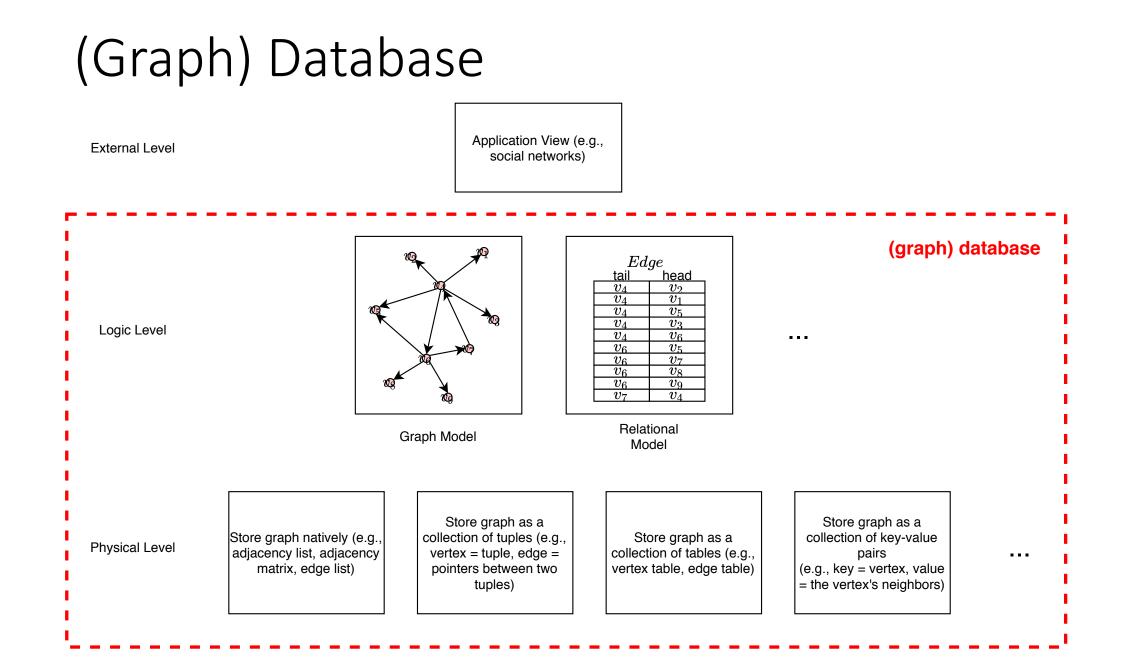
Introduction to Graph Database with Cypher & Neo4j

Zeyuan Hu

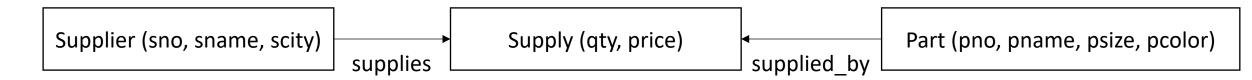
Dec. 2nd 2021

Austin, TX



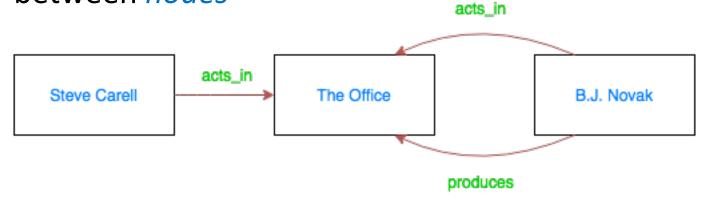
History

- Lots of logical data models have been proposed in the history of DBMS
 - Hierarchical (IMS), Network (CODASYL), Relational, etc
- What Goes Around Comes Around
 - Graph database uses data models that are "spiritual successors" of Network data model that is popular in 1970's.
 - CODASYL = Committee on Data Systems Languages



Edge-labelled Graph

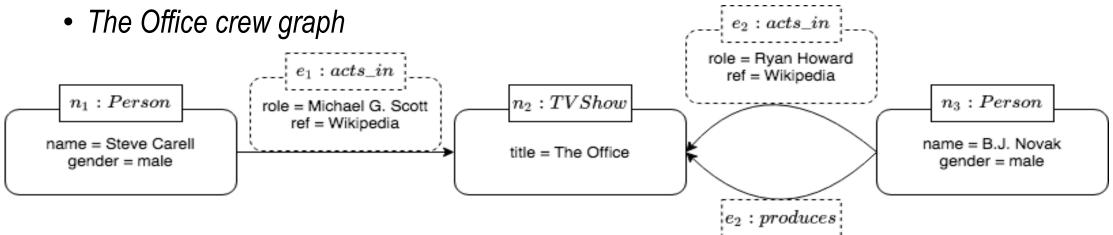
 We assign *labels* to *edges* that indicate the different types of relationships between *nodes*



- Nodes = {Steve Carell, The Office, B.J. Novak}
- Edges = {(Steve Carell, acts_in, The Office), (B.J. Novak, produces, The Office), (B.J. Novak, acts_in, The Office)}
- Basis of Resource Description Framework (RDF) aka. "Triplestore"

The Property Graph Model

- Extends Edge-labelled Graph with labels
 - Both edges and nodes can be labelled with a set of property-value pairs *attributes* directly to each edge or node.



