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Kadushin uses network analysis to show the distinctive structure of intellectual, scientific, and artistic circles. These circles of creators are contrasted with the utilitarian production networks which transfer creations into consumables.

Networks and Circles in the Production of Culture

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One of the latest catchwords in social science is “network.” A network is a set of social objects onto which is mapped a set of relationships or “flows” not necessarily in a 1:1 fashion. This idea has been around for a long time (Barnes, 1972), but it has recently been taken less metaphorically and more seriously. It has inspired a number of theoretically interesting studies of events in a wide variety of settings.¹ Network analysis obviously possesses in large measure a major virtue of any approach in social science—versatility. In this paper I propose to test some of this versatility by applying the concept to studies of the production of culture.

Networks have been frequently identified with informal or what might be called “emergent” relations—those which are not formally instituted. Of course, role and status sets are also fit subjects for network analysis, for they too are networks.

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Nonetheless, in discussing the production of culture, I shall emphasize emergent networks because they are especially apt for this field. In addition, emergent networks tend to be less visible than formally instituted networks. Emergent networks in the area of culture production also tend to be interstitial—that is, tend to link different social units such as different universities, publishers, authors, and the like. These kinds of connections also seem more dramatic than, for example, clique relations within the same structure, although both are network phenomena. The degree to which networks are instituted or emergent, visible or less visible, interstitial or not defines networks of different types. Our concern here is with the very special kind of network which is emergent, is by and large interstitial, whose visibility is generally relatively low, and which is a *macro-phenomenon* (see McPhee, 1963; Kadushin, 1975; and Tichy, 1976), not a micro one. These networks are typical of culture production systems.

**CIRCLES**

Producers of culture are also consumers. The flow through producer networks is, therefore, at least two-way and often circular. Most intellectuals, writers, painters, actors, musicians, and poets are avid consumers of each other’s performances. For example, the average respondent in my study of elite American intellectuals (Kadushin, 1974) checked off 14 journals of general content as his monthly reading fare. In fact, the circular relationship between performer and audience has been instituted in the citation system of science: all performers must demonstrate that they have read other performers’ work. The major formal problem for students of networks who wish to apply what is known about diffusion to studies of the production of culture is the circularity of a system in which each member is an opinion leader who influences other opinion leaders through an N-step process. The generic form of the network of producers is therefore the social circle.

Circles have some distinct properties, ones which often prove puzzling to observers and which make circles emergent, low visibility, interstitial networks. First, circles have *no clear boundaries*, and the dividing line between the center and the
periphery is often arbitrarily drawn. Because the boundary lines are not especially clear and because any individual member of a circle can “see” only his immediate surrounding contacts, “natives” of circles frequently have only fuzzy, if not totally incorrect, notions of what their circle looks like. Thus, American elite intellectuals had widely varying impressions of American intellectual circles, and most of these descriptions were wrong (Kadushin, 1974: ch. 3).

The second structural property of a circle, indirect interaction, means that not everyone has to know everyone else or have contact with everyone else. The flow of symbols or objects may be via one or two others, on the average, as well as directly from one person to another. The circle is viable even if most members do not relate directly to most other members. In this respect, it is quite different from a group.

A further structural characteristic of circles is that they often have a core of even greater density than the rest of the circle, or sometimes several such cores, but no formal leadership. In the circles of intellectuals we studied, there were indeed some members who were more central than others, but even Richard Kostelanetz (1974) would have difficulty in saying “Take me to your leader.”

A fourth characteristic of a circle is its relative lack of instituted structures and norms—that is, their “emergent” character. Like the face-to-face “informal organizations” which reside within more formally constituted organizations, circles lack clear norms about structure, leadership, membership, modes of interrelationships between members, and overall goal or purpose. This does not mean that individual sets of members who relate to one another do not know why they do so. On the contrary, circles arise to solve the problems of individual members who relate to one another because they have certain common interests and needs. It is the “organization” as a whole that lacks a purpose for, after all, in common with most other networks, circles are invisible in their totality, and this invisibility is their fifth major characteristic.

A sixth characteristic of circles, and this they have in common with other influence nets, is that because they are not instituted, they are always “pegged to” or “draped around”
other structures. That is, the lines of influence or interaction tend to follow other more formal relations, whether it be common occupational status or some relationship to a formal organization such as an intellectual journal, a theater group, a gallery, or even a bar or cafe. A major research task in the study of cultural networks is to discover the relationship between the more formal networks and the less formal ones. More strictly, this has been called the “homophily problem” (Lazarsfeld and Merton, 1954).

