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# Articles

## Specialization in the Structure and Organization of Geography

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**Abstract.** Specialty groups are a relatively recent innovation within the Association of American Geographers (AAG), but have grown rapidly to play a major part in the functioning of the organization. This paper examines the role of specialization within and between disciplines, with special reference to geography, as a response to the complexity of knowledge and of scientific activity, and as a phenomenon of social organization. The scale and basis of organization of the specialty groups are seen as responses to needs for communication and survival. Natural and empirical views of the organization of disciplines and other academic divisions within the field of knowledge, and of the processes operating on individual career paths, are discussed. The empirical (or pragmatic) view provides the basis for analyzing the membership of AAG specialty groups to determine the structure of the current discipline and the trends to which it is subject.

A multidimensional scaling and an elementary linkage analysis of the cross memberships of specialty groups for 1984 show patterns of affinity and divergence of topical interest and of general research paradigms. The revealed cores of the discipline confirm the earth-science, man-land and spatial traditions identified by Pattison (1964). In contrast, the area-studies tradition does not display any unified core, but links to the general body of geography through systematic concerns. Applied geography, historical geography and cartography are most central to the structuring of specialty group memberships and appear to be prominent sources of unity for those

groups that represent the different traditions. A diversity-of-interest measure, based on an information statistic, reveals that socio-demographic (age and sex), institutional (Ph.D.-granting departments), and technological factors also play significant roles in structuring the pattern of specialization.

**Key Words:** geography, specialization, sociology of knowledge, multidimensional scaling, elementary linkage analysis, information statistic.

In recent years specialty groups have become established within several national and international organizations as a strong new level and form of organization in geography. Listings of formalized specialty groups of associations from Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States, and from the International Geographical Union (IGU), provide ample evidence of their significance in the current structuring of geographic activity (Table 1). Whereas this is a recent phenomenon for the national associations, specialized Committees of the IGV date from 1891 and were formalized as part of its structure in 1925. Its three levels of organization included only nine groups in 1952, but by 1986 they had expanded to 42 (Fuchs 1986). The rapidity of this growth at the national level is illustrated by the Association of American Geographers (AAG). The special 75th anniversary volume on its history (James and Martin 1978) mentions only a recommendation for the formation of specialty groups, yet by 1986 they numbered 37 and were re-

**Table 1.** Formalized Specialty Groups in Geography: 1986

Association of American Geographers	Institute of British Geographers	Canadian Association of Geographers	International Geographical Union
<b>Specialty Groups:</b> Africa Aging Applied Asian Bible Biogeography Canadian Geography Cartography Chinese Geography Climatology Coastal & Marine Contemporary Agriculture & Rural Land Use* Cultural Ecology Energy Environmental Perception	<b>Study Groups:</b> Biogeography Developing Areas Geography and Planning Geomorphology Higher Education Historical Geography Industry Industrial Activity and Area Development Medical Geography Political Geography Rural and Urban Population Geography Rural and Urban Transport Geography	<b>Special Interest Groups:</b> Environmental Impact Assessment Geography of Parks, Recreation & Tourism Industrial Geography Marine and Coastal Zone Management Medical Geography Rural and Urban Fringe Canadian Women in Geography	<b>Commissions:</b> Geographical Education Geographical Data Geography and Processing Geographical Mounting and Forecasting Measurements, Theory and Application in Geomorphology Mountain Geology Population Geography Urban Systems in Transition
Geographic Information Systems* Geographic Perspectives on Women Geography in Higher Education Geomorphology Historical Industrial Geography Latin American Mathematical Models & Quantitative Methods Medical Microcomputers* Native American Political Geography Population Recreation, Tourism & Sport Regional Development & Planning Remote Sensing Rural Development Soviet & East European Transportation Urban Water Resources	Quantitative Methods Rural Geography Social Geography Transport Geography Urban Geography Women and Geography History and Philosophy of Geography	Working Groups: Resource Management in the Drylands Cartography of the Dynamic Environment Environmental Atlases Mathematical Models Tropical Climatology and Human Settlements Landscape Synthesis The Great World Metropolitan Cities	Changing Rural Systems Coastal Environment Industrial Change International Division of Labour and Regional Development The Significance of Periglacial Phenomena Geography of Tourism and Leisure Comparative Research in Food Systems of the World History of Geographical Thought Geomorphological Survey and Mapping International Hydrological Programme Geography of Transport Dynamics of Land Use Systems Urbanisation in Developing Countries Energy Resources and Development Man's Impact on Karst Areas Geography of Commercial Activities Geography of Telecommunication and Communication Map Use Environmental Perception in Resource Management Marine Geography
			<b>Study Groups:</b> Climatic Change Topoclimatological Investigation and Mapping World Political Map Development in Highlands and High Latitude Zones Geography and Public Administration Famine and Food Crisis Management

\* Not included in analysis of 1984 data (Table 2).

responsible for organizing 151 of the 319 academic sessions for the Twin Cities Annual Meeting (AAG 1986, 10).

The formation of specialty groups within the Association originated with the AAG Council's decision, in October 1976, to form an *ad hoc* Long-Range Planning Committee (LRPC). Its broad mandate spanned a variety of questions on matters of governance, finance, publications, services to members, and the organization of annual meetings. According to President Melvin Marcus (1977-78), this was:

"the most significant activity undertaken by the Association in the decade. The results will influence our goals, operations, and professional philosophies for many succeeding decades" (Marcus 1977, 1).

