Regionalization Theory

Who regionalizes?
- businesses (marketing, statistics, etc.)
- federal government (50 offices use regions)
- people in everyday lives
- researchers in sciences and humanities
- geographers at bars

Why regionalize?
- Group areas with similar characteristics for some functional purpose
- For example, a sports team wants to know where its fan base is...
- Also, South Coast faces similar problems, so it is often considered a region.

What are regions?
- A form of spatial generalization
- “Earth areas that display significant elements of internal uniformity and external difference from surrounding territory”
- “one of the most logical and satisfactory ways of organizing geographical information”

The Border Problem
- Where does one region stop and another start?
- Southern California, for example
- Usually (falsely) depicted as fine line
- Sometimes not false

Regionalization Theory

Who regionalizes?
- Who regionalizes?
- Why regionalize?
- Regions are a form of spatial generalization
- Borders are an issue
- Regions and scale
- Types of regions
- How does one regionalize?
  - choose variable(s)

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*Fellman, Getis, and Getis (2007)*
Regions and Scale

• Regions at one scale often not valid at another scale
• Homogeneity can often be scale dependent
  • California is a region when compared to the country, but not when we look a little closer
• Hierarchy of regions can be designed

Types of Regions

• Uniform regions
  • Same characteristics throughout (homogeneous)
• Nodal / Functional Regions
  • Organization of activity around a central place

Regionalizing

• Pick variable(s), start generalizing
• Food production, sports teams, political boundaries, functional units, political preferences, the list goes on...

Regionalization Theory

* Fellman, Getis, and Getis (2007)
The Book’s Regions

- What variable(s)?
  - “basic features of homogeneity inherent in various parts of North America at present”
  - focus on socioeconomic characteristics, but physical environment, history plays big factor in those
- very general way to regionalize
  - good when function = geography edu.