Political Geography

California State University
Northridge
Political Culture Regions

• What is territoriality?
• Are we humans territorial by nature?
• How much like animals are we?
What evidence speaks of our territoriality?

- Gang Graffiti
• Upper Middle Class and Working Class neighborhoods
US – Mexico Border

• Countries fence others out as well…or try.
Or to keep people in...
Othering

• Politics is an expression of how people’s territoriality plays out spatially. Our territory gives us a sense of who we are….and who “others” are.

• Othering
Jigsaw Globe

• There are approximately 190 countries in the world.
• Africa has about 50 of them.
• Europe has about 50.
• Many hundreds more possible as nations demand self-determination.
Boundaries – Old School Geopolitics

• Compact and round countries have less trouble with unity than oddly shaped countries.
• Enclaves, Penenclaves, Exclaves.
• Prorupt countries
• Archipelagos
• Marchlands (define “march”)
• Buffer States and Satellites
• Natural, Ethnographic, Geometric and Relic
- Capital city (in South Africa, function divided between several cities)
Azerbaijan-Armenia (fig)

Country A

Country B

Area no longer controlled by B, in the hands of A ethnic rebels since 1994
Strategies for Dividing Power

- Unitary governments
  - France
- Federal governments
  - Switzerland, Canada
- Semiautonomous regions
  - Hong Kong
- Which system does the United States employ?
One World Government?

- Supranational organizations, such as the United Nations, NATO; and treaties, such as NAFTA, challenge territoriality.
- Some fear them…
- Other countries complain that the US manipulates such organizations to their own benefit.
Electoral Geography

- Voting patterns can be mapped and they show very interesting patterns, some of which hold up for many decades.
Red vs. Blue

• The characterization of presidential elections with maps has misled many into thinking the country was divided in a way that it may not be.
Red vs. Blue

• Note that these now commonly accepted colors are opposite the traditional scheme where red was associated with the political left.

• Suggests political polarity.
Cartogram by County

- Does a much better job of showing urban population
Purple vs. Violet

2004 Presidential Votes Cast
Source Data: MSNBC.com (11/03/04, 6:00pm)

Map of the United States showing states colored in purple and violet to indicate the distribution of votes.
White?

This map reveals Mr. Bush’s suburban and rural support in the East and South.
Purple vs. Violet

2004 Presidential Votes Cast
Source Data: MSNBC.com (11/03/04, 6:00pm)

Map showing the distribution of votes in the 2004 presidential election with states color-coded based on percentage of support for Democratic or Republican candidates.
Purple vs. Violet in a Cartogram by County
NPR Animation of Electoral Politics

What does the Red vs. Blue electoral map incorrectly suggest?

- A. That we are really a multi-polar society
- B. That we have no political centrists
- C. That the conservatives are largely in the South
- D. That the liberals are largely on the coasts.
Elazar’s American Political Regions

• Traditionalistic
  – Laws based on tradition

• Moralistic
  – Laws based on moral imperatives

• Individualistic
  – Individual rights over group needs
Which Region?
Diffusion of Recycling Programs
(fig)
Social Conservatives and Libertarians

• Note that Social Conservatives are not in the same location as the “less-government” conservatives.
BEING CONSERVATIVE MEANS BELIEVING IN PERSONAL CHOICE, THE RIGHT OF PRIVACY AND FREEDOM FROM GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE

...EXCEPT WHEN IT DOESN'T...
Geography of Marital Privacy

States with Sodomy Laws

United States (AK & HI Inset)
by Yes=1, No=0

- 1 to 1  (18)
- 0.5 to 1  (4)
- 0 to 0.5  (28)
Gay vs. Cousin Marriage Laws

• Partly humorous, but also offers a glimpse into the relationship between politics, religion and tradition.

• Note the patterns in the Southeast and Southwest.

• Which state doesn’t fit its own pattern?
In Las Vegas, almost everything is legal. It’s following which of these political traditions?

- A. Traditionalistic (Social Conservative)
- B. Moralistic (Good Government)
- C. Hedonistic (Everything goes!)
- D. Individualistic (Libertarian)
Functional Electoral Regions

• Redistricting
  – Every 10 years electoral districts must be redrawn.

• Gerrymandering
  – The practice of constructing electoral districts that favor one party/race/religion/etc. over another
Gerrymandering (fig)
Gerrymandered Louisiana

- District created to ensure a black representative in Congress
- Is ethnicity a sufficient issue to create such a boundary?
• Note the two hypothetical maps on the right.
• See how the electoral boundaries of this “town” can be manipulated to change the outcome of an election.
According to lecture, which of the following is the most unfortunate outcome gerrymandering for everyone is:

- A. It keeps minorities from getting votes in congress
- B. It helps extremists get elected.
- C. It ensure incumbents get re-elected
- D. All of the above.
Religion and Politics

• In many parts of the world, religion is a good indicator of party affiliation.
• Many countries in Europe have parties with names like “Christian Democrats”
• In the United States, conservative religious groups have entered into a precarious alliance with the Republican party in the last 20 years.
• Abortion is the key issue, but others are hidden
Balkanization

- What is balkanization?
- What causes it?
- “shatterbelt”
- Other than the Balkans, what other part of the world has Balkan-like potential?
There will….

• Be a test question over the previous slide.

• Were you awake?

• Did you understand any of that?
Afghanistan

- Pashtun
- Baluch
- Tajik
- Uzbek
- Turkmen
- Brahul
- Hazara
- Pashai
- Nuristani
Political Imprint on Economic Geography

• Some borders are easier to see because of various governmental policies that encourage differing economic pursuits.
• Borders are economically disruptive-NAFTA
US-Canadian Border (fig)
US-Mexico Border
(fig)

Which side is which?
Political Landscapes

• Politics are expressed on the landscape in a variety of fashions.
• Some are blatant, some are less obvious.
Government Building

- How do we know that government buildings ought to look like this?
- What are we referencing with this style?
Fair Trial Here?
Here?
The Impress of Central Authority

- The evidence of a strong central government is everywhere!
- Patterns of highways, rail, communication lines
- Suppression of internal borders
- Military bases
Central Authority
National Iconography on the Landscape

• National symbols are easy to find.
• What sort of national symbolism do we have in the US?
• Statues, flags, eagles, monuments, etc.
• What is their function?
• Do they tell the whole story?
National Iconography

- Whose story is being told?
- Whose story is not being told?
Stone Mountain

- How does this monument to the Confederacy speak to Black people who visit?
Why do / don’t we build these?