In its final report to Council, in April 1978 (LRPC 1978), it was clear that the LRPC viewed the establishment of semi-autonomous specialty groups as a central element of its proposed reforms. This new level of organization would help to capture the support of special interest groups by giving them identity within the broader Association. The 1960s and early 1970s had seen increasing evidence of fragmentation along disciplinary lines. While the benefits of such specialization were recognized, there was fear that this could lessen the significance of the Association and erode the strength of geographers generally. Groups were identifying themselves and operating outside of the Association. Examples included the annual Applied Geography Conferences, the annual Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers (CLAAG), and the meetings of Eastern Historical Geographers. Even within the Association, annual meetings witnessed a pattern of increasingly specialized sessions. Council's acceptance of the proposal for specialty groups provided a flexible framework for accommodating the growth and changing patterns of specialization among geographers. The guidelines for the formation of specialty groups specified the requirements for recognition by the Association, established their accountability to Council, and described their responsibility for taking an active role in organizing sessions for the annual meeting (AAG 1978).

Aside from providing a framework for the Association's adaptation to changes in the practice of Geography, specialty groups may be seen

as a response to a perceived need for a partitioning of interests within the discipline, as a means of facilitating communication, and as structuring influence on the profession, influencing one's perceptions of the relative importance of various specialties, and indeed on the importance of specialization itself. While many scholars view the increasing level of specialization as an inevitable component of scientific development (Law 1976; Ziman 1980) some geographers have expressed concerns. Specialization has been characterized as:

...a threat to the continuation of the academic profession of geography (Gould 1986), and a representative of reductionist tendencies that preclude the holistic linkage of problems, philosophies, and techniques (Eliot Hurst 1985). The view of geography as a link between the natural and human sciences, represented in the classic statement by Woodbridge and East (1958) is at odds with Johnson's (1986) opinion that human and physical geography are independent streams of academic research and will Worsley's (1985) suggestion that geomorphology and other branches of physical geography would be stronger outside of geography. In contrast, others, such as Portugali (1985, 236) point to parallel currents of theory development in the natural and social sciences and note "that social science cannot be detached from nature and from interaction with the natural sciences." Another view sees specializations and their fusion in academic departments as symptomatic of external institutional controls over the development of disciplines (Grano 1984). Indeed, Peet's (1985) arguments on the development of environmental determinism as a dominant theme in late nineteenth-century geography suggest that the basic paradigm of a science may be governed more by the socio-political milieu in which it is practiced than by the idiosyncratic and unfettered choices of individual scholars.

Arguments for and against specialization may rest on deeply-held beliefs about the appropriate character of a discipline, and concern for the social context of a discipline's character may evoke an interesting clash of perspectives. While recognizing the legitimacy and importance of these issues, our intent in this paper is to juxtapose them with an empirically-based discussion of the current structure of specialization in the discipline.

## Objectives

In this paper we examine the structure of specialization within contemporary American geography through an analysis of individuals' affiliations with AAG specialty groups. Three conceptual sections provide the framework for this analysis. The first draws from literature on the sociology of knowledge (Griffith and Mullins 1972; Storer 1978; Whitley 1984; Price 1986) to identify sources and processes of unification and diversification in science, while the second considers how the organization of science (particularly learned societies) responds to changes in the economics of communication and to social factors that may limit communication (e.g., nationality and language). The final conceptual section considers the division of knowledge for purposes of identifying the boundaries and cores of disciplines and the career paths of individual scholars.

Throughout the three conceptual sections, attempts are made to root the examples in geography and its development. Thus, discussion on the sociology of knowledge isolates institutional agents that structure the distribution and intensity of scientific activity in geography—universities, funding agencies, journals and learned societies. The objective of the second section, which focuses on technological and social constraints to scholarly communication, is to consider rationales for, and problems associated with, organizing scholarly activity at national and regional levels, or according to systematic categories of knowledge. Finally, a general framework for viewing the division of knowledge is presented in order that the cores (and peripheries) of geography may be identified in relationship to the levels of interaction among its specializations.

The objectives of the empirical section are to describe how scholarly specializations in geography, represented by affiliations with AAG specialty groups, fit within the main body of the discipline, and to establish their degrees of linkage with one another. The cross-memberships among 35 specialty groups for more than 5000 members in 1984 provide the principal basis for analysis, but auxiliary data on regional interests, demographic traits, and educational experience of members allow for a more direct focus on how specialization may be influenced by the age and sex of geographers and by the

structuring influence of Ph.D.-granting institutions.

Because of limitations in the available data, our discussion about changes in the discipline's structure over time is speculative. But as data for longer time periods become available, either through archival work or by the addition of annual records on membership in specialty groups, it should be possible to establish benchmark profiles of geography's structure and to monitor their changes over time. We maintain that this and other forms of self-examination are an essential overhead of academic and professional activity. Structures of linkage among geographers and patterns of change in these structures may be diagnostic of both strengths and weaknesses of the internal relationships among the discipline's specialty groups and of geography's external associations with society generally and with other branches of knowledge.

The problem of identifying the structure of specialization in a discipline in relationship to developments in knowledge generally is a broad one. Putting this in the context of social and institutional forces compounds the task. This limited empirical analysis, based as it is on only a small set of relevant measures and on aggregate statistics, gives only a partial view of the complex underlying dynamics of specialization and social formation in geography.

## Geography and the Sociology of Science

### Diversification

Perhaps the simplest view of specialization in science is that it is a rational response to increasingly detailed knowledge. To function effectively in a particular field, a scientist must possess a comprehensive knowledge, together with technical skills not necessarily unique to the field. The early role played by natural historians such as Alexander von Humboldt, a scientist with a comprehensive view of the natural world, became increasingly difficult with the rapid growth of scientific knowledge of the 18th and 19th centuries, and with increasingly complex techniques for the pursuit of that knowledge. The space of all knowledge is clearly infinite, revealing more and more detail at every

level of examination in analogy to fractal geometry (Mandelbrot 1982; Goodchild and Mark 1987). Thus, developments in science require greater and greater specialization, first into disciplines and then either by continued fragmentation or by the emergence of finer and finer divisions within disciplines, processes that have been documented by historians of science (Geison 1981; Law 1976; Woolgar 1976).

