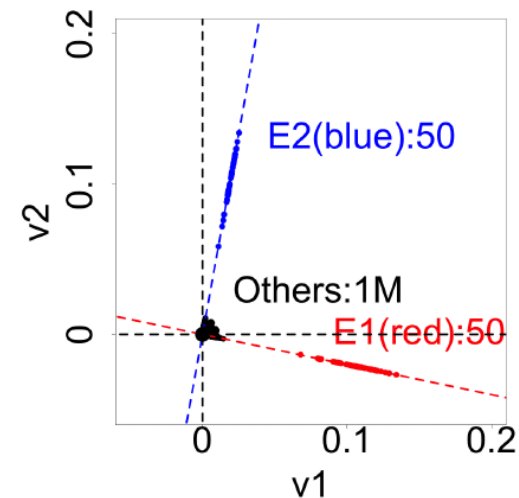
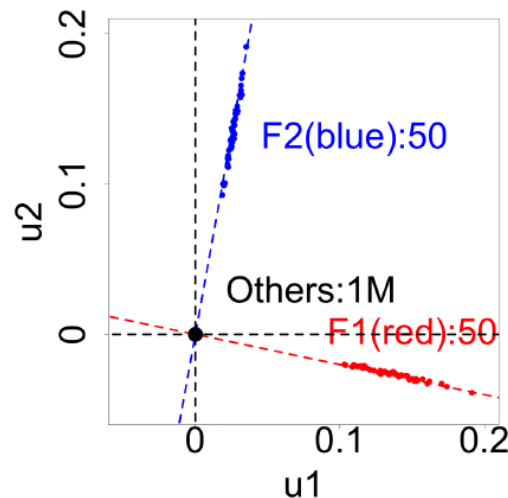
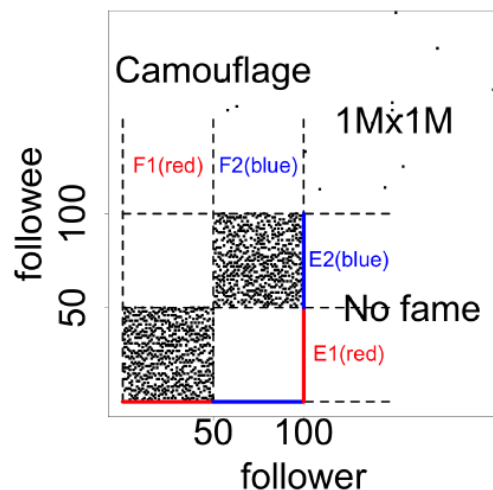


Lockstep and Spectral Subspace Plot

- Case #3: non-overlapping lockstep
- “**Camouflage**” (or “Fame”) $\longleftrightarrow$ Tilting “Rays”

Adjacency Matrix

Spectral Subspace Plot



Rule 3 (tilting “rays”): two blocks, with “camouflage”, no “fame”

Lockstep and Spectral Subspace Plot

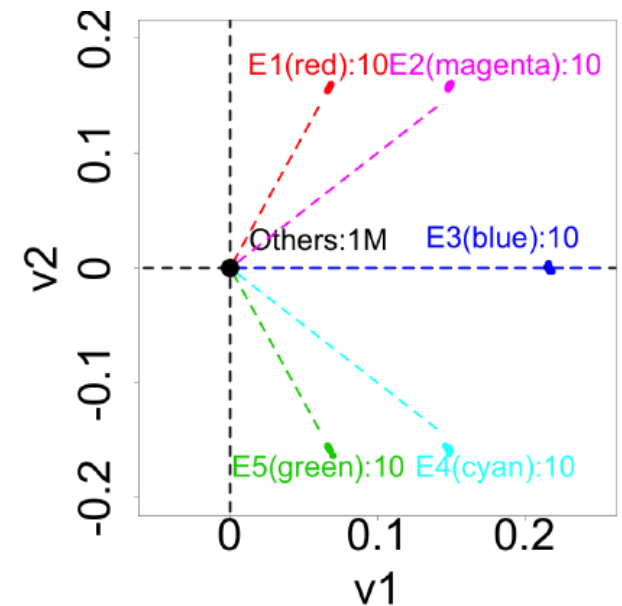
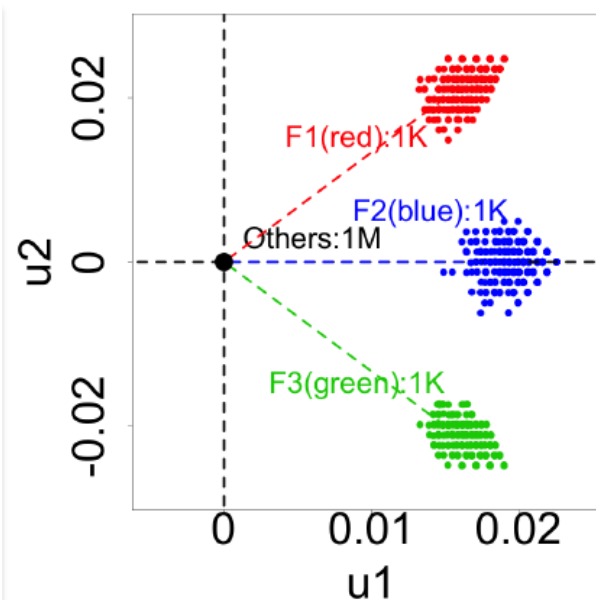
- Case #4: ? lockstep
- “?” “Pearls”



Adjacency Matrix

Spectral Subspace Plot

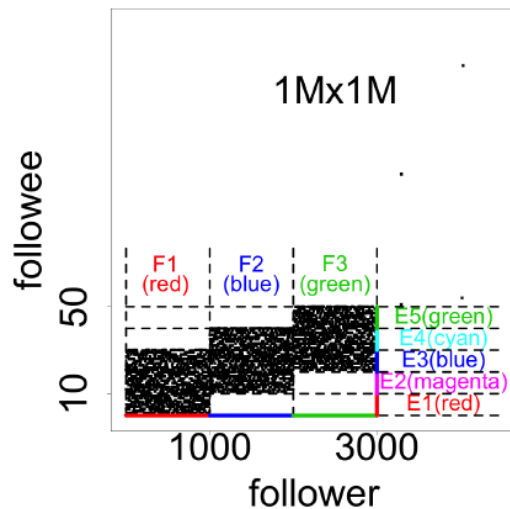
?



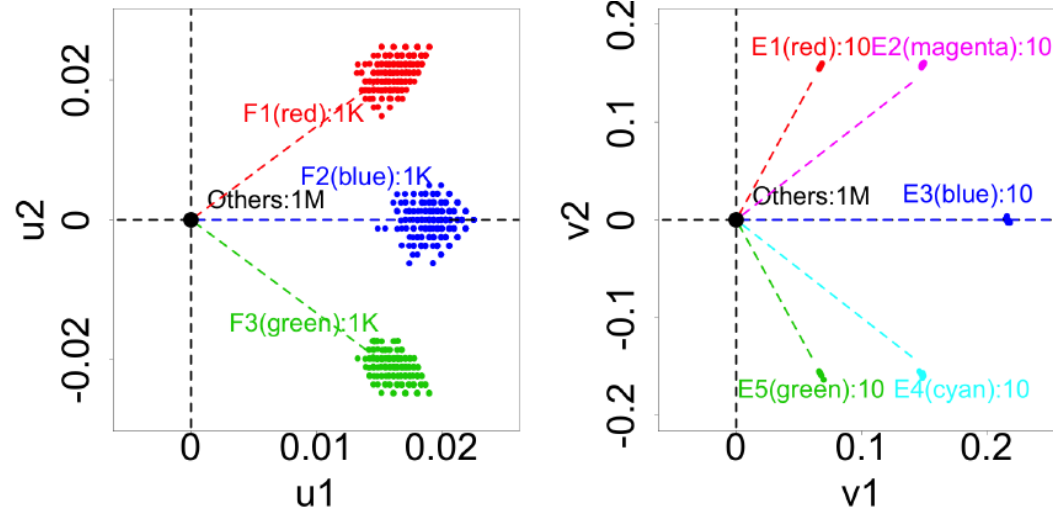
Lockstep and Spectral Subspace Plot

- Case #4: **overlapping lockstep**
- “**Staircase**” $\longleftrightarrow$ “**Pearls**”

Adjacency Matrix



Spectral Subspace Plot

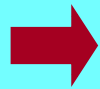


Rule 4 (“pearls”): a “staircase” of three partially overlapping blocks.



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OddBall: Spotting Anomalies in Weighted Graphs