Finally, circles in the cultural field are all the manifestation of the fact that culture production is an external economy industry (Vernon, 1963)—that is, an industry whose production line includes factors that are available only outside of the individual production organization. This is what makes cultural networks interstitial. A typical example given by economists is the women’s high fashion garment industry. This is an industry characterized by a large number of fairly small producers huddled together in their mutual dependence upon designers, each other (for “stealing” ideas), specialty suppliers (of buttons, cloth, and so on), and a flexible labor supply of specialists who drift in and out of being workers or subcontractors. Other external economy industries are Wall Street, advertising, radio-TV, music, film, publishing, theater, and art. The circle is the structural form taken by most relations in external economy industries.

The kind of information which flows through circles is a useful basis for defining types of circles. There are four kinds of interests which circle members may have in common (Kadushin, 1968: 692): utilitarian, power and influence, integration, and, of course, cultural—our major concern here. Utilitarian circles such as “Wall Street” are characterized by the need to trade goods and services with other producers and are the origin of the theory of “external economy” industries (Vernon, 1963). Political power and influence circles, which we have elsewhere called “interaction sets” (Kadushin, 1975), are those involved in studies of local and national elite systems. Neither of these two types of circles is necessarily characterized by value homophily. Integrative circles specialize in affect flow and, on the macro-level, result from the elaboration of a common experience such
as ethnic membership, wartime experience, or membership in an occupational community. We will not be further concerned here with utilitarian, power-influence, and integrative circles except insofar as cultural circles include them as secondary themes.

Different types of cultural circles roughly correspond to the different domains of culture. Circles which emphasize values, esthetics, ideology, and religion generally have the form of "intellectual circles." Those which emphasize expressive concerns such as literature, art, and music often take the form of a "movement circle," while those with cognitive emphases have been called "invisible colleges" (Price, 1963, Crane, 1972). Since the production of culture is also a market phenomenon in large-scale consumer society, there are also cultural networks (if not circles) which emphasize utilitarian concerns, and these are "journeyman" and "brokerage" nets. Finally, there are networks of "audiences" or "consumers" which, due to space limitations, will not be discussed here. These circles and networks differ in their structural characteristics, the degree to which they are pegged to different formal structures as well as the nature of these pegs, and their flows and functions. They also tend to move through different phases of development. Since the investigation of cultural circles is in its infancy, much of what I shall say about them in declarative form must be taken as tentative propositions, poorly grounded in data.

INTELLECTUAL CIRCLES

Let me begin with intellectual circles, for we know more about them than others (Kadushin, 1974; Coser, 1965), especially because intellectuals are persons of the word, and so they like to write about, among other things, themselves. Unlike any of the other circles of culture producers with which we shall deal, intellectual circles are networks of generalists and therefore often tend to cross occupational lines. Intellectuals, of the kind we are talking about, produce ideas about values, morals, politics, and esthetics, not for specialists but for so-called educated laymen and, of course, for each other. The intellectual himself may have his own academic specialty, be it nineteenth-century literature, baroque art, or social stratification. But ideas produced for the general marketplace can
neither be stimulated nor evaluated by the usual professional networks. A major function of the intellectual circles, therefore, is to evaluate both the ideas and the persons who produce them. Proof of this function is seen in the absence of circles. Clark (1973) shows that when intellectual "clusters," as he calls them, remain essentially centered around a single Patron rather than encompassing a wider group, intellectual quality deteriorates. And the current state of poor health of American intellectual journals is in part caused by the general weakening of the structure of American intellectual circles as a result of the trauma of the 1960s and the counter-culture.

Modern intellectual circles developed after the growth of modern complex societies made the salon too limited a means for intellectual exchange. Coffee houses or bars as meeting places around which circles are formed abound in intellectual history. Both geography and having been to the same schools at the same time is important—as, for example, in the Bloomsbury circle. Common political activity and views have been and remain important. The literary-political journal of general interest, a device "invented" by some Scottish intellectuals in the early nineteenth century (the *Edinburgh Review*), is an especially important peg in societies with some geographic dispersion of intellectuals, as is the case for the contemporary United States (and, of course, England and Scotland of the nineteenth century). Book publishers, at least in the United States, now do not seem to work well as intellectual circle "pegs," although they might have done so in earlier times. Occupation and even current university faculty membership, although they count, do not seem as important in the United States, at least, as some other pegs, although religious origin is probably more important than we first thought.

