

# Optimal Supply Networks III: Redistribution

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Principles of Complex Systems, Vols. 1, 2, & 3D  
CSYS/MATH 6701, 6713, & a pretend number, 2024–2025

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Distributed Sources

Size-density law

Cartograms

A reasonable derivation

Global redistribution

Public versus Private

References

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Santa Fe Institute | University of Vermont



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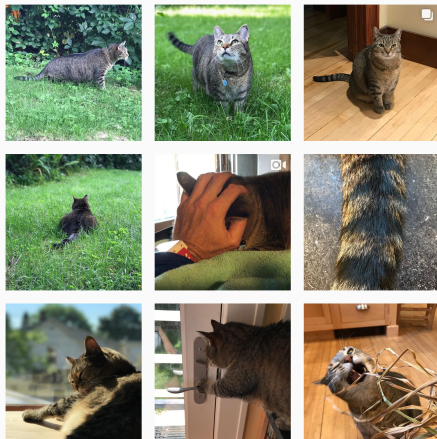
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# Outline

## Distributed Sources

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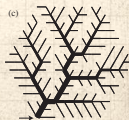
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# Many sources, many sinks

How do we distribute sources?

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# Many sources, many sinks

How do we distribute sources?

 Focus on 2-d (results generalize to higher dimensions).

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# Many sources, many sinks

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 Sources = hospitals, post offices, pubs, ...

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# Many sources, many sinks

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## How do we distribute sources?

-  Focus on 2-d (results generalize to higher dimensions).
-  Sources = hospitals, post offices, pubs, ...
-  **Key problem:** How do we cope with uneven population densities?





# Many sources, many sinks

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## How do we distribute sources?

-  Focus on 2-d (results generalize to higher dimensions).
-  Sources = hospitals, post offices, pubs, ...
-  **Key problem:** How do we cope with uneven population densities?
-  Obvious: if density is uniform then sources are best distributed **uniformly**.



# Many sources, many sinks

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## How do we distribute sources?

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-  Sources = hospitals, post offices, pubs, ...
-  **Key problem:** How do we cope with uneven population densities?
-  Obvious: if density is uniform then sources are best distributed **uniformly**.
-  Which lattice is optimal?



# Many sources, many sinks

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## How do we distribute sources?

- Focus on 2-d (results generalize to higher dimensions).
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- Which lattice is optimal? The **hexagonal lattice**
- Q2:** Given population density is uneven, what do we do?



# Many sources, many sinks

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## How do we distribute sources?

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- Key problem:** How do we cope with uneven population densities?
- Obvious: if density is uniform then sources are best distributed **uniformly**.
- Which lattice is optimal? The **hexagonal lattice**
- Q2:** Given population density is uneven, what do we do?
- We'll follow work by Stephan (1977, 1984) <sup>[4, 5]</sup>, Gastner and Newman (2006) <sup>[2]</sup>, Um *et al.* (2009) <sup>[6]</sup>, and work cited by them.



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# Optimal source allocation: Size-density law

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## Solidifying the basic problem



# Optimal source allocation: Size-density law

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## Solidifying the basic problem

- Given a region with some population distribution  $\rho$ , most likely uneven.



# Optimal source allocation: Size-density law

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## Solidifying the basic problem

- Given a region with some population distribution  $\rho$ , most likely uneven.
- Given resources to build and maintain  $N$  facilities.





# Optimal source allocation: Size-density law

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## Solidifying the basic problem

- Given a region with some population distribution  $\rho$ , most likely uneven.
- Given resources to build and maintain  $N$  facilities.
- Q:** How do we locate these  $N$  facilities so as to **minimize the average distance** between an **individual's residence** and the nearest facility?



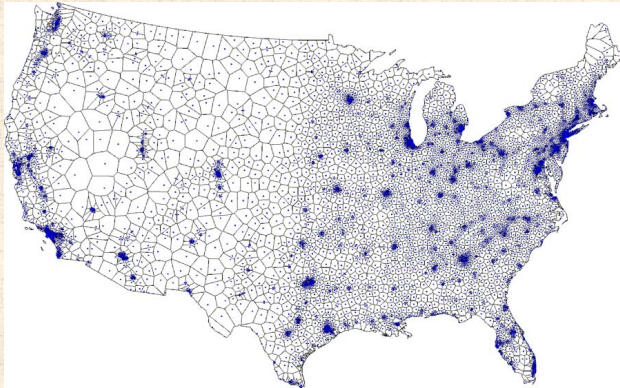





“Optimal design of spatial distribution networks”   
Gastner and Newman,  
Phys. Rev. E, **74**, 016117, 2006. [2]

Distributed Sources

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-  Approximately optimal location of 5000 facilities.
-  Based on 2000 Census data.
-  Simulated annealing + Voronoi tessellation.

