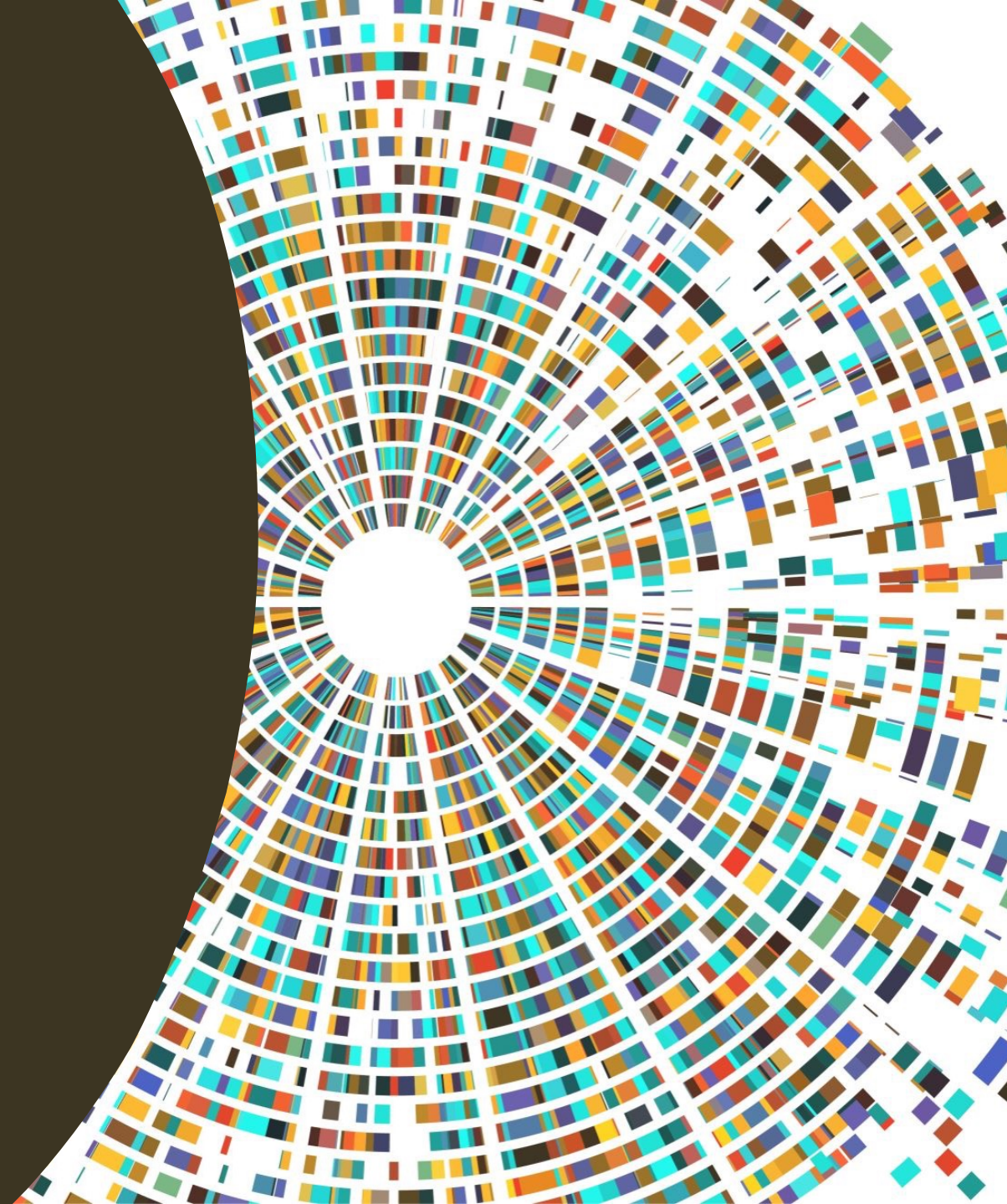


Specialization and Committees in the US House of Representatives

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Background

- **Specialization as a norm**
- **Past research**
 - **Interviews**
 - **Specialization in general**
 - **Committees in terms of legislative business**
 - **Specialization and party**
 - **Matthews (1960), Asher (1973), Smith (1989)**

