

# Only Connect?

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A Critical Appraisal of  
Connecting Practices in the  
Age of Social Media

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Prof. Richard Rogers

Digital Methods Initiative  
Summer School

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# ‘Connections’ as new object of study

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1. How to distinguish (ontologically and epistemologically) ties from connections?
2. Given the distinction, how (not) to study connections?



Only connect?

# How to distinguish (onto-epistemologically) between ties and connections?

## Ties

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Network

Structured

Longer-standing bonds

Maps of clusters

Search (pull)

Open (scraping)

(Social and Issue) network analysis

Web (links)

## Connections

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Platform

Algorithmic

Frequent interactions

Scrollable lists

Notifications (push)

Proprietary (API polling)

(Social cause) network analysis / Algorithmic auditing

Social media (follower/friend)