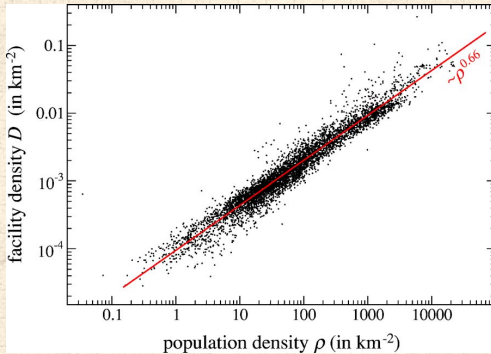


# Optimal source allocation

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Optimal facility density  $\rho_{\text{fac}}$  vs. population density  $\rho_{\text{pop}}$ .

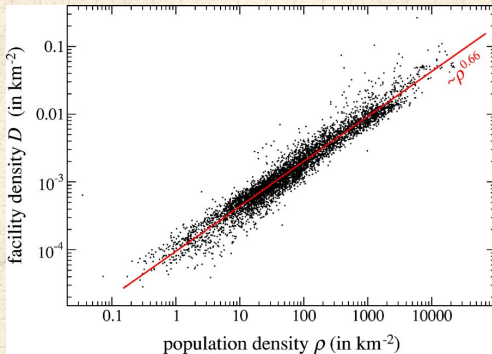



# Optimal source allocation


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 Optimal facility density  $\rho_{\text{fac}}$  vs. population density  $\rho_{\text{pop}}$ .

 Fit is  $\rho_{\text{fac}} \propto \rho_{\text{pop}}^{0.66}$  with  $r^2 = 0.94$ .

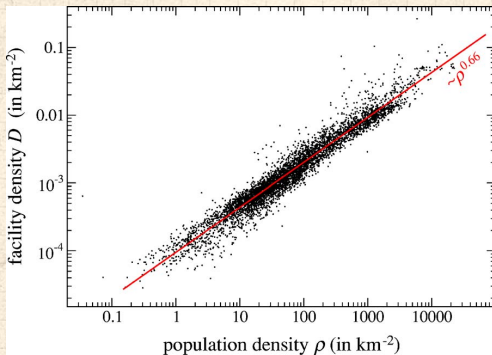



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 Optimal facility density  $\rho_{\text{fac}}$  vs. population density  $\rho_{\text{pop}}$ .

 Fit is  $\rho_{\text{fac}} \propto \rho_{\text{pop}}^{0.66}$  with  $r^2 = 0.94$ .

 Looking good for a 2/3 power ...



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Size-density law:



$$\rho_{\text{fac}} \propto \rho_{\text{pop}}^{2/3}$$



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Size-density law:



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Why?





# Optimal source allocation

## Size-density law:



$$\rho_{\text{fac}} \propto \rho_{\text{pop}}^{2/3}$$



Why?



Again: Different story to branching networks where there was either one source or one sink.



# Optimal source allocation

## Size-density law:



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Why?




Again: Different story to branching networks where there was either one source or one sink.



Now sources & sinks are distributed throughout region.





“Territorial division: The least-time constraint  
behind the formation of subnational boundaries” 

G. Edward Stephan,  
Science, **196**, 523–524, 1977. [4]



We first examine Stephan’s treatment (1977) [4, 5]





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🧱 Zipf-like approach: invokes **principle of minimal effort**.





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Zipf-like approach: invokes **principle of minimal effort**.



Also known as the Homer Simpson principle.



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Consider a region of area  $A$  and population  $P$  with a single functional center that everyone needs to access every day.



# Optimal source allocation

- Consider a region of area  $A$  and population  $P$  with a single functional center that everyone needs to access every day.
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# Optimal source allocation

- Consider a region of area  $A$  and population  $P$  with a single functional center that everyone needs to access every day.
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- Write **average travel distance** to center as  $\langle d \rangle$  and assume **average speed of travel** is  $\langle v \rangle$ .
- Assume **isometry**: average travel distance  $\langle d \rangle$  will be on the length scale of the region which is  $\sim A^{1/2}$



# Optimal source allocation

Consider a region of area  $A$  and population  $P$  with a single functional center that everyone needs to access every day.

