Unearthing Power Lines

Votes are cast by the full membership in each house of Congress, but much of the important maneuvering occurs in committees. Graph theory and linear algebra are two mathematics subjects that have revealed a level of organization in Congress—groups of committees—above the known levels of subcommittees and committees. The result is based on strong connections between certain committees that can be detected by examining their memberships, but which were virtually unknown until uncovered by mathematical analysis.
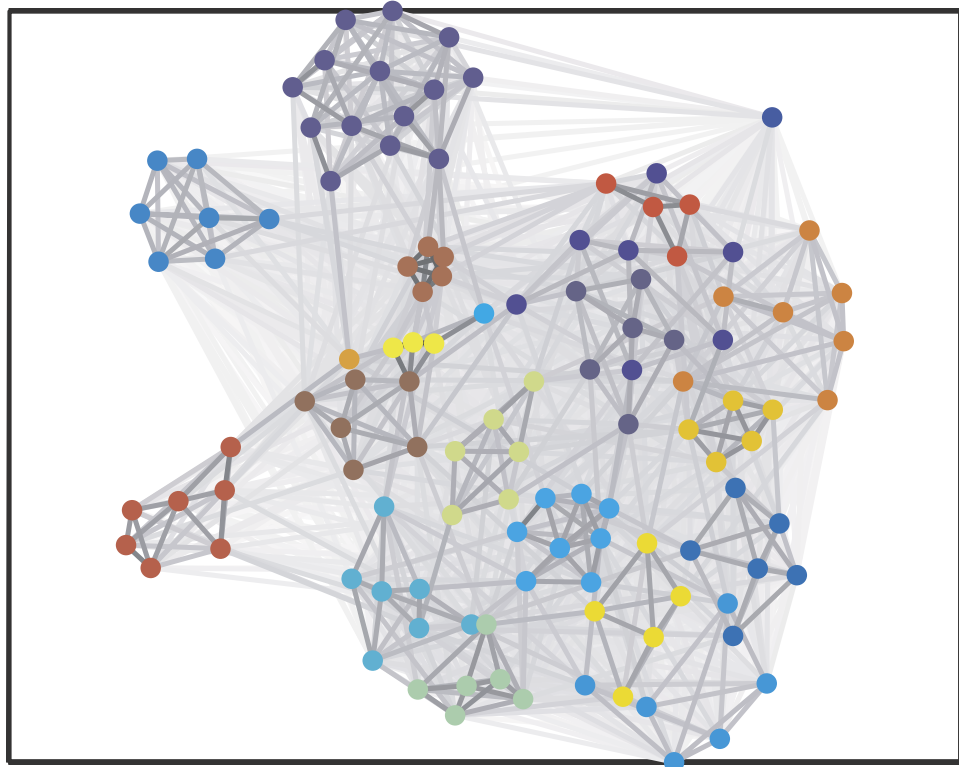

Image: Community Structure in the U.S. House, courtesy of Peter J. Mucha and Mason A. Porter.

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