

Generative network modeling reveals quantitative definitions of bilateral symmetry exhibited by a whole insect brain connectome

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Summary

- Aimed to define bilateral symmetry for a connectome, and formally test this hypothesis.
- Hemispheres differ in a network-wide parameter under even the simplest model of a network pair.
- Hemispheres differ in neuron group connection probabilities, even when adjusting for the network-wide effect.
- Detect no differences in adjusted group connections after removing a cell type or when only considering strong edges.
- Provided a definition of bilateral symmetry exhibited by this connectome, tools for future connectome comparisons

Motivation

- Connectomes are rich sources of inspiration for architectures in artificial intelligence.
- Comparing connectomes could help elucidate which structural features are necessary for yielding the capabilities animal intelligences.
- Bilateral symmetry for connectomes is one such comparison; has been investigated, but not clearly defined as a network hypothesis.

Larval *Drosophila* brain connectome

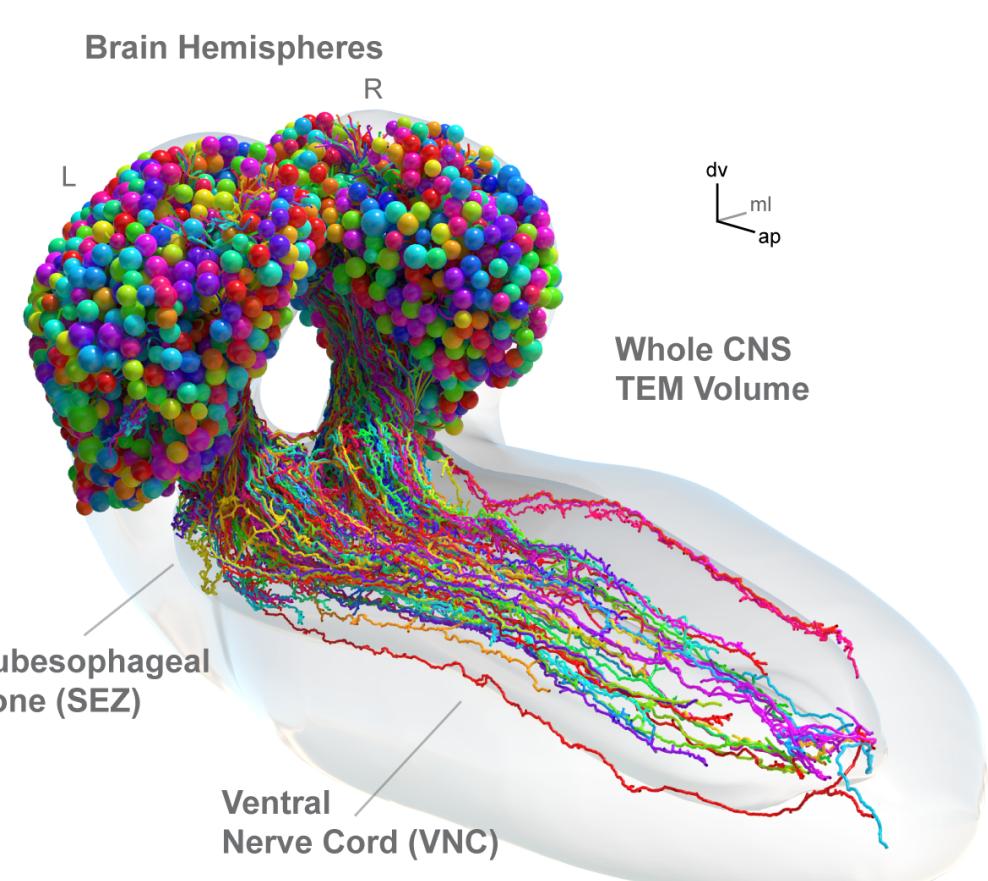


Fig 1A: 3D rendering of a larval *Drosophila* brain connectome [1] comprised of ~3k neurons and ~544k synapses.