Within geography the same argument can be applied independently to both systematic and regional specialization. But as progress in science demonstrates, spectacular advances have often been made by drawing on knowledge from apparently unrelated areas. Thus reductionism has been attacked, particularly within biology (Laszlo 1972, 1973; Boulding 1968; Waddington 1971), as fundamentally ineffective. Geography's long tradition of regarding itself as an integrating discipline may argue directly against the process of specialization within geography. Regional studies provide a particular case—the emphasis is on the integration of knowledge that spans a wide range of humanistic, social and scientific concerns.

These arguments lead to a view of specialization as an infinite continuum, with the possibility of subdivisions and organizational structures at all levels. The processes of diversification and unification operate in opposite directions on this continuum. Since there are no points of reference, it is possible for organizational structures to emerge at any level, and to be based on combinations of the specialization dimension with other factors such as nationality, gender, or language.

### Unification

Countering such tendencies for fragmentation are needs to exchange information across disciplinary boundaries, requirements for groups to meet a critical size that allows for activities essential to their development (for example, departmental status in universities, journals, and effective lobbying of governments), and difficulties in organizing new administrative structures to meet the needs of a new discipline. While the motivating benefits of specialization may be better communications and exchange within a narrow community of research scholars, the benefits of unification, in the pragmatic sense, are the opportunities

for holistic planning at levels that retain linkages to the broader realm of knowledge. The problem for traditional disciplines (such as geography) and for scientific societies (such as the AAG) is to offer integrative administrative arrangements and intellectual concepts that allow subspecialists to develop and to feel at home as part of a larger whole.

The historical materialism of Karl Marx, the unified science movement of the 1930s, concepts of a unified field theory (Lewin 1951), and systems analysis (von Bertalanffy 1968) represent previous attempts to address the intellectual unity of science at the broadest level. Quests for a unified geography are evident in the arguments of such prominent scholars as Harlan Barrows (1923) and Carl Sauer (1941) and in the search for a general paradigm for geography. Recent claimants include the positivist approach to spatial analysis, most clearly articulated by Abler, Adams and Gould (1971), and a general spatial systems theory, elucidated by Warritz (1973) and Coffey (1981). In sharp contrast, Eliot Hurst (1980, 1985) sees unity achievable only in terms of the de-definition of geography and other disciplines, and their merger with the broader social philosophy of historical materialism. In spite of these efforts, opportunities for and threats of increased specialization remain important issues in the discipline, receiving special attention recently in *Georum* (1992, no. 2) and *Transactions, Institute of British Geographers* (1986, no. 4).

### Intensity of Activity and Specialization

If specialization is driven by increasing diversification, then one might expect the process of division to reflect the need to limit complexity; subdivision would occur when practitioners no longer felt capable of comprehensive knowledge of a field. On the other hand the unification arguments would suggest that two fields would separate when the practitioners of one felt that knowledge of the other was no longer of benefit. However these arguments ignore variations in the levels of activity among the sub-branches of disciplines.

Intensity of activity clearly affects the process of specialization and yet is not uniformly distributed over all fields. The supply of scientific effort and the distribution of this effort over

the fields of science may be controlled very little by science itself, and much more by external factors operating in society at large. To be recognized, a field must be associated with a level of activity dependent on the scale of recognition, to be recognized as a new discipline, a group must clearly be of a size compatible with intuitive notions of that particular scale of specialization.

### Institutionalization and Specialization

Another set of processes can be referred to generally as institutionalization. Recent attention to this process within geography is represented in the work of Capel (1981), Crano (1981, 1984), Johnston (1983), Harvey (1984), Peet (1985), and Taylor (1985). In general, these authors have stressed the relationship between the division of labor in geography and the demands of society, demands that are reflected by the presence of geography and its specialties within the university curriculum, and by the presence of jobs within the civil service of the state and within the corporate sector.

For various administrative purposes within universities and governments, fields of scientific knowledge are divided such that the level of activity is similar within each division when measured across a wide range of indicators, such as student enrollment and the number of courses necessary to achieve a basic understanding of the field. Within this context the needs of administration and science may become hopelessly confused. Since it is administratively desirable that this system of division not change through time, despite the dynamic nature of scientific activity, it becomes increasingly difficult to justify divisions between departments, and lack of divisions within them, on scientific grounds. Although the term department tends to be associated with administrative division and discipline with scientific specialization, the process of institutionalization tends to make the distinction no more than semantic.

Funding agencies have similar structuring effects on specialization. The Office of Naval Research was of particular significance to the growth of spatial analysis, coastal studies, climatology, and remote sensing in the 1950s and 1960s (Pruitt 1979). Its mandate was initially quite

flexible, and many of the funded projects showed little relationship to the operational needs of the U.S. Navy. Although topical restrictions are not imposed by the National Science Foundation (NSF), Adler (1986) indicates a bias for basic science over applied and policy research.

NSF's *National Register of Scientific and Technical Personnel* lists more than a thousand specific subspecialties. To deal with research applications in an efficient manner, it groups them into divisions that closely mirror current activity, subject to the need to ensure reasonable volumes of activity in each division. However the needs of administration may conflict with those of science; work in novel fields may be handled by committees made up of researchers in more traditionally recognized areas, and may frequently straddle the boundaries imposed by older systems of division. Recent examples of relevance to geographic information systems and geographic information systems.

Other structuring institutions have less of an administrative role, but nevertheless may influence the development of specialization in similar ways. Journals have associated and relatively stable subdivisions, as reflected in their titles and the membership of editorial boards. Work in new fields may therefore be less easily published than work that fits within a journal's traditional area of interest. In addition, learned and scientific societies, the parent bodies of many significant journals, represent traditional systems of division, as do departments in traditionally structured universities that sponsor a large number of disciplinary-oriented journals. These significant organizational structures appear less inclined to promote the interests of new specializations (and journals) than do the entrepreneurs of many commercial publishers.

