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UNIWERSYTET IM. ADAMA MICKIEWICZA W POZNANIU

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**STUDIA
GERMANICA POSNANIENSIA
XVI**



POZNAŃ 1989

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DENNIS R. PRESTON

THE NICEST ENGLISH IS IN INDIANA

Keywords: Sociolinguistics, language attitudes, dialectology, cultural geography, language standards, ethnography.

Abstract. Preston Dennis R., *The nicest English is in Indiana*, Studia Germanica Posnaniensia, Adam Mickiewicz University Press, Poznań, vol. XVI: 1989, pp. 169–193, ISBN 83–232–0087–4. ISSN 0137–2467.

Nonlinguists' hand-drawn maps of their perceptions of US dialect areas reveal that prescription is an important part of their area identifications. Labels in these maps, however, indicate that two preferences may be at work — a preference for a “correct” English and another for a “pleasant” or “normal” variety. The fifty states, New York City, and Washington, D. C. were ranked for “pleasantness” of speech by young, white, well-educated, male and female residents of southern Indiana. The intensity of agreement (through standard deviations), a number of individual areas, the difference between men's and women's ratings, and the differences between the two modes of presentation of the research instrument are analyzed. The results are contrasted with an earlier ranking of the same areas by similar informants for the notion “correct” and generalized by being placed on a map representing the perception of US speech areas obtained from similar informants.

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When nonlinguists approach the task of dialect boundary identification (Preston 1982), a primary consideration is correctness. Overtly prescriptive labels (*standard, correct, normal, slang*) as well as covertly prescriptive ones (*twang, drawl, accent*) indicate that this is so. In addition, areas regarded as

TABLE 1. Means and standard deviations for eighty young, white, Southern Indiana residents' ratings of the notion "pleasant English" for the fifty states, Washington, D. C., and New York City

	"MAP"		"ALPHA"		TOTAL		sd
	male mean rank	female mean rank	male mean rank	female mean rank	male mean rank	female mean rank	
AK	33.58 45	31.68 48	28.92 32	32.85 49	32.00 49	15.03	
AL	38.50 51.5	25.41 20	24.38 20	26.42 22	27.63 33	19.54	
AR	23.17 13	26.77 29	20.85 10	25.36 18	24.69 11	10.62	
AS	33.50 44	41.09 52	22.62 16	32.97 50	33.60 52	12.16	
CA	17.67 7	17.95 1	17.92 3	18.82 4	18.26 2	14.58	
CO	21.33 9	24.32 11	19.54 5	18.21 2	20.57 5	11.33	
CN	24.67 22	24.82 16.5	25.62 24	24.33 13	24.73 12	14.71	
DC	31.17 38	25.86 24	26.23 26	21.88 9	25.07 13	15.10	
DL	31.89 39	31.32 47	20.15 7	25.88 20	27.34 28	14.15	
FL	25.25 24.5	27.00 31	18.69 4	22.21 10	23.41 8	14.84	
GA	38.33 50	23.68 10	26.08 25	26.82 28	27.56 32	19.69	
HA	38.50 51.5	33.45 51	21.77 14	21.64 7	27.44 30	15.72	
ID	25.33 26	26.32 26	25.31 22	32.79 48	28.68 40	11.03	
IL	16.00 4	23.45 9	16.54 2	19.88 5	19.74 4	14.67	
IN	10.17 1	18.50 2	8.69 1	10.33 1	12.29 1	14.15	
IO	23.83 15	26.41 27	21.00 11	31.12 46	27.09 25	13.17	
KS	16.42 5	27.82 37.5	23.38 17	27.82 31	25.39 17	12.19	
KY	24.50 19.5	29.41 42	29.31 35.5	26.67 26	27.53 31	19.61	
LA	32.50 42.5	29.64 43	35.77 50	28.64 34	30.65 48	17.56	
MA	24.58 21	24.50 13	28.46 31	26.21 21	25.86 20	17.20	
ME	25.25 24.5	25.00 19	19.77 6	23.22 11	23.50 9	14.26	
MI	11.67 2	25.82 23	20.38 8	21.67 8	21.10 6	14.46	
MN	16.83 6	21.91 7	24.23 19	25.06 16	22.82 7	12.61	
MO	24.33 17.5	26.55 28	22.38 15	33.21 51	28.29 35	13.83	
MR	29.02 33	28.05 39	21.38 12	23.88 12	25.40 18	13.48	
MS	33.67 46.5	30.27 46	32.46 44	33.48 52	32.46 51	17.16	
MT	32.08 41	27.77 35.5	27.38 27	29.55 37	29.09 42	10.92	
NB	32.50 42.5	26.95 30	31.33 40	27.06 29	28.53 37	10.89	
NC	26.67 30	20.41 4	29.31 35.5	26.45 23	25.29 16	15.05	
ND	23.33 14	28.55 41	31.69 41	30.00 40	28.88 41	11.22	
NH	24.33 17.5	24.82 16.5	29.15 34	27.91 32	26.73 22	15.36	
NJ	32.00 40	32.18 49	36.62 51	30.55 43	32.20 50	15.91	
NM	30.58 36	29.77 44	30.15 39	30.79 45	30.38 46	11.78	
NV	26.08 27	24.68 14.5	32.00 42	30.67 44	28.55 38	12.19	
NY	28.42 31	27.36 33	34.54 47	26.64 25	28.39 36	17.76	
NYC	33.67 46.5	33.00 50	37.00 52	25.24 17	30.55 47	19.34	
OH	12.33 3	21.23 6	20.54 9	18.45 3	18.64 3	14.48	
OK	30.42 35	25.55 22	35.08 49	30.06 41	29.69 45	12.94	
OR	25.00 23	24.95 18	29.54 37	29.00 35	27.38 29	11.13	
PA	19.42 8	27.77 35.5	34.62 48	26.52 24	27.11 26	13.54	
RI	26.25 29	27.82 37.5	29.08 33	25.58 19	26.86 23	13.81	
SC	29.42 34	20.73 5	33.15 45	24.52 15	25.61 19	15.82	

SD	24.17	16	30.09	45	29.77	38	30.39	42	29.28	43	11.05
TN	36.00	48	27.09	32	25.46	23	24.39	14	27.05	24	18.37
TX	28.92	32	26.27	25	28.31	29	19.94	6	24.39	10	17.66
UT	22.08	10.5	28.27	40	32.08	43	29.73	38	28.56	39	10.96
VA	30.67	37	20.27	3	24.46	21	26.76	27	25.19	15	15.28
VR	26.17	28	24.68	14.5	27.54	28	29.36	36	27.30	27	14.91
WA	22.08	10.5	24.36	12	23.54	18	27.42	30	25.15	14	12.18
WI	24.05	19.5	23.14	8	21.54	13	31.61	47	26.57	21	15.33
WV	36.42	49	25.45	21	34.00	46	28.09	33	29.57	44	15.34
WY	22.83	12	27.55	34	28.38	30	29.82	39	27.91	34	11.87

nonstandard are singled out as distinct by a larger number of informants than those thought of as prestigious or neutral (Preston 1983, 1984a, 1984b). It is not clear, however, that preference is solely a matter of perceived correctness. Covert prestige, as described by Labov (1966), may play a role in the perception of dialect boundaries and the status of the varieties perceived. Labels such as *normal* or *everyday* contrast with others such as *standard*, *correct*, and even *snooty* and *high-falutin'* in maps drawn by the same individual.

To begin to test the idea that preference for regions may be related to concepts other than correctness, eighty informants, twenty-five male and fifty-five female, of the background described above, were asked to rank the fifty states, New York City and Washington, D.C. on a scale of one (most pleasant) to fifty-two (least pleasant). Thirty-four of the informants were presented with a map of the United States with the areas to be ranked labelled (hereafter referred to as the "Map" format); the remaining forty-six informants were given an alphabetized list of the areas to be ranked and had no access to a map (hereafter referred to as the "Alpha" format). Table 1 displays the means for both research mode groups (further subdivided into male and female) and the means and standard deviations for the combined groups. Ranges of means are grouped together allowing representation of these data in a map (Figure 1).

Figure 1 (p. 172) displays most dramatically the informants' high regard for their local area and, less dramatically, a generally high regard for the surrounding North Central area (with the curious omission of Wisconsin). Also rather well-liked are California, Colorado, Florida, and Maine; Arkansas, Mississippi, and Alaska are worst ranked.