Build up a general cost function based on time expended to **access and maintain center**.

Write **average travel distance** to center as  $\langle d \rangle$  and assume **average speed of travel** is  $\langle v \rangle$ .

Assume **isometry**: average travel distance  $\langle d \rangle$  will be on the length scale of the region which is  $\sim A^{1/2}$

Average time expended per person in accessing facility is therefore

$$\langle d \rangle / \langle v \rangle = cA^{1/2} / \langle v \rangle$$

where  $c$  is an unimportant shape factor.




# Optimal source allocation




Next assume facility requires regular maintenance (person-hours per day).



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 Call this quantity  $\tau$ .



# Optimal source allocation



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If burden of maintenance is shared then average cost per person is  $\tau/P$  where  $P$  = population.



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- Now Minimize with respect to  $A$  ...



# Optimal source allocation



Differentiating ...

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial A} = \frac{\partial}{\partial A} \left( cA^{1/2} / \langle v \rangle + \tau / (\rho_{\text{pop}} A) \right)$$

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# Optimal source allocation



Differentiating ...

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\partial T}{\partial A} &= \frac{\partial}{\partial A} \left( cA^{1/2} / \langle v \rangle + \tau / (\rho_{\text{pop}} A) \right) \\ &= \frac{c}{2 \langle v \rangle A^{1/2}} - \frac{\tau}{\rho_{\text{pop}} A^2}\end{aligned}$$



# Optimal source allocation



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Rearrange:

$$A = \left( \frac{2 \langle v \rangle \tau}{c \rho_{\text{pop}}} \right)^{2/3}$$



# Optimal source allocation



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 Groovy ...

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An issue:

 Maintenance ( $\tau$ ) is assumed to be **independent** of population and area ( $P$  and  $A$ )







# Optimal source allocation

## An issue:

 Maintenance ( $\tau$ ) is assumed to be **independent** of population and area ( $P$  and  $A$ )

 Stephan's online book  
"The Division of Territory in Society" is here .

 (It used to be here .)

 The Readme  is well worth reading (1995).



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# Cartograms

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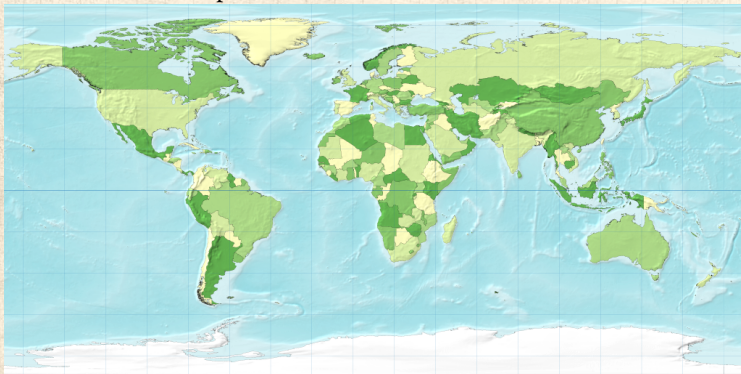
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Standard world map:



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Cartogram of countries 'rescaled' by population:



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Diffusion-based cartograms:

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# Cartograms

## Diffusion-based cartograms:



- ❏ Idea of cartograms is to **distort areas** to more accurately represent some local density  $\rho_{\text{pop}}$  (e.g. population).





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- ❏ Algorithm due to Gastner and Newman (2004)<sup>[1]</sup> is based on standard diffusion:

$$\nabla^2 \rho_{\text{pop}} - \frac{\partial \rho_{\text{pop}}}{\partial t} = 0.$$

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$$\nabla^2 \rho_{\text{pop}} - \frac{\partial \rho_{\text{pop}}}{\partial t} = 0.$$

- ❏ Allow density to diffuse and trace the movement of individual elements and boundaries.
- ❏ Diffusion is constrained by boundary condition of surrounding area having density  $\langle \rho \rangle_{\text{pop}}$ .