- Node n₁ has node label Person with attributes: <name, Steve Carell>,
 <gender, male>
- Edge e_1 has edge label acts_in with attributes: <role, Michael G. Scott>, <ref, Wikipedia>

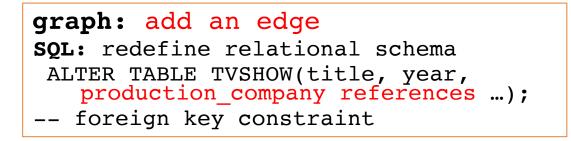
Property Graph v.s. Edge-labelled Graph

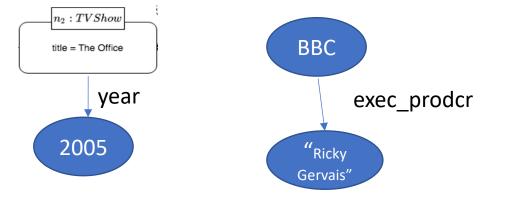
- Having node labels as part of the model can offer a more direct abstraction that is easier for users to query and understand
 - Steve Carell and B.J. Novak can be labelled as Person
- Suitable for scenarios where various new types of meta-information may regularly need to be added to edges or nodes

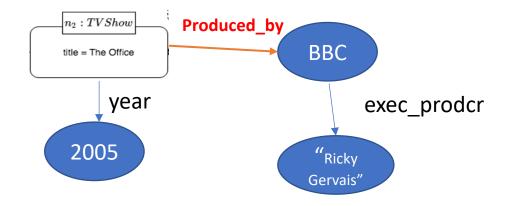
Graph v.s. Relational - Schema Extensibility

Useful for data integration tasks (e.g., link discovery)

CREATE TABLE TVSHOW(title, year); CREATE TABLE Production_Company(name, exec_prodcr)

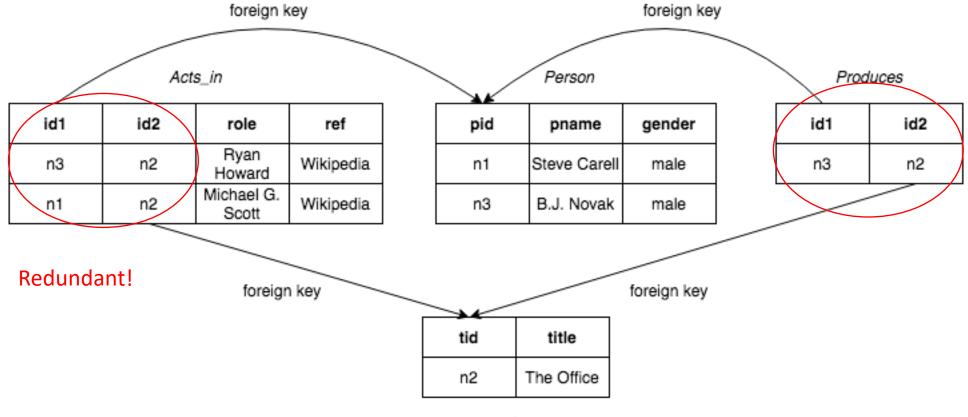






Same Data, Different Model

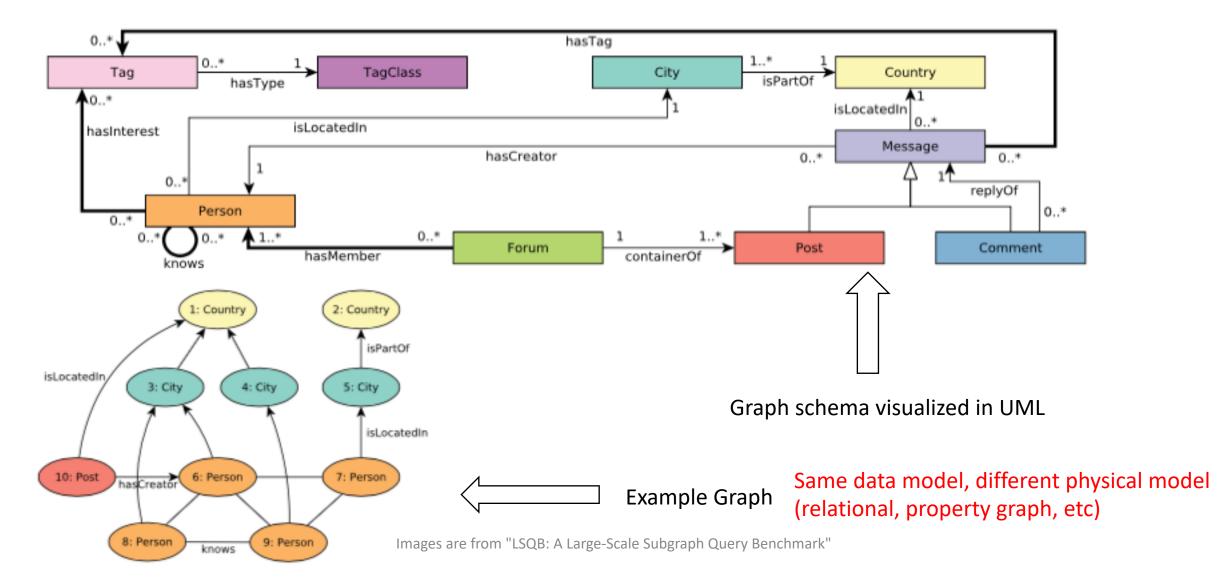
• The same data represented in relational model



Property Graph v.s. Relational Model

- Graph Structure is more intuitive than a collection of tables (e.g., org chart)
- Ambiguity in graph representation using relational model (directed or undirected?)
- Avoid repetitive data storage *from user perspective* (e.g., primary key & foreign key)
- Enable same relation name with different attributes
 - CREATE TABLE TVSHOW(title, year);
 - CREATE TABLE TVSHOW(title, year, production_company); // Not possible!
- Nice query language for graph problems