In discussing these areas of preference and dislike it will be interesting to contrast a similar group's rankings of the same areas for "correct" English (Figure 2 (p. 173), Preston 1984a). At first glance, there would seem to be no reason to claim that a different pattern of responses exists in the two studies. In

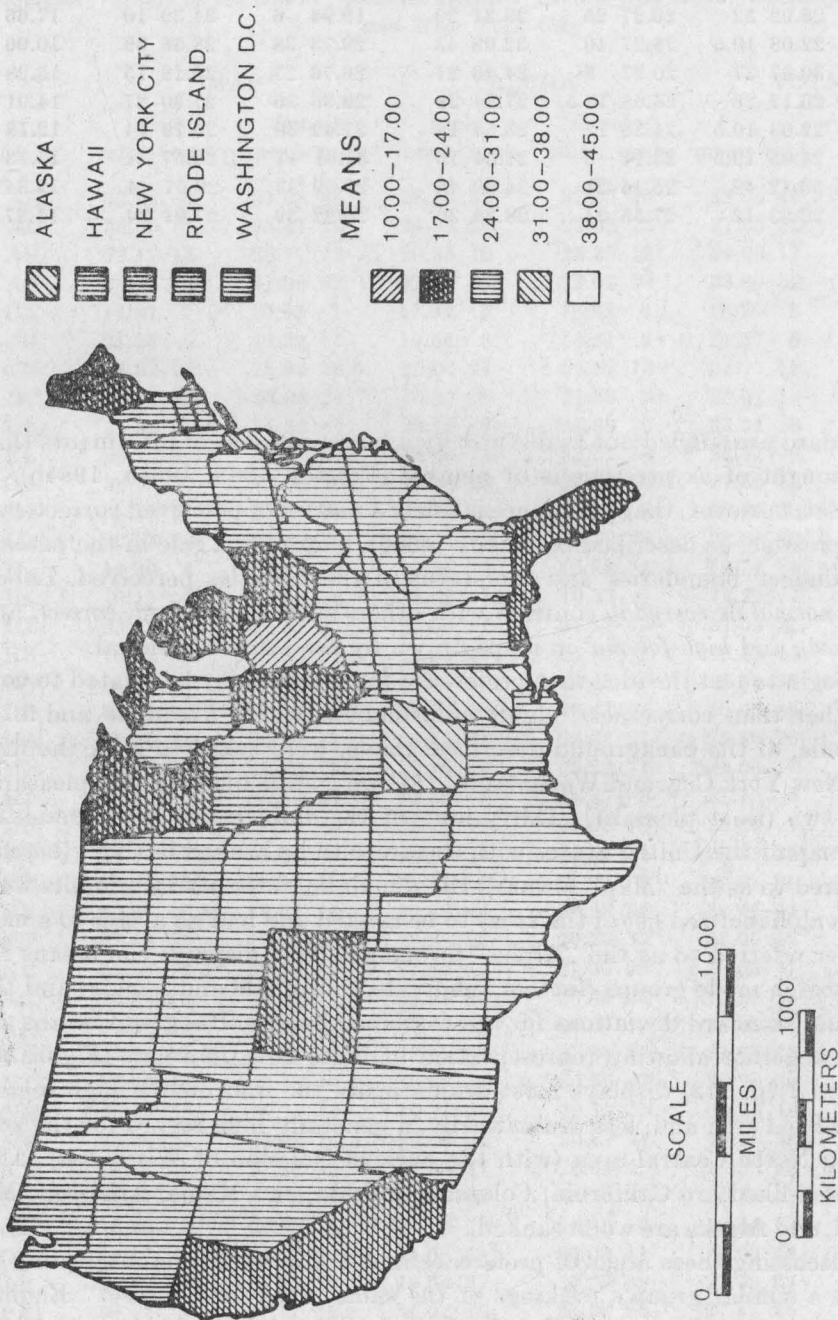


FIGURE 1: Mean scores (on the scale 1 = "most pleasant" to 52 = "least pleasant") for the fifty states, New York City, and Washington, D. C. as ranked by eighty young, white, well-educated southern Indiana informants (see Table I).



FIGURE 2: Mean scores (scale as in Figure 1) for the concept "correct" as ranked by seventy-six informants (also as in Figure 1) (from Preston 1984a).

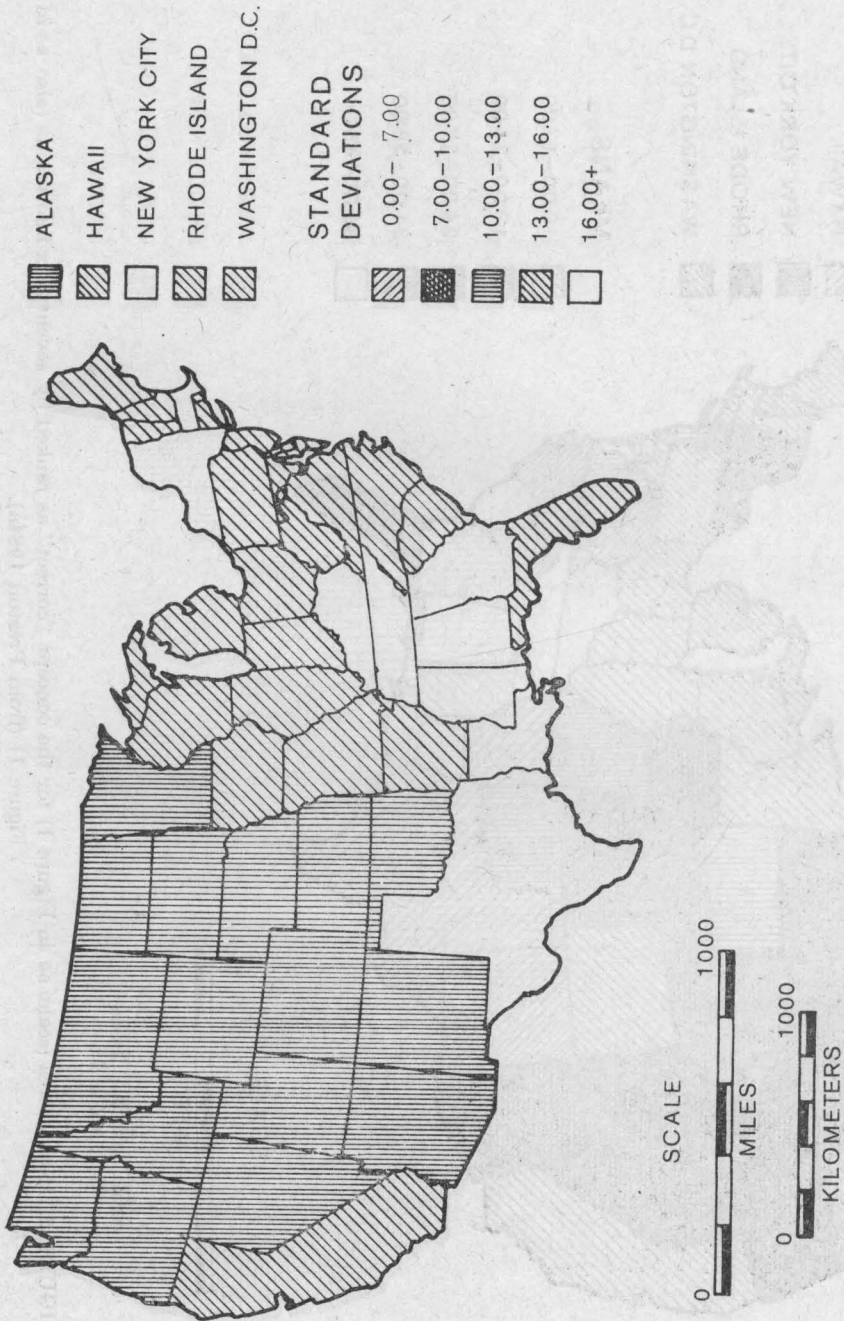


FIGURE 3: Intensity of agreement (standard deviations) for the scores represented in Figure 1 ("pleasant") (see Table I).