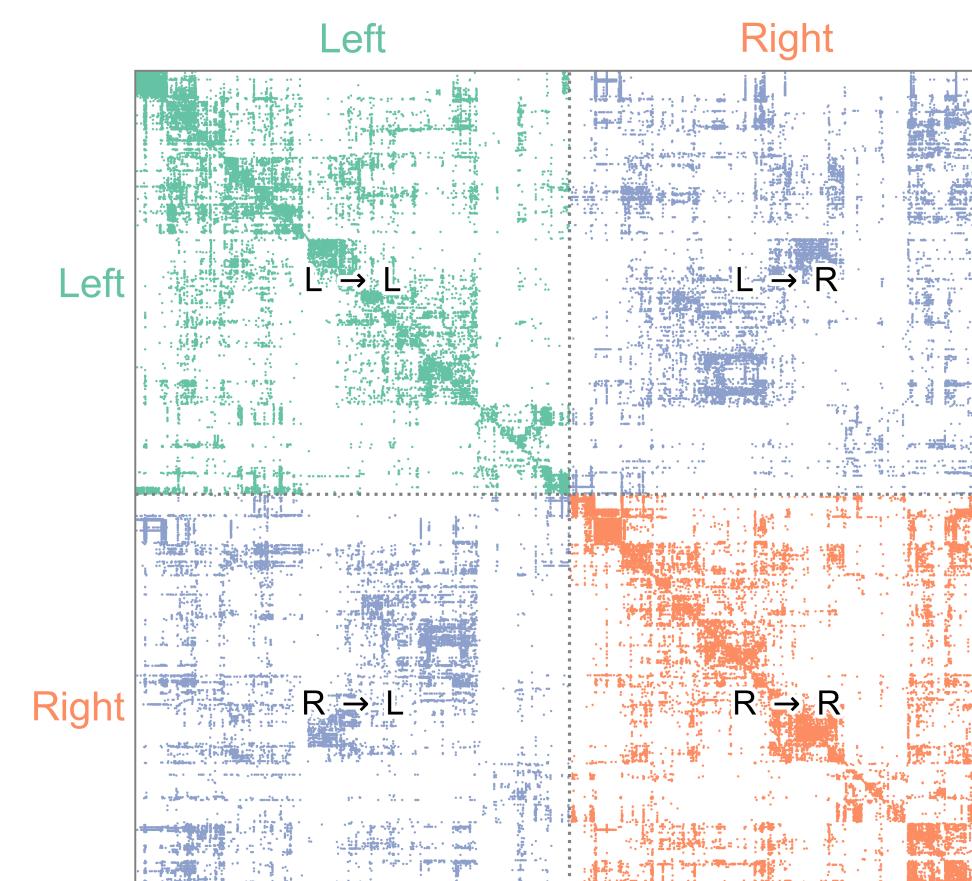


Fig 1B: Directed, binary adjacency matrix sorted by brain hemisphere. We compare $L \rightarrow L$ vs. $R \rightarrow R$ subgraphs.

Are the left and right networks "different"?

Requires that we define what we could mean by "different" for a pair of networks, develop a test procedure for each definition.

Density test (Model 1)