Data Modeling is still relevant in Graphs



Neo4j

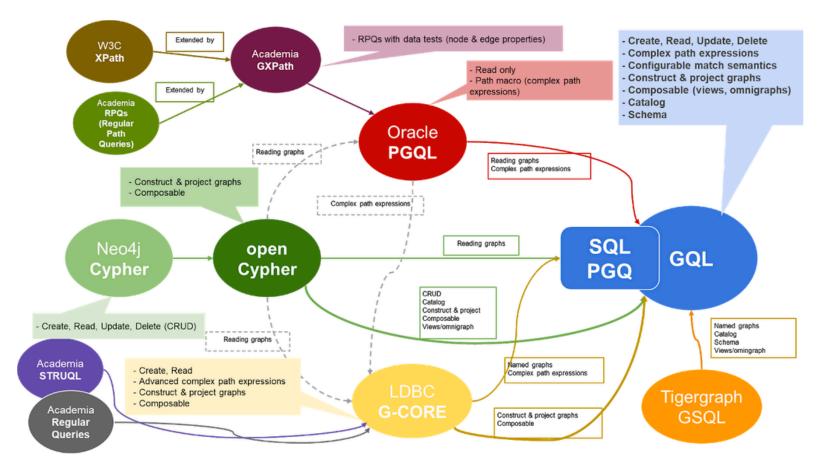
- Neo4j is a graph database that uses *property graph* data model with a query language called *Cypher*
- In graph database domain, there is no standard query language (yet). Many vendor-dependent flavors
 - SPARQL for RDF
 - Cypher, Gremlin, etc. for property graph
 - Ex: Find co-stars of The Office

```
MATCH (x1:Person) -[:acts_in]->
    (:TVSHOW {title: "The Office"})
    <-[:acts_in]- (x2:Person)
RETURN x1, x2</pre>
```

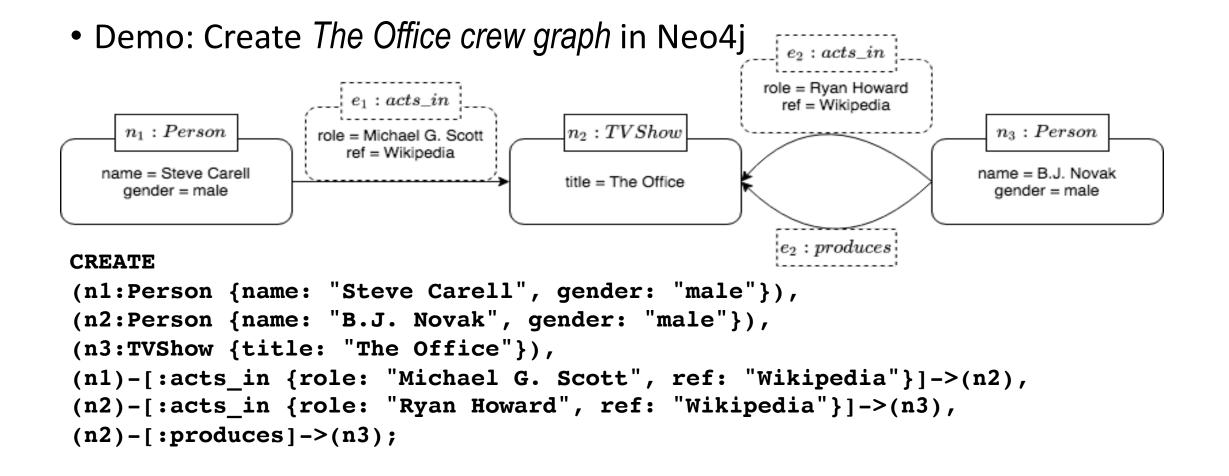
```
g.V().has("TVSHOW", "title", "The Office").
in('acts_in').hasLabel("Person").
values("name")
```

Graph Query Language (GQL)