All the factors mentioned above do relate to the "homo-phily" of intellectual relations in the United States (Alba and Kadushin, 1976). From what I know impressionistically about other countries, geography is extremely important, if only negatively because, except for the United States, almost all the intellectuals who count live in the capital city. Political party activity and views are also quite important in Europe. The
meeting place is also more important in Europe than in the United States for in some countries, if one sat daily in a select set of cafes or restaurants, one might garner a good sample of the intellectual elite, a circle much less specialized in occupation than in the United States. In most European countries, writers, professors, editors, and free-lance intellectuals of one kind or another mingle with artists, theater and film persons, and musicians. In the United States, intellectual, theater, film and music circles seem to overlap only slightly. American geographic dispersion may well account for this pattern, but so may our relative lack of interest in politics and world views, together with our strong careerism, which tends to produce a narrow occupational focus.

Intellectual circles may well be subject to “social lag.” The circles in the United States that I studied reflected interests, ideas, politics and friendships of some ten years’ or so standing, at the minimum, and represented the way cold war issues had been resolved in the late 1950s. The “new” issue of the time, the war in Vietnam, for various reasons, did not restructure these older circles. Rather than discussion of the war following the existing circle pattern, word diffused from a central core composed of “experts” on the topic. Other structural pegs were less important. It is hard to say whether these findings are typical, but at least they are plausible and the only systematic case we have. If we were to generalize, we would speculate that circles, even as ephemeral as they are, are nonetheless tied to existing social structures which are, in turn, tied to many other structures and values.

Relationships bound to such structures are not so easy to break. An effective intellectual system does, however, allow new ideas to be transmitted, even though they are evaluated along the structural lines (and, perforce, the ideology) of old circles. Eventually, either the disparity between the ideas and the circles grows intolerable, or else a new generation with new ties enters, together with new ideas, and forms a new pattern of circles. But the death and transfiguration of circles remain topics with little hard research data.
CIRCLES IN SCIENCE

The relation of social structure to new ideas is clearer in areas in which the growth of ideas tends to be specialized, cumulative, and exponential. Such is the case with science (Merton, 1973). Crane (1972) argues that the periods of rapid growth in science stem in part from personal influence on the selection of problems. There is evidence that such influence follows the familiar two-step flow found in diffusion studies. Social circles in science, or invisible colleges, tend to abound in such periods. Conversely, fields of scientific work which have little informal social structure tend to be fields which have either passed their period of rapid growth and are no longer “hot” or have not yet come into such a period. The lack of informal social structure may, therefore, actually impede the development of a field—further verifying the function of circles.

While Crane and others tend to stress the informational content of scientific networks, evaluation and exhortation—leading to “taste”—are also very important. Thus, circles in science arise not only to circulate information in a new field—information that by definition is not yet available in print, but also to support the new ideas and to encourage self-awareness among scientists that their current endeavors have a unique place. For unlike intellectual circles which dedifferentiate in order to produce scientific knowledge, scientific circles grow from the need to specialize and differentiate in order to produce scientific knowledge.

The structural form taken by circles in science seems, on the basis of several studies (Price, 1965; Griffith and Mullins, 1972; Mullins, 1968; Crane, 1972, and those cited by her) to be somewhat different than that of intellectual circles. While there are many intellectual “stars,” concentration on a small set of stars seems more pronounced in scientific circles. The pattern, which does vary somewhat from field to field, seems to be that of a number of relatively tight groups composed of current and past collaborators on research and current and former master-student relations. Current or past propinquity seems important for these groups (as it is for intellectual circles). The groups, when they interact with other groups, tend to do so via the “stars,” who in turn interact with each other as well as with
members of their own group. There are really two sets of circles, therefore, in most active scientific communities (excluding those who do not publish much): a large set of clumps or clusters centered around stars and, at the core of the entire system, an “elite invisible college” which directly links the stars. For this latter circle, propinquity is unimportant.

The basic differences between invisible college systems (as a generic term for scientific circles) and intellectual circles lie in the nature of their “external economies.” Most of the work of elite intellectuals is noncollaborative and, for that matter, largely noncumulative (Aristotle is as good a reference as Arendt). They depend on interaction for stimulation and for idea-testing, but not for idea production. Most scientists work in teams and are frequently (though much less than business executive teams) part of the same formal organization. Nonetheless, if a team remains isolated, the content of its ideas and its productivity are both likely to suffer. Elite scientists probably depend on contact with other elite scientists as much as do elite intellectuals, however, and their circles are likely not only to be cross-institutional but also cross-national. Elite as well as nonelite scientists depend on other scientists for ideas, which are often in written form (but in quickly growing fields not formally printed), thus making it possible even for the nonelite to have “contact” with the elite. This need for contact on the “leading edge” in a rapidly growing field is an important aspect of the external economy of science.