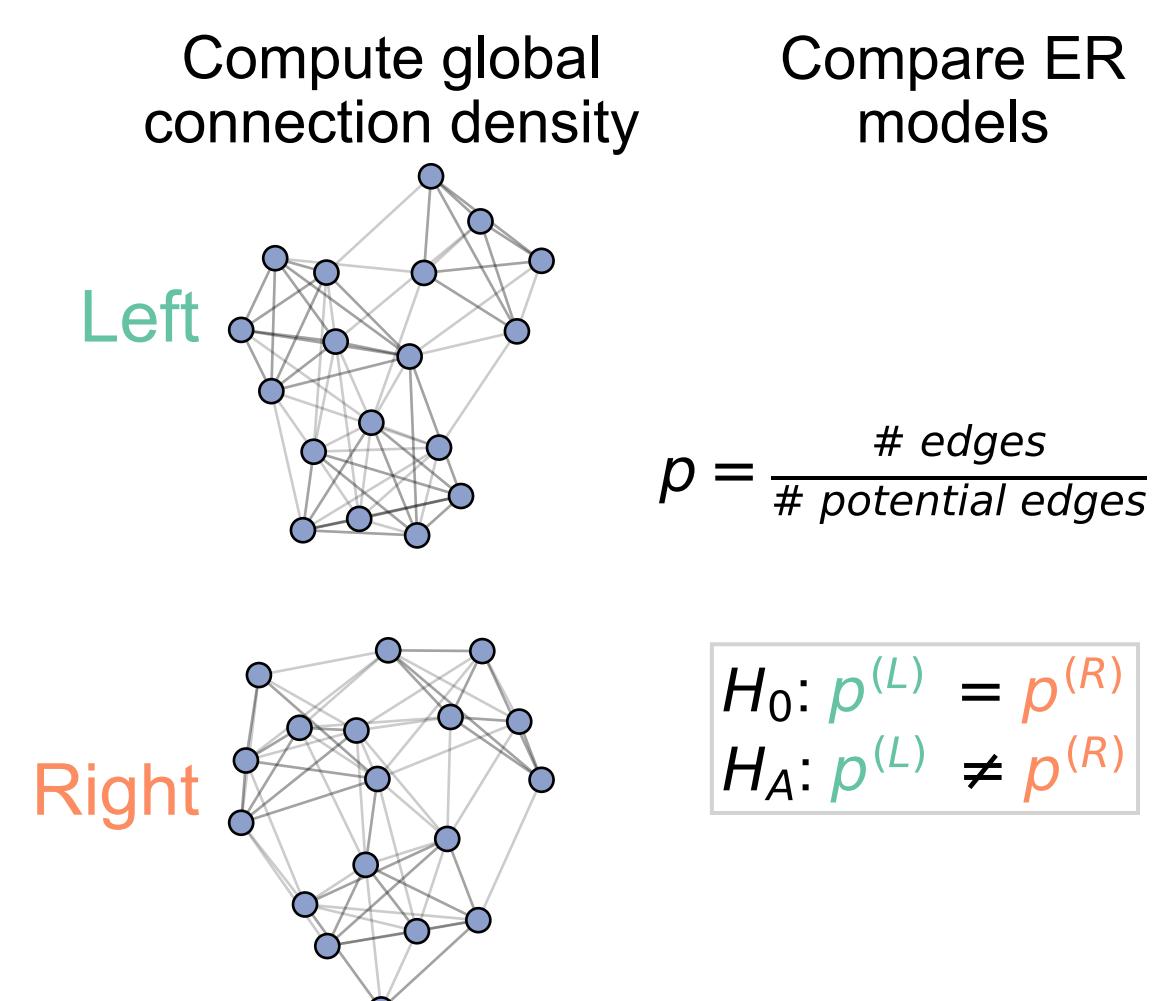


Fig 2A: Testing symmetry under Erdos-Renyi (ER) model [2] compares global connection probability (density), here via Fisher's exact test.

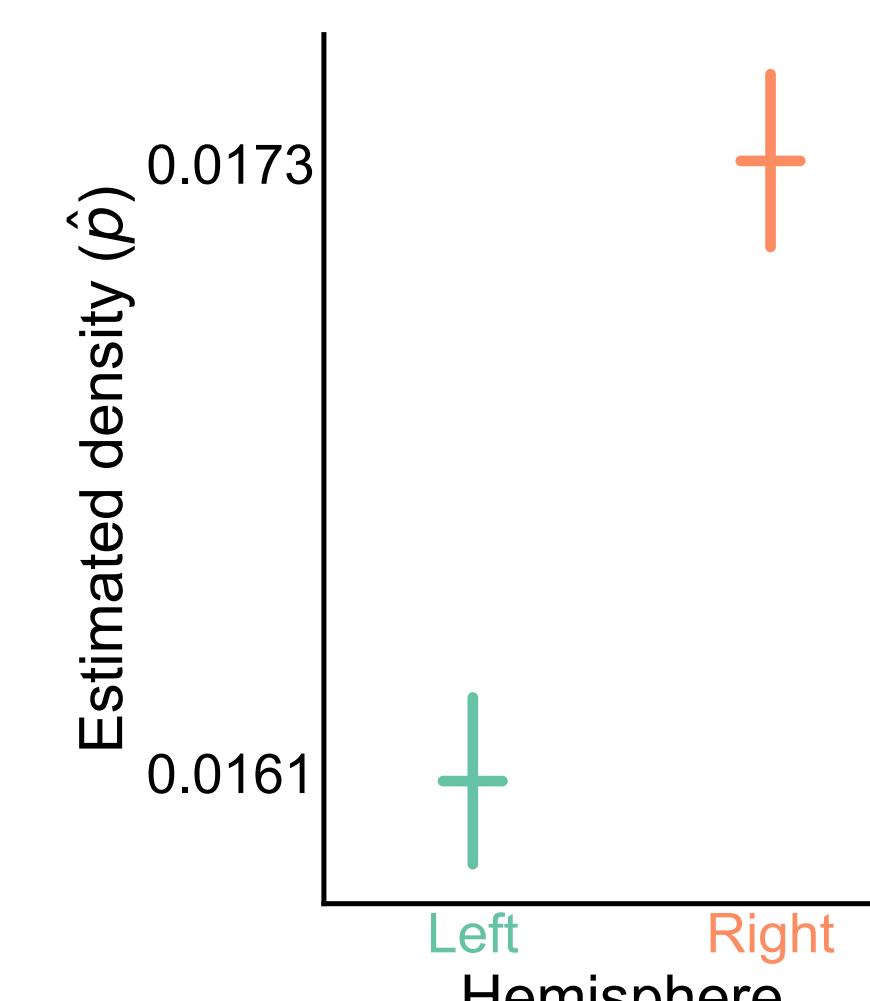


Fig 2B: Test comparing densities rejected ($p < 10^{-23}$), even the simplest model parameter differs between hemispheres.