Leman Akoglu, Mary McGlohon, Christos
Faloutsos

*Carnegie Mellon University
School of Computer Science*

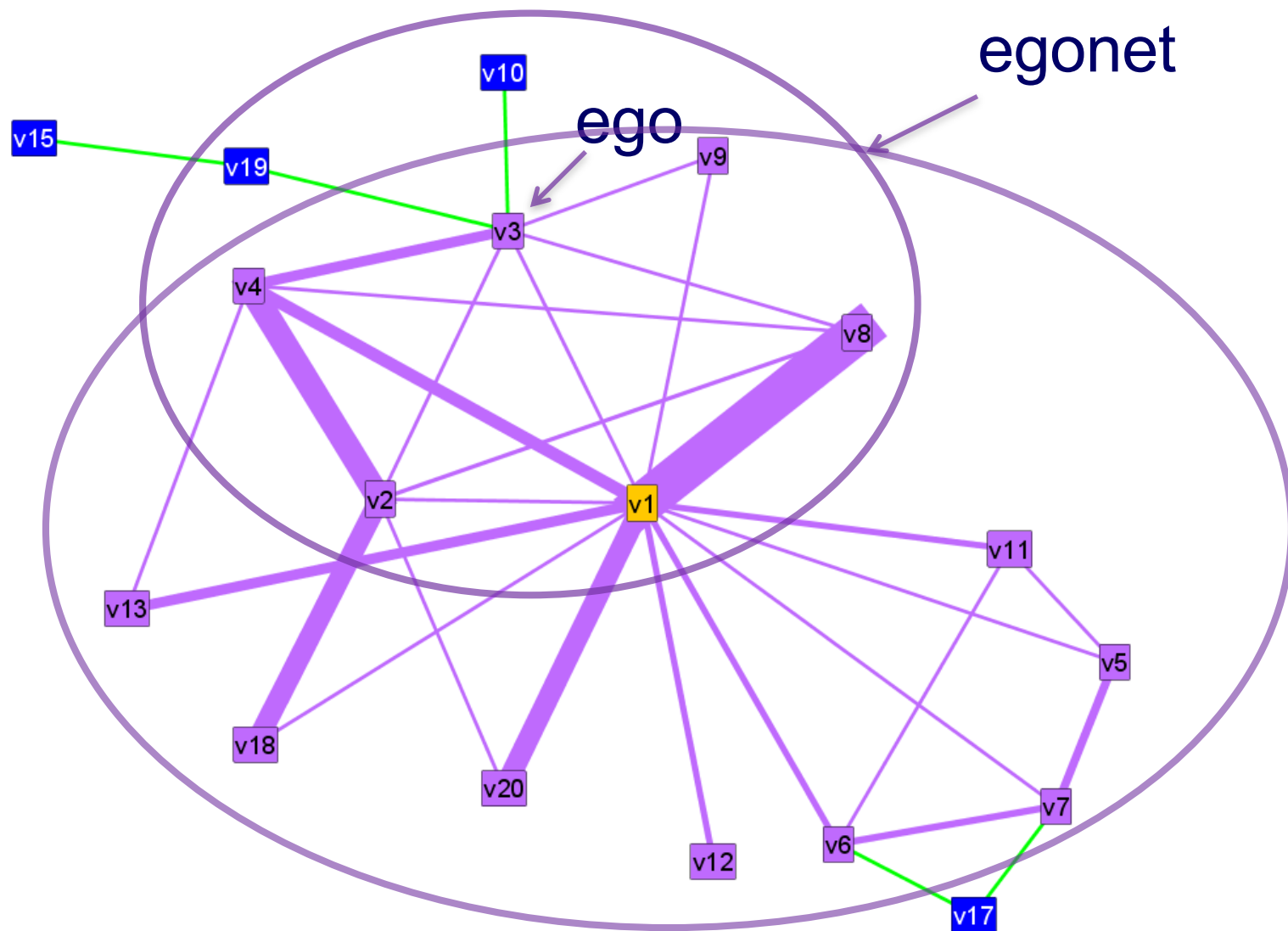
PAKDD 2010, Hyderabad, India

Main idea

For each node,

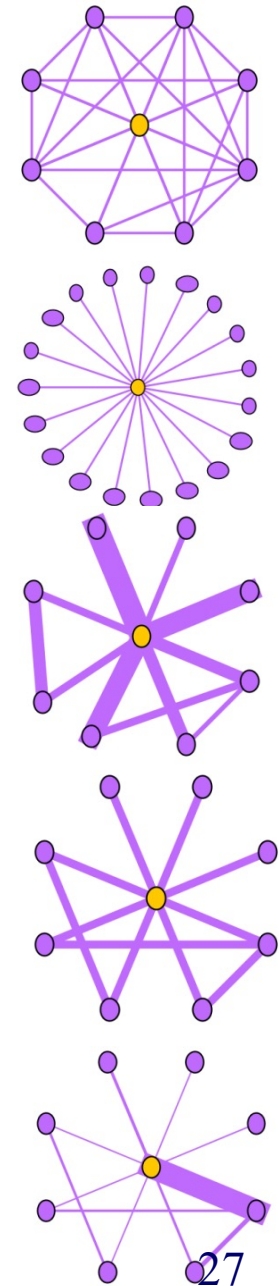
- extract ‘ego-net’ (=1-step-away neighbors)
- Extract features (#edges, total weight, etc etc)
- Compare with the rest of the population

What is an egonet?

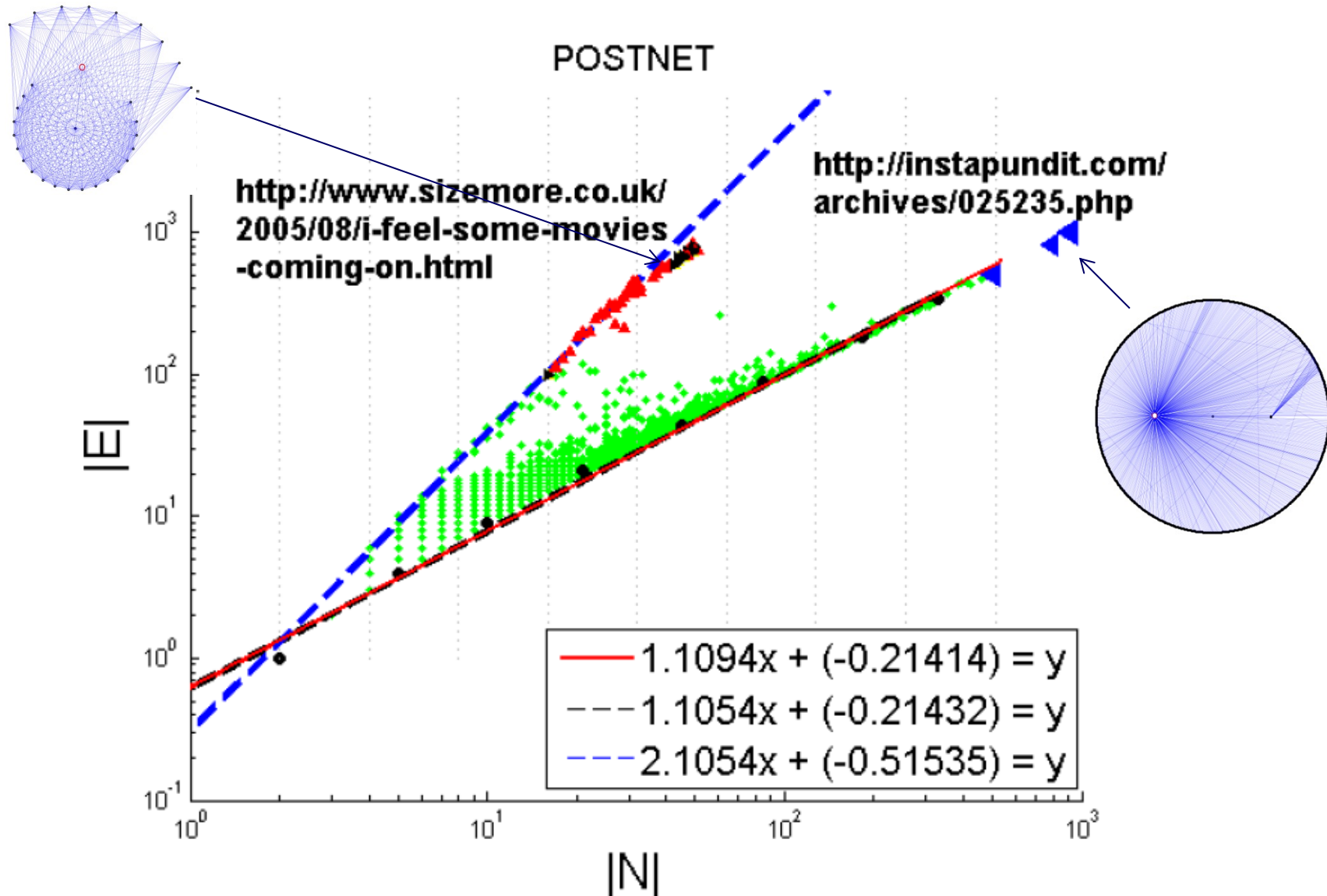


Selected Features

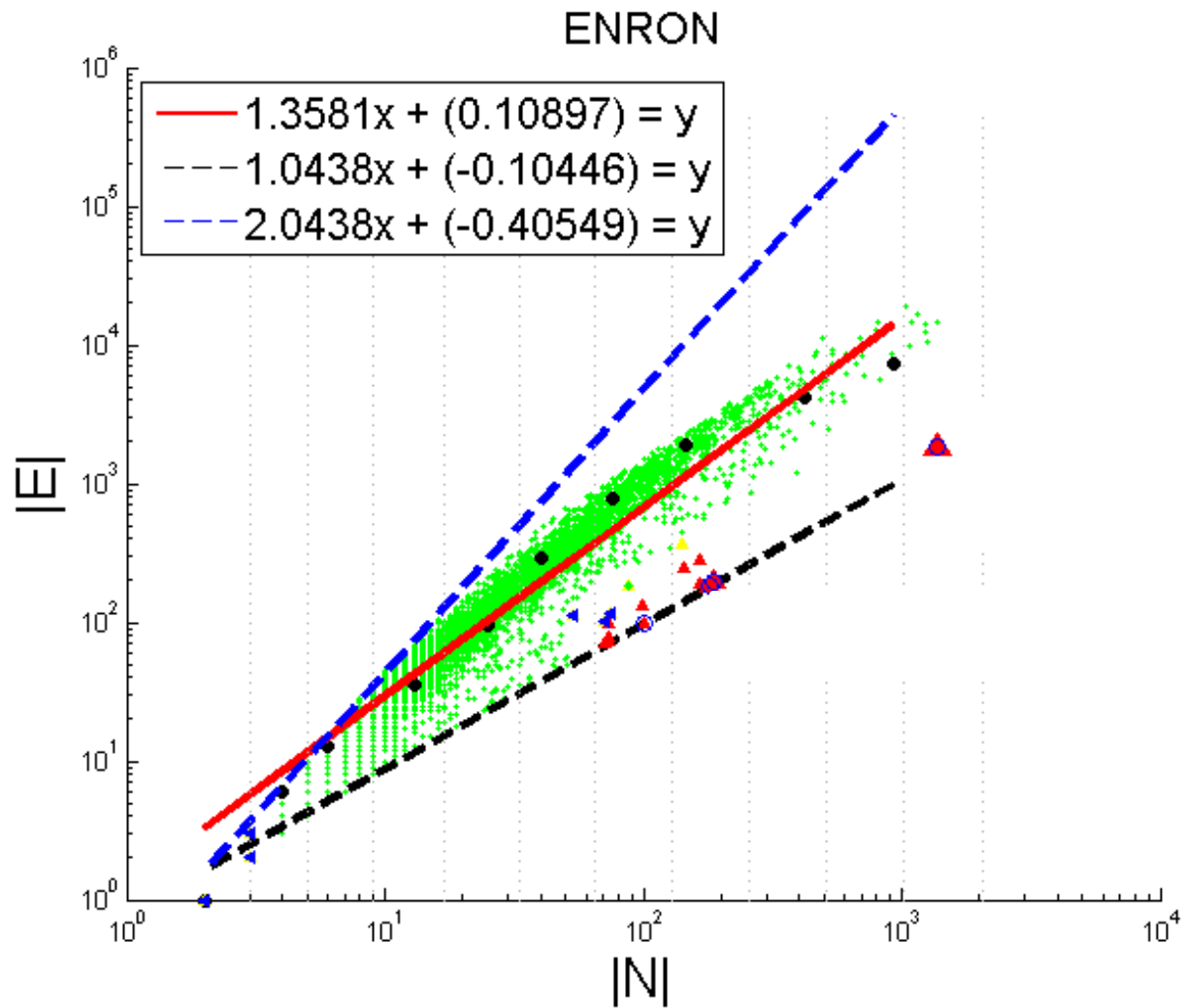
- N_i : number of neighbors (degree) of ego i
- E_i : number of edges in egonet i
- W_i : total weight of egonet i
- $\lambda_{w,i}$: principal eigenvalue of the **weighted** adjacency matrix of egonet I