Ongoing standardization effort just like SQL for relational model



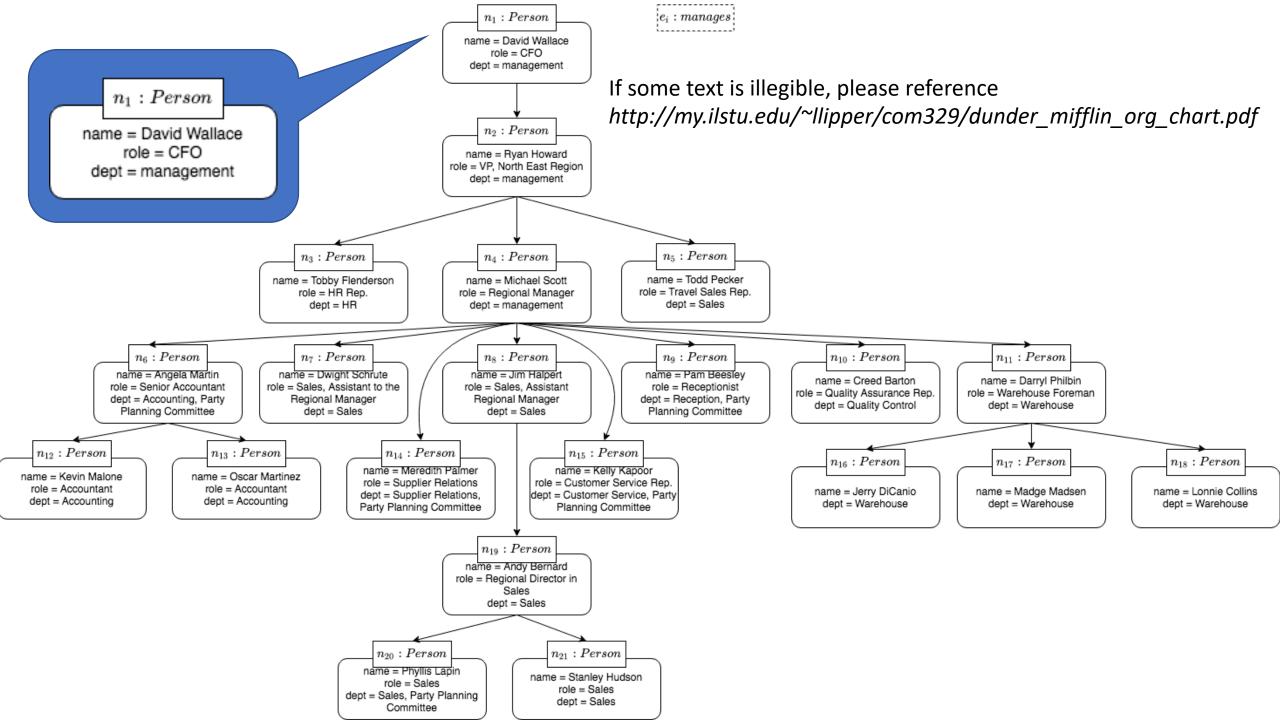
First Property Graph with Neo4j



Let's Practice



- Let's create the org. chart of the paper company Dunder Mifflin, Scranton Branch¹ in The Office.
- All edges have labels e_i: manages with i being numbers from 1 to n, the number of edges
- Some useful commands & notes
 - See the graph MATCH (n) RETURN n LIMIT 50
 - Delete the graph MATCH (n) DETACH DELETE n
 - To create list of values, use "[]"
 - For example, role: ["Sales", "Assistant Regional Manager"]

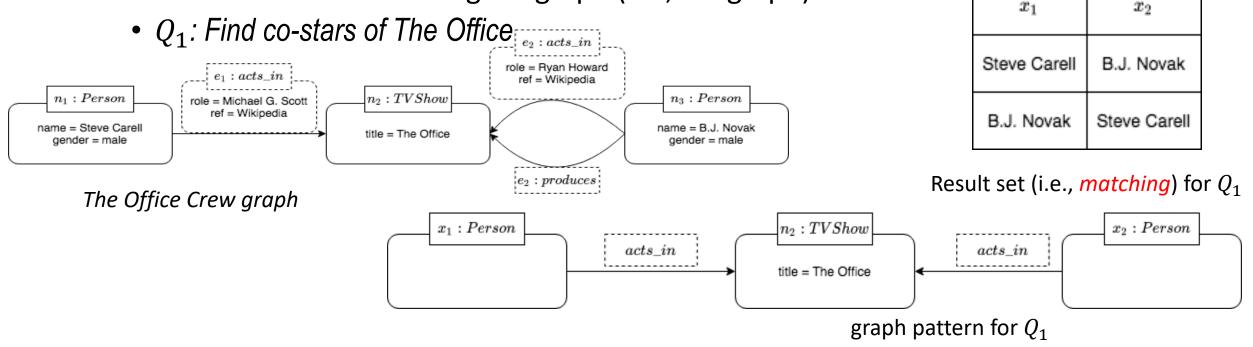


Graph Query Languages

- Two important usage patterns for graph query languages:
 - Graph Pattern Matching
 - Graph Navigation
- We'll focus on Cypher in this tutorial. However, any significant graph query languages will have these two important patterns in their languages.

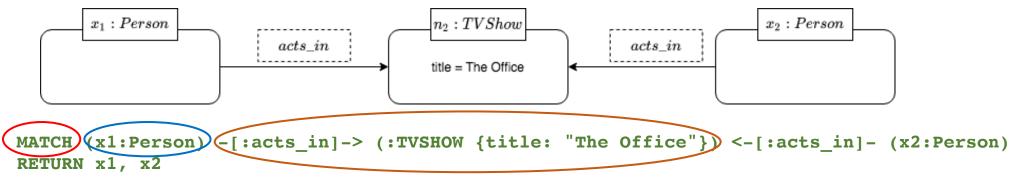
Graph Pattern Matching

- Graph Pattern Matching
 - A match is a mapping from variables to constants such that when the mapping is applied to the given pattern, the result is, roughly speaking, contained within the original graph (i.e., subgraph).



Graph Pattern Matching in Cypher

- Cypher has no-repeated-edges, bags semantics
- Q_1 : Find co-stars of The Office



Match pattern x_1 has to connect to TVShow node through an incoming edge with edge label acts_inWe want to match variable x_1 to node with node label Person

- Cypher manual:
 - https://neo4j.com/docs/cypher-manual/current/syntax/patterns/

Example

- Who's inside Party Planning Committee (PPC)? (*hint: PPC is a dept*) MATCH (p:Person) WHERE "Party Planning Committee" in p.dept return p.name
- How many people does Michael directly manage? (hint: use count())

```
MATCH (p:Person)<-[:manages]-(n:Person)
WHERE n.name = "Michael Scott"
RETURN count(p)</pre>
```

Let's Practice

• Find all the employees that are directly managed by someone that reports to Michael

```
MATCH (p {name: 'Michael Scott'})-[:manages]->()-[:manages]->(q)
RETURN q.name
```

• Does Michael directly manage more employees than Jim Halpert?

```
MATCH (p:Person)<-[:manages]-(n:Person)
WHERE n.name = "Michael Scott"
WITH count(p) AS c1
MATCH (p:Person)<-[:manages]-(m:Person)
WHERE m.name = "Jim Halpert"
RETURN c1 > count(p)
```

```
Each MATCH ... WHERE can be thought as
a SELECT ... FROM ... WHERE
MATCH (p:Person)<-[:manages]-(n:Person)
WHERE n.name = "Michael Scott"
MATCH (q:Person)<-[:manages]-(m:Person)
WHERE m.name = "Darryl Philbin"
RETURN p.name, q.name
```