Group connection test (Model 2)

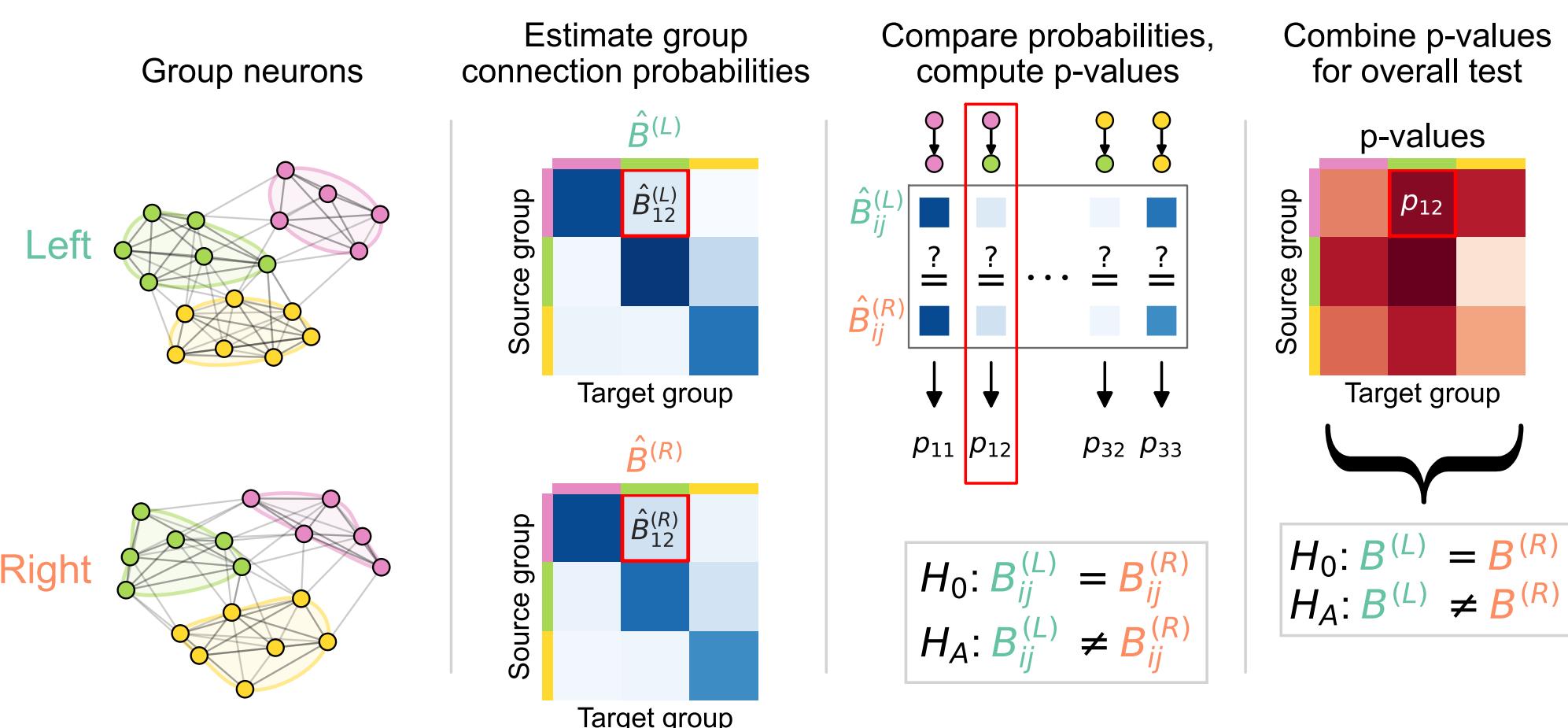


Fig 3A: Testing under stochastic block model (SBM) compares probabilities of connections between groups (here using cell types [1]).