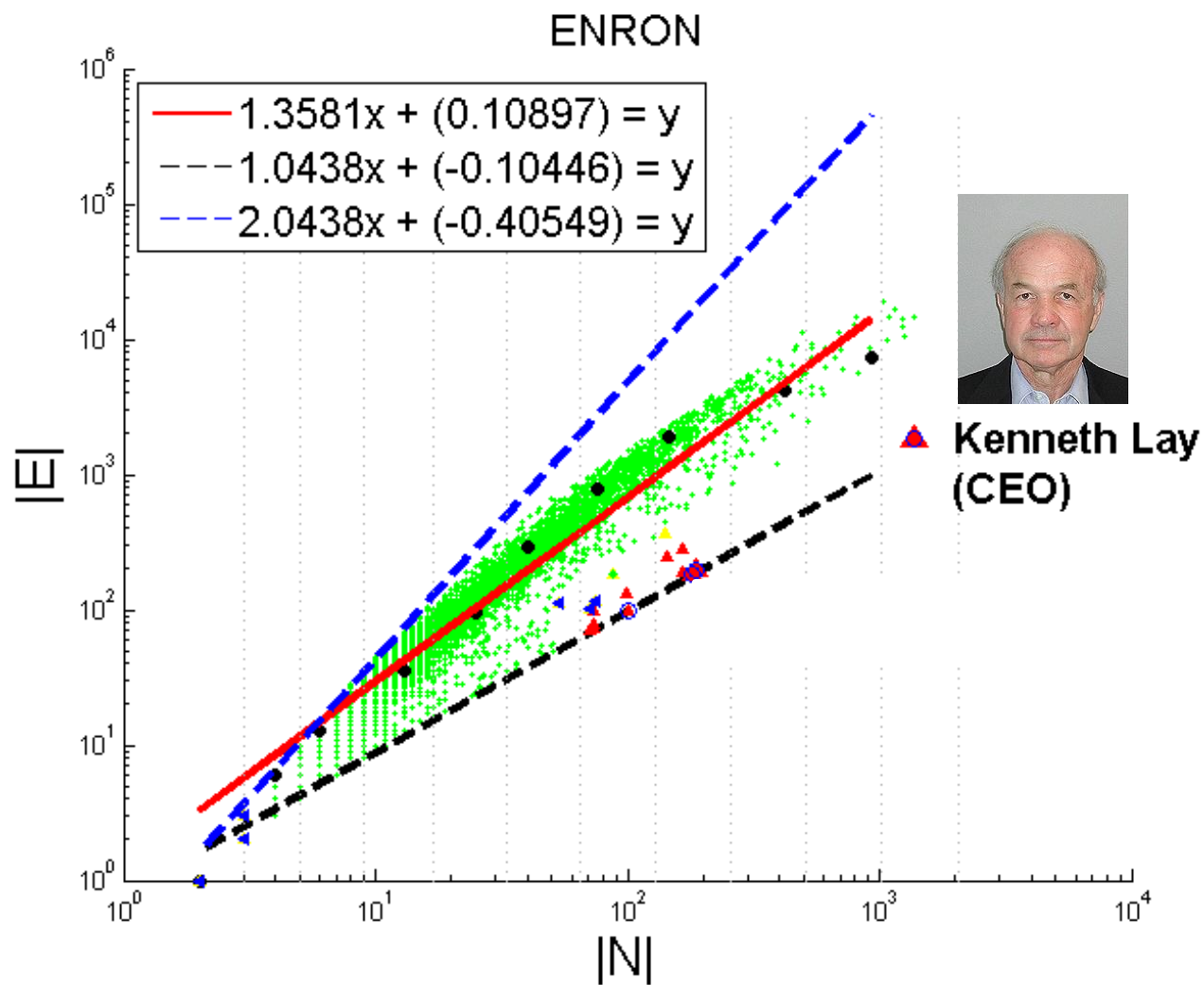
Near-Clique/Star



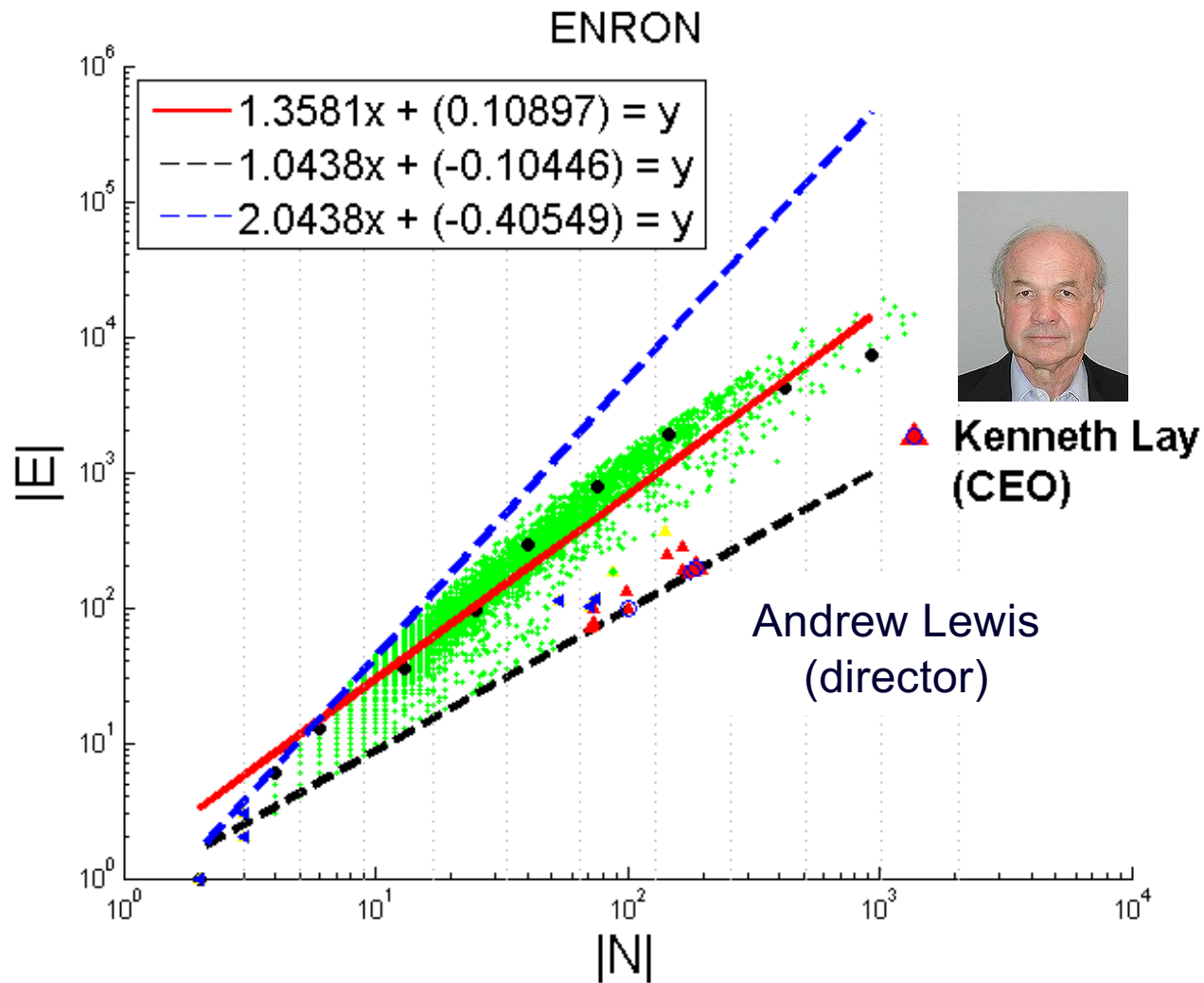
Near-Clique/Star



Near-Clique/Star



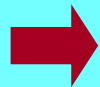
Near-Clique/Star





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 - Patterns of IAT
 - [tensors]
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Fraud

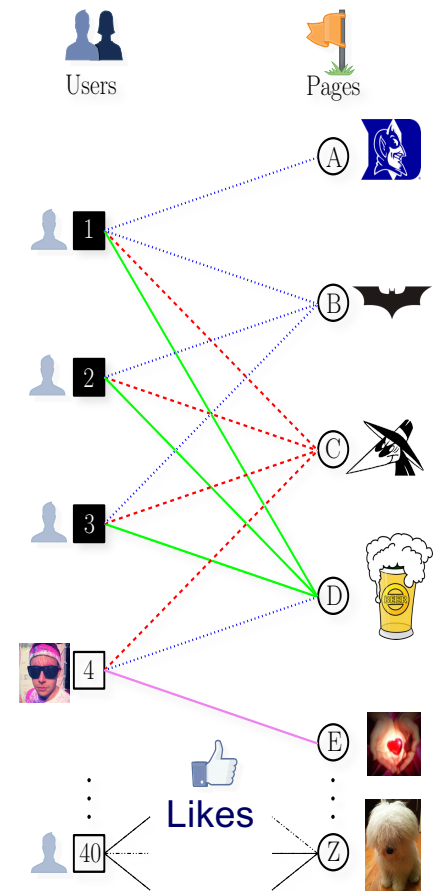
- Given
 - Who ‘likes’ what page, and when
- Find
 - Suspicious users and suspicious products



CopyCatch: Stopping Group Attacks by Spotting Lockstep Behavior in Social Networks, Alex Beutel, Wanhong Xu, Venkatesan Guruswami, Christopher Palow, Christos Faloutsos *WWW*, 2013.

Fraud

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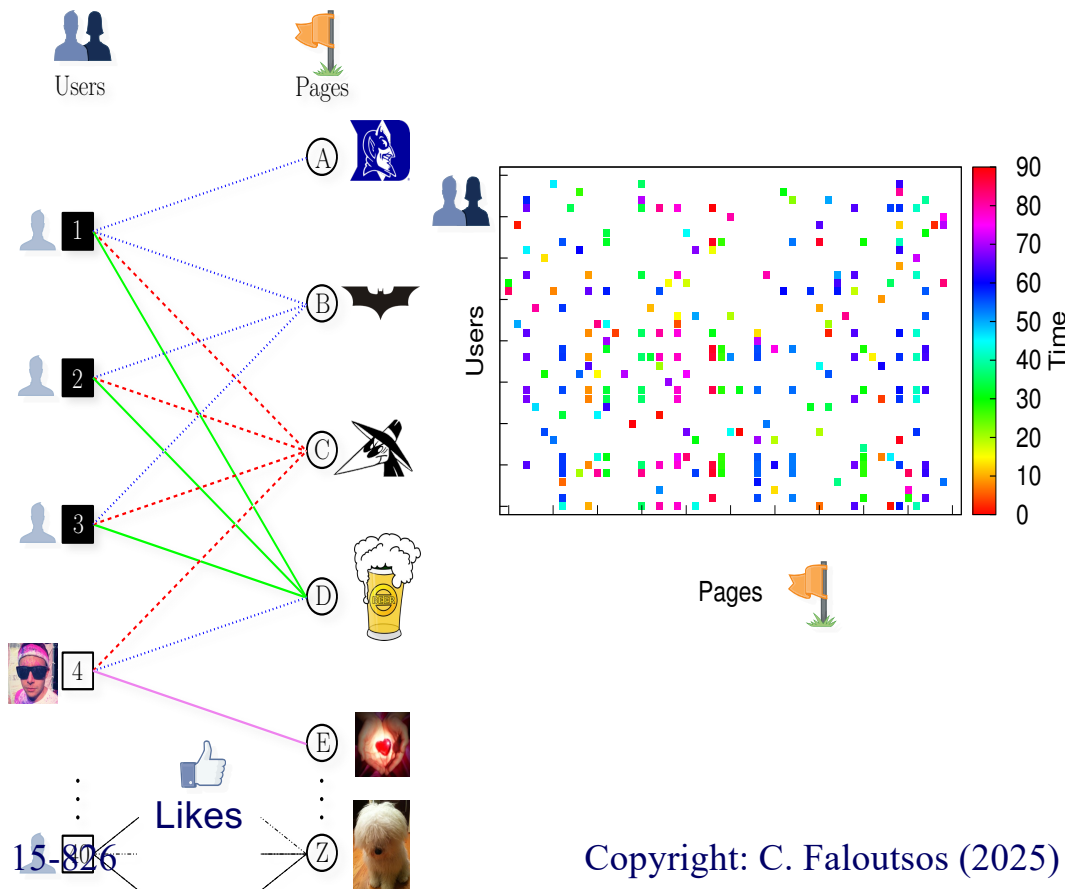
CopyCatch: Stopping Group Attacks by Spotting Lockstep Behavior in Social Networks, Alex Beutel, Wanhong Xu, Venkatesan Guruswami, Christopher Palow, Christos Faloutsos *WWW, 2013*.

