

Barry Wellman



Ties & Bonds

BBS

Indiana has quickly become a social network hot spot. **Scott Feld** and **Jill Suitor** moved Summer 04 to Purdue Soc from LSU, and **Stan Wasserman** moved from U Illinois to Indiana U Soc & Stats. In addition, Katy Börner is doing network visualization stuff at Indiana U's School of Information. Plus, Maureen Hallinan (Notre Dame Soc), and Art Alderson, Bernice Pescosolido, Elijah Wright, and Eric Wright in Indiana have also been known to work with nets.... **Ron Rice** has moved from Rutgers to an endowed chair in the Communication Studies dept of Cal-Santa Barbara....

Ainhoa de Federico de la Rua has attained her doctorate and has been appointment to the permanent position of Maître de Conférences at the U de Lille, France.... Former INSNA head (and UCINet maven) **Martin Everett** has moved from being a mere departmental chair at Greenwich U to being The Provost at the Marylebone campus of Westminster Univ, right in the heart of London (opposite the Baker Street tube stop and near Regent's Park). There is a cute pix of Martin at <http://www.wmin.ac.uk/alumni/Network%20Spring%202003.pdf>, p. 7. The same newsletter also shows how travelers can get cheap rooms at the university during the summer months. No mention of special discounts for networkers....

Lynn Smith-Lovin (Duke U) elected VP of Am Soc Assoc.... **Elisa Bienenstock** has been accomplishing many deeds. Married (J.P Hyatt Oct 2002 in LA) — a scholar of skeletal muscle. Elisa herself now is a senior consultant for Booz Allen

Hamilton in the Washington area. And she had twin girls May 2004.... **Keith Hampton** (Urban, MIT) is the father of Ian Hampton, May 2004....

Bonka Boneva died suddenly in a traffic accident near Pittsburgh, Sept. 04. A recent PhD out of Carnegie Mellon U's HCI Institute, Bonka was first author on a nice chapter about women online in the recent new book by Wellman and Haythornthwaite....

I've also just learned that **Colin Bell** died March 03 in England. Colin was a great community sociologist. His work, sometimes joint with Howard Newby, strongly informed my own stuff in the 1970s, especially on the need to take class and power considerations into my analysis of community networks. I read *Middle Class Families* and "Community, Communion, Class and Community Action" repeatedly. I also profited from many beers and coffees with Colin while I was on sabbatical in England, 1974-1975. There was a vibrant UK urban community then: I think of such folks as Ray Pahl, Chris Pickvance, Howard Newby, Doreen Massey, Bryan Roberts, Clyde Mitchell and Peter Saunders. Colin was a bold, maverick, magnetic speaker and writer. Therefore I was astonished – but pleased – to learn that he had become a senior University administrator, Vice-Chancellor, first at Bradford and then at Stirling. An English friend writes: "He had become a powerful voice in that world – rather more unorthodox than many of those. I believe he had an unexpected heart attack." A conference 'Whither Community Studies' was held this past March in Colin's memory. I understand that the organizer, Paul Thompson, is hoping to put out a special issue or

book, based in part on these papers. Please contact him directly – I have nothing to do with this and don't even have his e-address.

Getting What They Deserve

Russ Bernard (Anthro, U Florida) has received the Franz Boas Award from the American Anthropological Assoc for exemplary service to anthropology. The award notes that during his 40 years of service, his books on research methods have become standard references.

Barry Wellman, U of Toronto Soc, received the 2004 Outstanding Achievement Award from the Communication & Info Tech section of the Am Soc Assoc. The citation said that Wellman “has pioneered, promoted, expanded, and defined a great deal of the social research on the impact of communications and information technologies on social networks and community life. The significance of his work extends across such diverse sociological subdivisions as urban sociology, organizational sociology, the sociology of science, and methodology. Outside of sociology, he has collaborated with and influenced scholars in disciplines as different as social work, transportation planning, and computer science: more than 80 collaborators in several different countries. His many students form the core of the next generation of internet scholars.”

Northwestern U Bus school's **Brian Uzzi** won the *Administrative Science Quarterly's* 2003 Award for Scholarly Contribution for “Social Structure & Competition in Interfirm Networks: The Paradox of Embeddedness”. It was 1 of the first to consider how economic transactions are embedded in networks. The award credits the March 1997 paper as having the most influence on theory and research in the 5 years following its publication.