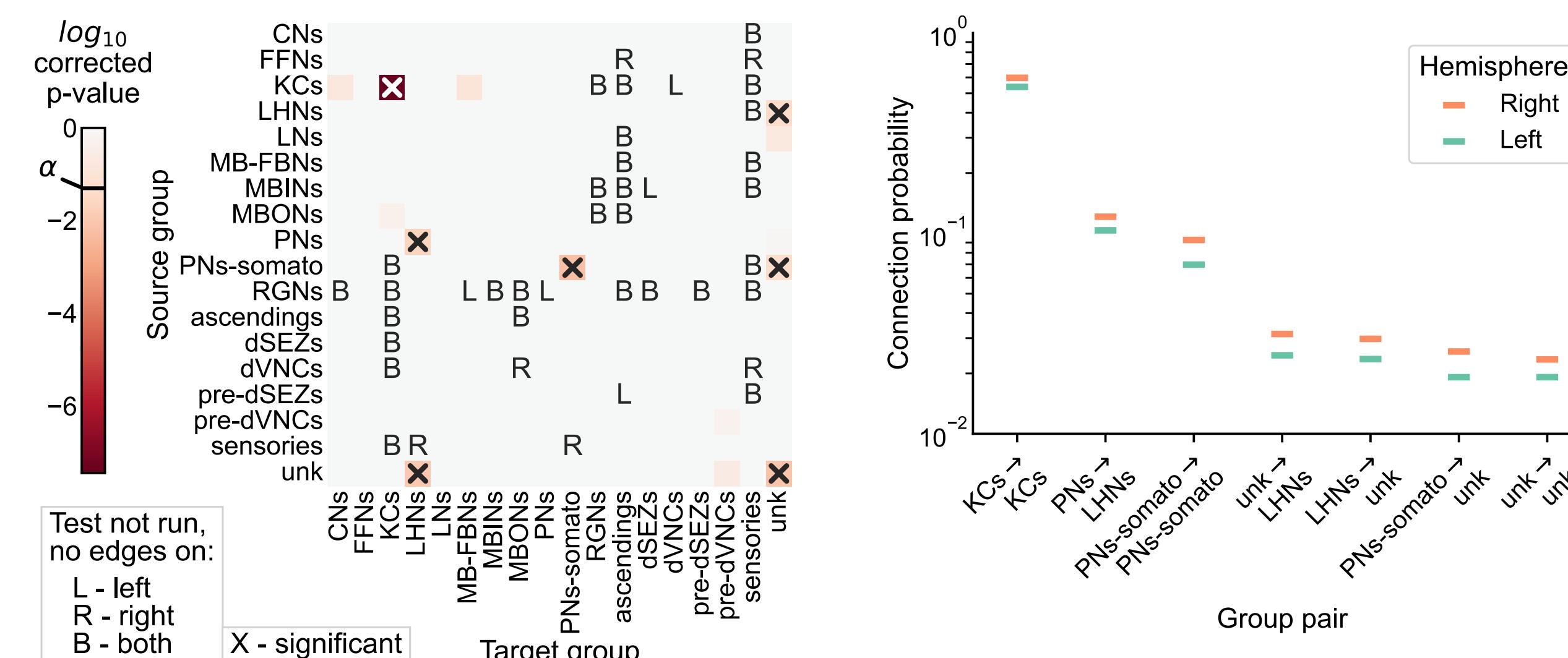


Fig 3B: Test comparing group connections rejected ($p < 10^{-7}$); five specific connections differ.

Fig 3C: For significant group connections, denser hemisphere probability is always higher.

Density-adjusted group connection test (Model 3)

