Natalie Dionne and Naomi Liftman
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Paper Topic

As Congress and the greater United States becomes evermore polarized on key components of identity, such as age, race, religion, gender, and sexuality, we feel it is important to see how these identities affect the Congressional Network. There is extensive literature surrounding the idea that the divisiveness of identity has significantly increased during the Trump Era, with that we intend to look at the 114th (one session before Trump took office to act as a control) to the 117th Congress. This network analysis will help understand the extent to which identity affects the Congressional Network, specifically in modeling how likely individuals are to work together based on similar competents of identity. Our hope is that this question will help get at bigger concepts like the role of identity in politics and the extent to which collaboration can exist with core identity differences.

We plan to merge multiple datasets to achieve our goals, with the first dataset having been collected by Zachary Neal using the *incidentally* package. Using this package Neil built a framework for collecting information of legislators' bill sponsorship activities for individual sessions of congress–to achieve our goals we must scrape multiple sessions of congress and merge them into one file. We will then combine this data with data collected from the Pew Research Center who have on multiple occasions collected identity based information on United States congresspeople.

https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/incidentally/vignettes/congress.html
https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2023/01/09/u-s-congress-continues-to-grow-in-racial-ethnic-diversity/