Graph Patterns and Lockstep Behavior

Our intuition



Lockstep behavior: Same Likes, same time



Copyright: C. Faloutsos (2025)

December 2013						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

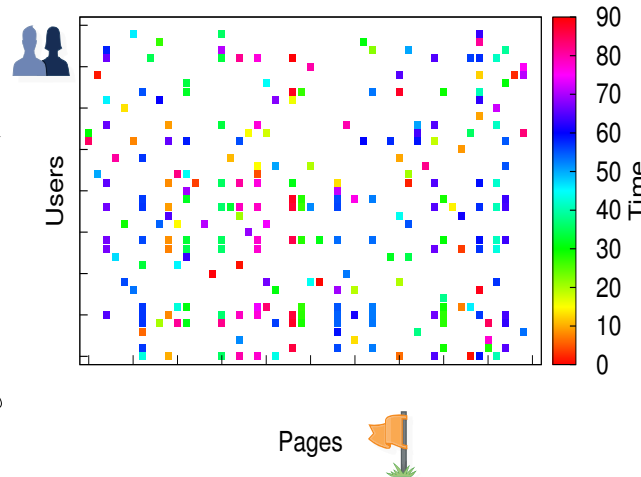
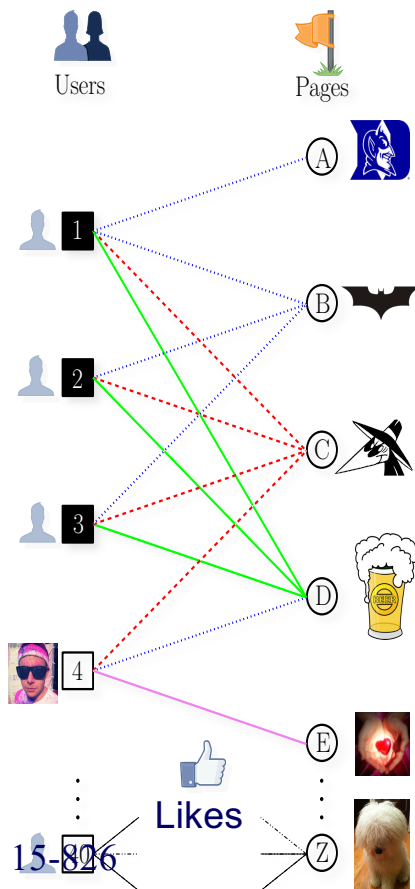
Graph Patterns and Lockstep Behavior

Our intuition

Behavior



Lockstep behavior: Same Likes, same time



December 2013

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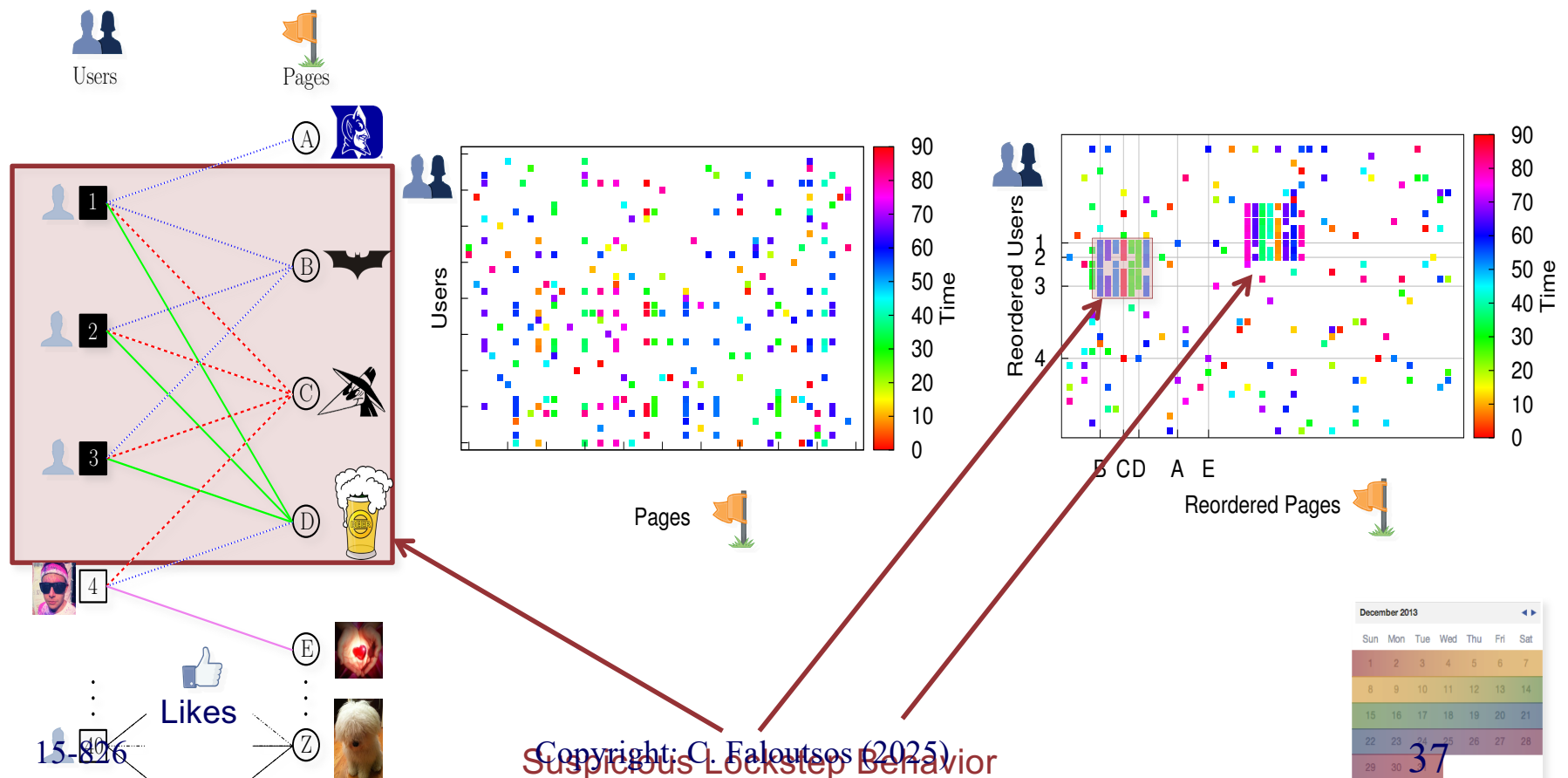
Copyright: C. Faloutsos (2025)

Graph Patterns and Lockstep Behavior

Our intuition



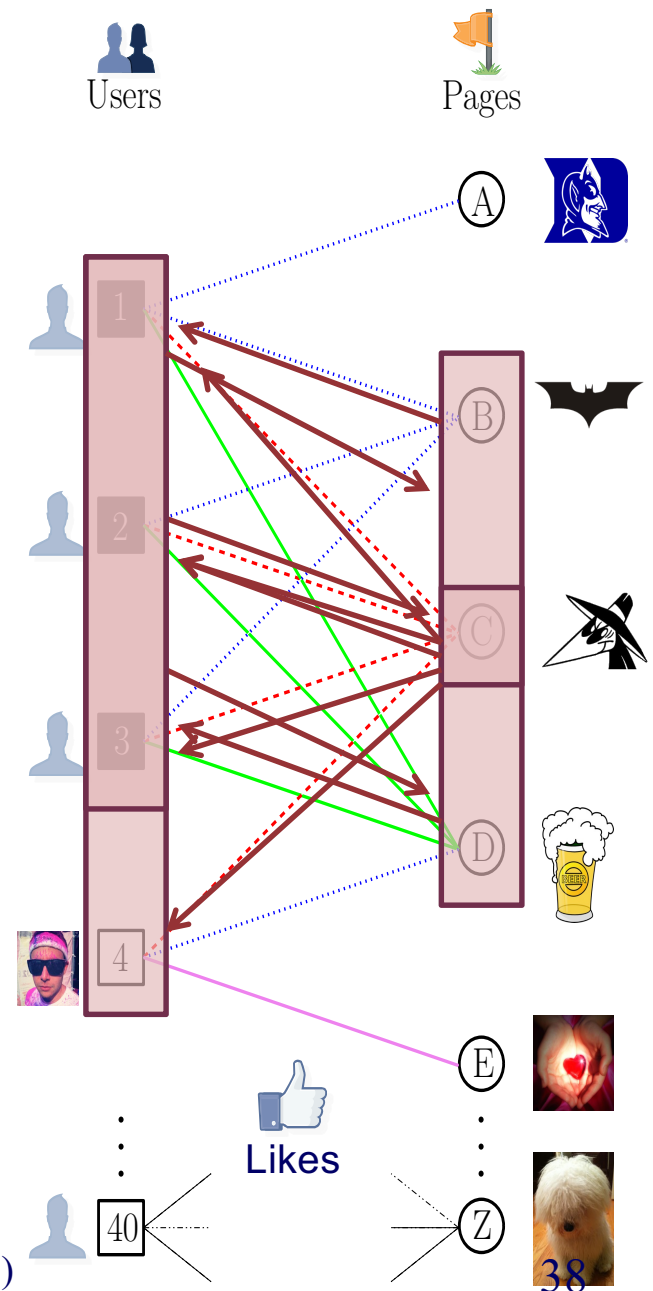
Lockstep behavior: Same Likes, same time



MapReduce Overview

Use Hadoop to search for many clusters in parallel:

1. **Start** with randomly seed
2. **Update** set of Pages and center Like times for each cluster
3. **Repeat** until convergence

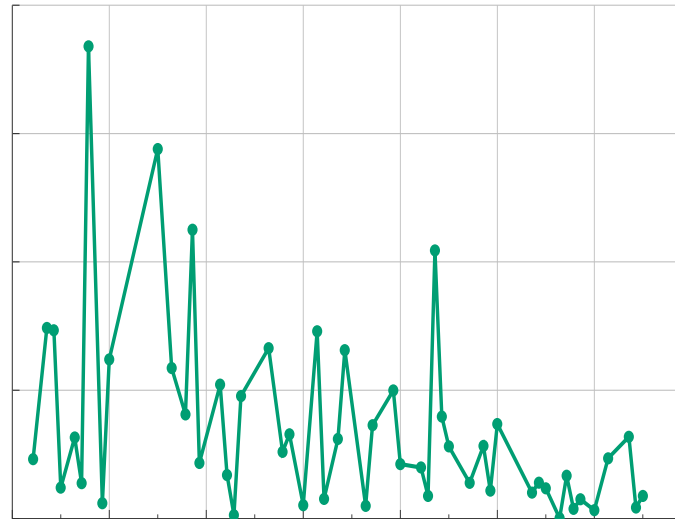


Deployment at Facebook

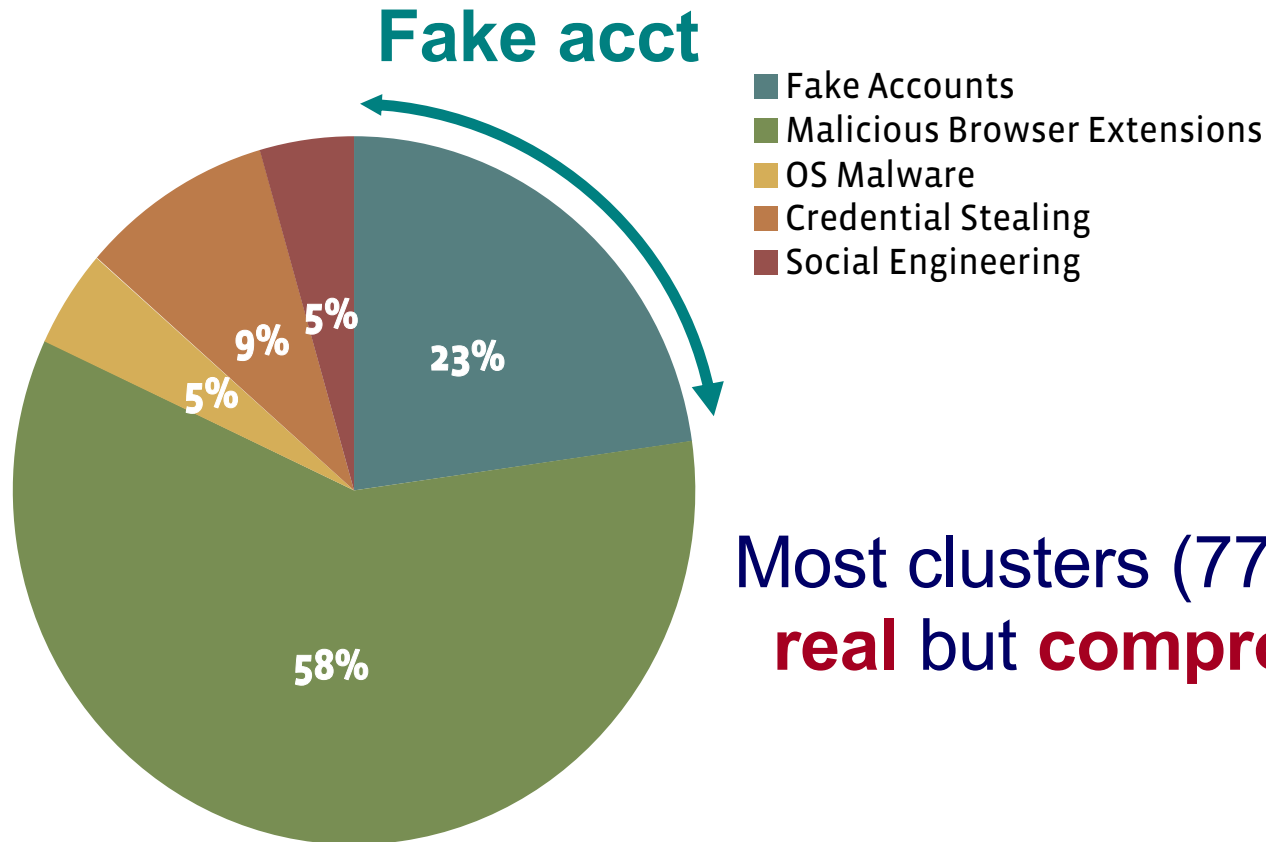
CopyCatch runs regularly (along with many other security mechanisms, and a large Site Integrity team)