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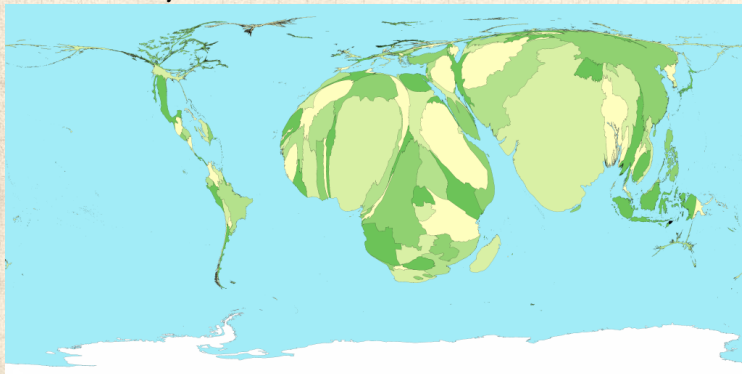
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Child mortality:



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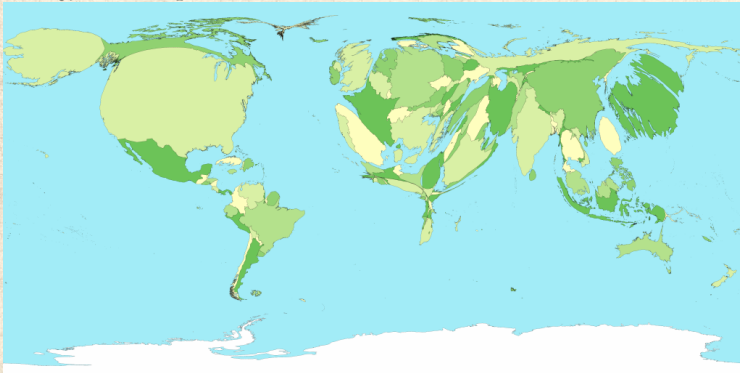
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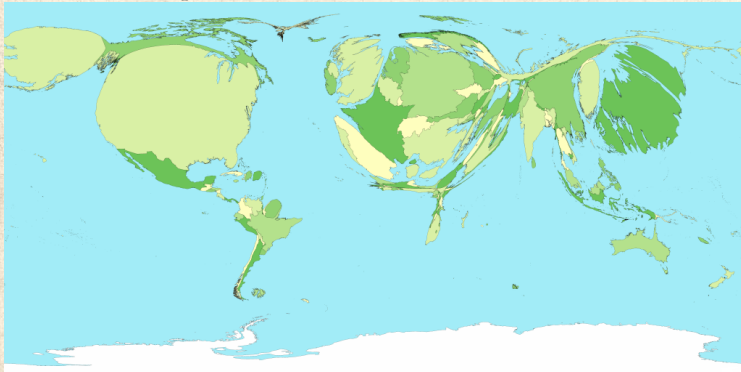
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Gross domestic product:



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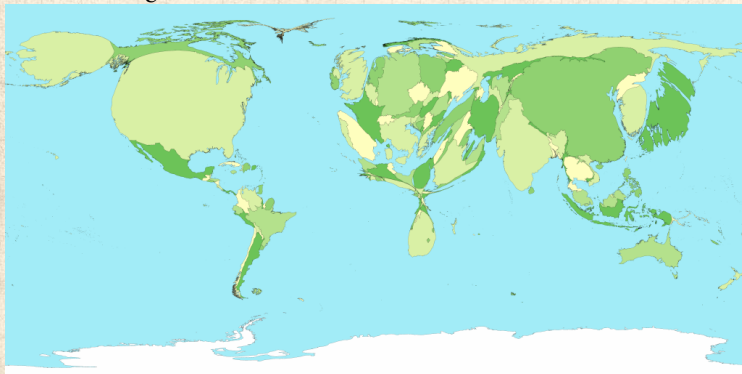
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Greenhouse gas emissions:





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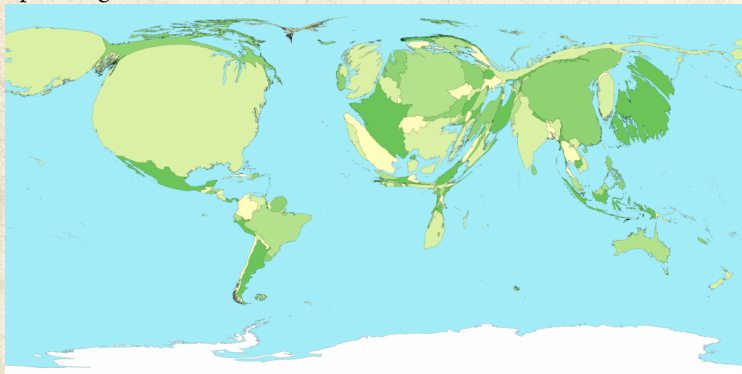
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Spending on healthcare:



