

Chapter 1: Introduction: What is Geography?

Geo-geography: literally, describing the earth.

Idiographic - traditional approaches to describing earth

Nomothetic - law-finding approaches such as the scientific method

Disciplinary paradigms

"Mother" discipline

Major paradigms and shifts, modern pluralism

Environmental determinism

- Geography that sought to understand the cause-and-effect relationship between culture and physical environment.
- *Environmental determinists* sought to demonstrate how local conditions like climate, topography and soil characteristics were key *determinants*, or causes, behind the evolution of local or regional cultural practices.

Regional analysis

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Quantitative revolution

- A paradigm shift that seeks to adopt legitimate scientific methodologies (acquire data for analysis).

Critical geography

- Geography that seeks for social justice, liberation and leftist politics
- Critical geographers work to uncover how and why societies and individuals believe what they do, and how those beliefs are manufactured, manipulated, distorted, maintained, subverted, appropriated or eliminated.

Geography as discipline (the Jedi way, Dr. Graves' [Star Wars](#) metaphor)

Landscape literacy (Jedi goggles)

- Ability to read and understand significant number of messages inscribed into the environment

Epistemology (Jedi mind trick)

- Study of knowledge
- Must know how you know, what you know.

Methodology (Jedi weapon)

GIS (Geographic Information Science, working with Geographic Information Systems) is the "lightsaber" tool wielded by many geographers

Cartography (Jedi language)

- Science and art of map making (specialized language of the geographer)
- Maps allow to communicate large amounts of information or idea

Core concepts

Location

Absolute

- Every physical object has a physical location (physical address)
- Logical system that helps with navigation

Relative

- Location of a place or entity based on its location with respect with other locations.

Region

Functional

- Region that is mapped with a relationship that is shared with multiple locations that are near one another (regions that function together in some fashion)
- Ex: network of radio stations that broadcast something together

Formal

- Region that has officially recognized boundaries defining it
- Boundaries are usually set by local or national governments

Vernacular

- Known as perceptual regions (regions mostly exist in the imagination of groups or even individuals.)
- People believe they exist
- Ex: Dixie

Diffusion - from hearth

Relocation

- Type of cultural diffusion where a person moves from one area or place to a new location.
- This kind of diffusion happens when an idea/practice moves with a person rather than through media like records
- Not a type of expansion diffusion

Expansion

Contagious

- Pattern is like the manner in which ideas (contagious disease) spreads from person to person, infection nearby people first and distant people later

Hierarchical

- When innovations are adopted in the largest cities first, and smaller cities or rural areas much later.

Reverse Hierarchical

- When ideas/practices come from a small town and diffuses upward through the hierarchy

Stimulus

- This diffusion occurs when the principal element of an idea or behavior spreads but other elements are significantly modified by those who adopt it elsewhere

Distance decay

- Term that describes the effect of distance on cultural or special interactions (effect states that the interaction between two locales declines as the distance between them increases.)

First Law of Geography

- things that are near each other are more often similar than things that are far from each other
- Proposed by Tobler

Friction of distance

- based on the notion that distance usually requires some amount of effort, money, and/or energy to overcome.

Spatial statistics

Correlation - test for the existence of a relationship between factors (variables)

Regression - distinguish cause (independent variable) and effect (dependent variable)

Spatial Autocorrelation - test for clustering

Chapter 2: Culture and Cultural Practices

Culture is an idea (social construct), not something separate and above people.

Cultural determinism, flawed - instead recognize how the agency of human beings intersects with the structures of society as embodied in its rules and norms.

Popular vs. folk culture

housing as signifier of folk culture

Regional differences reflect economy, class structure, climate and weather conditions, demographics

Major folk regions in US reflect early settlement patterns:

Yankee – Cape Cod, New England Large, Salt Box houses

- Northmost major US folk culture
- People referred to as a “Yankee”
- Cape cod: smallest version of a Yankee folk house (single floor plan consisting of a chimney)
- Salt box houses has a unusual, asymmetrical roofline that characterizes the gable ends of the house that mimic the side profile of boxes used to store salt in kitchens during the Colonial Era.

Midwest/Mid-Atlantic “Midlands” – Hall and Parlor house, I-house

- Immigrants were likely to come from continental Europe
- Hall and parlor house: most common house (were single story that had two rooms)
- I-house: two-story cousin of the Hall and parlor house (most common folk house in the Midwest and piedmont regions)

Upland South – Cabin and Porch, Dogtrot, Saddlebag houses