Graph Navigation

- A mechanism provided by graph query languages to *navigate* the topology of the data.
- Two important query classes:
 - Path Query
 - Path Query + Graph Pattern Matching (i.e., navigational graph pattern)

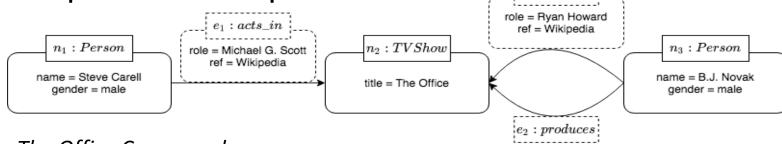
Path Query

- using Regular • Previously, we match a graph pattern; now, we
- Path query has the general form $P = x \xrightarrow{\alpha} y$ where α specifies conditions on the paths we wish to retrieve and x and y are the endpoints of the path.

Often represented

Expressions

attern.



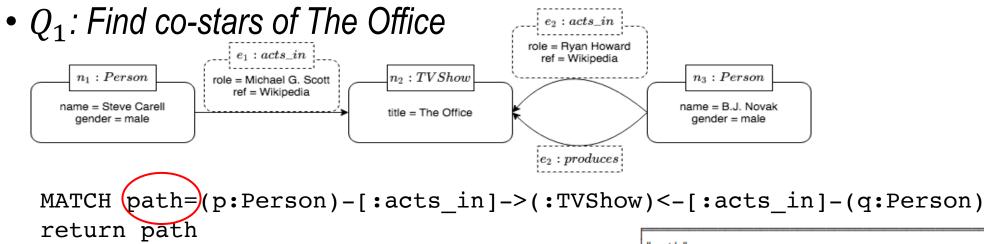
The Office Crew graph

• Q_1 : Find co-stars of The Office

$$P \coloneqq x \xrightarrow{acts_in \cdot acts_in} y$$
 Edge has direction

Path Query in Cypher

• Cypher has no-repeated-edge, bags semantics



Nothing new but we return a path now!

'path"

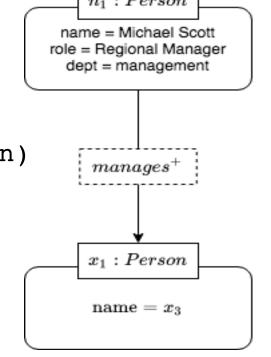
[{"gender":"male","name":"Steve Carell"},{"ref":"Wikipedia","role":"Mi
chael G. Scott"},{"title":"The Office"},{"title":"The Office"},{"ref":
"Wikipedia","role":"Ryan Howard"},{"gender":"male","name":"B.J. Novak"
}]

[{"gender":"male","name":"B.J. Novak"},{"ref":"Wikipedia","role":"Ryan Howard"},{"title":"The Office"},{"title":"The Office"},{"ref":"Wikipe dia","role":"Michael G. Scott"},{"gender":"male","name":"Steve Carell" }]

Navigational Graph Pattern in Cypher

- Q2: Find all the people that Michael Scott manages

```
MATCH path=(p:Person)-[:manages*1..]->(q:Person)
WHERE p.name = "Michael Scott"
return q.name
```



 Resources: https://neo4j.com/docs/cyphermanual/current/syntax/patterns/#cypher-pattern-relationship

Example

• Get the Dunder Mifflin employees that are on the same level as "Michael Scott" (*hint: use length() on path*)

```
MATCH p1 = (n:Person)<-[:manages*]-(p:Person)
MATCH p2 = (m:Person)<-[:manages*]-(p:Person)
WHERE length(p1) = length(p2) AND m.name <> n.name AND n.name = "Michael Scott"
RETURN m
```

Same Data, Different Model

• Let's query the same data in Relational Model

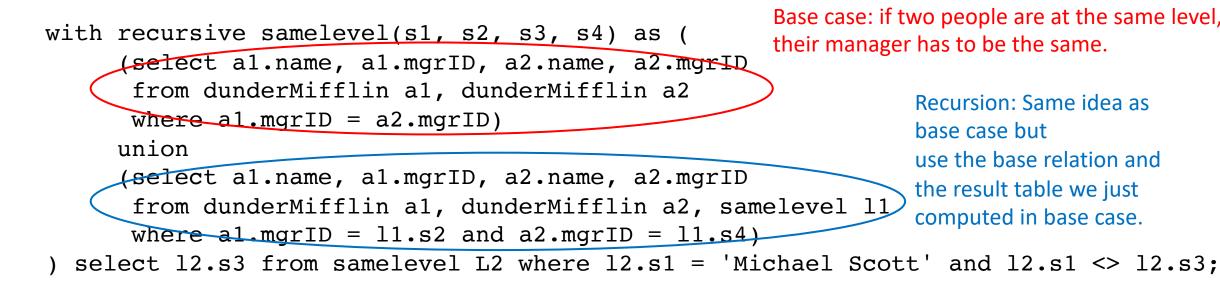
empID	name	role	dept	mgrID
1	David Wallace	{"CFO"}	{"management"}	
2	Ryan Howard	{"VP, North East Region"}	{"management"}	1
3	Tobby Flenderson	{"HR Rep."}	{"HR"}	2
4	Michael Scott	{"Regional Manager"}	{"manace ant"}	2
	+d Pecker			

Actual schema and data see "sql-ex-2.sql"

MATCH p1 = (n:Person)<-[:manages]-(p:Person)
MATCH p2 = (m:Person)<-[:manages]-(p:Person)
WHERE length(p1) = length(p2) AND m.name <>
n.name AND n.name = "Michael Scott"
RETURN m

Same Data, Different Model

 Get the Dunder Mifflin employees that are on the same level as "Michael Scott"



Let's Practice

• Does Jim Halpert manage Phyllis Lapin?

```
MATCH path=(p:Person)-[:manages*1..]->(q:Person)
WHERE p.name = "Jim Halpert" and q.name = "Phyllis Lapin"
return count(path) > 0
```

Why do we use distinct p2 rather than distinct path?