Assumptions and Research Question

- Committees predict what members will specialize in?
- Research Question: Do committee memberships predict what members choose to specialize and therefore speak on?
- What percent of members on a given bill are a member of the *jurisdiction committee*?
- C-SPAN Video Library as research tool

Research Methods

- **Four Congresses: 103rd, 104th, 112th, 116th**
 - **All large freshman classes**
 - **Even split of Republican and Democratic control**
- **Filter bills via:**
 - **HR, public law, and specific Congress**
- **Random number to establish starting point**
- **Every 10th bill**

Research Methods Continued

- From each bill extract:
 - Jurisdiction committee
 - Each speaker and their:
 - Committee assignments, party, state, district, member of jurisdiction committee t/f
 - *Suspension bill t/f*
 - *Appropriation bill t/f*

Table with columns A through X containing bill numbers, committee names, speakers, and committee assignments.

Results

- **Figure 1**
 - **All types of bills**
- **Figure 2**
 - **Appropriation bills only**
- **Figure 3**
 - **Suspension bills only**
- **Figure 4**
 - **Non-suspension, non-appropriation bills**

Figure 1 All Bills

103rd All Bills				
			Marginal	
	Democrats	Republican	Total	
Not a member of Committee	39%	57%	48%	
Member of Committee	61%	43%	52%	
Total	100%	100%	100%	
N	56	60	116	

Figure 1: All Bills

104th All Bills				
			Marginal	
	Democrats	Republican	Total	
Not a member of Committee	26%	28%	27%	
Member of Committee	74%	72%	73%	
Total	100%	100%	100%	
N	43	43	86	

Figure 1: All Bills

112th All Bills				
			Marginal	
	Democrats	Republican	Total	
Not a member of Committee	44%	28%	37%	
Member of Committee	56%	72%	63%	
Total	100%	100%	100%	
N	43	39	82	

Figure 1: All Bills

116th All Bills				
			Marginal	
	Democrats	Republican	Total	
Not a member of Committee	42%	50%	46%	
Member of Committee	58%	50%	54%	
Total	100%	100%	100%	
N	33	28	61	

Figure 1 Analysis

- **Claim/research question is supported**
- **No major difference between Democratic and Republican parties**
- **Majority of other figures display similar results**

Figure 2: Appropriations Bills

103rd Appropriation non suspension bills				
			Marginal	
	Democrats	Republican	Total	
Not a member of Committee	48%	83%	68%	
Member of Committee	52%	17%	32%	
Total	100%	100%	100%	
N	27	35	62	

Figure 2 Analysis

- **103rd as an outlier**
 - **HR 4606**
 - **Labor, HHS, Education, and other agencies**
 - **76% of speakers on 4606**
 - **56% non-committee speakers are related committees**
 - **62 speakers larger than all others**

Figure 3: Non-Appropriation Suspension Bills

116th non appropriation suspension bills				
			Marginal	
	Democrats	Republican	Total	
Not a member of Committee	50%	53%	51%	
Member of Committee	50%	47%	49%	
Total	100%	100%	100%	
N	24	19	43	

Figure 3 Analysis

- **116th as an outlier**
 - **H.R 1158 comprises 65% of the speakers' topics**
 - **86% were appropriations committee members**
 - **This is an appropriation bill that has jurisdiction in the Homeland Security Committee**

Future Research

- **Focus on larger bills**
- **Focus on party and specialization connection**

Conclusion

- **Overwhelming evidence in support of claim**
 - **Committee membership does predict specialization/speakership**
- **Outliers**
 - **Adjacent committee members**
 - **Large encompassing bills**
 - **Outside motivations to rise in non-jurisdiction committee membership**

References

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