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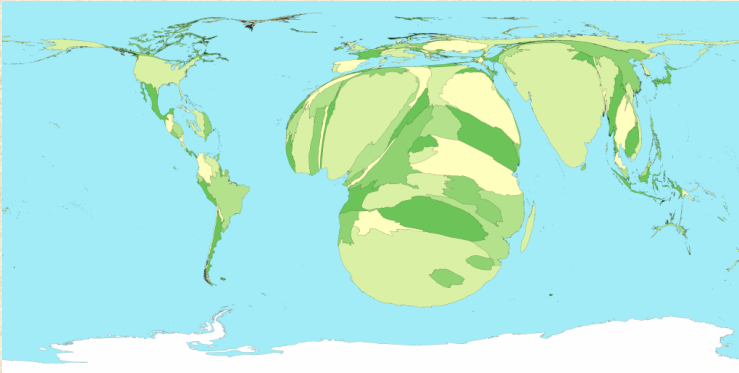
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People living with HIV:



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 The preceding sampling of Gastner & Newman's cartograms lives here .

 A larger collection can be found at worldmapper.org .

 **WORLDMAPPER** *The world as you've never seen it before*

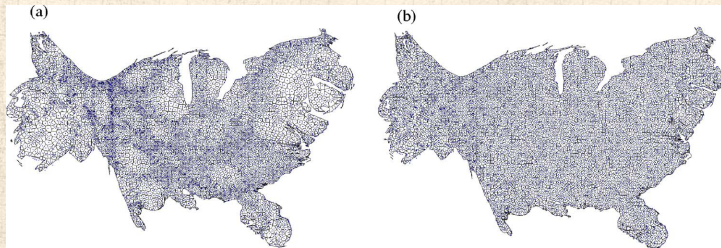





“Optimal design of spatial distribution networks” ↗

Gastner and Newman,

Phys. Rev. E, **74**, 016117, 2006. [2]



 **Left:** population density-equalized cartogram.

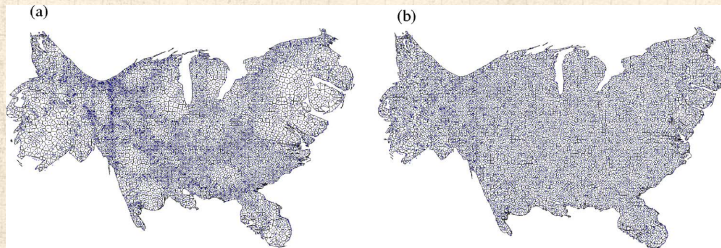






## “Optimal design of spatial distribution networks”

Gastner and Newman,

Phys. Rev. E, **74**, 016117, 2006. [2]



 **Left:** population density-equalized cartogram.

 **Right:** (population density)<sup>2/3</sup>-equalized cartogram.

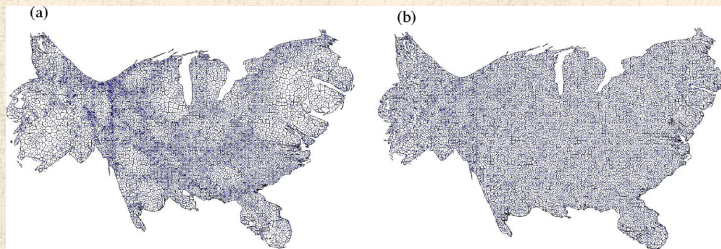






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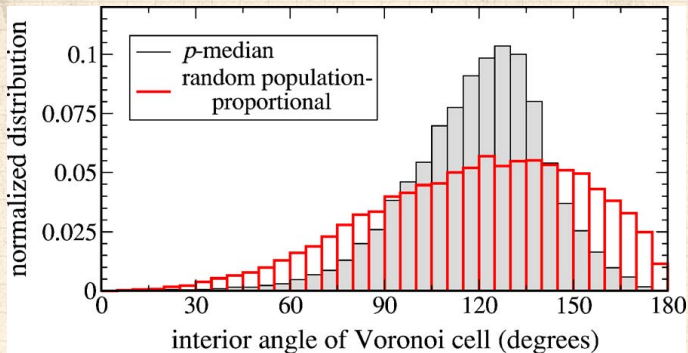


 **Left:** population density-equalized cartogram.


 **Right:** (population density)<sup>2/3</sup>-equalized cartogram.

 Facility density is uniform for  $\rho_{\text{pop}}^{2/3}$  cartogram.