Graph Algorithms in Cypher

- Cypher and many graph query languages allow user to directly embed graph algorithms inside the query
- Q3: Find the shortest path between David Wallace and Andy Bernard

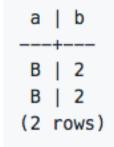
```
MATCH path = shortestPath(
 (p:Person {name: "David Wallace"})-[:manages*1..]-(q:Person {name: "Andy Bernard"}))
 RETURN path
```

• More graph algorithms: PageRank, Centrality, Connected Component algorithms, etc.

Understand a Cypher Query

- Neo4j has EXPLAIN command; just like EXPLAIN in any RDBMS vendor
- Running example for this section
 - Data modelled in Relational Model CREATE TABLE R3(a char(1)); CREATE TABLE R2(a char(1), b integer); CREATE TABLE R1(b integer);

```
INSERT INTO R3(a) VALUES ('A'),('B'),('B');
INSERT INTO R2(a,b) VALUES
('A',1),('A',1),('B',1),('B',2);
INSERT INTO R1(b) VALUES (2),(3);
```



• Query: SELECT * FROM r1 NATURAL JOIN r2 NATURAL JOIN r3;

• The plan for SQL query looks like

```
[ee382v=# explain select * from r1 natural join r2 natural join r3;
                                  QUERY PLAN
 Merge Join (cost=2507.23..6928.67 rows=293913 width=12)
   Merge Cond: (r1.b = r2.b)
   -> Sort (cost=179.78..186.16 rows=2550 width=4)
         Sort Key: r1.b
         -> Seg Scan on r1 (cost=0.00..35.50 rows=2550 width=4)
   -> Sort (cost=2327.45..2385.08 rows=23052 width=12)
         Sort Key: r2.b
         -> Merge Join (cost=301.05..657.03 rows=23052 width=12)
               Merge Cond: (r2.a = r3.a)
               -> Sort (cost=142.54..147.64 rows=2040 width=12)
                     Sort Key: r2.a
                     -> Seg Scan on r2 (cost=0.00..30.40 rows=2040 width=12)
               -> Sort (cost=158.51..164.16 rows=2260 width=8)
                     Sort Key: r3.a
                     -> Seg Scan on r3 (cost=0.00..32.60 rows=2260 width=8)
(15 rows)
```

- Let's model the same data in property graph model
- Guidelines to map relational model to graph model
 - A row is a node
 - A table name is a label name
 - Attributes in relational schema become properties associated with nodes
 - A join or foreign key is a relationship (i.e., edge)

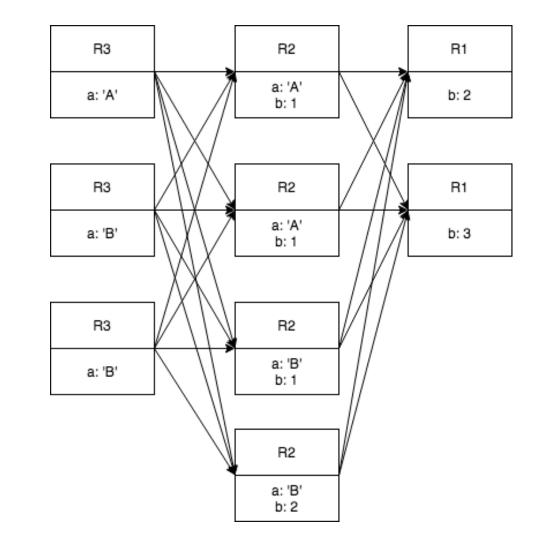
Not So Correct Attempt

CREATE

```
(n1:R3 {a: "A"}),
(n2:R3 {a: "B"}),
(n3:R3 {a: "B"}),
(n4:R2 {a: "A", b: 1}),
(n5:R2 {a: "A", b: 1}),
(n6:R2 {a: "A", b: 1}),
(n7:R2 {a: "B", b: 1}),
(n8:R1 {b: 2}),
(n9:R1 {b: 3});
```

MATCH (r1:R1), (r2:R2)
CREATE (r1)-[:e]->(r2)
MATCH (r2:R2),(r3:R3)
CREATE (r2)-[:e]->(r3)

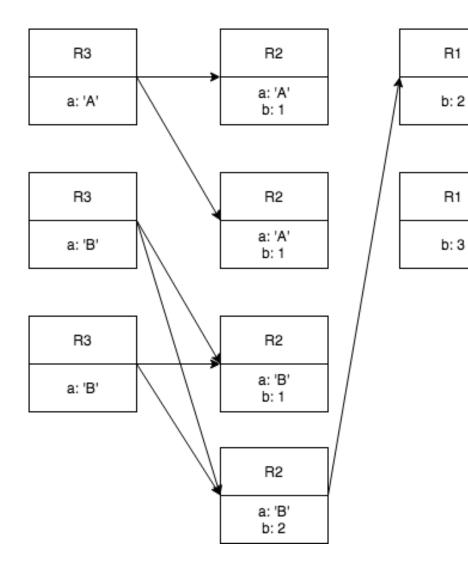
Violates a join or foreign key is a relationship: we have cartesian product