Cognitive matters are not the only flow through the channels of scientific and intellectual exchange. Money and other rewards flow, too. Unlike elite intellectuals (who until very recently could at best hope for a Guggenheim Fellowship or its equivalent once or twice in a lifetime), elite scientists are perpetually in the business of raising large sums of money for research. This activity in itself creates an external economy network of grantees and recipients who, because of the peer review system, are likely to change places with the regularity of a musical chairs game. Just what effect the informal structure of science has on the granting business is a touchy subject and, therefore, it has not been systematically explored, although
there have been studies of the formal affiliations of grantees and grantors (Mullins, 1972). The functional equivalent in the intellectual world is the reviewing system often described (Kostelanetz, 1974) as venal and parochial, in which circle members review each other's works favorably (or at the very least review them, rather than letting them die through the censorship of neglect), but the system seems less structured than the grant system. Finally, peer review in science for books, articles, and grant applications is also more systematically structured. Here, too, the operation of networks of reviewers and reviewees has not been directly studied though Zuckerman and Merton (1971) have developed data which suggest that particularism is not an important factor in the judgments about manuscripts submitted to the Physical Review.

Last, but hardly least, the job market in both scientific and intellectual circles also operates through networks established for other purposes. One suspects that scientific circles are more effective than intellectual circles in securing full-time jobs for members, since being a scientist is an occupation, while being a general intellectual is not. The network of intellectuals does, however, allocate among its members book contracts, magazine assignments, reviews, lectures, and the like, involving important amounts of money even to those intellectuals (the majority) who have steady jobs. Although there is much myth about the importance of word of mouth in getting jobs and assignments, one careful study (Granovetter, 1974) shows that, despite the importance of networks, the more distant contacts are more useful to the individual than the more proximate ones, because the distant contacts are privy to information that one's immediate circle does not have.

In sum, intellectual and scientific circles have somewhat different external economies, and this tends to produce circles of differing structure. A basic issue for further research is the relationship of the primary idea flows in intellectual and scientific circles to subsidiary utilitarian flows such as money and other rewards, power and influence flows—the "politics" of intellectual life and scientific circles, and integrative flows via occupational community.
MOVEMENT CIRCLES

Partisanship is well known in scientific and intellectual circles, but there is a pretense of inclusiveness and universality. Since the Romantic movement in the nineteenth century, however, poetry, fiction, painting, theater, and music have often been self-consciously parochial, with producers of culture huddling together in “movements.” We have neither the space nor the hard data to discuss movement circles in detail, but a few speculative observations may throw intellectual and scientific circles into relief. The kind of movement circle we have in mind is typified by the New York Action School in art or the alternative or experimental theater movement (e.g., Open Theater) in drama. Kostelanetz (1974) describes similar movements in poetry and literature.

Movement circles emphasize creativity as do scientific and intellectual circles, but movement circles also tend to create “against” some established principles or images. It is the sense of embattlement that leads to common bonding. If we had quantitative data, it might well be that the average network distance between any pair in movement circles would be less than in cultural and scientific circles. The controversial nature of movement circles also seems to lend to them a more obvious life cycle or natural history than is the case for the other circles. The first stage is divided into two phases. In the first or start-up phase, the circle is very inclusive. Anyone who is “on our side” may join, and the typical linkage is through friends with no particular questions asked. In the second phase of the first stage, the circle becomes more concerned with boundary clarity, and members attempt, within the limitation of circle diffuseness of style, to fix the notion of “membership.” Some persons may join, but others may not; some are expelled while others stay. This greater structural rigidity goes hand in hand with an attempt to give the ideas of the movement greater artistic clarity.

In the second stage, the nascent circle has become itself a kind of “establishment.” The first phase of the second stage continues the emphasis on standards of belonging, but the standards are now more abstract and less ad hominem as they begin to become codified. The circle now more clearly has a
central core and a periphery. In the final phase, the circle is now itself an "establishment" and has instituted forms or organizations or journals upon which the circle drapes itself. The circle may even come to have official university status and connections. It is now ripe for a new rebellion against its authority. Only at this last stage is the movement circle nongeographic and less dependent on propinquity. The urban milieu described by Simmel (1950, 1955—originally, 1902 and 1922) of overlapping circles well describes the social, artistic, and intellectual "external economy" of movement circles and explains why they as well as the more inclusive intellectual circles are almost always found in a country's major metropolis, at least when circles are in their most fruitful and growing phases (Craven and Wellman, 1973; Fischer, 1975).