From Gastner and Newman (2006) [2]

 Cartogram's Voronoi cells are somewhat hexagonal.



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# Deriving the optimal source distribution:

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## Deriving the optimal source distribution:

 **Basic idea:** Minimize the average distance from a random individual to the nearest facility. [2]

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## Deriving the optimal source distribution:

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-  Assume given a fixed population density  $\rho_{\text{pop}}$  defined on a spatial region  $\Omega$ .

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-  Formally, we want to find the locations of  $n$  sources  $\{\vec{x}_1, \dots, \vec{x}_n\}$  that minimizes the **cost function**

$$F(\{\vec{x}_1, \dots, \vec{x}_n\}) = \int_{\Omega} \rho_{\text{pop}}(\vec{x}) \min_i \|\vec{x} - \vec{x}_i\| d\vec{x}.$$

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-  Not easy ...in fact this one is an NP-hard problem. [2]
-  Approximate solution originally due to Gusein-Zade [3].



# Size-density law

## Approximations:




-  For a given set of source placements  $\{\vec{x}_1, \dots, \vec{x}_n\}$ , the region  $\Omega$  is divided up into Voronoi cells , one per source.







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 As per Stephan's calculation, estimate typical distance from  $\vec{x}$  to the nearest source (say  $i$ ) as


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 Approximate  $c_i$  as a constant  $c$ .



# Size-density law

Carrying on:

 The cost function is now

$$F = c \int_{\Omega} \rho_{\text{pop}}(\vec{x}) A(\vec{x})^{1/2} d\vec{x}.$$

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 Sneakily turn this into an integral constraint:

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 Within each cell,  $A(\vec{x})$  is constant.

 So ...integral over each of the  $n$  cells equals 1.






## Now a Lagrange multiplier story:

 By varying  $\{\vec{x}_1, \dots, \vec{x}_n\}$ , minimize



$$G(A) = c \int_{\Omega} \rho_{\text{pop}}(\vec{x}) A(\vec{x})^{1/2} d\vec{x} - \lambda \left( n - \int_{\Omega} [A(\vec{x})]^{-1} d\vec{x} \right)$$



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Setting the integrand to be zilch, we have:

$$\rho_{\text{pop}}(\vec{x}) = 2\lambda c^{-1} A(\vec{x})^{-3/2}.$$



# Size-density law

Now a Lagrange multiplier story:


 Rearranging, we have

$$A(\vec{x}) = (2\lambda c^{-1})^{2/3} \rho_{\text{pop}}^{-2/3}.$$




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 Substituting  $\rho_{\text{fac}} = 1/A$ , we have

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 Normalizing (or solving for  $\lambda$ ):

$$\rho_{\text{fac}}(\vec{x}) = n \frac{[\rho_{\text{pop}}(\vec{x})]^{2/3}}{\int_{\Omega} [\rho_{\text{pop}}(\vec{x})]^{2/3} d\vec{x}} \propto [\rho_{\text{pop}}(\vec{x})]^{2/3}.$$

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# Global redistribution networks

One more thing:

 How do we supply these facilities?

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# Global redistribution networks

One more thing:



How do we supply these facilities?



How do we best redistribute mail? People?

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# Global redistribution networks

One more thing:

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- Travel time is more complicated: Take 'distance' between nodes to be a composite of shortest path distance  $l_{ij}$  and number of legs to journey:

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- When  $\delta = 1$ , only number of hops matters.