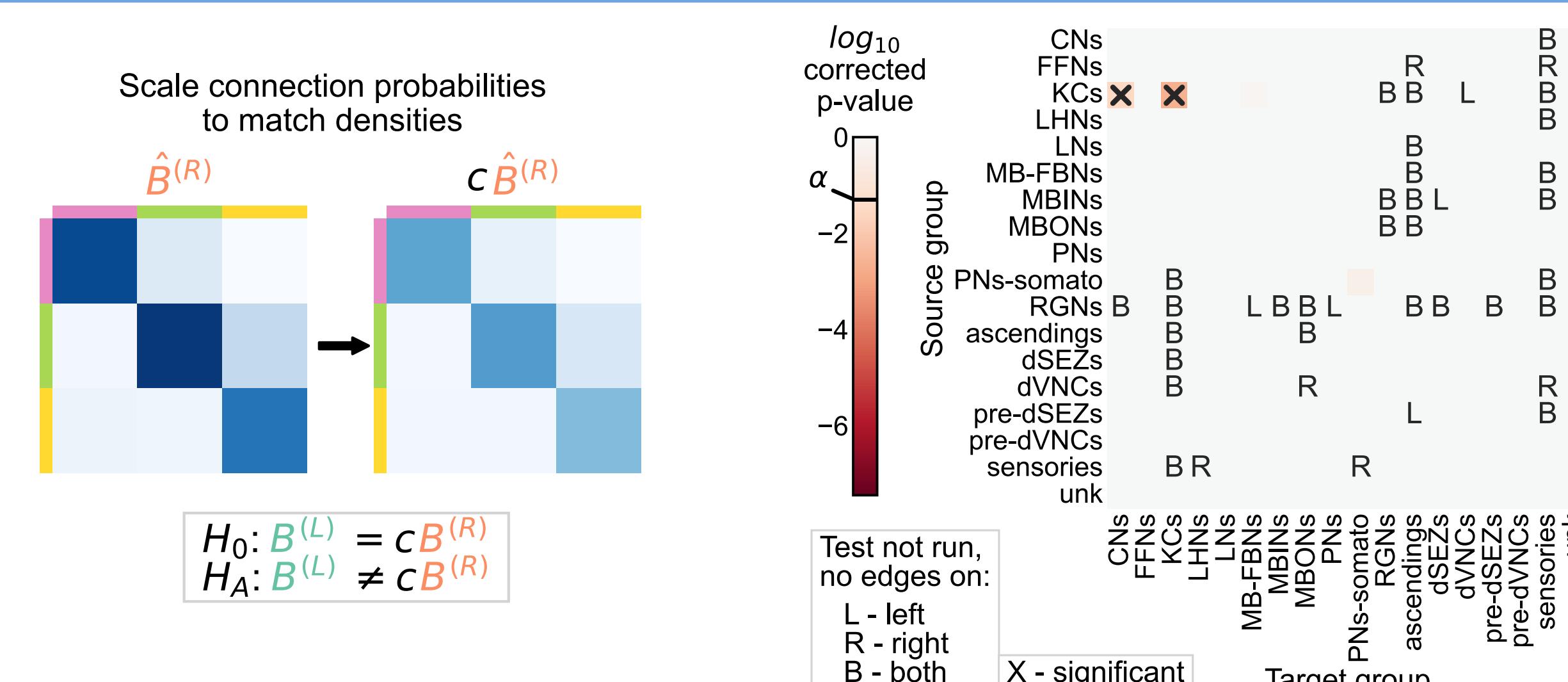


Fig 4A: Hypothesis from Fig 3 modified by a factor c set to make densities equal.

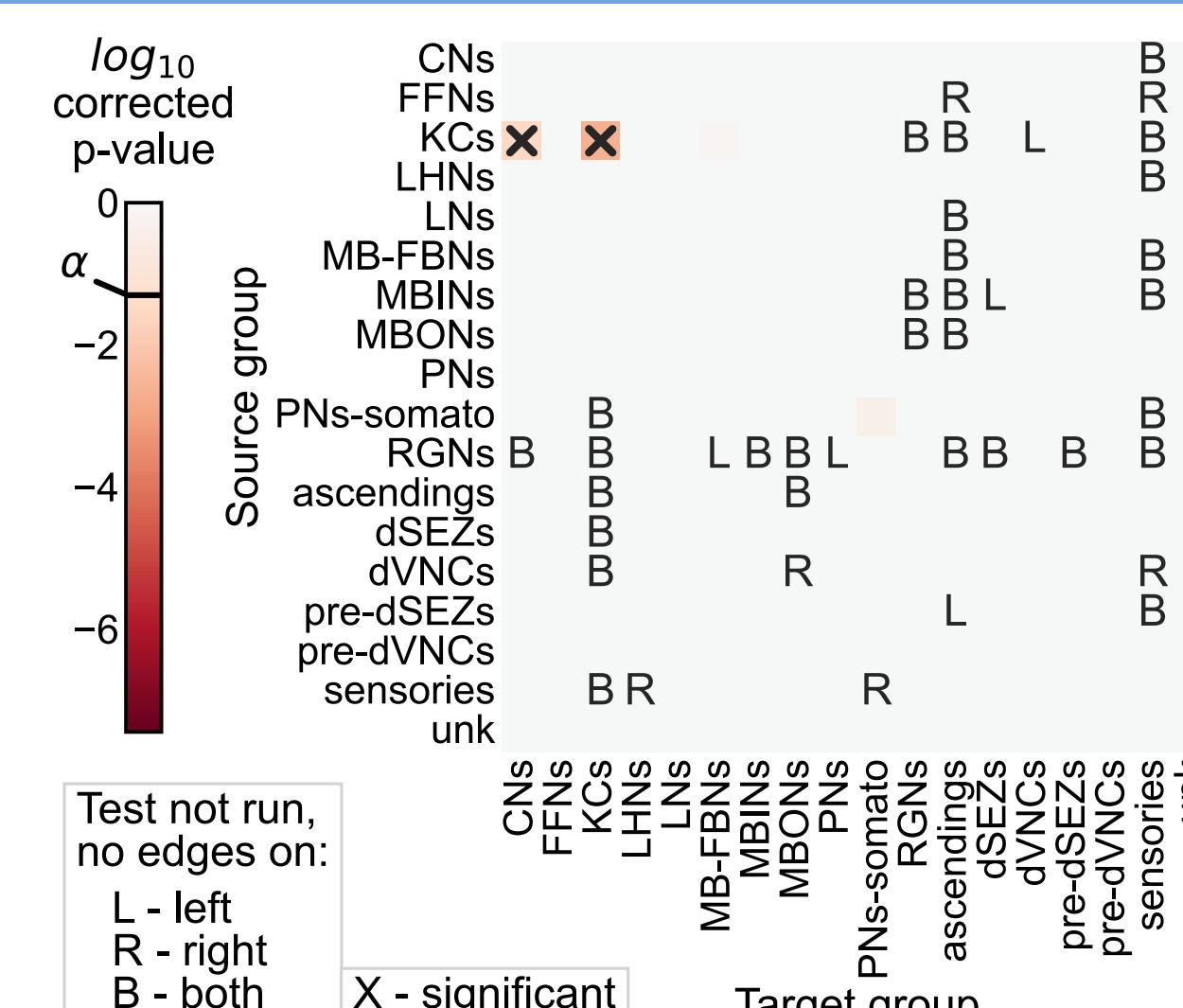


Fig 4B: Test comparing adjusted group connections rejected ($p < 10^{-2}$); differences from KCs.

