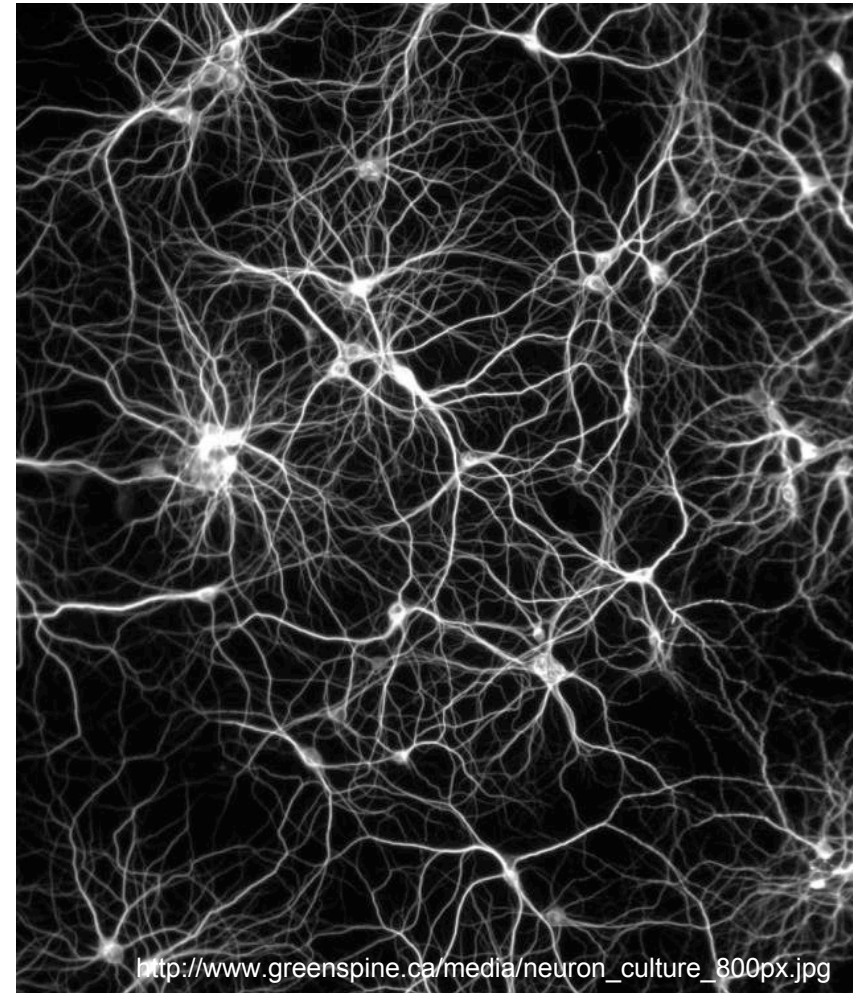


“We’re not gossiping, we’re networking!”:

The Effect of Gossip on Social Networks



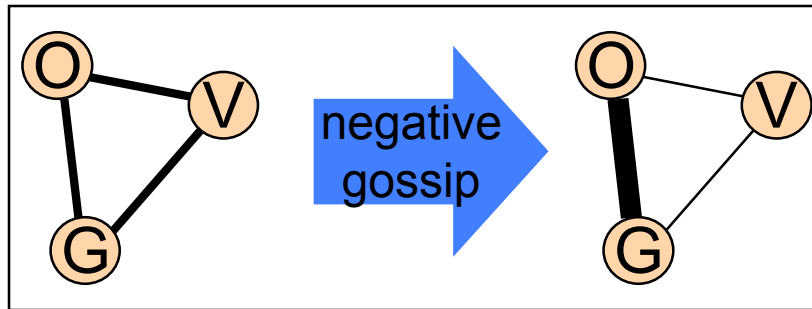
Social structure affects information spread



Information can reinforce connections

What is Gossip?

- Information passed between two individuals about a third one



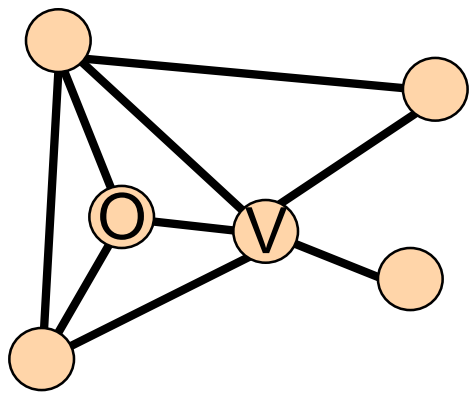
V = victim
O = originator
G = gossiper

- Gossip influences the strength of all three connections (Wittek & Wielers 1998)
- Gossip is used to maintain relationships, like grooming in primates (Dunbar 2004)

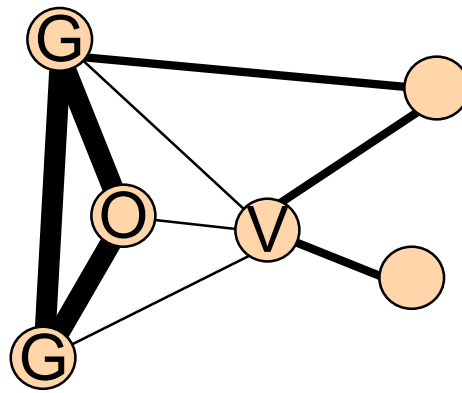
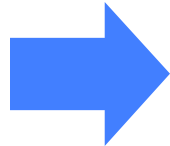


