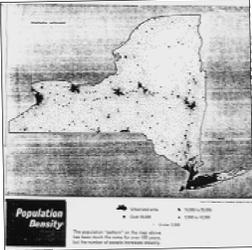


FOCUS ON MAPS

Geography of New York State
Prof. Anthony Grande

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NYS in Maps

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Focus on Maps

- **Maps are geographers' special tools.**
 - They show spatial distribution at a glance.
 - They allow for comparison over time.
- **GEOG 101 introduced us to maps and geographic research.**
 - Information must be:** Collected, organized, processed, analyzed, and portrayed (the map).

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Focus on Maps

We learned that **maps can be used to influence peoples' perceptions** by the use of scale, colors, graphics and type size and what people "see" can be influenced by the ability and intent of the map maker.

Maps **portray reality by showing the location of things.**

Conversely, **maps can influence reality by creating a perception of a place that is different from reality.**

If this is true, maps can influence peoples' opinions and behaviors. For example, the size of dots on a crime map or the coloring of large areas when the item being mapped covers only a small portion of that area can give a **false impression** of an area.

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SPATIAL ARRANGEMENT and the PATTERN of MAN-MADE PHENOMENA

People's behaviors influence the arrangement of cultural phenomena (rather than just the knowledge of location variables).

Individual motivations and societal constraints are important in the creation of reality.

Perceive -- React -- Impact

- **The Individual** – perceives/recognizes/interacts with other people and/or the environment.
- **Geographic space** – reality (places can be located on the earth's surface)
- **New variables and spatial structures emerge** – mental images, time distance relationships, regional science (when an area takes on a "life" of its own), and spatial interaction.

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SPATIAL ARRANGEMENT and the PATTERN of MAN-MADE PHENOMENA

Do maps create reality?

- Perceived relationships are located on the earth's surface using an accepted system of coordinates that creates real places.
- Other people observe the relationship between phenomena and real locations (accepting the validity because of the "real" location).
- Real locations of abstract ideas and perceptions create a reality. (Because data sets are anchored to the earth's grid and presented in map format, they are accepted by people as being true.)
- But is it really real?
- **We need to be careful when interpreting maps.**

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TRUE or FALSE: NYS is part of the Mississippi River Basin?

from USGS watersheds web page

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County Perceptions

What is your perception of each of the three counties assigned to you?

Thematic Maps

Seasonal Snowfall

Female Urinary Bladder Cancer

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In-class Map Interpretation Exercise

- Using the plastic 3-D maps and the paper thematic maps, compare the patterns shown on all the maps with the topographic features on the plastic raised-relief maps.
- What is the correlation, if any, between the patterns on the thematic maps and the landform features on the plastic raised-relief map?
- Make a list of them.

What is the relationship between topographic features on the plastic 3-D maps and

- 1. Population density
- 2. Agriculture regions
- 3. Climate regions
- 4. Network of major roads
- 5. Natural vegetation
- 6. Mean seasonal snowfall

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Influence of Geography on NYS

- 1. The geologic structure of the state is responsible for its highlands and lowlands.
- 2. Rugged terrain and water bodies limited contacts with neighboring areas.
- 3. NY harbor and the Hudson River valley become the gateway to the interior of North America.
- 4. NY is situated on the trans-Atlantic, coastal and interior trade routes.

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Influence of Geography on NYS

- 5. NYC became the focus of commerce and trade because of its location.
- 6. Climate – a result of many factors – is favorable.
- 7. Climate with landforms create soil.
- 8. Surface water systems and groundwater is a result of glaciation.
- 9. The glaciers, which retreated 8000-15,000 years ago, sculpted the present landscape.

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Influence of Geography on NYS

- 10. The settlement pattern reflects the path of easiest movement.
- 11. People selected the best aspects of the physical environment for their needs: gather, hunt, fish, mine, lumber.
- 12. The valleys were settled first because of the ease of farming, transportation, and access to fresh water supplies.
- 13. The physical landscape was transformed by people and their works.

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Viewing the Physical Characteristics of NYS

- We set the “stage” that is NYS by looking at the characteristics of its physical geography. These in turn have shaped its human/cultural geography.
- We will look at the **LANDFORMS, CLIMATE** and **WATER RESOURCES** of NYS.
- These three are part of the **BIOSPHERE** which supports all life.

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Viewing the Physical Characteristics of NYS

- When people are put into the mix, there is the creation of the cultural landscape.
- People have made decisions over time on how to best use the physical landscape for their needs:
 - Settlement
 - Land use
 - Transportation networks
 - Economic development

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Google Maps

<http://maps.google.com/maps>

Using **Google Maps** you can get a bird's eye view of NYS.

Start off with the “SATELLITE” view and then zoom in on various areas of the state.

Switch to “MAPS” view. Under “MORE” click on “TERRAIN” to see 3-D representation.

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