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# Global redistribution networks

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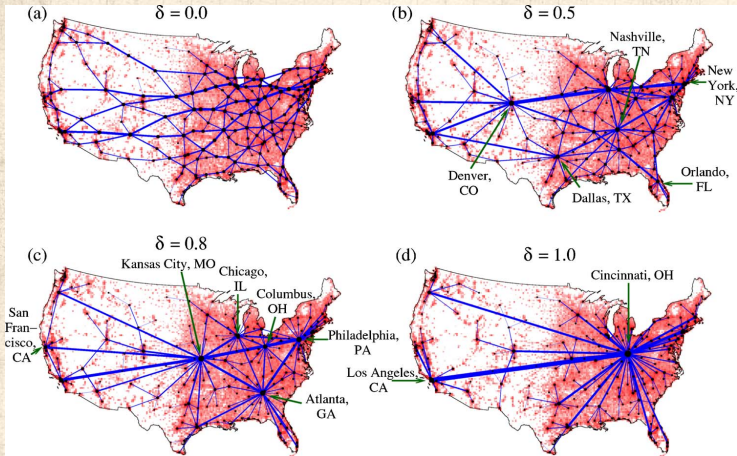
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From Gastner and Newman (2006) [2]



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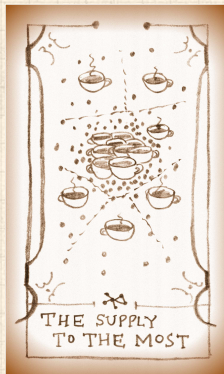
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# Public versus private facilities

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# Public versus private facilities

Beyond minimizing distances:

 “Scaling laws between population and facility densities” by  
Um *et al.*, Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci., 2009. [6]

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# Public versus private facilities

Beyond minimizing distances:

🧱 “Scaling laws between population and facility densities” by Um *et al.*, Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci., 2009. [6]

🧱 Um *et al.* find empirically and argue theoretically that the connection between facility and population density

$$\rho_{\text{fac}} \propto \rho_{\text{pop}}^{\alpha}$$

does not universally hold with  $\alpha = 2/3$ .

🧱 **Two idealized limiting classes:**

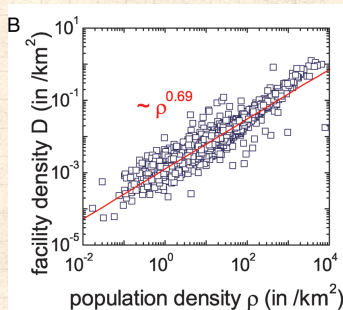
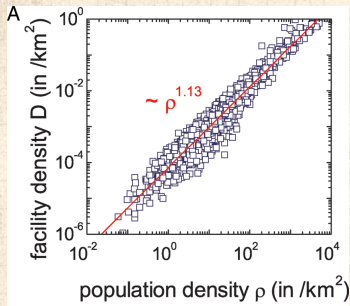
1. For-profit, commercial facilities:  $\alpha = 1$ ;
2. Pro-social, public facilities:  $\alpha = 2/3$ .


🧱 Um *et al.* investigate facility locations in the United States and South Korea.






# Public versus private facilities: evidence



 **Left plot:** ambulatory hospitals in the U.S.

 **Right plot:** public schools in the U.S.





# Public versus private facilities: evidence

US facility	$\alpha$ (SE)	$R^2$
Ambulatory hospital	1.13(1)	0.93
Beauty care	1.08(1)	0.86
Laundry	1.05(1)	0.90
Automotive repair	0.99(1)	0.92
Private school	0.95(1)	0.82
Restaurant	0.93(1)	0.89
Accommodation	0.89(1)	0.70
Bank	0.88(1)	0.89
Gas station	0.86(1)	0.94
Death care	0.79(1)	0.80
* Fire station	0.78(3)	0.93
* Police station	0.71(6)	0.75
Public school	0.69(1)	0.87

SK facility	$\alpha$ (SE)	$R^2$
Bank	1.18(2)	0.96
Parking place	1.13(2)	0.91
* Primary clinic	1.09(2)	1.00
* Hospital	0.96(5)	0.97
* University/college	0.93(9)	0.89
Market place	0.87(2)	0.90
* Secondary school	0.77(3)	0.98
* Primary school	0.77(3)	0.97
Social welfare org.	0.75(2)	0.84
* Police station	0.71(5)	0.94
Government office	0.70(1)	0.93
* Fire station	0.60(4)	0.93
* Public health center	0.09(5)	0.19

Rough transition between public and private at  $\alpha \approx 0.8$ .

Note: \* indicates analysis is at state/province level; otherwise county level.