Notions of bilateral symmetry

With Kenyon cells

Model	H_0 (vs. $H_A \neq$)	p-value
1	$p^{(L)} = p^{(R)}$	$< 10^{-23}$
2	$B^{(L)} = B^{(R)}$	$< 10^{-7}$
3	$B^{(L)} = cB^{(R)}$	$< 10^{-2}$

Without Kenyon cells

Model	H_0 (vs. $H_A \neq$)	p-value
1	$p^{(L)} = p^{(R)}$	$< 10^{-27}$
2	$B^{(L)} = B^{(R)}$	$< 10^{-2}$
3	$B^{(L)} = cB^{(R)}$	0.42

Edge weight thresholds

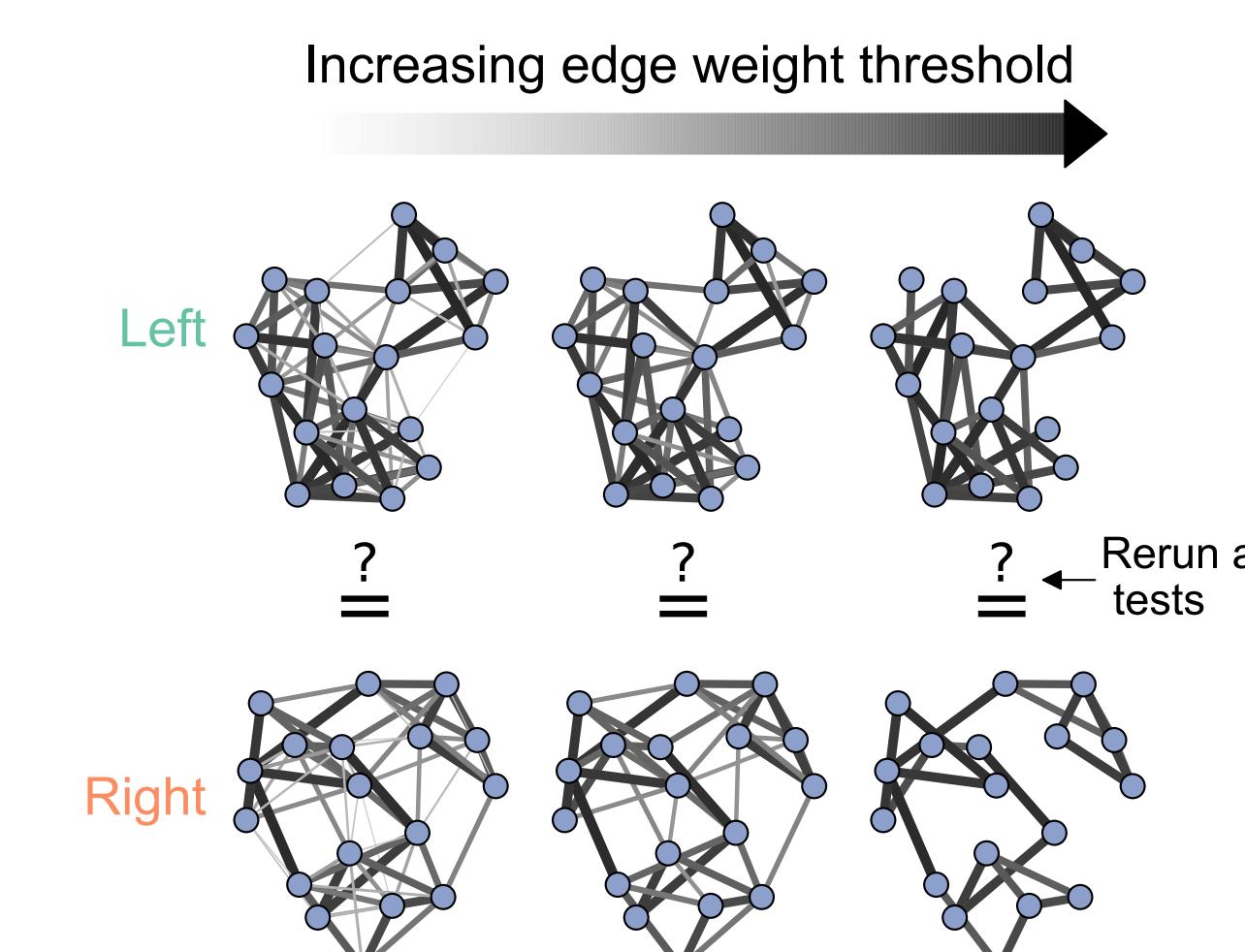


Fig 5A: Removed edges w/ weight (synapse count or percentage of input to downstream neuron) below some threshold, tested symmetry for each pair of networks.