Jeffrey Boase (U of Toronto Soc) won the Outstanding Student Paper Prize from the same section. His award said, “Jeffery Boase's paper explores the importance of the Internet in facilitating communication between family members, neighbors, professional associates, and friends. Boase begins by summarizing the debate be-

tween utopian and dystopian accounts of Internet use. He argues that both are inadequate and can be replaced by a more empirically-based, holistic understanding. This is an important issue and the paper does a fine job of exploring the nuances by summarizing the results of many empirical studies. In addition, the paper rises above the level of empirical description. Not the least of Boase's strengths are the theoretical refinements he offers to the theory of networked individualism. The arguments are well-organized, and the writing is polished and clear.” (from the citation by Grant Blank). Jeff's paper is forthcoming in the *Handbook of Personal Relationships*, edited by Anita Vangelisti & Dan Perlman, Cambridge U Pr.

Allison Gilmore (Math, Washington U) selected 1 of 12 Rhodes scholars for 2004-05. She's at Oxford studying social science. When questioned why the discipline shift, she noted her interest in social network analysis involved both sociology and math. “When I found this field, I couldn't believe it. It was like somebody made it for me.” She hopes to become a math prof working with sociologists. [source: *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, 25Nov03, via Gene Johnsen].

Erdős Number for Sale

Hungarian mathematician Paul Erdős (1913-1996) traveled the world co-authoring. Anyone who co-authored with him has an Erdős number of 1. Anyone who has co-authored with someone who has co-authored with Erdős has an Erdős number of 2, etc. (I have a 3, thanks to Ove Frank.) A mysterious eBay ad (4April04) offered to sell a still-valuable Erdős number of 5, with the seller offering to coauthor with the highest bidder.

The ad said in part: “The seller will make his time available to the winner — after payment is received — on a part-time basis not to exceed 40 total hours doled out at a rate of no more than 10 hours per week, distributed to their mutual convenience over the period beginning May 1 2004 and ending on July 31 2004. During that period, the seller will provide expert technical advice on research projects in the fields of evolutionary

algorithms, machine learning, agent-based modeling of complex biological and social systems, complex systems research in general, social network theory (including business and marketing applications), engineering design automation using machine learning algorithms, artificial life, and any of a number of other specialties.” <http://cgi.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPL.dll?ViewItem&item=3189039958>.

On 12Sept04 eBay reports: “Bidding has ended for this item. (madd_greg is the winner)”

Who were the mysterious seller and buyer?
A web site summarizes *Science News*:

“Turns out that madd_gregg was really “Jose Burillo, a mathematician at the Polytechnic University of Barcelona in Spain with an Erdős number of 3 [who — wrote that he had placed the winning bid 'to stop the mockery this person is doing of the paper/journal system' and called the auction a 'travesty.' William Tozier 'whose Erdős number is 4 ... launched the auction as a joke, in his words, 'one morning before I'd had enough coffee.' He used the exercise as an experiment in social networking. He told four friends about the auction and asked them to spread the word, then tracked how the news carried.

“Although the first auction was a bust due to the Burillo sabotage, Tozier is considering running the auction again. He says he would like to use some of the money earned to set up a collaborative community where amateur mathematicians would have the opportunity to work with academic mathematicians and others with similar interests. Tozier said he received more than one hundred responses from non-mathematicians who were interested in his offered collaboration because they feel excluded from any opportunity to discuss their mathematical work with the academic mathematical community.”

Source: Sal Towse in: http://www.towse.com/blogger/2004_04_01_archive.htm

Tozier had co-authored a comment on another paper with Mark Newman (Erdős 3). in *Physical Letters A*. Mark writes that “he is a friend of mine from years ago.” Tozier is now a grad student (with another prof.) at U Michigan. Tozier's

own germane website is at: <http://williamtozier.com/slurry/comment/social/erdosJune.html>

As the *Science News* article points out, “An Erdős number of 5 isn't that big of a deal: More than 66,000 mathematicians can claim the honor. Yet in some parts of the world, Burillo says, Erdős numbers are taken very seriously, and mathematicians post their number prominently on their résumés.” [Erica Klarreich, “Theorems for Sale, June 12, 2004; Vol. 165, 24: 376 [<http://www.sciencenews.org/articles/20040612/bob8.asp>]. For more info, see also the *Chronicle of Education* piece: <http://chronicle.com/free/v50/i38/38a01501.htm>.