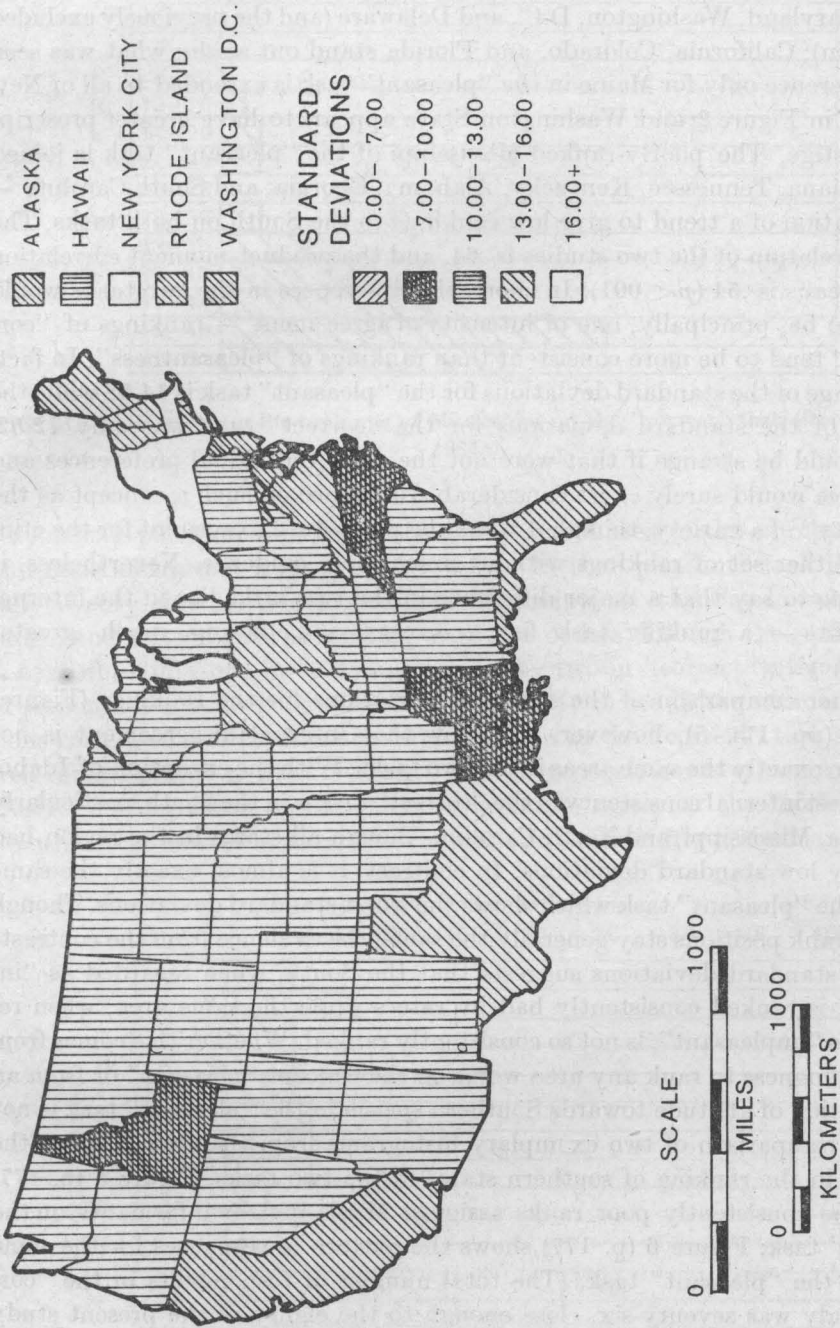


FIGURE 4: Intensity of agreement (standard deviations) for the scores represented in Figure 2 ("correct") (from Preston 1984a).

the "correct" map the local area of preferences is enlarged to include Pennsylvania, Maryland, Washington, D.C., and Delaware (and the previously excluded Wisconsin); California, Colorado, and Florida stand out again; what was seen as a preference only for Maine in the "pleasant" task is extended to all of New England in Figure 2; and Washington State appears to have greater prescriptive prestige. The poorly-ranked Mississippi of the "pleasant" task is joined by Louisiana, Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina — an indication of a trend to give low rankings to the South on both tasks. The rank correlation of the two studies is .64, and the product-moment correlation of the means is .54 ($p < .001$). In short, the differences in the two tasks would appear to be, principally, one of intensity of agreement — rankings of "correctness" tend to be more consistent than rankings of "pleasantness". In fact, the average of the standard deviations for the "pleasant" task is 14.38 while the average of the standard deviations for the "correct" task was only 12.52.

It would be strange if that were not the case. Individual preferences and experience would surely exert considerable influence on such a concept as the "likability" of a variety, though it would be premature to account for the etiology of either set of rankings without much more evidence. Nevertheless, it seems safe to say that a major difference in the two tasks lies in the internal agreement — a ranking task for "correctness" eliciting much greater consistency.

Further comparison of the standard deviations for the rankings (Figures 3 and 4 (pp. 174 - 5), however, will show that internal disagreement is not located in exactly the same areas in the two tasks. With the exception of Idaho, the greatest internal consistency in the "correct" task is in the South, particularly Louisiana, Mississippi, and North Carolina, though all states in the region had relatively low standard deviations. In contrast, it is almost exactly the same area in the "pleasant" task which shows the worst standard deviations. Though relative rank positions stay generally the same, the evidence from the contrasts in these standard deviations suggests that the South, when regarded as "incorrect", is ranked consistently bad by raters while the same area, when regarded as "unpleasant", is not so consistently ranked. Whether this comes from an unwillingness to rank any area worst on the concept "pleasant" or from an amelioration of attitude towards Southern speech in the "pleasant" task is not clear. A comparison of two exemplary histograms from the area displays the contrast in the ranking of southern states in the two tasks. Figure 5 (p. 177) shows the consistently poor ranks assigned Mississippi by informants on the "correct" task; Figure 6 (p. 177) shows the pattern of responses for the same state on the "pleasant" task. (The total number of respondents in the "correct" study was seventy-six, close enough to the eighty of the present study to allow for direct comparison rather than conversion to percentages.) Only five

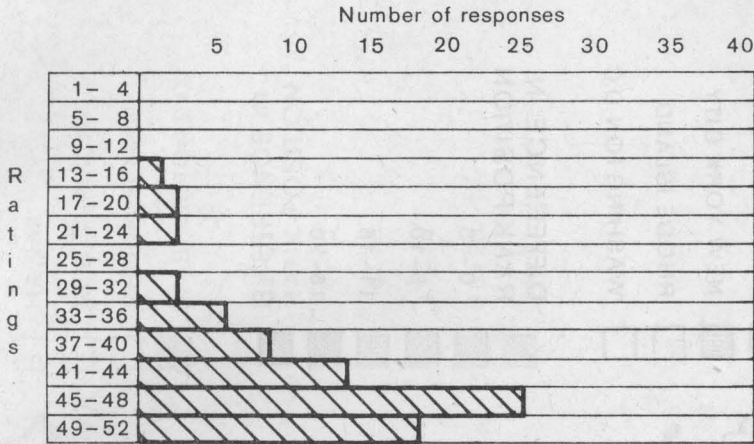


FIGURE 5: Histogram for rankings of Mississippi on the "correct" task (from Preston 1984a).

respondents placed Mississippi in the more correct area of the ratings (1 - 24), and none assigned it a rank below twelve. In the "pleasant" task, however, fully twenty-nine respondents ranked Mississippi in the one-to-twenty-four range, and sixteen gave it a rating of twelve or less. Though the rank change is negligible (fifty-one in "pleasant" and fifty-two in "correct"), the intensity of response is much stronger in the latter. Tests to see if low standard deviations correlated well with poorly-ranked states in the "correct" task and with well-ranked states in the "pleasant" task in general, however, were not conclusive. A comparison of standard deviations to ranks for the "correct" task (in which the lowest standard deviation was ranked fifty-second and so on)

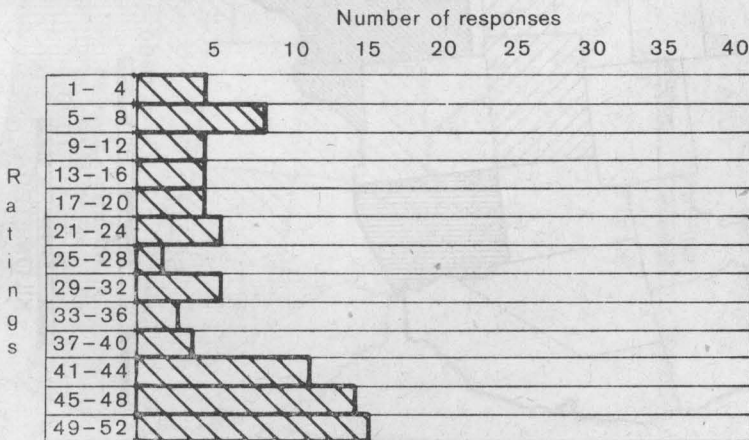


FIGURE 6: Histogram for rankings of Mississippi on the "pleasant" task (see Table 1).