3 months of *CopyCatch* @ Facebook

#users
caught



Deployment at Facebook



Most clusters (77%) come from **real** but **compromised** users

Manually labeled 22 randomly selected *clusters* from February 2013



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KDD 2015 – Sydney,
Australia

RSC: Mining and Modeling Temporal Activity in Social Media

Alceu F. Costa* Yuto Yamaguchi Agma J. M. Traina

Caetano Traina Jr. Christos Faloutsos

*alceufc@icmc.usp.br

Pattern Mining: Datasets

Reddit Dataset

Time-stamp from comments
21,198 users
20 Million time-stamps

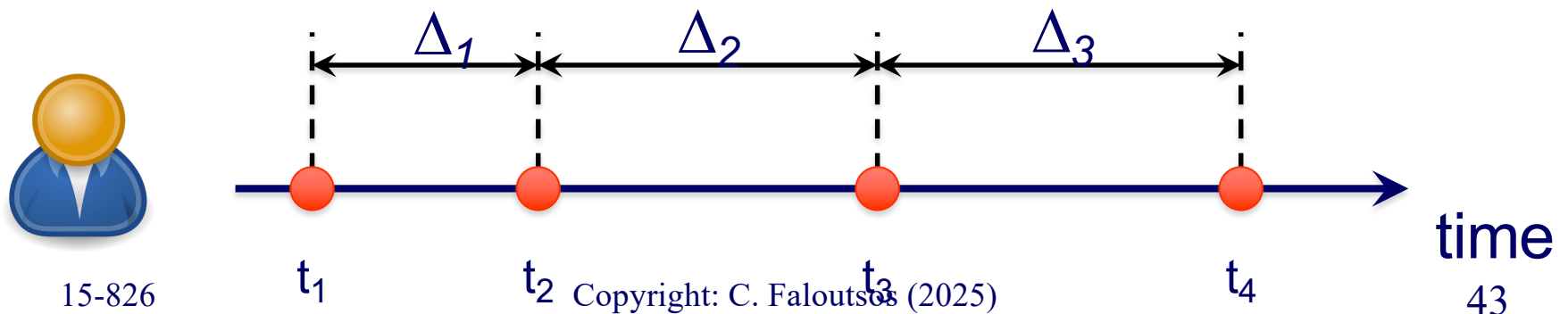
Twitter Dataset

Time-stamp from tweets
6,790 users
16 Million time-stamps

For each user we have:

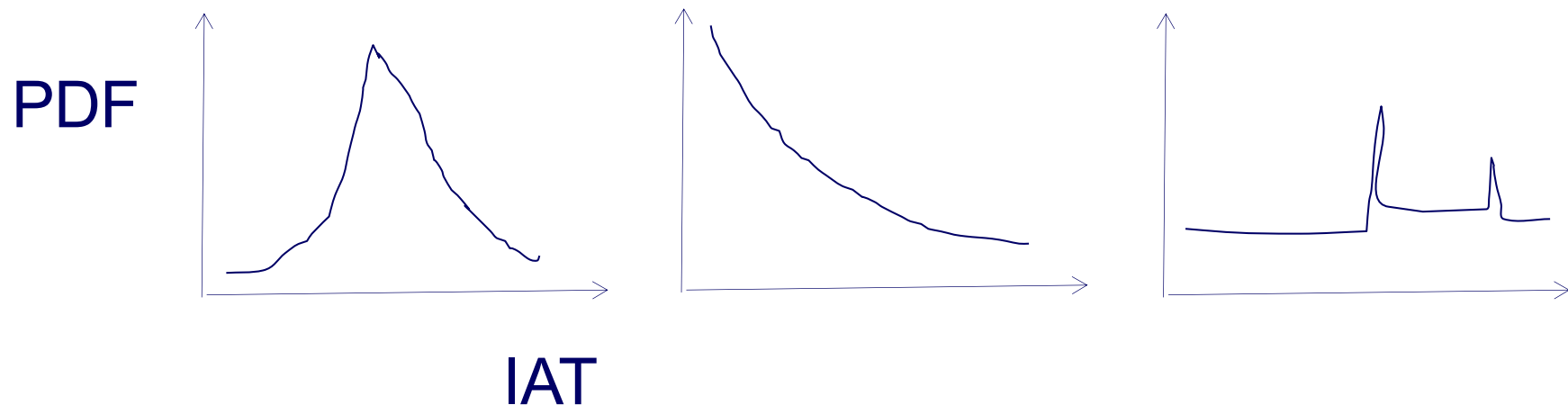
Sequence of postings time-stamps: $T = (t_1, t_2, t_3, \dots)$

Inter-arrival times (IAT) of postings: $(\Delta_1, \Delta_2, \Delta_3, \dots)$



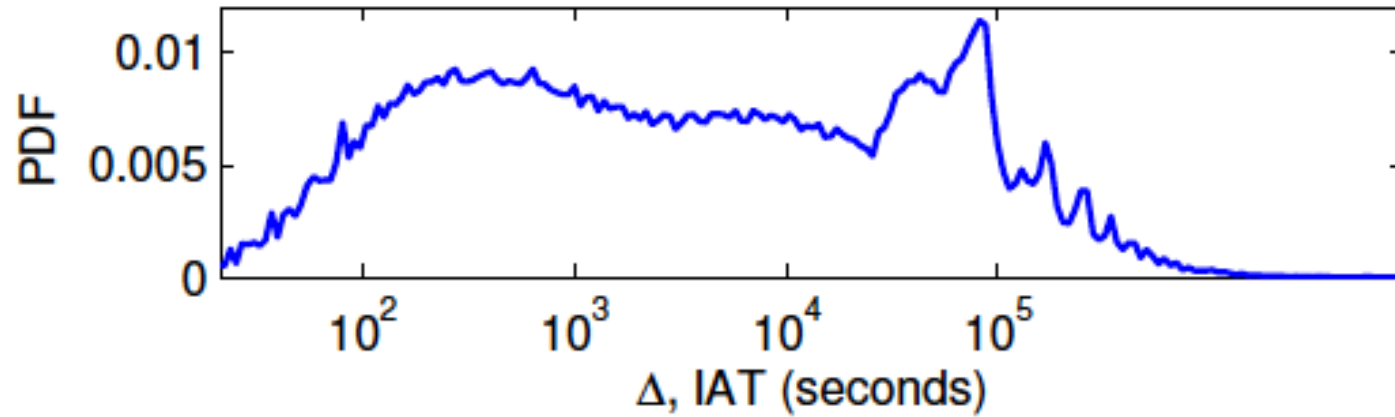
Guess the IAT pdf

- Gaussian ($10'$ +/- a bit)?
- Power law? Slope?
- Log-logistic?
- Periodic (spike for 1 day, 1 week)?

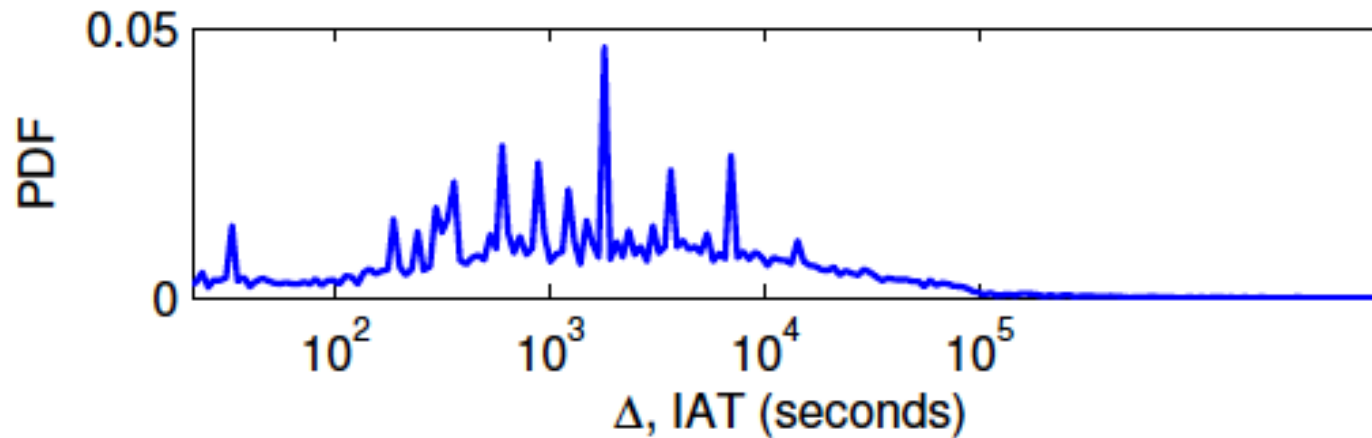


Human? Robots?

linear



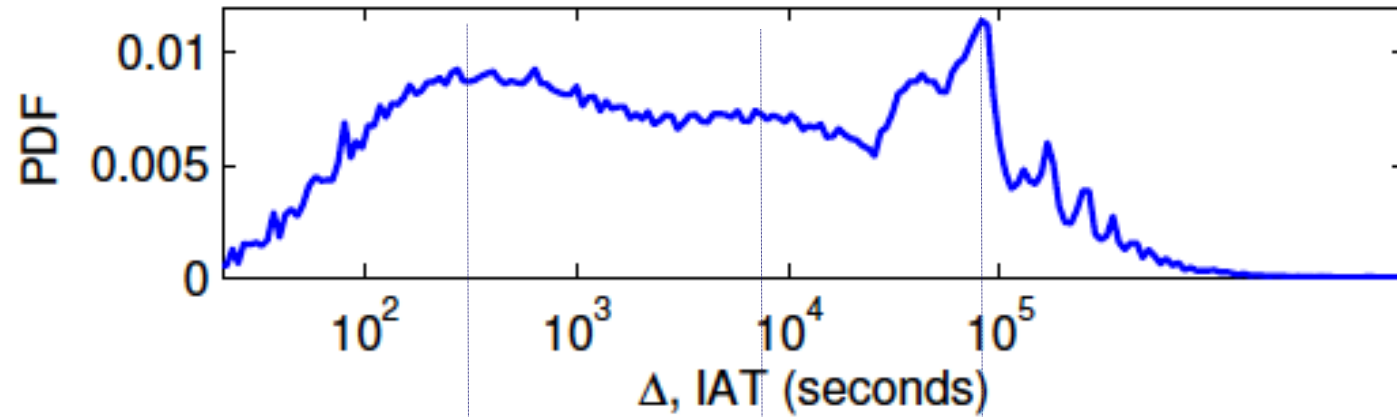
log



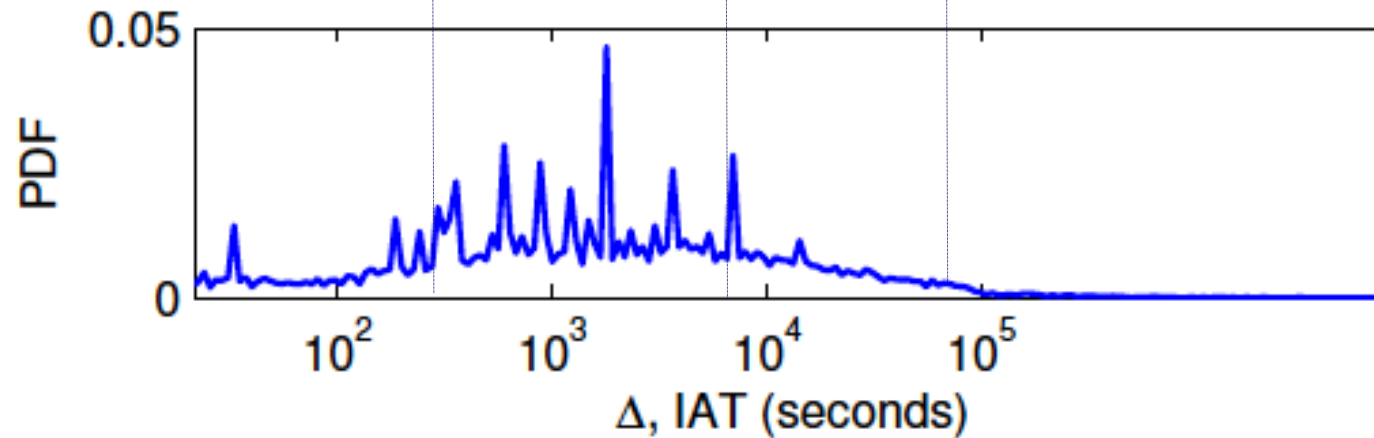
Human? Robots?

