Rendering pathways to convey quantitative genomic relationships

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1 Introduction

Given an R graph representing a biological pathway and a vector of numbers (e.g., estimated levels of gene expression, or quantile of gene expression value in a distribution over samples) linked to the nodes of the pathway (e.g., genes), we wish to display the graph with nodes colored to convey the relationships among the numbers.

Our primary tool for rendering graphs is Rgraphviz. This package uses AT&T graphviz to compute layouts, and various aspects of R graphics to create renderings.

Our primary tools for creating pathway graphs are the graph and pathRender packages.

In this vignette and associated code, we aim to simplify the use of software in these components to allow the intended renderings to be created in a flexible way.

2 An example

2.1 A pathway graph

The graph package contains a custom-made graph representing the pancreatic cancer initiation pathway. First we render it in isolation from data:

```r
> library(graph)
> library(Rgraphviz)
> data(pancrCaIni)
> plot(pancrCaIni, nodeAttrs = pwayRendAttrs(pancrCaIni))
```
Note that the default rendering of the pathway graph is hard to read; we use the new pwayRendAttrs function to generate attributes that improve readability.

2.2 An ExpressionSet and its reduction

We will work with ALL.

```r
> library(ALL)
> if (!exists("ALL")) data(ALL)
```

A basic problem is to reduce the information obtained using the whole-genome microarray to a set of numbers relevant to the pathway we wish to render. The reduceES function helps with this. Given a vector of annotation tokens (e.g., HUGO gene symbols) and a map from symbols to associated microarray probes, reduceES restricts the assay data to relevant probes. The map parameter can be either an AtomicAnnDbBimap as created in the *.db annotation packages, or a list with annotation tokens as element names and vectors probe identifiers as elements. Here we illustrate the use of the Bimap:
```r
> if ("package:hgu95av2" %in% search()) detach("package:hgu95av2")
> library(hgu95av2.db)
> red1 = reduceES(ALL, nodes(pancrCaIni), revmap(hgu95av2SYMBOL),
+   "symbol")
> red1

ExpressionSet (storageMode: lockedEnvironment)
assayData: 28 features, 128 samples
  element names: exprs
phenoData
  sampleNames: 01005, 01010, ..., LAL4 (128 total)
  varLabels and varMetadata description:
    cod: Patient ID
    diagnosis: Date of diagnosis
    ...: ...
    date last seen: date patient was last seen
      (21 total)
featureData
  featureNames: 1940_at, 32159_at, ..., 34006_s_at (28 total)
  fvarLabels and fvarMetadata description:
    symbol: NA
experimentData: use 'experimentData(object)'
  pubMedIds: 14684422 16243790
Annotation: hgu95av2

> pData(featureData(red1))

   symbol
1940_at  KRAS
32159_at  KRAS
37901_at  PIK3R4
34254_at  RALGDS
37543_at  ARHGEF6
40781_at  AKT3
1706_at  ARAF
1707_g_at  ARAF
39253_s_at  RALA
2050_s_at  RAC1
40864_at  RAC1
33770_at  CHUK
1861_at  BAD
486_at  CASP9
487_g_at  CASP9
```
Note that the reduceES creates a featureData variable and that there are repetitions of values of this variable. We can specify that we want to collapse repetitions by specifying a function for the collapseFun parameter. We will use mean.

```r
> collap1 = reduceES(ALL, nodes(pancrCaIni), revmap(hgu95av2SYMBOL),
+                   "symbol", mean)
> collap1
```

ExpressionSet (storageMode: lockedEnvironment)

assayData: 18 features, 128 samples
  element names: exprs

phenoData
  sampleNames: 01005, 01010, ..., LAL4 (128 total)
  varLabels and varMetadata description:
    cod: Patient ID
    diagnosis: Date of diagnosis
    ...: ...
    date last seen: date patient was last seen
    (21 total)

featureData
  featureNames: AKT3, ARAF, ..., RALGDS (18 total)
  fvarLabels and fvarMetadata description:
    symbol: NA

experimentData: use 'experimentData(object)'

Annotation:

2.3 A rendering

Now we will render information on one sample from the reduced data.
> library(RColorBrewer)
> plotExGraph(pancrCaIni, collap1, 1)