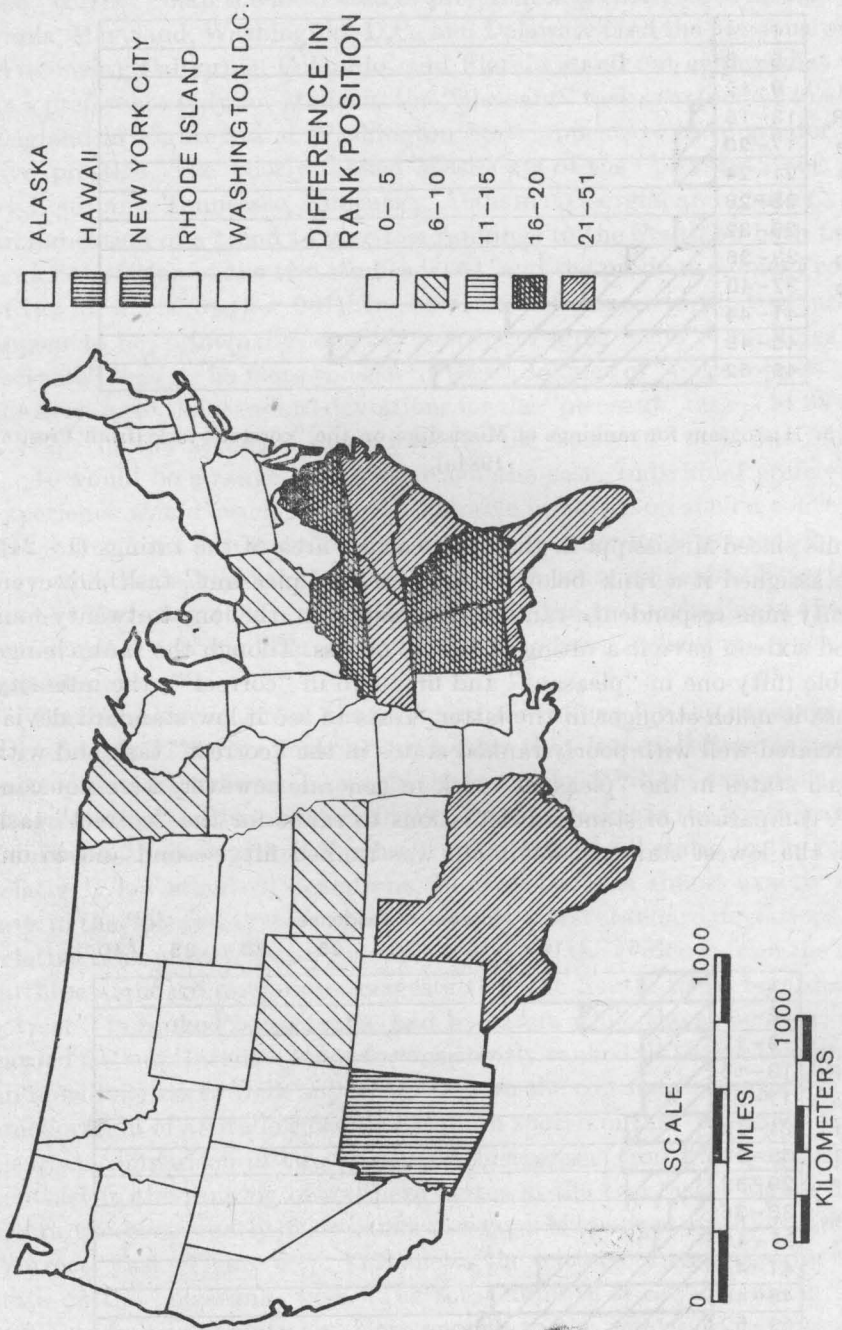


FIGURE 7: Areas rated worse on the "correct" task (compare Figures 1 and 2).

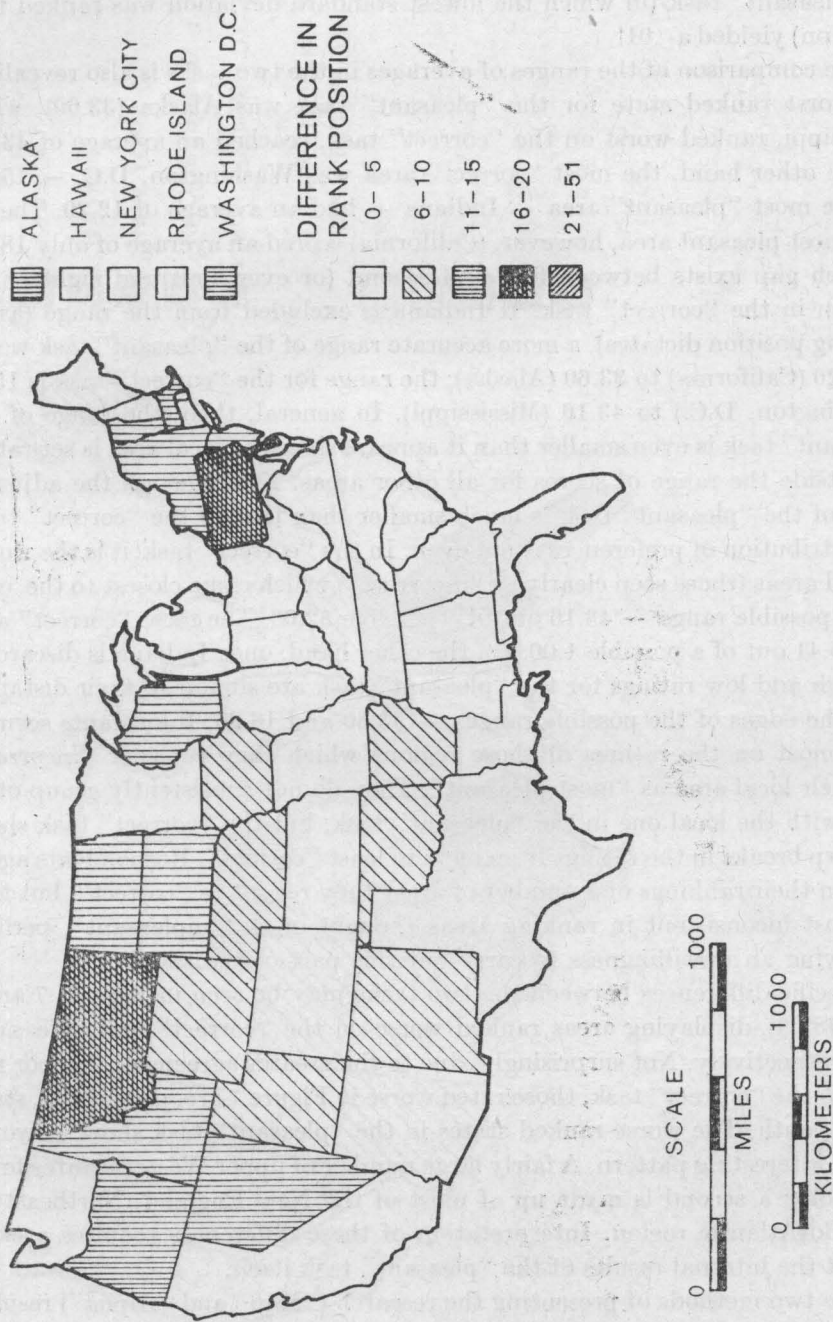


FIGURE 8: Areas rated worse on the "pleasant" task (compare Figures 1 and 2).

yielded a rank correlation score of .37. On the other hand, a similar test for the "pleasant" task (in which the lowest standard deviation was ranked first and so on) yielded a .01!

The comparison of the ranges of averages in the two tasks is also revealing. The worst ranked state for the "pleasant" task was Alaska (33.60), while Mississippi, ranked worst on the "correct" task, reached an average of 43.16. On the other hand, the most "correct" area was Washington, D.C. — 15.41, but the most "pleasant" area — Indiana — had an average of 12.29. The second most pleasant area, however, (California) scored an average of only 18.26. No such gap exists between first and second (or even first and eighteenth!) position in the "correct" task. If Indiana is excluded from the range (as its outlying position dictates), a more accurate range of the "pleasant" task would be 18.26 (California) to 33.60 (Alaska); the range for the "correct" task is 15.41 (Washington, D.C.) to 43.16 (Mississippi). In general, then, the range of the "pleasant" task is even smaller than it appears since the local area is set rather far outside the range of scores for all other areas. Even though the adjusted range of the "pleasant" task is much smaller than that of the "correct" task, the distribution of preferences is not even. In the "correct" task, it is the worst-ranked areas (those seen clearly as "incorrect") which come closest to the edge of the possible range — 43.16 out of a possible 52.00. The most "correct" area was 15.41 out of a possible 1.00. On the other hand, once Indiana is discarded, the high and low ratings for the "pleasant" task are similar in their distances from the edges of the possible ranges — 33.60 and 18.26. Informants seem to agree most on the ratings of those regions which they consider "incorrect" and their local area as "most pleasant". They do not consistently group other areas with the local one in the "pleasant" task, but the "correct" task shows no sharp breaks in the ratings from most to least "correct". Respondents agree, then, in their rankings of a number of areas they regard as "correct", but they are most inconsistent in ranking areas thought of as "unpleasant", perhaps displaying an unwillingness to carry out this part of the task.

Specific differences between the two tasks may be seen in Figures 7 and 8 (pp. 178 - 9), displaying areas ranked worse on the "correct" and "pleasant" tasks respectively. Not surprisingly, due to the greater agreement on poor rankings in the "correct" task, those rated worse in Figure 7 are, principally, states in the South. The worse-ranked states in the "pleasant" task show, however, a more interesting pattern. A fairly large number of upper Western states forms one block; a second is made up of most of the New England, Northeastern, and Mid-Atlantic region. Interpretation of these differences requires a closer look at the internal results of the "pleasant" task itself.