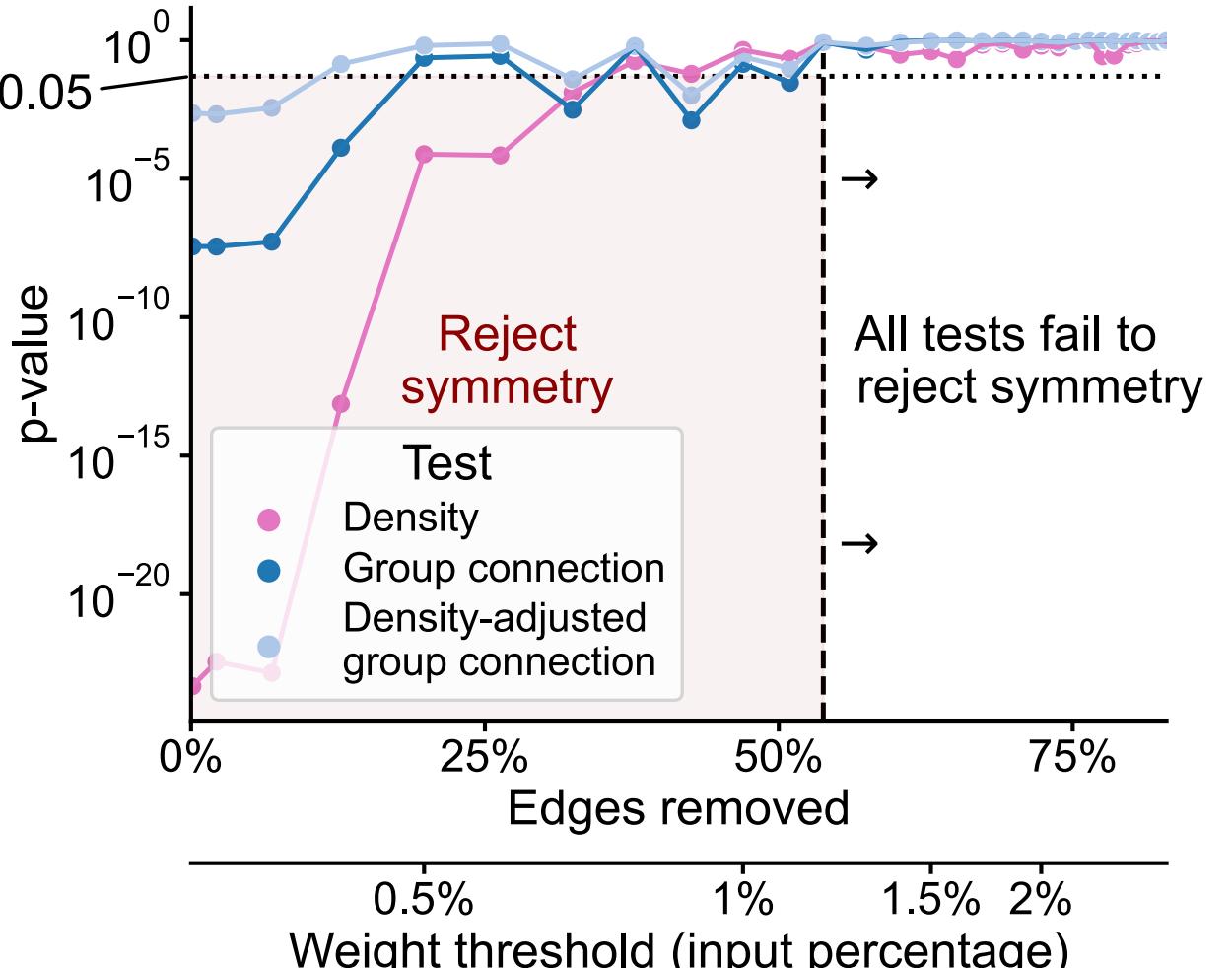


Fig 5B: Did not detect asymmetry in networks of only top ~50% of edges (by input percentage) under models studied here. Not true using synapse counts edge weights (not shown).

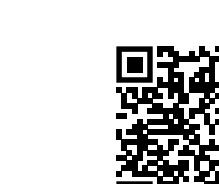
Limitations and extensions

- Other models to consider (e.g. random dot product graph [3])
- Other sensible neuron groupings for group connection test
- Matching nodes across networks leads to new models, likely more power

Code



This work



References

- [1] Winding, Pedigo et al. "The complete connectome of an insect brain," In preparation (2022)
- [2] Chung et al. "Statistical connectomics," Ann. Rev. Statistics and Its Application (2021)
- [3] Athreya et al. "Statistical inference on random dot product graphs: a survey," JMLR (2017)

Funding

B.D.P. supported by the NSF GRFP (DGE1746891). J.T.V. supported by NSF CAREER Award (1942963). J.T.V + C.E.P. supported by NIH BRAIN Initiative (RF1MH123233). Findings and conclusions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the funders.

Acknowledgements

Marta Zlatic's lab, Albert Cardona's lab and all tracers for the amazing dataset and many ideas. NeuroData lab for feedback. Many at Microsoft Research for w/ graspologic.