2' 3h 1day

linear



log

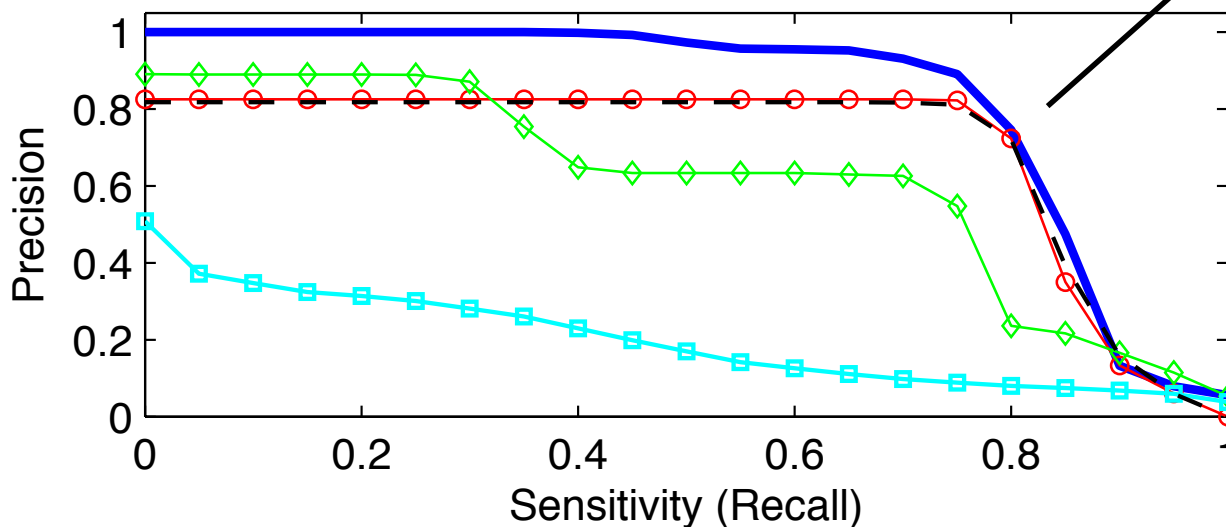


Experiments: Can RSC-Spotter Detect Bots?

Precision vs. Sensitivity Curves

Good performance: curve close to the top

Twitter Dataset



Precision > 94%
Sensitivity > 70%

With strongly imbalanced datasets

— RSC-Spotter

—○ IAT Hist.

15-826

—◇ Entropy [6]

—□ Weekday Hist.

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--- All Features

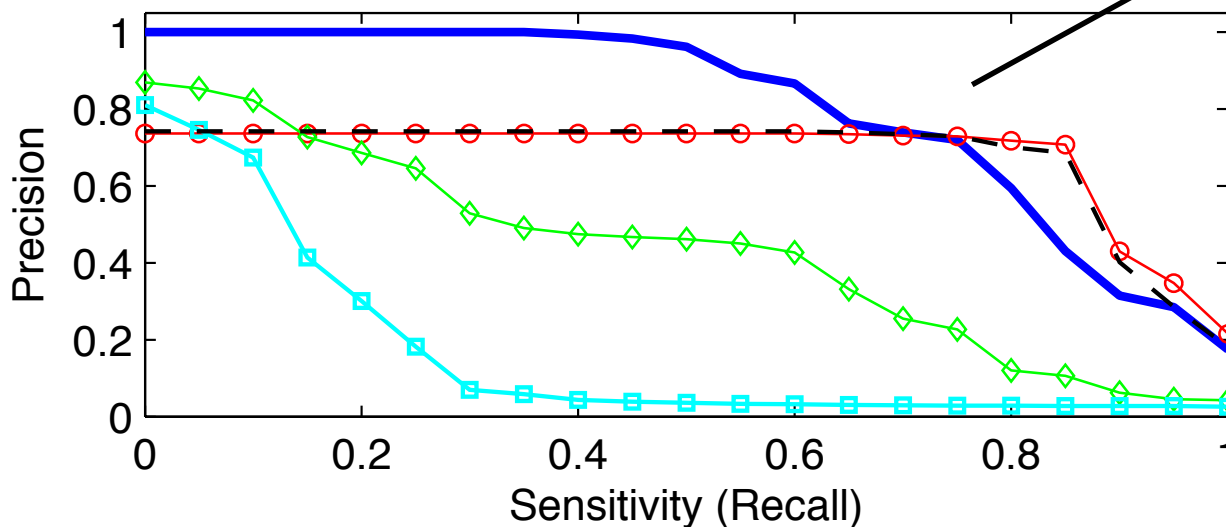
humans >> # bots

Experiments: Can RSC-Spotter Detect Bots?

Precision vs. Sensitivity Curves

Good performance: curve close to the top

Reddit Dataset



Precision > 96%
Sensitivity > 47%

With strongly imbalanced datasets

— RSC-Spotter

—○ IAT Hist.

15-826

—◇ Entropy [6]

—□ Weekday Hist.

--- All Features

humans >> # bots

Copyright: C. Faloutsos (2025)

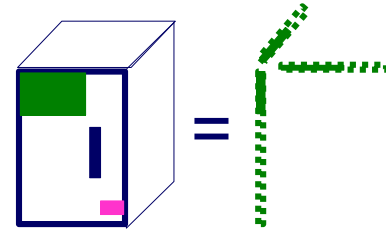


Roadmap

- Introduction – Motivation
- Unsupervised
 - static graphs
 - Time-evolving graphs
 - ‘copyCatch’ in FaceBook
 - Patterns of IAT
 - [tensors]
- Supervised: BP
- Conclusions

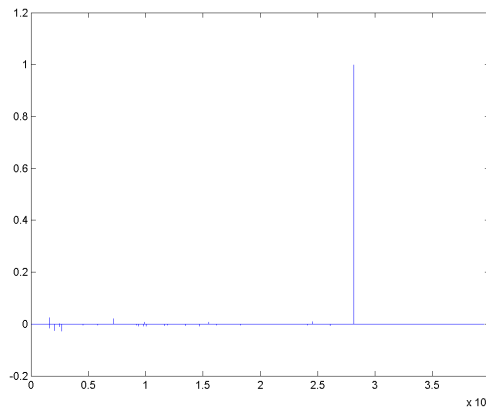


Anomaly detection in time-evolving graphs

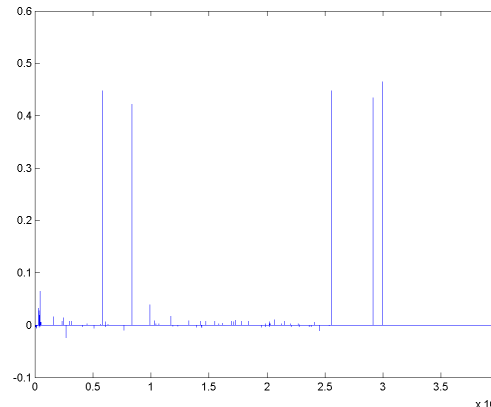


- Anomalous communities in phone call data:
 - European country, 4M clients, data over 2 weeks

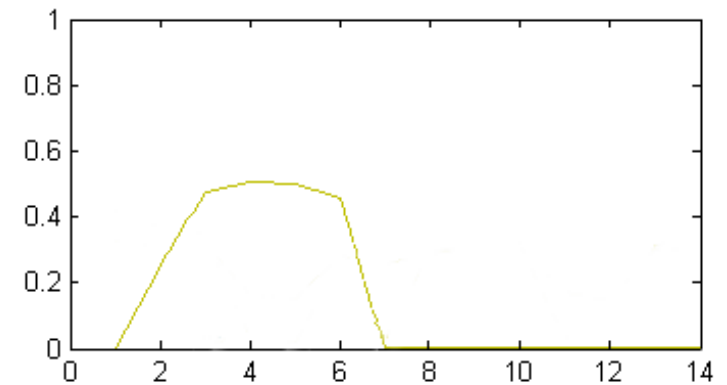
1 caller



5 receivers

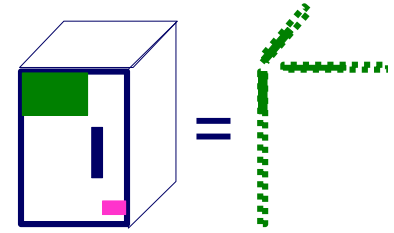


4 days of activity

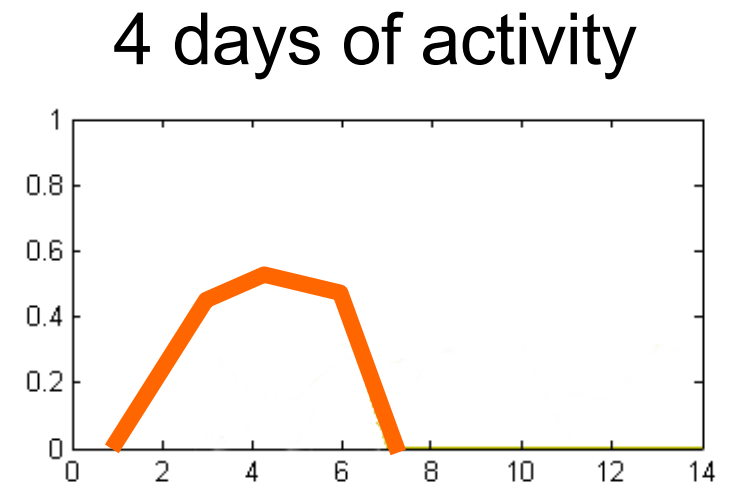
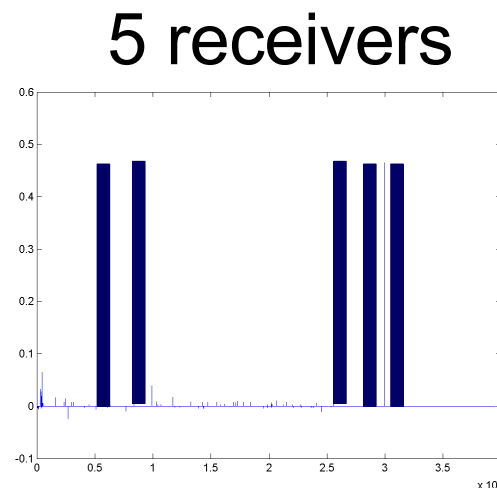
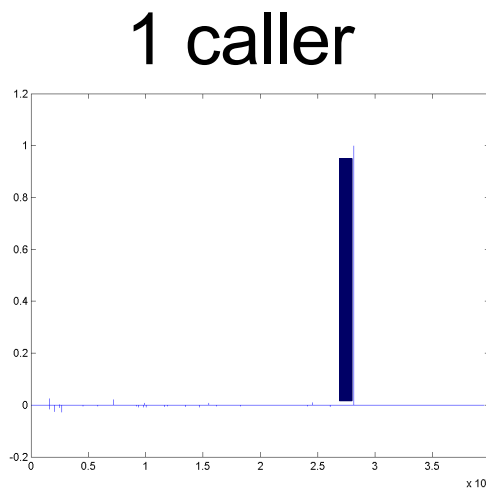


~200 calls to EACH receiver on EACH day!