The two methods of presenting the research ("Map" and "Alpha") resulted in rather different responses. The two displayed a rank correlation of .55 and a product-moment correlation of means of .55 ($p < .001$). (This rank correlation

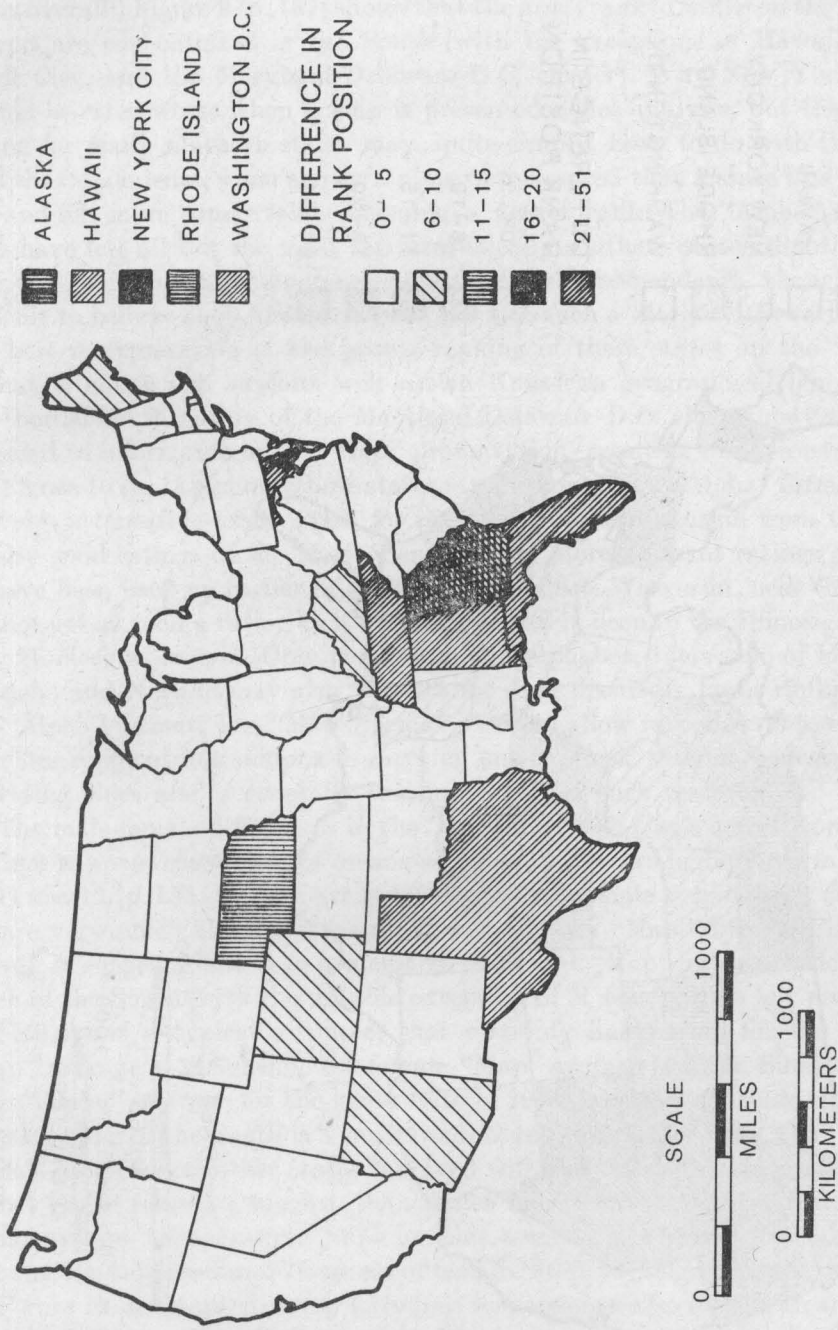


FIGURE 9: Areas rated worse on the "Map" of the "pleasant" task (see Table 1).

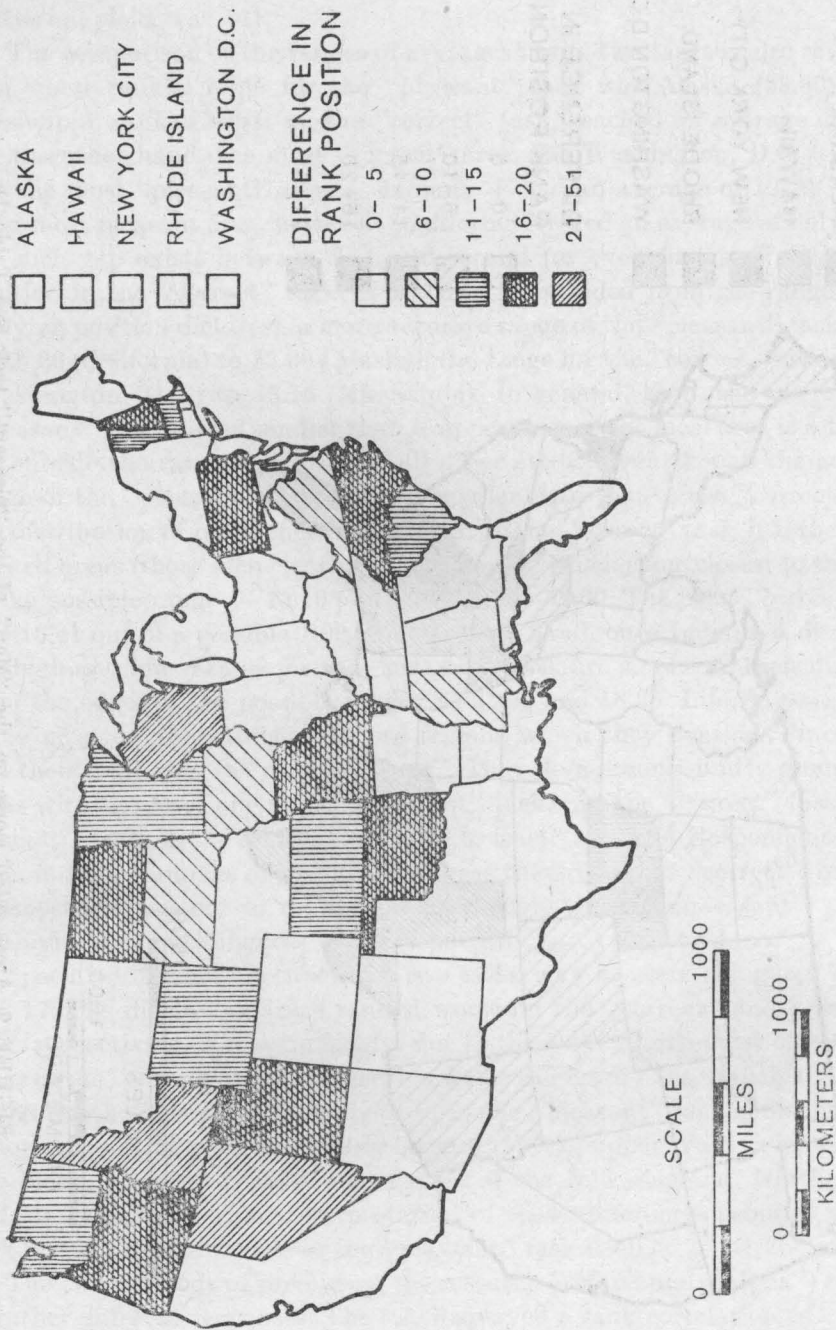


FIGURE 10: Areas rated worse on the "Alpha" format of the "pleasant" task (see Table 1).

is actually lower than the agreement between the "pleasant" and "correct" tasks overall!) Figure 9 (p. 181) shows that the areas ranked worse on the "Map" format are concentrated in the South (with the exceptions of Hawaii, New York City, and the Maryland-Delaware-D.C. cluster). Why New York City should be rated worse when a map is presented defies analysis, but the lower rating for many southern states may, quite simply, have to do with the fact that the respondents, when shown a map, were assured that a state *was* southern and felt more comfortable assigning a poorer rank. The "Alpha" format may have left all but the most caricaturistically southern states slightly outside the geographical competence of many of the respondents, though it is difficult to believe that Alabama could fall into such a category. Nevertheless, the best interpretation of the poorer ranking of these states on the "Map" format is one which exploits well-known American geographical ignorance. The border-south nature of the Maryland-Delaware-D.C. cluster may also be revealed to informants in the "Map" presentation, resulting in poorer ratings.

Figure 10 (p. 182) shows those states rated worse in the "Alpha" format and provides a tentative explanation for the exclusion of Wisconsin from the generally good ratings of the North Central area. More pleasant ratings appear to have been used up earlier in the alphabetical list; Wisconsin, near the end, did not get as good a rating as it might have had it been in the Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, or even Ohio position in the alphabet. Ignorance of location of Idaho and Nevada may also account for their decidedly lower rankings in the "Alpha" format. The "Map" format seems to allow respondents to exploit a greater range of folk notions in carrying out the task without unnecessarily providing clues and is generally recommended for such research.