UTILITARIAN NETWORKS IN CULTURE PRODUCTION

Finally, we have the journeyman net and the brokerage net. Neither of these are circles in the sense of having a clearly defined dense region or core, although obviously some parts of the net are more dense than others. In these nets what was secondary to circles of culture production—utilitarian concerns—becomes primary, and what was primary—the production of culture—becomes secondary. A journeyman net is typified by the seemingly chaotic pattern of job-finding in the performing arts, including music, and the process of socialization to the occupational community (Kadushin, 1969b). Journeymen, actors, and musicians are linked in rather long nets in terms of the need to find jobs: being professional means participation in such nets and holding paying jobs at least at union scale. Academic standards tend to be downgraded in favor of action and "doing." Much more needs to be said about such systems, their "pegs," and other characteristics, but that discussion will have to be reserved for other occasions.

An investigation into the role of publishers as gatekeepers of ideas is currently being undertaken by Lewis Coser, myself, and Woody Powell (see Hirsch, 1972; Boissevain, 1974; Coser, 1975). It is premature to report any conclusions, but it does appear that publishers occupy a position in book-producing like that of the foreman in industrial plants. They are the persons in
the middle, linking producers of culture with both the market of sources of capital and the market of consumers. The best ones blend in their soul all three worlds—capital, audience, and culture producer. It turns out that there are layers and layers of brokers in publishing, just as there are in the theater, music, and the art market: publishers, book editors, author’s agents, and more. Within the world of publishing, there are different circles, corresponding in part, but not entirely, to the kind of book published and the way it is marketed. Rumor, word of mouth, and contacts count almost for everything. Indeed, publishers have institutionalized a major social ritual—eating—as one of their major occasions for making contacts and thus doing their business as a way of symbolizing the importance of social contact. Again, this topic must be fully explored elsewhere.

In conclusion, this paper can only allude to the most vexing problem of the sociology of knowledge—the relationship of social structure to the content and style of ideas—by noting that the main point of this paper has been to show how the systematic study of the properties of different social circles affects and is affected by the content and style of the ideas produced by members of the circle. Whether a firm relationship between content and form can be further substantiated, and whether an adequate theory can be developed to account for existing findings and to predict future ones, remain to be seen.

NOTES

1. This wide range is exemplified by friendship patterns in Malta (Boissevain, 1974), the Mafia in the United States (Ianni, 1972, 1974) and in Sicily (Blok, 1974), mining in Africa (Kapferer, 1969), leisure patterns in England (Bott, 1971), job-searching in America (Granovetter, 1974), the search for psychiatric help in New York City (Kadushin, 1966, 1969a), corporate overlap in the Netherlands (Mokken and Stokman, 1974) and the United States (Sonquist and Koenig, 1975), elite studies, and many more.

2. Some chains are long—having as many as 15 steps. In data we have seen, however, the magic number seems to be an average of two or three steps for most circles (Pool, 1973). An algorithm for clustering circles generally, therefore, has to consider only those persons one or two steps away from any ego (Alba and Kadushin, 1976).

3. Audiences do not in fact depend only on the evaluations of culture producers; rather, at least some members of the audience, called opinion leaders, actively participate in passing around the objects and symbols which originate at the center (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944). Most movie-goers evaluate new films as much on the basis of
their friends’ opinions as they do on mass media hype; voters are at least as much influenced by other voters as they are by the campaign (Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955); most physicians prescribe new drugs only after their friends have done so, whatever they may have previously read about the drug (Coleman et al., 1966); and the same is true for the adoption of contraceptives (Katz, 1957) or new agricultural techniques (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971). This pattern generally operates in one direction—from producer to consumer. In most audience studies, therefore, symbols or objects which pass through the network are regarded as immutable, at least for most purposes. Of course, audiences do affect performances, but in general audiences do not produce new symbols or objects.

4. The data must be regarded as tentative, since recent techniques which objectively partition large networks had not been developed at the time these studies were published. See Roistacher (1974).

5. One reason for the lack of structure in intellectual reviewing is that its effect is less directly financial than scientific reviewing. As Crane (1972) points out, scientists themselves tend to control all of their rewards, whereas the penumbra of intellectual circles and the mass market control much of the financial if not the artistic rewards of intellectual generalists. The extent to which good or bad reviews affect this market is at least questionable.

6. This section has profited from discussions with Rhea Gaisner and others of the “Open Theater.” Diana Crane suggests that movement circles also occur in scientific fields.

7. A promising theory has been advanced by Ekeh (1974) and is more fully described elsewhere (Kadushin, 1975). In essence, it tries to elaborate some ideas of Levi-Strauss and show that certain kinds of network patternings produce certain kinds of ideology, but that takes us even further afield.

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