Last I heard, former co-stars of Kevin Bacon were not auctioning off acting gigs.

Organizational Haiku

Written by Lydia Bean of Harvard while studying for her comprehensive exams:

No, Barry Wellman.
My “Intimate Networks” don't
need “liberating.”

There's another one linking Mark Granovetter and embeddedness, but as this is a family magazine, I will not reprint it.

Ali Marin, another Harvard grad student contributes this haiku:

Social capital
Use your friends to get ahead
But which friends to use?

The Network War

Follow the Mispuhke: US General Raymond Odierno, whose forces captured Saddam Hussein in Iraq says he realize 6 months before capture that the key lay in figuring out Hussein's clan and family support structures. Odierno had his analysts and commanders build “link diagrams” (aka sociograms) showing everyone related to Hussein by blood or tribe. He said these diagrams led his forces to lower level, but nonetheless highly trusted, relatives and clan members harboring Hussein and helping him

move around the countryside. [Source: “Clan, Family Ties Called Key to Army’s Capture of Hussein, Vernon Loeb, *Washington Post*, 16 Dec03].

Kathleen and the Jihad: Carnegie Mellon prof Kathleen Carley “has used intelligence data and computer modeling to monitor changes in jihadist networks, including the cell responsible for the suicide bombing of the American Embassy in Tanzania. She found that eliminating the ‘central actors’ — that is, cell members who have the most ties to other cell members and to other groups — has actually spurred terrorists to adapt more quickly, and has been less effective in the long run than eliminating less-central foot soldiers.” [New York Times Op-Ed piece by Scott Atran extensively and positively discussing the work of Kathleen Carley and Bob Axelrod. 16 Mar04]

“Net-Centric” Warfare supposedly means using computer, communication and social networks to fight an opponent. As usual, the earnings potential of the hardware and software outweighs the social. In the U.S., Boeing is investing \$500M in this. “The capabilities are mind boggling. For many years it used to be about force. Now, it’s all about networks — who can see can react first,” says Jim Albaugh, head of Boeing’s Integrated Systems program. Company officials estimate that the market for net-centric systems could reach \$200B in 10 years, with communication nets, intelligence, surveillance & recon projects, and command and control integration to provide “global situational awareness.” No one in the story says who will provide the sociopolitical brains. [“Boeing Bets on ‘Net-Centric’ Warfare”, *News-Tribune*, via *Yahoo! News*, 7Jul04].

Short Schticks

“Mellon Will Acquire Final 70% of Pareto” said a Wall Street Journal headline this August. Does that mean that Citibank will counter by acquiring 75% of Simmel? [Note: Pareto Partners is 1 of the world’s largest currency managers.]

Six Degrees of Copulation: Boston U scientist Luis Amaral reports sample survey findings that

“much less than 6 partners” sexually link Swedes “because some people have a very high number of sexual partners” (see *Nature*, vol 411: 907). Nostalgia — the movie was made in 1967, *I am Curious (Yellow)* or, as the Swedes like to say when networking: Jag är nyfiken.

Are Readers More Clannish Than Talkers?

Valdis Krebs’ Amazonish research into book buying networks (using Amazon’s published info about people who have bought X, have also bought Y, Z,...) was discussed 13 March04 in the *New York Times*. No less than 4 letters were printed in the March 16 *Times*, most of them missed the point and saw book networks as tightly-bounded groups. They bemoaned the alleged fact that people tended to read within tightly-bounded intellectual orbits. But in fact, although networks certainly do cluster, they often are less bounded and more heterogeneous, i.e., they are leakier than groups.

Divorce as a Feminist Networking Device:

“Women, especially women married to rich men, often don’t have a network of professional contacts. So they turn to me.” [NY divorce lawyer Raoul Lionel Felder quoted by John Cassidy “The Misery Broker,” *New Yorker*, 3May04: 76]

Social Support Among Baboons:

Baboon mothers with many female friends are more successful parents at raising their young. “They are spending a lot of time and a lot of trouble in maintaining their social contacts. They spend 10% of their day grooming others and that is a big chunk of time for living in the wild. The most sociable females are about 1/3 more likely to rear their infants successfully than were the least sociable females.” Silk suggests that evolution favors social networking.” [From Paul Recer, Study: Social Baboon Moms are Good Moms,” *Associated Press*, 13Nov03, reporting on the article in *Science* by John Silk, Susan Alber8ts, et al.]