The male-female differences in the "pleasant" task (rank correlation = .57; product-moment correlation of means = .61 — $p < .001$) are highlighted in Figures 11 and 12 (p. 184-5). The areas rated poorer by male respondents (Figure 11) are very much like the areas rated worse in the "Map" format (Figure 9 above). It suggests that it is principally male and "Map" ratings which give much of the South (with the notable exception of Mississippi) its low position. If Alabama is a typical example, that certainly holds true, for the male-"Map" average is 38.50 while the female-"Map" average is 25.41. Since the female-"Alpha" average for the same state is 26.42, we may conclude that the male lowering of the South is a much more significant factor than the "Map" format. (A glance at other states involved will show that this generalization holds.) These relations suggest that males more consistently hold negative opinions about "pleasantness" than females, a result, in a forced rank task, of, perhaps, the supposed unwillingness of female raters to assign extreme ratings.

Figure 12, areas rated worse by female respondents, also targets an area — the Upper Midwest and Plains and Mountain states. It is too easy to suggest that cowboy talk, great outdoors speech, and hunting and fishing lingo have

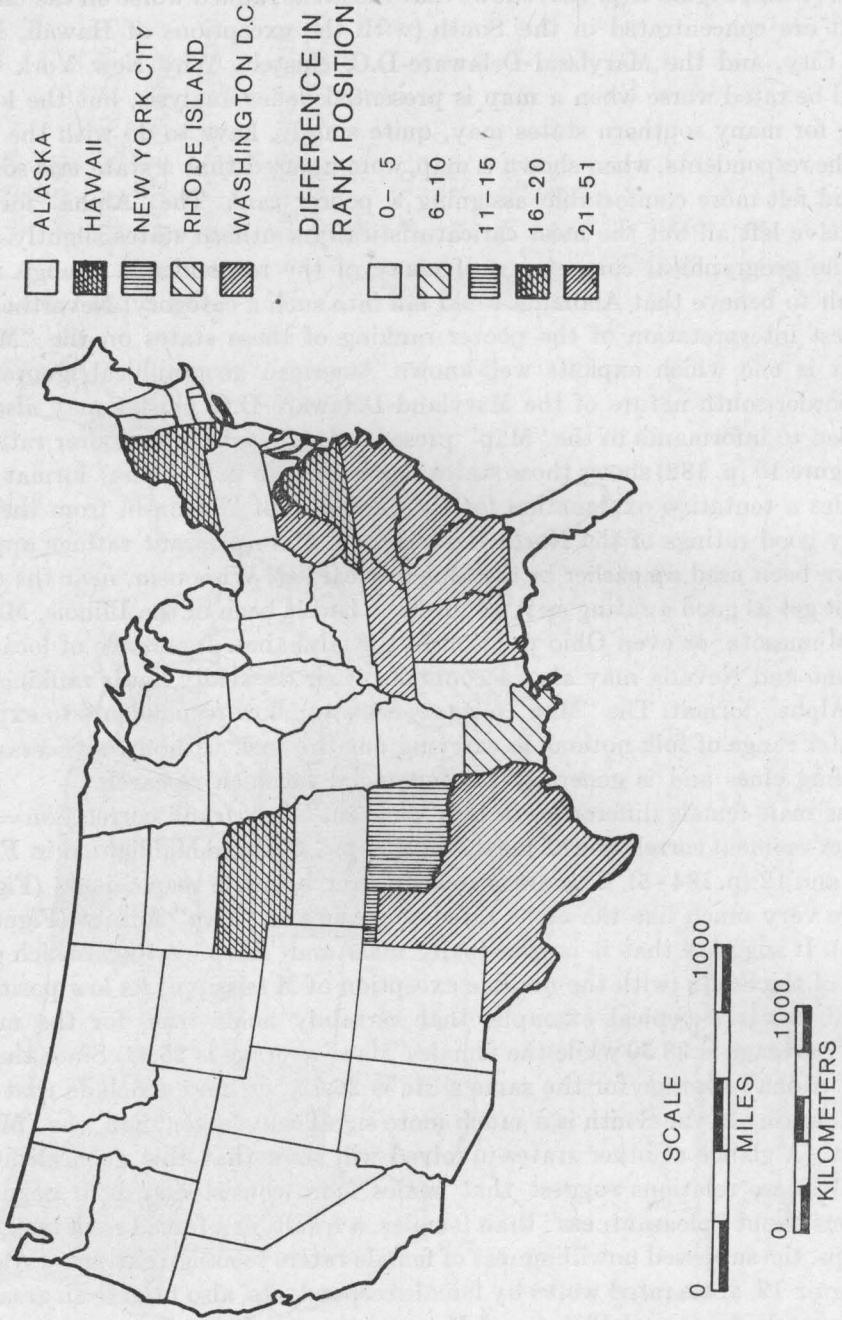


FIGURE 11: Areas rated worse by male informants on the "pleasant" task (see Table 1).

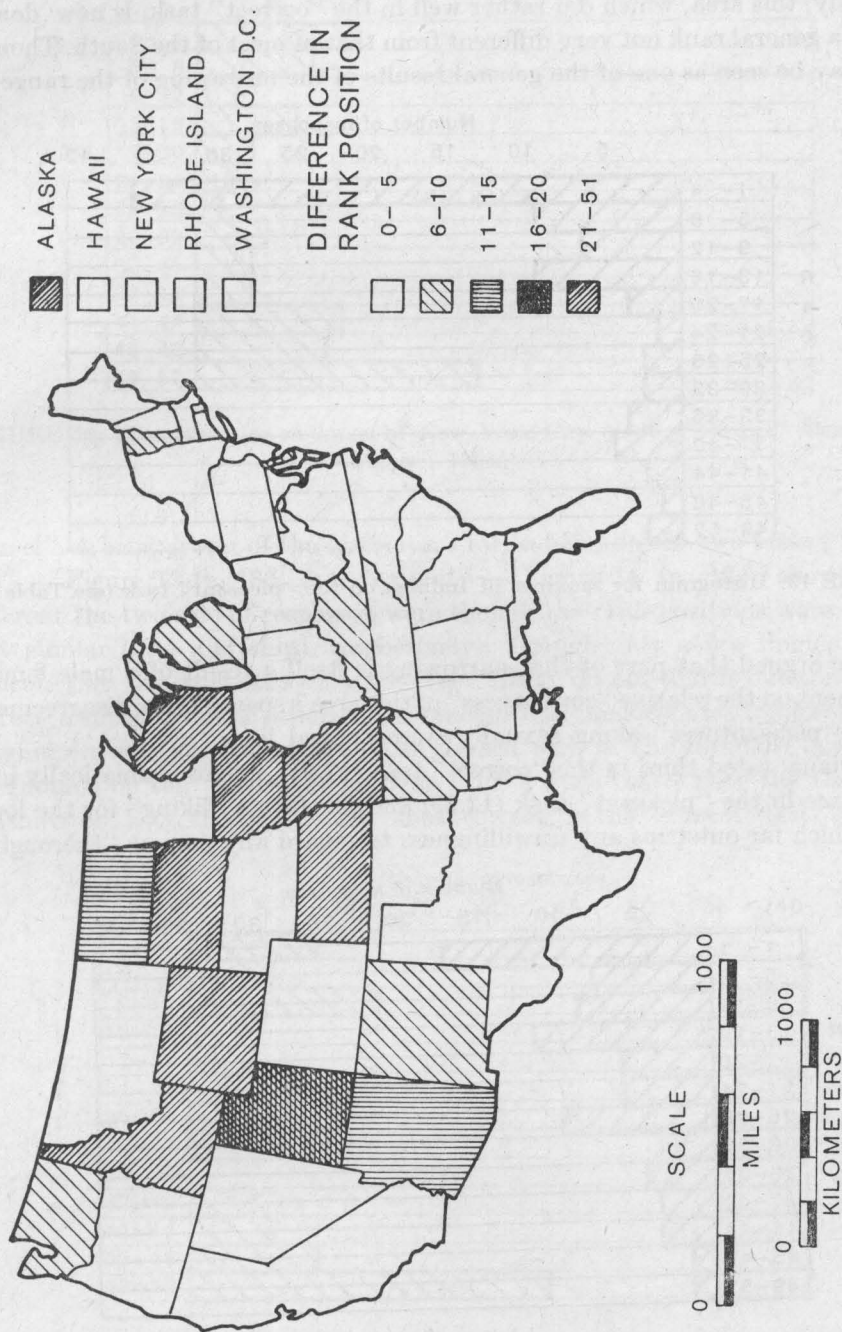


FIGURE 12: Areas rated worse by female informants on the "pleasant" task (see Table 1).

less appeal for female raters, but it may also be the best explanation. More seriously, this area, which did rather well in the "correct" task, is now demoted to a general rank not very different from that of most of the South. Though this may be seen as one of the general results of the narrowing of the range, it

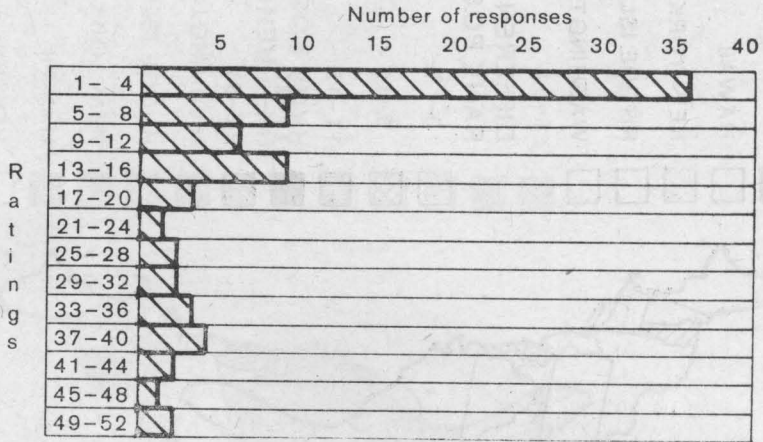


FIGURE 13: Histogram for rankings of Indiana on the "pleasant" task (see Table 1).

may be argued that part of that narrowing is itself a result of a male-female agreement on the relative "correctness" of this area's speech but a disagreement on its "pleasantness" along sexually stereotypical lines.