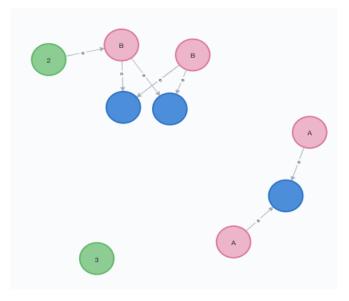
Better Attempt CREATE (n1:R3 {a: "A"}), (n2:R3 {a: "B"}), (n3:R3 {a: "B"}), (n4:R2 {a: "A", b: 1}), (n5:R2 {a: "A", b: 1}), (n6:R2 {a: "A", b: 1}), (n7:R2 {a: "B", b: 1}), (n8:R1 {b: 2}), (n9:R1 {b: 3});

```
MATCH (r1:R1),(r2:R2)
WHERE r1.b = r2.b
CREATE (r1)-[:e]->(r2)
```

```
MATCH (r2:R2),(r3:R3)
WHERE r2.a = r3.a
CREATE (r2)-[:e]->(r3)
```



• Resulting graph in Neo4j



Observation

- Neo4j doesn't have notion of undirected edges during graph creation; user can ignore directions when they query the graph
- Unlike relational model, part of join computation is done during the graph model creation (e.g., when create relationships)

- Recall SQL query
 - SELECT * FROM r1 NATURAL JOIN r2 NATURAL JOIN r3;
- In Cypher

```
MATCH (r1:R1),(r2:R2),(r3:R3)
WHERE r1.b = r2.b AND r2.a = r3.a
RETURN r2.a, r1.b
```

- Let's check the query plan
 - EXPLAIN MATCH (r1:R1),(r2:R2),(r3:R3) WHERE r1.b = r2.b AND r2.a = r3.a RETURN r2.a, r1.b

▼ NodeByLabelScan@neo4j	▼ NodeByLabelScan@neo4j		
r1	r2		
r1:R1	r2:R2		
10 estimated rows	10 estimated rows		
▼ CacheProperties@neo4j	▼ CacheProperties@neo4j		
r1	r2		
cache[r1.b]	cache[r2.a]		
10 estimated rows	10 estimated rows		
▼ ValueHashJoin@neo4j	▼ NodeByLabelScan@neo4j		
r1, r2	r3		
cache[r1.b] = r2.b	r3:R3		
10 estimated rows	10 estimated rows		
ValueHashJ	ojn@neo4i		
r1, r2, r3			
cache[r2.a]	= r3.a		
	10 estimated rows		
▼ Projection@ne			
r1, `r1.b`, r2			
Cache[r2.a] AS AS `r1.b`	`r2.a`, cache[r1.b]		
	10 estimated rows		
▼ ProduceResults	@neo4j		
r1, `r1.b`, r2,	r1, `r1.b`, r2, r3, `r2.a`		
`r2.a`, `r1.b`			
	10 estimated rows		
Result			

 Three-way join is computed using hash join in a pipeline fashion in Neo4j 4.2 optimizer

This query builds a cartesian product between disconnected patterns.

If a part of a query contains multiple disconnected patterns, this will build a cartesian product between all those parts. This may produce a large amount of data and slow down query processing. While occasionally intended, it may often be possible to reformulate the query that avoids the use of this cross product, perhaps by adding a relationship between the different parts or by using OPTIONAL MATCH (identifier is: (r3))

EXPLAIN MATCH (r1:R1),(r2:R2),(r3:R3) WHERE r1.b = r2.b AND r2.a = r3.a RETURN r2.a, r1.b

Suggests the above Cypher query is "anti-pattern"

- Recall the semantics of semi-join in graph
 - A ⋈ B means given a set of starting vertices in B, return the set of vertices in A that connect to those starting vertices via edges
- A multi-way join query = A fixed-length path query
- Cypher query

```
MATCH (r3:R3)-[:e]-(r2:R2)-[:e]-(r1:R1)
WHERE r2.a = r3.a and r2.b = r1.b
RETURN r2.a, r1.b
```

r1 r1:R1 10 estimated rows
10 estimated rows
▼ Expand(All)@neo4j
r1, anon_27, r2
(r1)-[anon_27:e]-(r2)
2 estimated rows
▼ Filter@neo4j
r1, anon_27, r2
r2.b = cache[r1.b] AND r2:R2
0 estimated rows
Expand(All)@neo4j r1, anon_14, r2, r3, anon_27
(r2)-[anon_14:e]-(r3)
0 estimated rows
▼ Filter@neo4j
r1, anon_14, r2, r3, anon_27
cache[r2.a] = r3.a AND not anon_14 = anon_27 AND r3:R3
0 estimated rows
▼ Projection@neo4j
r1, `r1.b`, anon_14, r2, r3, anon_ 27, `r2.a`
cache[r2.a] AS `r2.a`, cache[r1.b] AS `r1.b`
0 estimated rows
▼ ProduceResults@neo4j
r1, `r1.b`, anon_14, r2, r3, anon_ 27, `r2.a`

- Expand(All)
 - Given a start node, and depending on the pattern relationship, the Expand(All) operator will traverse incoming or outgoing relationships.
 - = breadth-wise expansion of the search tree
- Join = Expand(All) + Filter
 - The execution starts with r₁ and follows the edges from r₁ by one more level to find all r₂ that satisfies (r1) [anon_27:e] (r2)
 - Then Filter is applied with predicate r2.b = r1.b.
- Recall: Each MATCH ... WHERE can be thought as a SELECT ... FROM ... WHERE

```
MATCH (r2:R2)-[:e]-(r3:R3)
WHERE r2.a = r3.a
with r2
MATCH (r2)-[:e]-(r1:R1)
WHERE r2.b = r1.b
RETURN r2.a, r1.b
```