Harris and Fellmann (1980, 7) have documented the acceleration of new journals in geography, increasing "from an average of about 45 a year in the 1950s, . . . to more than 100 a year in the 1970s. . . ." From their inventory of 3335 geographical serials, 1089 were considered active in 1979 (Harris 1980, 2); but, as a body of international scholarship, their use was limited by linguistic and national barriers. Although Harris judged 443 of these to be reasonably accessible to the international scientific community, it is likely that relatively new structuring institutions are serving to limit the breadth of literature search by many scholars.

Journal abstracting services (for example, Geo Abstracts, Ltd.) and citation indexes (for example, those provided by the Institute for Scientific Information) must make judgments on which publications to include as source journals, a function that may have a strong conditioning effect on the exchange of information. For instance, current volumes of the *Science Citation Journal Reports* include only nine journals in the geography category, while the *Social Science Citation Journal Reports* list only 25 geography journals. Increasingly, these data sources have dominated bibliometric studies on citation transactions among journals within and between disciplines. Examples include the work of Lenoir (1979) in the sociology of science, Laplace (1980) in political science, and Gattrell (1984) and Gattrell and Smith (1984) in geography. In addition, this same source was used by Turner and Meyer (1985) to compare geography departments in American universities according to levels of scholarly publication.

### Disciplines as Social Organizations

We have suggested that the overall effect of structuring institutions is to weaken the scientific basis for new disciplines and other abstract divisions of scientific knowledge. The individual who finds his or her research increasingly incompatible with that of departmental colleagues is unlikely to change department or disciplinary allegiance even if another department would be more compatible. Membership in a department thus becomes analogous to membership in many social organizations where the criterion for belonging is relatively weak and irrelevant. It is not surprising, then, that many writers have analyzed academic disciplines as social organizations (Griffith and Mullins 1972; Blackburn 1973; Storer 1978; Whitley 1984). In the extreme view disciplines are analogous to tribes and are distinguished by the same social mechanisms.

From this sociological perspective, the formation of specialty groups and other divisions within disciplines is to be understood by similar reference to the behavior of groups; the scientific basis for each group's interests simply provides the key to membership, and serves to distinguish members of the group from nonmembers. Groups disappear or subdivide whenever the parent group becomes too large,

so that belonging no longer satisfies some basic human imperative, or when the key to membership is no longer real. They may reform on regional or systematic lines; again, the choice is incidental and will be driven by independent concerns and technical factors, for example by nationality, language, and the economics of communication.

### Technical Factors and Specialization

Reference has already been made to the need to specialize as a response to the complexity of knowledge, leading to the potential for a continuum of scales of division within science. Administrative needs require a consistent division into disciplines that can be associated with academic departments, learned societies, and a host of other institutions, but do not appear to dictate consistent division below that level. We now turn to a number of technical factors that may explain the emergence of organizations and groups on the basis of economies of scale, facility of communication, or the existence of political or linguistic barriers. From our earlier sociological perspective, these are factors that dictate the form of groups once the need for such groups has been established.

There are several possible dimensions on which group membership might be established. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) both function as organizations for all of science everywhere, but only as umbrellas for more narrowly defined groups. Although Whitehand and Edmondson (1977) provide evidence of increasing trans-Atlantic communication among geographers, although the general internationalization of co-authorships in science has been documented (Frame and Carpenter 1979; Kerwin 1981); and although many national organizations, such as the AAG, have significant foreign membership, nevertheless, nationality remains the most significant basis for the organization of scholarly activity.

### Organization at National and Regional Levels

Some organizations, such as the American Geographical Society and the National Geo-

graphic Society, use only this national dimension. The National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE) allows for state affiliates, but its principal activities occur at the national level. Others, such as the AAG and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, incorporate smaller regional divisions.

Nationality conveys several obvious advantages as a basis for organization; it frequently coincides with linguistic and ethnic bases, and allows organizations to function as effective channels to national government. The growth of strong academic organizations in Quebec is a clear response to the Canadian exception to this principle (Fournier and Mahew 1977). Gilbert and Throuz (1987) provide evidence of the linguistic basis for the distinctive linkages of Quebec geographers, nationally and internationally.

Regional dimensions are often combined with disciplinary or systematic divisions. However, the order of combination confirms the dominance of national identity. Thus the question of U.S. representation on the Commissions of the ICU is not referred to the specialty groups of the AAG; although both Commissions and specialty groups combine spatial and systematic divisions, the order of precedence is reversed. Three points on the continuum of spatial division of the discipline have emerged over time as appropriate for the organization of American geography: the department, region, and Association. Of these, only the region has no obvious rationale. The Pacific Coast Division was organized in the late 1930s. Some divisions (e.g., Middle Atlantic, East Lakes, West Lakes, and Southeastern) originated as parts of the American Society for Professional Geographers (1943-48), which amalgamated with the AAG in 1948. Subsequent boundary shifts, principally to incorporate the growth of Canadian membership, have led to the current mix of nine regions (James and Martin 1978, 103, 120-21, 173-75). In principle, the number and spatial structure of regions should represent a compromise between the desire to have regional meetings that can be attended at minimal transport cost and the need to bring together a critical mass of practitioners in a variety of specializations to allow for productive discussions. In practice, the current regional divisions show considerable variation in membership and little compactness of spatial structure. This situation was described by Marcus (1978, 117) as "a particular

embarrassment that, of all people, an association of geographers seems incapable of delineating rational and viable regions. Such sentiments suggest that the current divisions may not represent a stable state.

