CS 6474 Social Computing: Social Influence

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The Tipping Point

HOW LITTLE THINGS CAN MAKE
A BIG DIFFERENCE

MALCOLM GLADWELL

Surprise!

# "Measuring User Influence in Twitter: The Million Follower Fallacy"

Summary

- An early paper examining spread of influence on Twitter and people's social network and interaction characteristics.

- Early uses of a very huge Twitter dataset

- Influence measured through three attributes: in-degree (number of followers), retweets, mentions

- Findings:

  - More in-degree doesn't imply more influence in terms of RTs or mentions

  - Influence users tend to share content on a number of topics

  - Influence generation is gradual, and happens through focus on specific topics

Everyone's an Influencer: Quantifying Influence on Twitter

Summary

- Diffusion of URLs on Twitter
  - Easy to be traced back to the originating user through the follower graph
- "Influencers are identified only in retrospect, usually in the aftermath of some outcome of interest, such as the unexpected success of a previously unknown author or the sudden revival of a languishing brand"
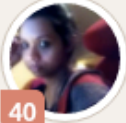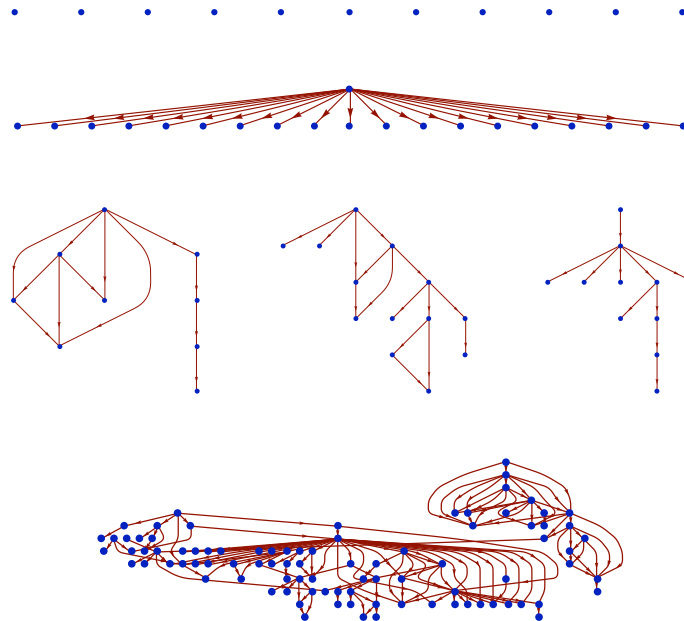
Why do we care about social influence?

What intuition may explain why large number of followers does not necessarily imply greater influence?

Can influence imply different things in different platforms? How does design impact influence? [Hint: pre-Twitter; Facebook News Feed]

Class Exercise

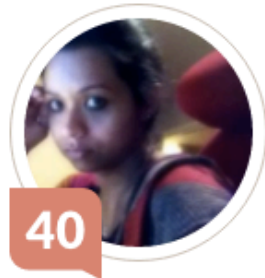# The battle of network structure and content

The tension between influence and trust