Anomaly detection in time-evolving graphs

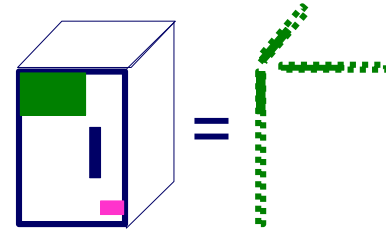


- Anomalous communities in phone call data:
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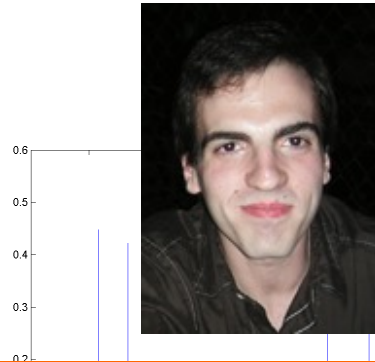
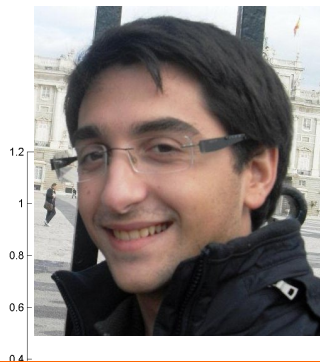


~200 calls to EACH receiver on EACH day!

Anomaly detection in time-evolving graphs



- Anomalous communities in phone call data:
 - European country, 4M clients, data over 2 weeks



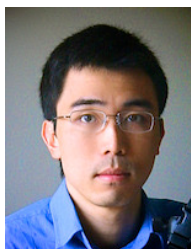
Miguel Araujo, Spiros Papadimitriou, Stephan Günnemann, Christos Faloutsos, Prithwish Basu, Ananthram Swami, Evangelos Papalexakis, Danai Koutra. *Com2: Fast Automatic Discovery of Temporal (Comet) Communities.* PAKDD 2014, Tainan, Taiwan.



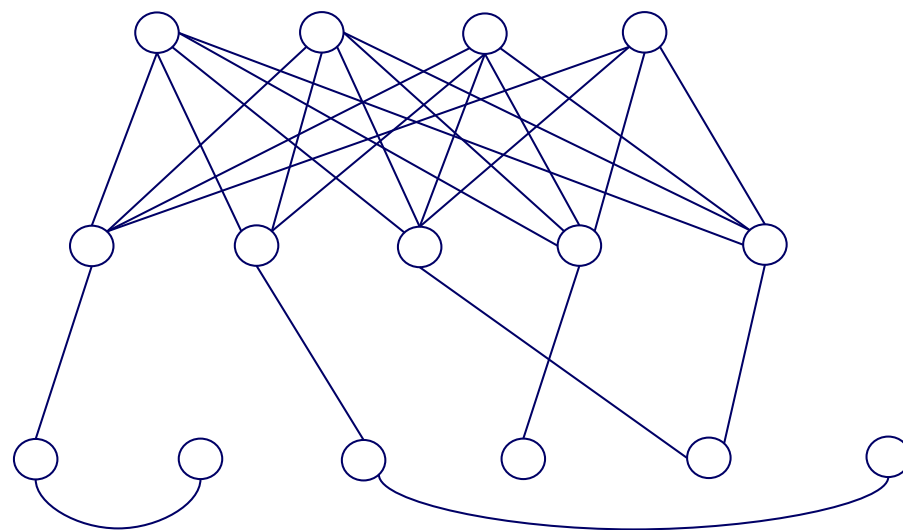
Roadmap

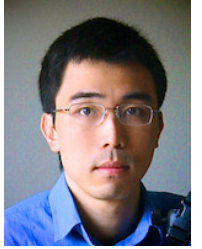
- Introduction – Motivation
- Unsupervised
 - static graphs
 - Time-evolving graphs
- Supervised: BP
 - ➔ – Ebay fraud (‘NetProbe’)
 - Malware (Polonium)
- Conclusions

E-bay Fraud detection

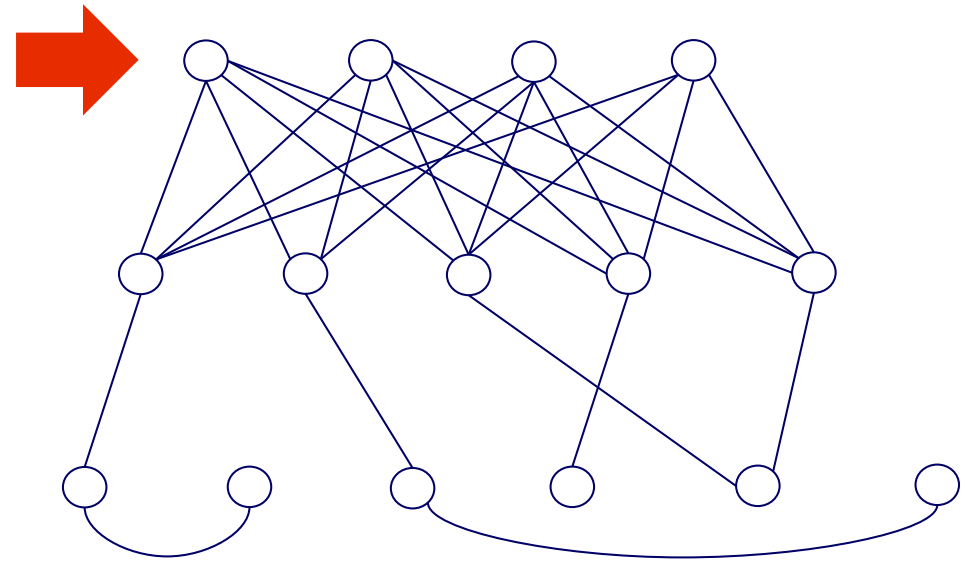


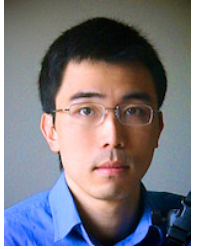
w/ Polo Chau &
Shashank Pandit, CMU
[www'07]



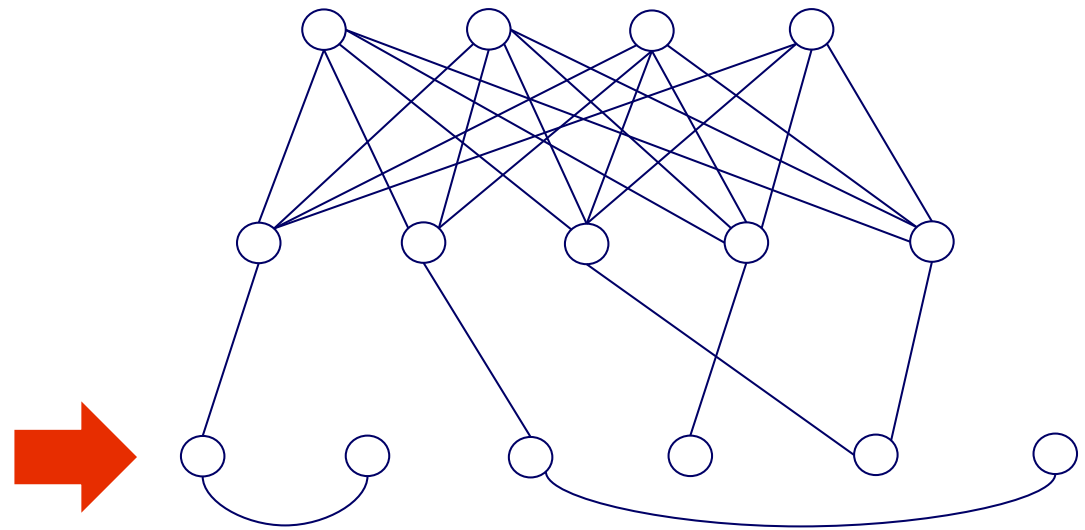


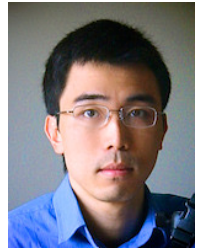
E-bay Fraud detection



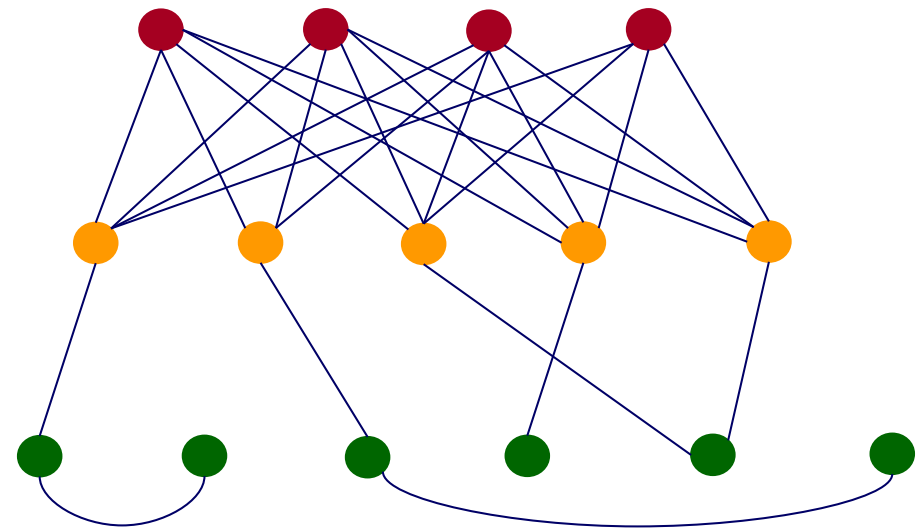
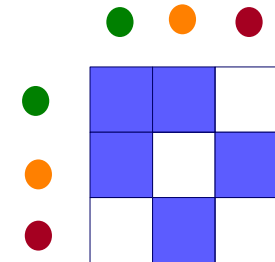
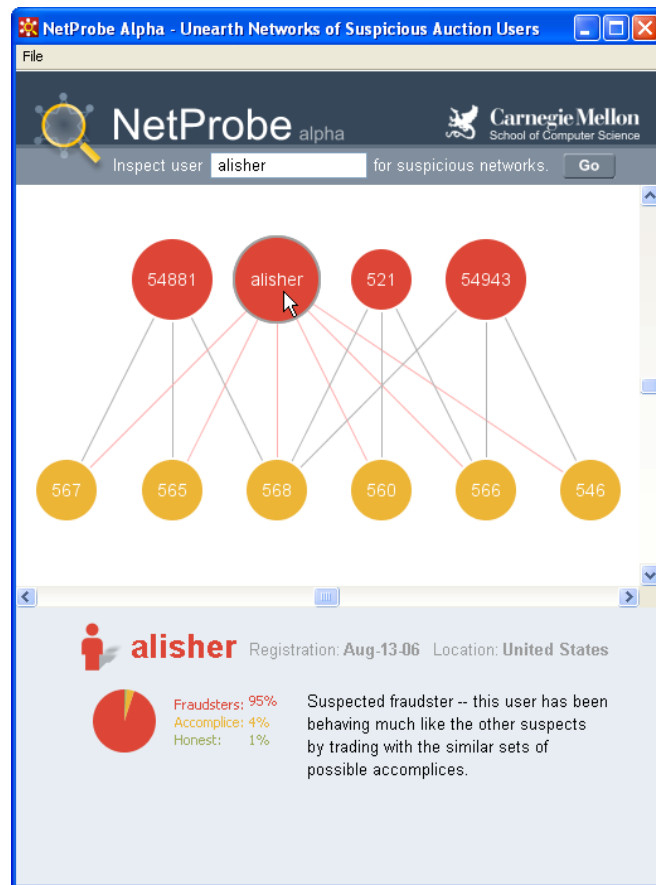


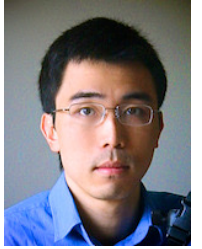
E-bay Fraud detection





E-bay Fraud detection - NetProbe





Popular press



The Washington Post

Los Angeles Times

And less desirable attention:

- E-mail from ‘Belgium police’ (‘copy of your code?’)