### Communication Technologies

The development of new divisions within American geography will continue to be limited by costs of transportation as long as the primary method of communication remains the academic meeting, with its formal presentations and informal contact. Traditional communications by mail and telephone have done little to replace meetings, despite the potential of telephone conferencing. Nevertheless much scientific activity occurs outside the structures imposed by institutions such as the learned societies, through meetings that cross these conventional boundaries. Electronic communication over Bitnet and electronic bulletin boards may affect this balance in fundamental ways if they remain essentially free to academics. This development adds a new dimension to the formation of what Crane (1972) and Price (1986) describe as "invisible colleges." Unlike telephone callers, users of these networks do not incur the risk of disturbing and annoying their contacts; both the social and economic costs are low.

### Specialty Groups

The specialty groups represent a new point of reference on the continuum of systematic division—a set of formal subdisciplinary organizations. Most specialty groups' activities occur within the Annual Meeting and so incur no additional transportation cost. Under these circumstances there are few checks to growth in the number of groups; although the AAG requires a minimal membership, this has proven relatively easy to achieve since each member of the Association may select up to three groups at no immediate cost (AAG 1978). However each new group must now establish itself at the expense of membership in existing groups, which will, in the long run, act to limit the proliferation of groups.

Specialty groups appear to have escaped the technical and economic problems of overcom-

ing distance by associating their activities with an existing, established annual meeting. They are as yet largely unaffected by processes of institutionalization, and new communications technologies have the potential of enhancing the levels of their activities. As scientific organizations they are at this time remarkably free from many of the practical constraints faced by other groups and divisions, and are, we believe, an accurate mirror of the structure of activity within the discipline.

### Representations of Knowledge

We have referred to the set of all knowledge as a multidimensional space, with a complexity that depends on the level of detail at which it is examined, in analogy to geographical information about the surface of the earth. There appear to be two distinct images of how this space is subdivided into disciplines and other forms of specialization, which we will refer to as the structural and empirical representations of knowledge.

#### A Structural View of Knowledge

In the structural view (Fig. 1a) there exist clear and natural partitions of the space, forming domains or niches identified by the names of specialties. Domains may be further subdivided, again along natural partitions, into sub-specialties and infinitum. One might visualize the boundaries as lying along zones of low density of knowledge or perhaps as discontinuities in the set of skills necessary to advance knowledge at each point in the space. One of the domains at the disciplinary level of subdivision is labeled geography, and one of the most basic (but apparently endless) tasks of its practitioners is to find that verbal formula that expresses the domain's already naturally determined boundaries as succinctly as possible.

Individuals can be seen as points in this space, following career trajectories as their interests change. Change of discipline results when an individual's interests take him or her across a natural boundary into another domain. The specialized interests of departments, specialty groups, or journals can be represented as zones

that perhaps overlap more than one discipline or subdiscipline and whose boundaries are probably fuzzy.

#### The Empirical View of Knowledge

In the empirical/pragmatic representation (Fig. 1b) there are no natural partitions or reference points in the space of knowledge. Disciplines are represented by punctiform cores with satellite cores for subdisciplines or specialties. Individual interests follow trajectories among the cores, the affiliation of an individual at any time being judged by proximity of interests to the various cores. The process of change of discipline is no longer abrupt; as interests or the reward levels for participation in a given specialty change, the individual may move away from one core and closer to another, making a sequence of decisions to drop or add journal subscriptions, learned society memberships, and other symbols of affiliation. Departments are similarly represented by points in the space, moving in response to the interests of their staff and students, who in turn may be responding to the changing foci of funding agencies, to the policies of governments and universities, and to the broader dictates of the socio-political milieu.

The empirical representation of knowledge is dynamic and in a continual state of flux. The cores themselves are not stable, but change under the influence of key individuals and departments and under pressures from external forces. While the structural view sees the discipline's boundaries as immutable, the empirical view echoes the sociological perspective of the previous section, seeing the discipline as a tribe of individuals wandering in the space of knowledge with relatively weak ties to any absolute frame of reference. Interactions occur between all features in the space, whether cores or individuals, and may be attractive or repulsive. For example, the interactions between Ph.D. students in a department operate in most cases to reduce diversity of interests, while repulsive forces often operate among the staff of a department as each individual attempts to establish an exclusive niche. The territorial imperative is not limited to individuals, but occurs even between the major disciplines, and their associations and journals, as cores move in response to attempts to secure each one's future.

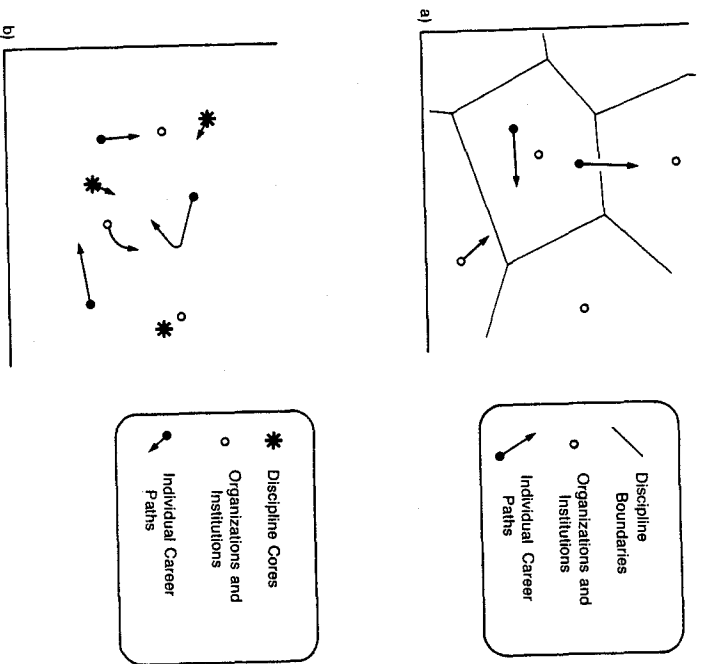


Figure 1. Representations of the space of knowledge: (a) structural/natural and (b) empirical/pragmatic.