Labels (i.e., relation names) are important

 Graph query focuses more on labels rather than properties → properties in graph queries may not be as important as attributes in relational queries

МАТСН

```
(person1:Person)-[:KNOWS]-(person2:Person),
(person1)<-[:HAS_CREATOR]-(comment:Comment)-[:REPLY_OF]->(
post:Post)-[:HAS_CREATOR]->(person2)
RETURN count(*) AS count SELECT count(*)
FROM Person_knows_Person
JOIN Comment ON Person_knows_Person.Person1Id
= Comment.
hasCreator_Person
JOIN Post ON Person_knows_Person.Person2Id =
Post.
hasCreator Person
```

```
AND Comment.replyOf_Post = Post.id;
```

Labels (i.e., relation names) are important

- Joins in graphs happen along predefined access paths, i.e., predeclared pointers (or edges)
- Joins in relational are value-based arbitrary tables can be joined on arbitrary columns as long as those columns have the same data types

Relational vs. Graph: A Case Study

- A term project done by a student in the same class in Spring 2019
- The goal is to enable run queries against a large collection of data (~2.2M rows) gathered from student's workplace
 - Example query: Where are all my photos?
 - Similar scenarios:
 - Query against files stored in S3 bucket
 - Query against log files collected over time from different services on AWS
- Method: model data in relational model (Postgres 11) and graph model (Neo4j 3.5) and compare performance
- Independent of the DBMS, the raw data comprised a labeled directed graph

Relational vs. Graph: A Case Study (cont')

• Query 1: Exact Filename Match

Return full paths of files that match a given file name

```
WITH RECURSIVE filetree AS (
       select file_id, filename, parent_file_id, host, path as path_org,
           filename as path, 0 as depth, parent_file_id as tpid from files match p = (r)-[:parent_of*]->(f)
           where filename ='all.txt'
       UNION
       select ft.file_id, ft.filename, ft.parent_file_id, ft.host,
           ft.path as path_org, f.filename || '/' || ft.path as path,
           ft.depth + 1 as depth, f.parent_file_id as tpid
       from files f
       join filetree ft
       on ft.tpid = f.file_id
select * from filetree where tpid = -1
```

```
match(f:file) where f.name = "all.txt"
match(r:is_root)
// The reduce notation concatenates the parent nodes to reconstruct the path
return reduce(acc = "/", x IN nodes(p)[1..] | acc + "/" + x.name),
    reduce(acc = 0, x IN nodes(p)[1..] | acc + 1)
```

Cypher query is much shorter* than SQL counterpart \rightarrow easier development and code maintenance

*average < 1/3 LoC. Newer, similar studies show even greater reduction (e.g., occasionally < 1/10 LoC)

Relational vs. Graph: A Case Study (cont')

		-
Database	Speed	
Neo4j	1 ms	
Postgresql	1 ms	
Neo4j	4013 ms	
Neo4j	777 ms	
Neo4j	947 ms	1
Postgresql	5949 ms	ſ
Neo4j	833 ms	
Neo4j	236 ms	
Postgresql	6008 ms	
Postgresql	32 ms	
Neo4j	636 ms	1
Postgresql	56 ms	
Neo4j	636 ms	
Postgresql	5720 ms	
Postgresql	183 ms	
	Neo4j Postgresql Neo4j Neo4j Postgresql Neo4j Postgresql Postgresql Neo4j Postgresql Neo4j Neo4j	Neo4j 1 ms Postgresql 1 ms Neo4j 4013 ms Neo4j 777 ms Neo4j 947 ms Postgresql 5949 ms Postgresql 833 ms Neo4j 236 ms Neo4j 32 ms Postgresql 32 ms Postgresql 32 ms Postgresql 56 ms Neo4j 56 ms Postgresql 5720 ms

- Postgres outperforms Neo4j for certain queries
- Cypher query still needs many hand tuning* to reach acceptable performance → indicates lack of maturity for Neo4j optimizer

*writing query in a different way, and/or overriding Neo4j's Cypher Query Optimizer's choice of query plan.

Conclusion

- Introduced Edge-label Graph, Property Graph
 - Discussed their difference with each other and with Relational Model
- Introduced graph query languages
 - SPARQL for RDF (i.e., Edge-label Graph), Gremlin and Cypher for Property Graph
 - Introduced three important usage patterns in graph query languages
 - Graph Pattern Matching
 - Path Query
 - Navigational Graph Pattern Matching
 - Demonstrated and practiced those usage patterns in Cypher with Neo4j
 - Introduced Cypher query profiling in Neo4j
- A real world case study on relational model vs. graph model
 - Graph query is easier to write and maintain
 - Neo4j has a long way to go to build a sophisticated optimizer like Postgres

Moving Forward

- Gremlin
 - <u>https://kelvinlawrence.net/book/Gremlin-Graph-Guide.html</u>
 - <u>https://tinkerpop.apache.org/docs/current/tutorials/getting-started/</u>
- Contrast among Cypher, SQL, and Datalog on the same data
 - <u>https://github.com/xxks-kkk/Code-for-blog/tree/master/2020/sql-datalog-cypher</u>
- Code for this tutorial
 - <u>https://github.com/xxks-kkk/Code-for-blog/tree/master/2020/intro-to-graphdb-with-neo4j</u>
- Slides available
 - <u>https://zhu45.org/introduction-to-graph-database-with-neo4j.pdf</u>