Roadmap

- Introduction – Motivation
- Unsupervised
- Supervised: BP (Belief Propagation)
 - Ebay fraud (‘NetProbe’)
 - Malware (Polonium)
 - – Intuition behind BP
- Conclusions

Unifying Guilt-by-Association Approaches: Theorems and Fast Algorithms



Danai Koutra

U Kang

Hsing-Kuo Kenneth Pao

Tai-You Ke

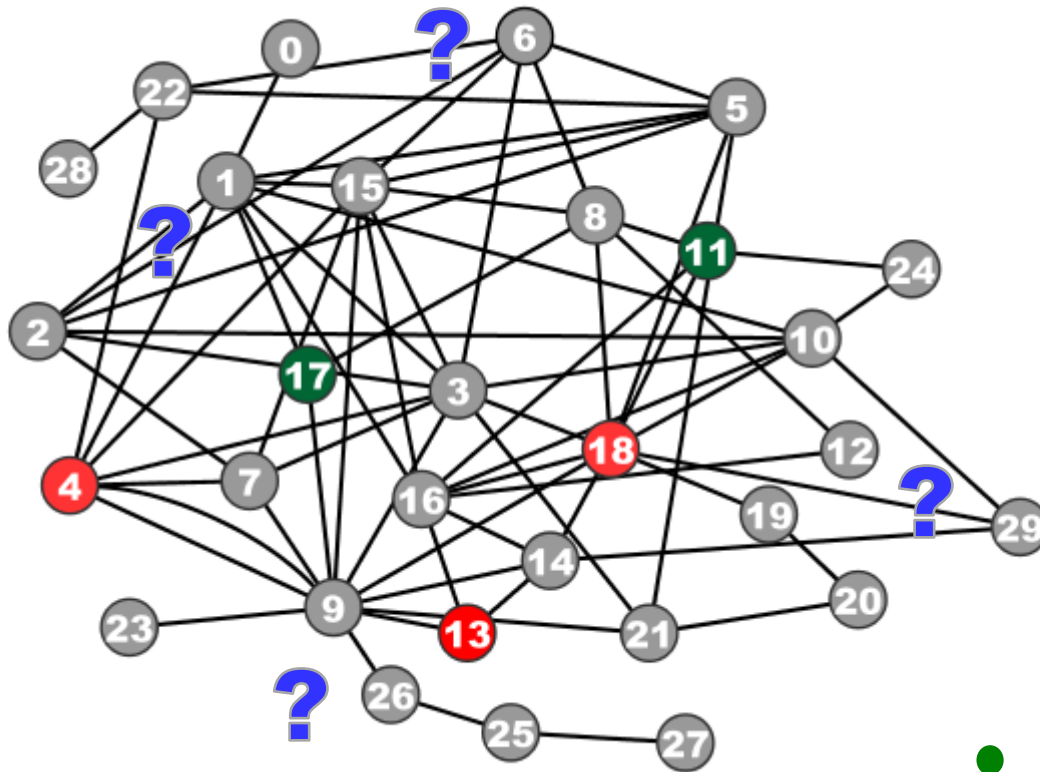
Duen Horng (Polo) Chau

Christos Faloutsos

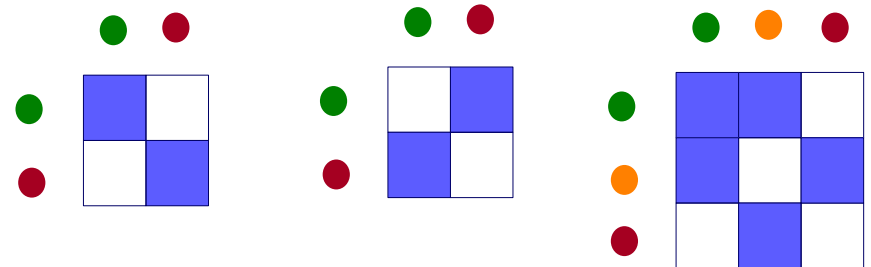
ECML PKDD, 5-9 September 2011, Athens, Greece

Problem Definition:

GBA techniques



Given: Graph; &
few labeled nodes
Find: labels of rest
(assuming network
effects)



Are they related?

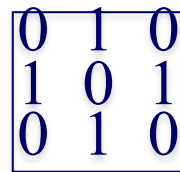
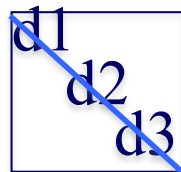
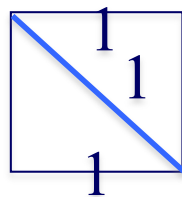
- RWR (Random Walk with Restarts)
 - google's pageRank (*'if my friends are important, I'm important, too'*)
- SSL (Semi-supervised learning)
 - minimize the differences among neighbors
- BP (Belief propagation)
 - send messages to neighbors, on what you believe about them

Are they related? **YES!**

- RWR (Random Walk with Restarts)
 - google's pageRank (*'if my friends are important, I'm important, too'*)
- SSL (Semi-supervised learning)
 - minimize the differences among neighbors
- BP (Belief propagation)
 - send messages to neighbors, on what you believe about them

Correspondence of Methods

Method	Matrix	Unknown	known
RWR	$[I - c \underline{A} D^{-1}] \times$	$\mathbf{x}$	$(1-c)\mathbf{y}$
SSL	$[I + a(\underline{D} - \underline{A})] \times$	$\mathbf{x}$	$\mathbf{y}$
FABP	$[I + a \underline{D} - c' \underline{A}] \times$	$\mathbf{b}_h$	ϕ_h



adjacency
matrix



final
labels/
beliefs



prior
labels/
beliefs

Cast



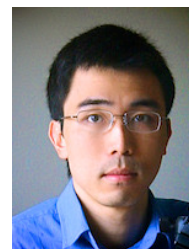
Akoglu,
Leman



Araujo,
Miguel



Beutel,
Alex



Chau,
Polo



Kang, U



Koutra,
Danai



Lee,
Jay Yoon



Prakash,
Aditya



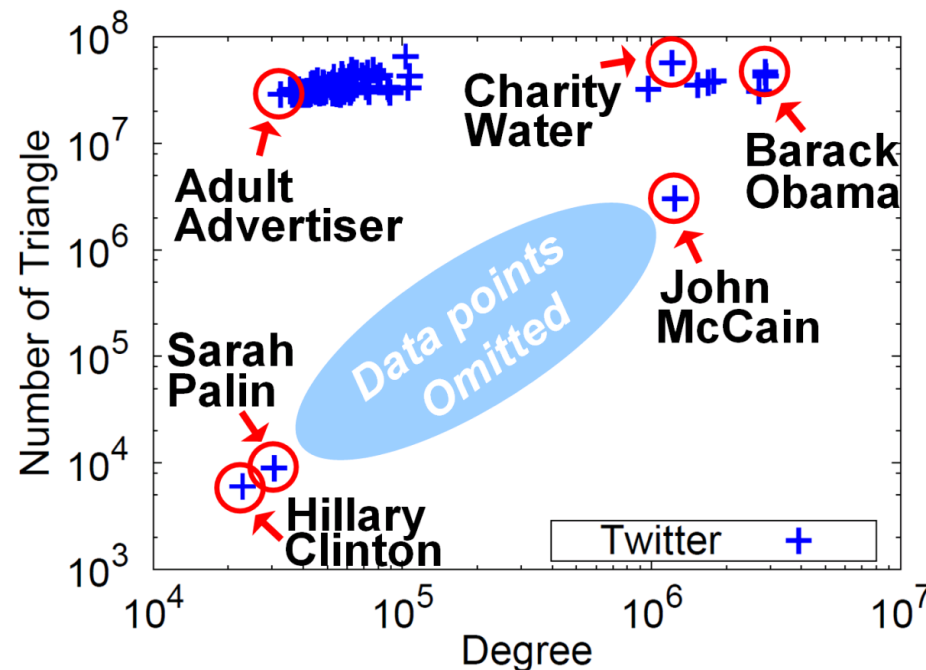
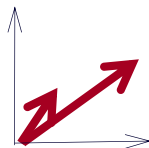
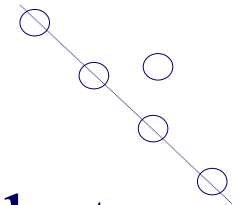
Papalexakis,
Vagelis



Shah,
Neil

Insights:

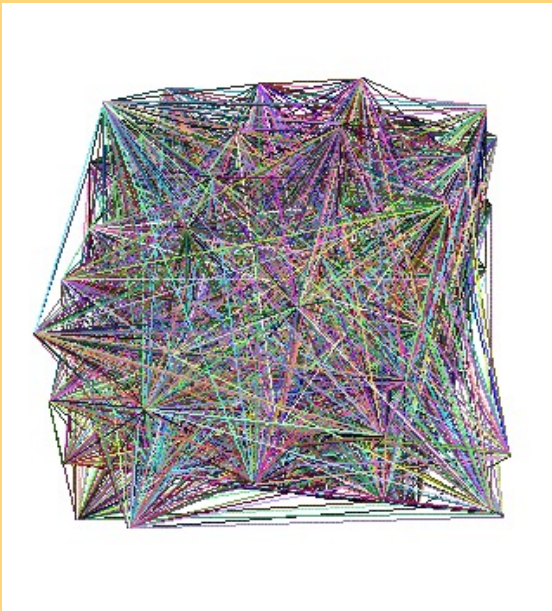
- **Patterns**  **Anomalies**
- **Large datasets reveal patterns/outliers that are invisible otherwise**



Solutions



Given:

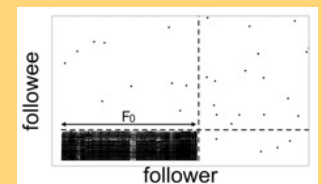
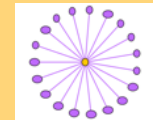
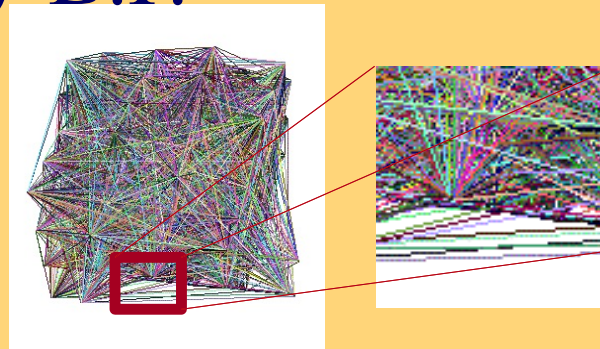


Find:

- 1) Outliers
- 2) Lock-step
- 3) B.P.

OddBall

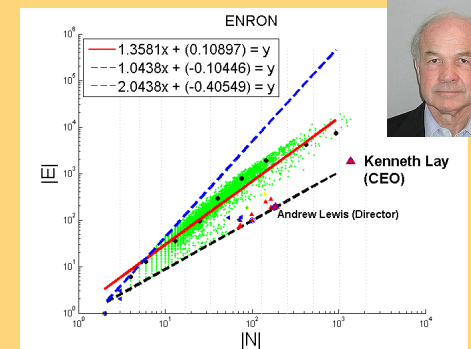
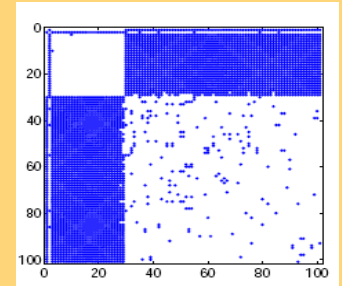
SVD



Solutions, cont'd



- un-supervised
- Spectral/tensor methods: spot lockstep behavior
 - OddBall: strange, single nodes



- semi-supervised
- BP: good for the supervised setting (ie., some labels are given)