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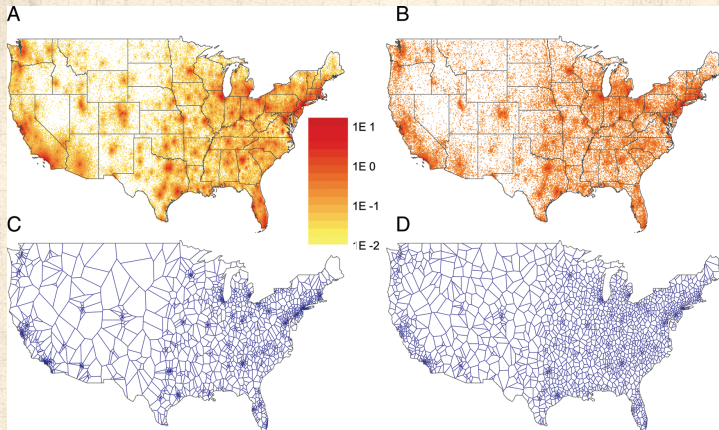
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# Public versus private facilities: evidence




**A, C:** ambulatory hospitals in the U.S.; **B, D:** public schools in the U.S.; **A, B:** data; **C, D:** Voronoi diagram from model simulation.



# Public versus private facilities: the story

So what's going on?

 Social institutions seek to minimize distance of travel.

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# Public versus private facilities: the story

So what's going on?

-  Social institutions seek to **minimize distance of travel**.
-  Commercial institutions seek to **maximize the number of visitors**.

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# Public versus private facilities: the story

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- 🧱 Defns: For the  $i$ th facility and its Voronoi cell  $V_i$ , define
  - 🧱  $n_i$  = population of the  $i$ th cell;
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- 🧱 Objective function to maximize for a facility (highly constructed):

$$v_i = n_i \langle r_i \rangle^\beta \text{ with } 0 \leq \beta \leq 1.$$





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## 🧱 Limits:

- 🧱  $\beta = 0$ : purely commercial.
- 🧱  $\beta = 1$ : purely social.



# Public versus private facilities: the story

 Either proceeding as per the Gastner-Newman-Gusein-Zade calculation or, as Um *et al.* do, observing that the cost for each cell should be the same, we have:

$$\rho_{\text{fac}}(\vec{x}) = n \frac{[\rho_{\text{pop}}(\vec{x})]^{2/(\beta+2)}}{\int_{\Omega} [\rho_{\text{pop}}(\vec{x})]^{2/(\beta+2)} d\vec{x}} \propto [\rho_{\text{pop}}(\vec{x})]^{2/(\beta+2)}.$$



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For  $\beta = 0$ ,  $\alpha = 1$ : commercial scaling is linear.



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-  For  $\beta = 0$ ,  $\alpha = 1$ : commercial scaling is linear.
-  For  $\beta = 1$ ,  $\alpha = 2/3$ : social scaling is sublinear.



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References

System type:	Dominant cost/benefit scaling:	Dominant constraint scaling:	Scaling of number of events per partition:	Density scaling:	Quantity equalized across partitions:
General form	$\rho_{\text{event}} V^\alpha$ $0 < \alpha \leq 1$	$V^{-\beta}$ $1 - \alpha \leq \beta \leq 1$	$N \propto V^{1-\alpha-\beta}$	$\rho_{\text{partition}} \propto \rho_{\text{event}}^{1/(\alpha+\beta)}$	$NV^{\alpha+\beta-1}$
I. Event rate equalizing with partition number constrained (for-profit)	$\sim \rho_{\text{event}} \ln V$	$V^{-1}$	$N \propto V^0$	$\rho_{\text{partition}} \propto \rho_{\text{event}}^1$	$N$
II. Minimizing average event access time with partition number constrained (p-median problem, pro-social)	$\rho_{\text{event}} V^{1/d}$	$V^{-1}$	$N \propto V^{-1/d}$	$\rho_{\text{partition}} \propto \rho_{\text{event}}^{d/(d+1)}$	$NV^{1/d}$
III. System under stochastic threat with partition boundary constrained (HOT model)	$\rho_{\text{event}} V^1$	$V^{-1/d}$	$N \propto V^{-1/d}$	$\rho_{\text{partition}} \propto \rho_{\text{event}}^{d/(d+1)}$	$NV^{1/d}$
IV. System under stochastic threat with partition number constrained	$\rho_{\text{event}} V^1$	$V^{-1}$	$N \propto V^{-1}$	$\rho_{\text{partition}} \propto \rho_{\text{event}}^{1/2}$	$NV$



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