Indiana, rated third in the "correct" task (17.04), moves dramatically into first place in the "pleasant" task (12.29) and displays a "liking" for the local area which far outstrips any unwillingness to regard any area as "thoroughly

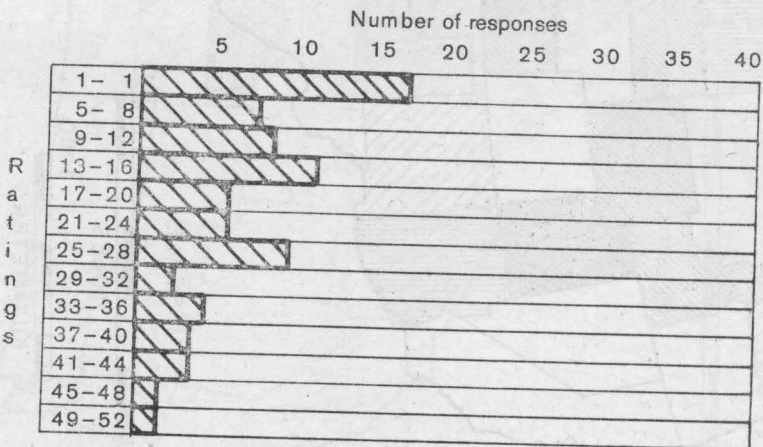


FIGURE 14: Histogram for rankings of Indiana on the "correct" task (from Preston 1984a).

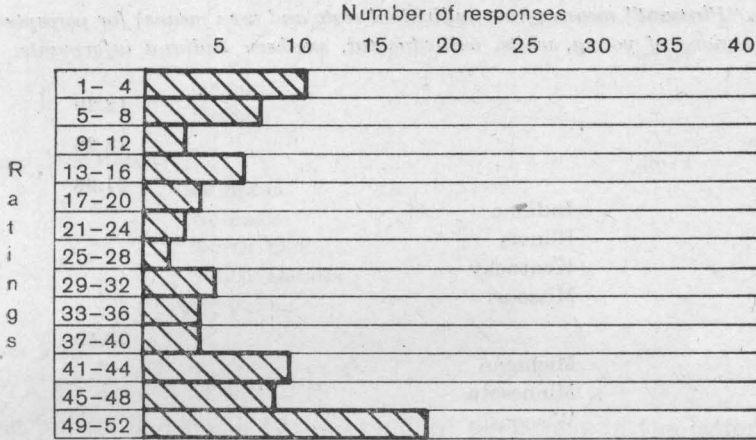


FIGURE 15: Histogram for rankings of New York City on the “correct” task (from Preston 1984a).

correct”. A comparison of the histograms for Indiana on the two tasks (“pleasant” — Figure 13 (p. 186) and “correct” — Figure 14 (p. 186) shows how different the two sets of responses were though the rank positions were relatively similar (first and third, respectively). Though only a few linguistically insecure find the local area very incorrect, many do not find it outstandingly correct; a similarly small number of soreheads find the local area unlikable, but a significantly large number are most pleased with it. The standard deviation for Indiana on the “pleasant” task (14.15) is a little better than the 15.67 for Washington, D.C., the area judged “most correct” in the “correct” task, though

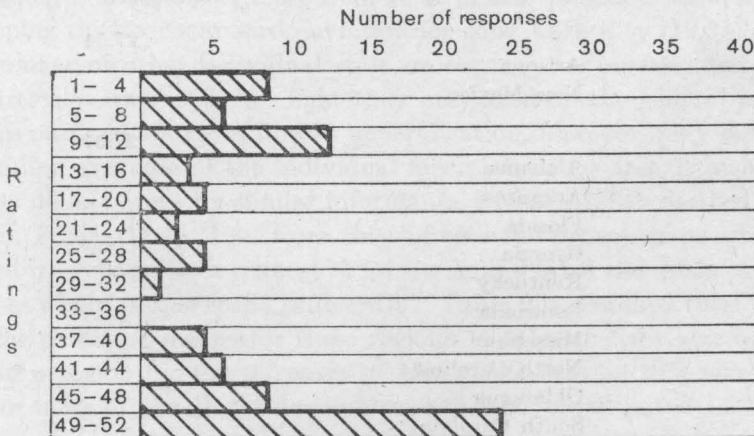


FIGURE 16: Histogram for Rankings of New York City on the “pleasant” task (see Table 1).

TABLE 2. "Pleasant" means (from individual state and area means) for perceptual dialect regions of young, white, well-educated, southern Indiana informants

Indiana		12.29
California		18.26
Midwest		21.96
	Indiana	
	Illinois	
	Kentucky	
	Missouri	
North		23.50
	Michigan	
	Minnesota	
	Wisconsin	
Texas		24.39
East Coast		25.15
	Virginia	
Northeast		26.86
	Connecticut	
	Delaware	
	Maine	
	Maryland	
	Massachusetts	
	New Hampshire	
	New Jersey	
	New York	
	Pennsylvania	
	Rhode Island	
	Vermont	
Southwest		27.54
	Arizona	
	New Mexico	
South		27.57
	Alabama	
	Arkansas	
	Florida	
	Georgia	
	Kentucky	
	Louisiana	
	Mississippi	
	North Carolina	
	Oklahoma	
	South Carolina	
	Tennessee	
	Texas	
	Virginia	

West		27.97
	Oregon	
	Nevada	
Plains and Mountains		28.74
	Montana	
	Nebraska	
	North Dakota	
	South Dakota	
	Wyoming	
New York City		30.55

“incorrect” areas had much better standard deviations in the latter task as pointed out above.

New York, New Jersey, and New York City stand out in a number of the comparisons already displayed as areas with particularly bad standard deviations. In the “correct” study, the worst was, in fact, New York City — 18.89. Figure 15 (p. 187), a histogram of responses for New York City in the “correct” study, shows why. Two patterns of responses, a caricature of New York “incorrectness” and a stereotype of its cultural centrality, may be seen (Preston 1984a). In the “pleasant” study, New York (State and City) continue to display poor standard deviations. The “pleasant” histogram for New York City (Figure 16 (p. 187) shows that this division of opinion is exactly copied; in fact, the willingness to rate New York City at the worst extreme of the scale is greater than the willingness to so rank any of the southern states though they, in general, have worse mean scores. In fact, a large number of southern states have standard deviations of more than 19.00 in the “pleasant” task, some even outstripping the poor standard deviation for New York City (19.34).

A number of other individual state scores may be investigated both for their particular interest or for light they may shed on the general pattern of responses outlined above. A further generalization, however, may be obtained by providing averages of the individual mean scores for areas which are perceived as dialect areas by similar informants. Preston 1984b derived the map shown in Figure 17 (p. 190) from thirty-five hand-drawn maps which were produced in response to a request to “draw in and label the areas of the United States where people speak differently”. Table 2 is a ranked (best to worst) list of the averaged means for these regions. A state or area was considered a part of a region for the purposes of this generalization if it was included by five or more of the thirty-five informants who participated in the map-drawing-task.