### Geography and the Empirical View of Knowledge

Several previous commentaries on the dynamics of geographical interests fit well with this empirical image. The unfolding life-paths of individual geographers, such as Allan Pred (1979), and the phenomenologically rooted construct of lifeworld (Buttner 1976, 1981) provide substance for the importance of social milieu in the development of geographical ideas and paradigms, and for provision of ways to communicate geographical knowledge. The Association's diamond anniversary special issue of the *Annals* (1979, no. 1) gives further substance and a human face to the currents of change in the discipline, with a wealth of anecdotal insights on the development of important departments (Berkeley, Chicago, Clark, Iowa, Washington, Wisconsin, UCLA and oth-

### Disciplinary Cores in Geography

The notion of disciplinary cores has a lengthy history in geography. A unitary core has been viewed as a basis for overcoming the potentially divisive role of dualisms (distinctions in the nature of geographic work based, for example, on regional vs. systematic and human vs. physical splits). Fenneman's (1919) remedy for the splintering effect of systematic specialization was to focus on the region as an integrating concept that offers unique identity to the discipline. However the intellectual lineages of distinct traditions point to multiple possible cores in geography. In what McNee (1973, 296) described as a "more ecumenical approach," Pattison (1964) identified four principal traditions, all operating simultaneously: a spatial tradition, an area studies tradition, a man-land tradition, and an earth science tradition. Although Pattison saw these traditions as "joined in action," Haggett's systems-oriented approach gives an even more explicit focus to integrating concepts, namely: spatial analysis, ecological analysis, and regional complex analysis (Haggett 1983).

The names of the Association's specialty groups attest to the distinctive purposes (e.g., teaching, planning) and objects of inquiry (both regions and systematic specialties) that form the reality of American geography. Our empirical view admits to no specific core(s) or network(s), but as a framework for positioning the specializations of individuals and groups relative to those of others, it allows for the identity of possible clusters and cleavages.

For science generally, Storer (1972) identified cleavages in the choice of field according to sex, geographic region, level of education, personality, and the ability to work with collaborators. In geography, Jumper and Harrison (1986) provide a general profile on the social, demographic, and career characteristics of AAG members. Specific examples of cleavages in the specialization of geographers include those based on sex (Gilbert 1987) and age (Thausladen and Wyckoff 1985). In the analysis that follows, we concentrate on age, gender, and the origins of university training.

### Empirical Analysis

This section draws on our previous discussions concerning the sociology and division of

knowledge to describe the structure of specialization in contemporary American geography. Data on the joint memberships of individuals in different AAG specialty groups provide a basis for identifying linkages among specializations, for recognizing clusters of specialty groups that represent distinctive disciplinary cores of geography, and for assessing the centrality of the different specializations in the discipline as a whole. Differentiation in the patterns of specialization for different age groups and according to gender are considered as possible evidence of social influences on the structure of the discipline and on the career choices of individual scholars, while similarities in the interests among the graduates of major university geography departments are seen as evidence of institutional influence.

### The Data

Membership in AAG Specialty Groups is established each year at the time of payment of annual dues, when each individual selects up to three groups from the current list. Our analysis is based on the 5419 members in good standing at the beginning of May, 1984, and uses the set of groups in existence at that time; it differs from the 1986 list in Table 1 by the absence of three groups, marked with asterisks, and the inclusion of Environmental Studies (see Table 2). The set of groups, the ages, origins, and the inclusion of Environmental Studies, the pattern of shared memberships among groups provide a very rich and timely data source on the present state of the discipline. Since individual affinities to specialty groups are reestablished each year, it is assumed that the structures they reveal provide a useful empirical comparison with the more abstract representations of the nature and organization of knowledge shown in Figure 1b.

In addition to specialty groups, the annual membership renewal form allows each individual to select up to three areal and three topical proficiencies from a predetermined list. We present below a number of analyses of area proficiencies, but have limited our use of topical proficiencies as we believe members' active interests to be better represented by the social commitment of specialty group affiliations. There are several grounds for believing that

**Table 2.** Membership of specialty groups of the Association of American Geographers, May 1984

Specialty group	Number of members
Africa	124
Aging	67
Applied	440
Asian	128
Bible	61
Biogeography	176
Cartography	84
Canadian Geography	483
Chinese Geography	82
Climatology	233
Coastal and Marine	134
Cultural Ecology	144
Energy	184
Environmental Perception	209
Environmental Studies	356
Geographic Perspectives on Women	150
Geography in Higher Education	167
Geomorphology	316
Historical	342
Industrial Geography	202
Latin American	250
Mathematical Models and Quantitative Methods	123
Medical	50
Native American	248
Political Geography	256
Population	182
Recreation	302
Regional Development and Planning	341
Remote Sensing	162
Rural Development	96
Socialist	123
Soviet	208
Transportation	531
Urban	283
Water Resources	283

Source: May 1984 membership records of the AAG.

this annual process of self-allocation (particularly to specialty groups) provides a more objective and reliable method of revealing structure than a more direct approach, such as the distribution of a series of questions about perceptions of structure. Choices are made between concrete, perceivable alternatives rather than between abstract constructs, and under real rather than hypothetical constraints. And we could not possibly have obtained a 100 percent response by any other means.

### Linkages among Specialty Groups

The largest specialty group in number of members at that time was the Urban group (Table 2). Fifty-seven percent of members chose at least one specialty group, 47 percent chose at least two and 32 percent chose the maximum of three. The propensity of members to identify specialty groups varies strongly with seniority in the profession. Among student members only 29.5 percent identified no specialty groups while 42.7 percent identified the maximum of three; among university faculty members the figures are 41.1 percent and 32.2 percent, very close to the percentages for the membership as a whole; and among retired members they are 79.2 percent and 7.3 percent respectively. Females are slightly more likely to identify specialty groups than are males. While 43 percent of the membership identified no specialty groups, there is much less reluctance to identify topical specialties (only 7.1 percent identify none) or areas (16.3 percent). There are no strong associations between reluctance to identify specialty groups on the one hand and particular topics or areas on the other.

