

meaning is social networks 1

essays and sketches

- Sketches. Think about how you can draw lines: they can be thicker, thinner, longer, shorter. They can be solid or dashed, dark or light, wavy, straight or angular. 1. Draw a series of lines they vary along these and other dimension. Write a 1 line description of the type of data you think would be useful to depict with that variation (e.g. what would you try to depict with color vs with angularity etc). 2. Think about the problem we discussed in class about showing people who are physically distant but personally close. If a long thick line is used it may be too prominent. We talked about different solutions to being able to vary the length of a line while maintaining a constant sense of its overall weight or importance. Try sketching 2 or 3 solutions to this problem.
- Feld's theory on how networks form is based on a notion of foci in which people participate. These foci can be almost anything, from loosely bounded groups focused on neighborhoods, to the tight groupings of close families. Draw a network of about 20 variously interconnected people, using the notion of foci as the basis for your depiction. Think about how you want to use color, shape and size to represent the interests and circumstances that unite different people. How will you depict the people? Do you want to think about categorizing different types of foci - or depicting something about their strength, etc.?
- Feld and Granovetter's papers, read together, present a model of how information flows within social networks. People with many heterogeneous ties have access to a wide variety of information. while those with a small number of homogeneous ties have access to less information, but possible more social support (though Wellman suggests that this varies - and that some people with small, close-knit networks just end up *providing* a lot of support). Think about how information flows in the network you have drawn. Is it uniform or highly varied? Is it symmetric across links? How would you depict it?