Since Indiana was regarded as a separate speech region, it stands in first position. California, also thought of as separate linguistically by these informants,

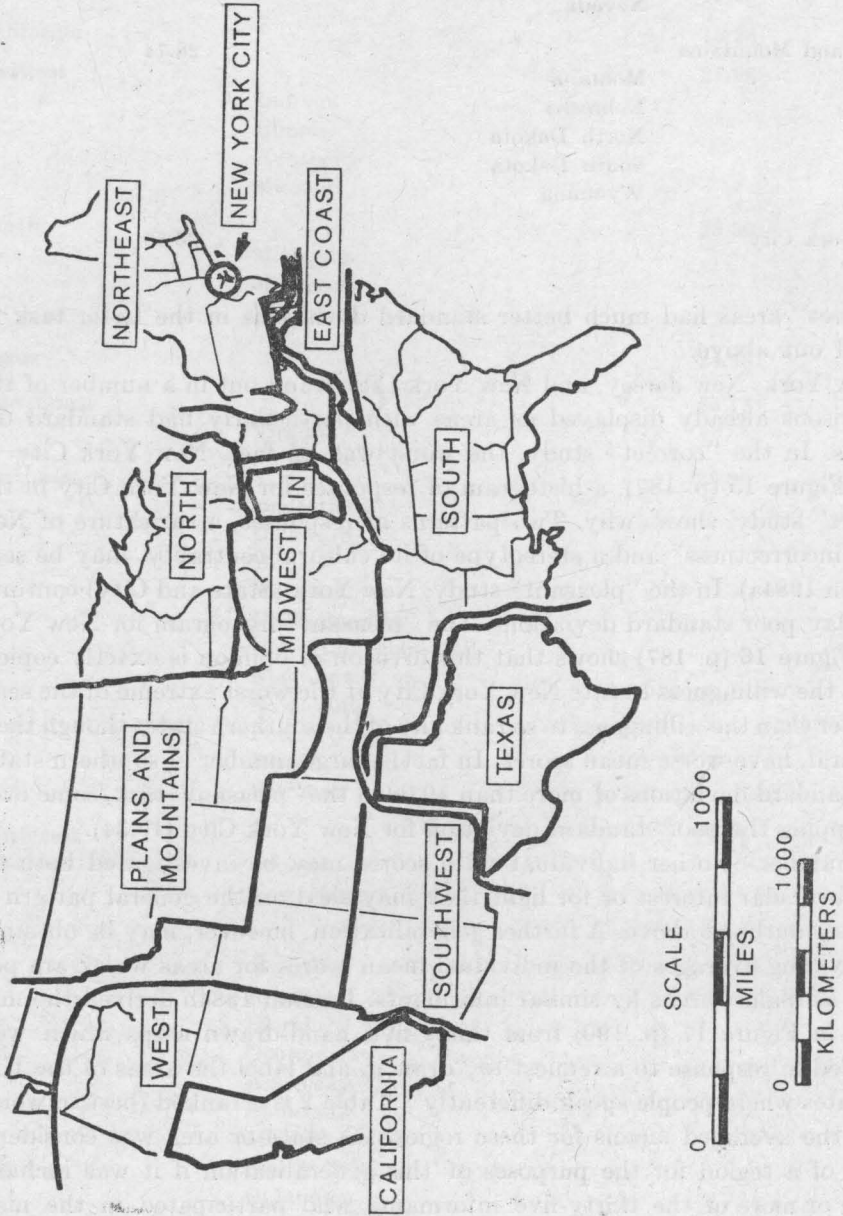


FIGURE 17: Perceptual dialect areas from southern-Indiana.

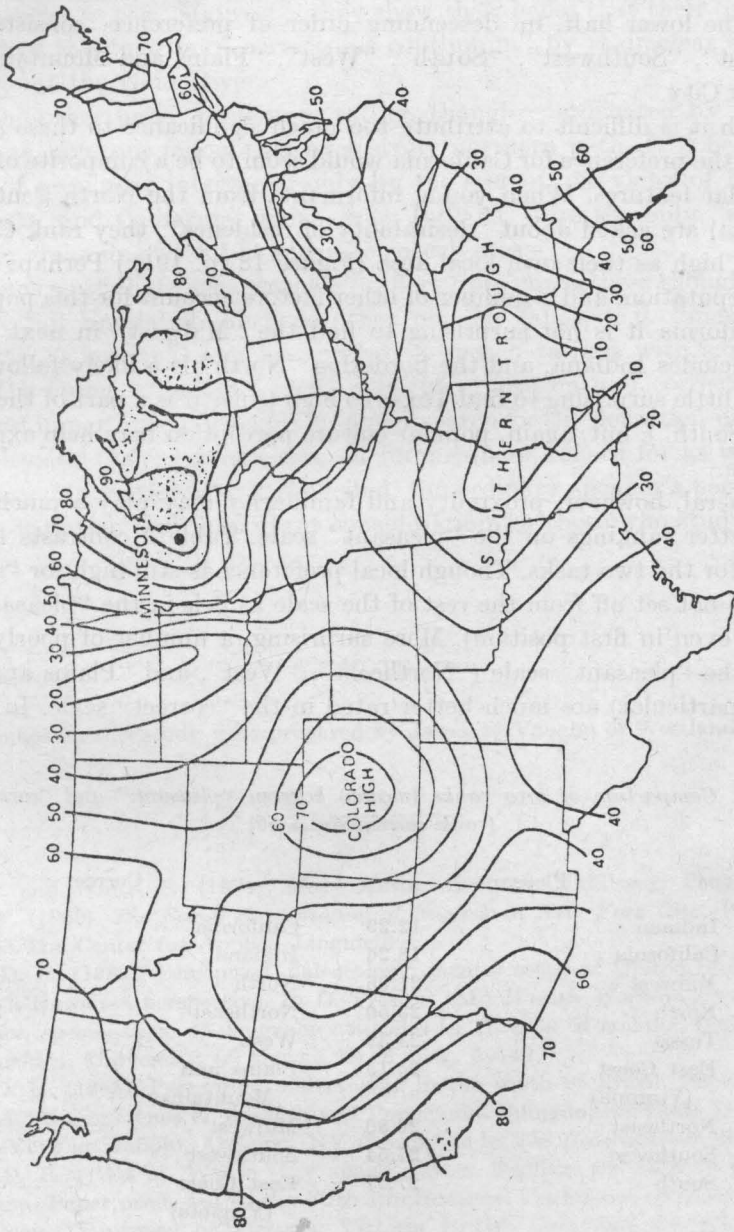


FIGURE 18: Desirability of residence from Minnesota.

is in a distant second place. The remaining high-ranked areas are the "Midwest" (which includes Indiana), the "North", Texas, and the "East Coast" (actually only Virginia, the only state to qualify with a minimum of five placements). The lower half, in descending order of preference, consists of the "Northeast", "Southwest", "South", "West", "Plains and Mountains", and New York City.

Though it is difficult to attribute too much significance to these averages of means, the preference for California would seem to be a composite of natural and popular features. When young informants from the North Central area (Minnesota) are asked about "desirability of residence", they rank California almost as high as their own local area (Figure 18 (p. 191).) Perhaps climate, popular reputation, and a number of other factors account for this popularity. After California it is not surprising to find the "Midwest" in next position since it includes Indiana, and the bordering "North" is a likely follower.

It is a little surprising to find Texas so high (since it is a part of the poorly-ranked "South"), but, again, popular culture perception may help explain the preference.

In general, however, proximity and familiarity may play a much greater role in better rankings on the "pleasant" scale. Table 3 contrasts the areal rankings for the two tasks. Though local preference is still high for "correct", Indiana is not set off from the rest of the scale as it is in the "pleasant" task (nor is it even in first position). More surprising, a number of poorly-ranked areas in the "pleasant" scale ("Northeast", "West", and "Plains and Mountains" in particular) are much better rated in the "correct" scale. In general,

TABLE 3. Comparison of area ranks (means) between "pleasant" and "correct" tasks (rank correlation = .50)

	Pleasant		Correct	
# 1	Indiana	12.29	California	16.21
# 2	California	18.26	Indiana	17.04
# 3	Midwest	21.96	North	18.79
# 4	North	23.50	Northeast	20.78
# 5	Texas	24.39	West	22.92
# 6	East Coast (Virginia)	25.15	Plains and Mountains	25.12
# 7	Northeast	26.86	Midwest	25.73
# 8	Southwest	27.54	Southwest	27.91
# 9	South	27.57	East Coast (Virginia)	29.45
# 10	West	27.97	New York City	30.82
# 11	Plains and Mountains	28.74	South	35.95
# 12	New York City	30.55	Texas	37.01

correctness would seem to be perceived as a band of varieties stretching across the northern part of the United States, excluding only stereotypically demoted New York City. In self defense, perhaps, even though these informants put Kentucky in the "Midwest", they show their belief that their own speech is a part of this "northern correctness continuum" by their clear separation of ratings at the Ohio River.

On the other hand, preference rating, though complicated by factors of correctness, does not follow that exclusively northern path. It is best seen as a reflex of proximity interrupted only by the stereotypic views of New York City, Texas, and California, which, with Indiana, were the only "state-size" or smaller areas singled out as separate speech areas.

It seems clear that "pleasantness" differs from correctness though the concepts are not unrelated. Perhaps other popular labels (e.g. "masculinity", "honesty", "sincerity") can be applied to speech ratings with some profit, though the larger considerations of areal identification and correctness may prove most important to the ethnographers' search for the definition of a speech community and their understanding of its members' regard for as well as use of language. No matter how it is elicited, the ordinary speaker's perception of language variation is an important consideration for those who study situated speech.

NOTE

The maps for this study were prepared by James R. Vaughn of Westland, Michigan.

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