To obtain a measure of the degree of cross-membership between each pair of groups, only those who belong to two or three groups were considered. To ensure that all individuals are weighted equally, a score of  $\frac{1}{2}$  was given to each of the three possible pairs for those 1734 individuals who identified three groups, and 1 to the pair for those 813 individuals who identified two. On this basis the most strongly linked pair of groups was Cartography and Remote Sensing, with a score of 68. A high cross-membership score can be taken as indicative of the interaction between groups and of their similarity of interests.

In this phase of the analysis, no attempt was made to assess the expertise of individuals (as for example, by level of training or years of experience) or to weight members by academic credentials. A later section that focuses on the role of geography departments in structuring the patterns of specialization will concentrate only on Ph.D. members of the Association.

Non-metric multidimensional scaling (MDS) (Young and Torngerson, 1967) provides a convenient means for visualizing structure in the matrix of cross-memberships. Given a matrix of measures representing the relative similarities between pairs of objects, an MDS procedure

### Structure of Geography



**Figure 2.** Two-dimensional non-metric scaling solution from cross-memberships of specialty groups, May 1984.

searches iteratively for locations for the objects in a space of a prescribed number of dimensions, such that the distances between the objects in the solution are in the same rank order as the similarities in the input matrix. A general description of MDS as a spatial analytic technique can be found in Rushton and Gollidge (1972). When it is impossible to preserve perfect agreement between the rank orderings of similarities and distances in a space of the prescribed number of dimensions, an index of stress, ranging from 0 to 1, can be used to measure the degree of disagreement.

Spaces of two dimensions have been used in many applications to obtain a visual representation of matrices of interactions between objects, on the understanding that strong interaction can be equated with similarity and thus with proximity in two dimensions. Gatrell and Smith (1984) have used this approach to analyze structural relations in the cross-referencing of journal citations and Frame and Carpenter (1979) used MDS to study international research collaboration. A two-dimensional space in which each specialty group has been located such that proximity in the space (based on straight line

distance) is directly related to the cross-membership score is shown in Figure 2. Pairs with high scores are close together and pairs with low scores are far apart. With these data it is not possible to obtain a perfect monotonic fit between proximity and cross-membership, as the inherent dimensionality of the data is greater than two; the stress index is 0.30. Although this index indicates that higher dimensionality solutions may reveal additional structure in the data, we believe that the loss of information is more than outweighed by the simplicity of two-dimensional display and that supplemental techniques of analysis will help account for residual interpretations.

Several interesting features are revealed in Figure 2. First, it clearly identifies major divisions of the discipline, grouping the physical specialties on the lower left and the human specialties above and to the right, with no apparent overlap in the group centroids. Resource and technical specialties (water resources, environmental studies, cartography, and remote sensing), as one might expect, provide a hinge relationship between the broad human and physical divisions. Although Urban

is the most populous group, it is not the most central as its cross-memberships are more specialized than those of the Applied and Historical groups, both of which are more able to cross the major cleavages of the discipline. The most peripheral groups, with the least consistent patterns of cross-memberships, are exemplified by Canadian Geography, Aging, and Native American. Note also that while the spatial analysis paradigm produces a clear grouping (Quantitative, Urban, Transportation, Regional Development), the regional specialties are scattered over the space with no strong community of interest.

The central positions of Historical Geography, Applied Geography, and Cartography allow for interesting speculations. Have they replaced Fernman's regional geography as the new core(s) of geography? While it may not be possible to equate historical geography with the historical approach or with humanism *per se*, interest in historical geography is at least suggestive of humanistic concerns among geographers. Applied geography represents the discipline's outreach in the service of society. Although Frazier (1978, 236) suggested that it may be "premature to speak of an applied geography paradigm," the central position of this specialty group is significant. Finally, Cartography's position confirms the importance of maps as one of geography's principal tools of communication and analysis.

Another approach to visualizing the structure of the cross-membership table is through Elementary Linkage Analysis (McQuitty 1957), in which the strongest linkages (based on similarity measures from the MDS analysis) are used to establish groups. The results for the specialty group cross-memberships are shown in Figure 3; there are four natural groupings: Cartography/Remote Sensing, the physical specialties, Asian/China, and a large residual group. Within the latter it is interesting to note several pairings between regional and systematic specialties: Latin America is linked to the Urban core through Population, Canadian through Historical, Africa through Medical, and Soviet through Political. Again this approach implies a lack of community of interest in regional specialties; areal specialists tend to concentrate their efforts on a single region and to have low levels of interaction with those who study other regions. Furthermore, the evidence suggests that interest in a region derives not from some gen-

eral interest in regions but from the associated systematic specialty.

**Indicators of Change**

The discipline portrayed in Figures 2 and 3 is for one point in time. Since specialty groups are a recent innovation, the longitudinal data cover an insufficient time span to document meaningful shifts in the structural patterns of cross-memberships. But indirect measures, based on ages of group members, and on the self-selection of areal and topical labels (as designated on the annual membership renewal form) provide some evidence of recent trends.

One indirect approach to identifying changes in the appeal of different specializations is to focus on age. The mean year of Ph.D., mean year of birth for those with Ph.D.s, and mean age at Ph.D. for the members of each group are shown in Table 3. The groups have been ranked by mean year of Ph.D. since this is the most accurate index available of the length of each individual's career in the profession. To a limited extent, this value may reflect the prevailing concerns and fashions or social influences at the time of one's training, but it should be borne in mind that more recent cohorts of geographers had more specialties to choose from. Nonetheless, the problems judged important by each generation of geographers should be reflected in the current pattern of specialty group membership.

