Document-Centered Network Analysis of Journalist Interaction During the Spanish-American War

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Question:
How does network analysis help us better represent, and, therefore, understand journalist interaction in the Spanish American War?

Methods:
- I analyzed typed documents written by detective agencies and journalists sending reports between Cuba and the United States between 1890 and 1900. They were written in both Spanish and English and I tracked people, places, and document numbers.
- The detectives discussed a variety of people and places, but each document was focused. These focuses helped us create a network of connections between the people and places that were important to the detectives.
- We can't interview these people or visit the places as they were in that time, but we can use the documents that are still around. Using documents as the connecting nodes helped us recreate a more authentic representation of the past based on what we had on hand.

Results:
- I was able to see how visual representations help contribute to our knowledge about history.

With my small sample of documents, I was able to see how a document-centered network enables us to understand how people were talking about each other and this is why I included the documents in the representation.

The clusters (two samples outlined in blue) enable us to see who was in communication most often. They also serve as a reference, because we know to go to that specific document instead of having to skim through a bunch to find connections.

- For example, Halstead, Caldwell, and Matanzas show up in several of the same documents, therefore they are connected to each other. These people, and others in different clusters, can serve as stepping stones for further research.