The Model

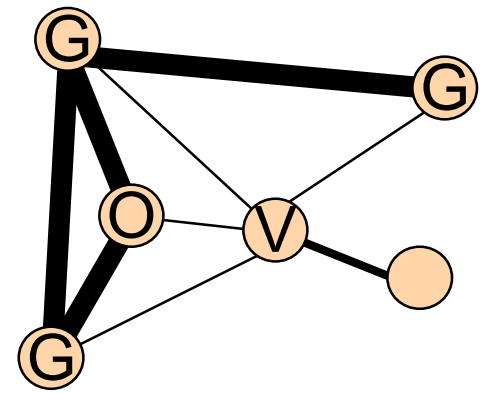
1. Pick a victim
2. Pick a neighbor as the originator
3. Spread gossip to mutual friends



start



first wave



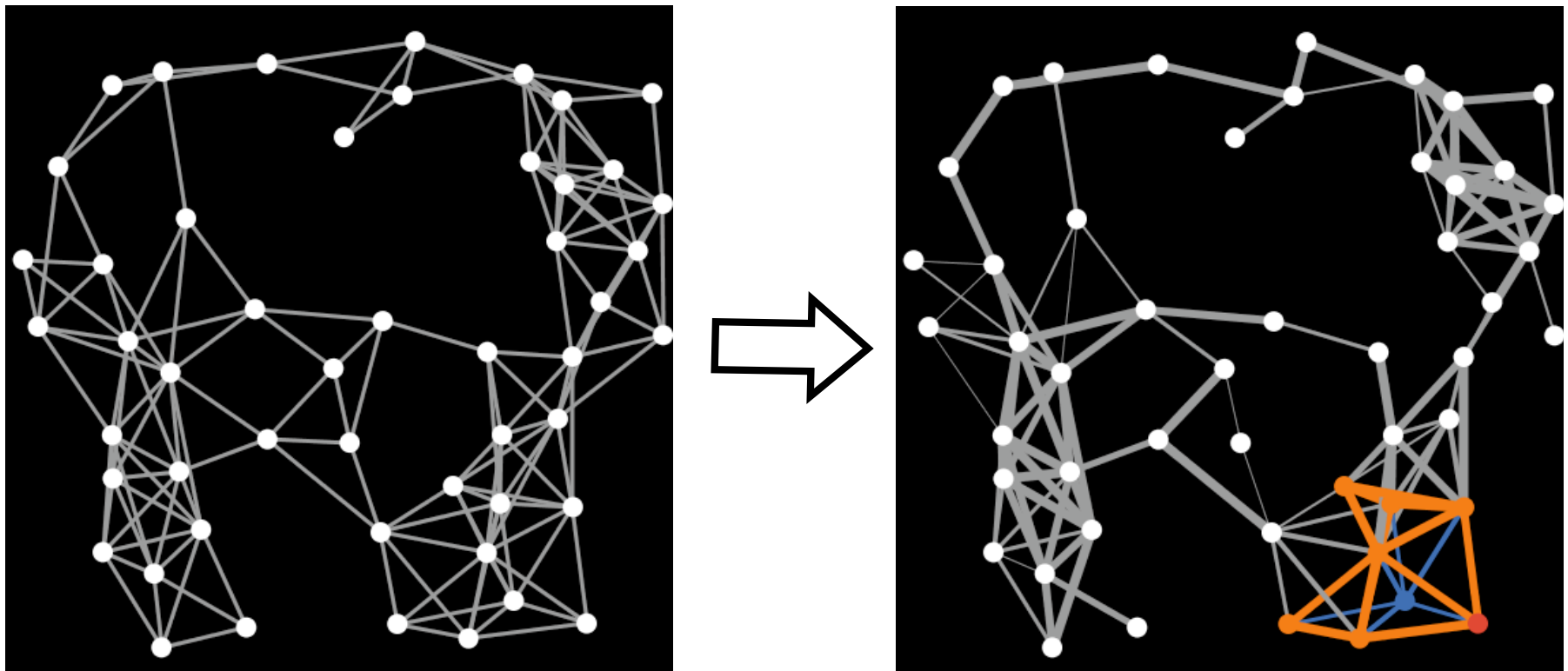
second wave

Preliminary Results

- If gossip or network is random, gossip **breaks up triads**

BUT

- gossip spreading in a nonrandom network **strengthens clusters**



Extensions

- Non-random choice of victim and originator
- Different gossip rules (e.g. positive gossip)
- Individual heterogeneity (e.g. tendency to gossip)



David
Brooks

Milena
Tsvetkova

Allison
Shaw

Chang
Yu

Roozbeh
Daneshvar

References:

- Wittek, Rafael, and Rudi Wielers. 1998. Gossip in Organizations. *Computational & Mathematical Organization Theory* 4(2):189–204.
- Dunbar, R.I.M. 2004. Gossip in Evolutionary Perspective. *Review of General Psychology* 8(2):100–110.