The specialties populated by the newest graduates are technical (Mathematical Models, Remote Sensing, Cartography), physical (Geomorphology, Biogeography), and reflective of contemporary social concerns (Native American, Women, Socialists). At the other extreme, the "oldest" include all of the regional specialties, and the traditional, general systematic divisions (Historical, Political). By implication the groups with youngest members are growing or have recently grown, while those with the oldest members are or will soon be in decline. These results parallel those of Hausladen and Wyckoff (1985), whose analysis, by age cohort, of topical and areal proficiencies, suggested impending compositional changes in the specialties practiced by geographers.

The mean age at Ph.D. shows interesting patterns. It is highest at 36.1 years for the Bible

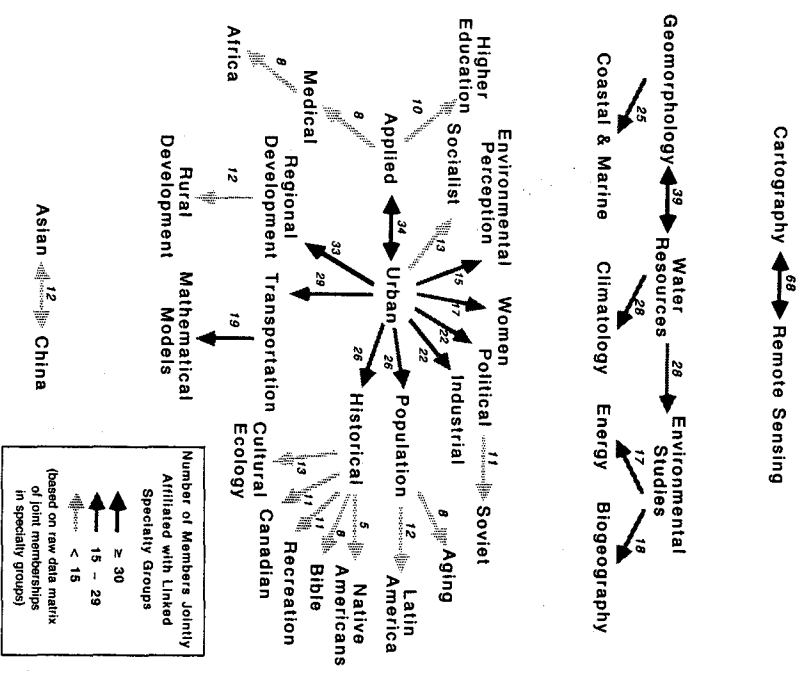


Figure 3. Elementary linkage analysis from cross-memberships of specialty groups, May 1984.

group, the second smallest in the Association after Native American, and conspicuously low for the spatial analysis specialties (Mathematical Models, Transportation, Urban, Industrial), and Socialist. Analyses of non-Ph.D. geographers might reveal different patterns.

Although the specialty group data do not lend themselves to direct longitudinal analysis at this time, members have identified topical proficiencies from a reasonably stable list for much longer. These proficiency data are seen as weak surrogates of the specialty group designations.

Since the data do not reflect any standardized basis for measuring expertise or career commitment, the term "proficiency" may be a misnomer. With this reservation in mind, Figure 4 shows a comparison of the topical labels iden-

tified by all AAG members in 1984 with those of 1971. Percentages of the membership were calculated for each term in both years, and the percentage change for 1971-84 was plotted against the percentage in 1984. In this way it is possible to suggest topics that are growing or declining, and small or large. But caution is required. Individuals are selecting terminology to describe their interests from a pre-determined list; they are not selecting social-professional affiliation with a group.

Without the social commitment that is expected of members of a specialty group, the selection of labels is likely to show less stability over time and to be more easily changed in response to fashion. For example, Figure 4 shows the general label "Economic" in substantial de-



**Table 3.** Year of Ph.D., year of birth and age at Ph.D. by specialty group for members with Ph.D.s, May 1984, ranked by mean year of Ph.D.

Specialty group	Year of Ph.D.		Year of birth		Age at Ph.D.	
	Mean	Year of birth	Mean	Year of birth	Mean	Year of birth
Soviet	1966.7	1933.5	1933.5	1933.5	33.2	1933.5
Asian	1966.9	1932.9	1932.9	1932.9	34.0	1932.9
Bible	1967.0	1933.4	1933.4	1933.4	36.1	1933.4
Canadian Geography	1967.2	1933.4	1933.4	1933.4	33.8	1933.4
Political Geography	1968.9	1936.2	1936.2	1936.2	32.7	1936.2
Latin American	1969.3	1935.1	1935.1	1935.1	34.2	1935.1
Chinese Geography	1969.7	1935.3	1935.3	1935.3	34.4	1935.3
Historical	1970.2	1937.6	1937.6	1937.6	32.6	1937.6
Africa	1970.4	1937.7	1937.7	1937.7	32.7	1937.7
Geography in Higher Education	1970.5	1936.6	1936.6	1936.6	33.9	1936.6
Recreation	1970.7	1938.1	1938.1	1938.1	32.6	1938.1
Cultural Ecology	1971.5	1938.7	1938.7	1938.7	32.8	1938.7
Rural Development	1971.5	1938.2	1938.2	1938.2	33.3	1938.2
Water Resources	1971.5	1938.8	1938.8	1938.8	32.7	1938.8
Transportation	1971.5	1941.0	1941.0	1941.0	30.5	1941.0
Environmental Studies	1971.6	1938.6	1938.6	1938.6	33.0	1938.6
Population	1971.8	1939.7	1939.7	1939.7	32.1	1939.7
Climatology	1972.1	1940.0	1940.0	1940.0	32.7	1940.0
Medical	1972.1	1940.0	1940.0	1940.0	32.1	1940.0
Coastal and Marine	1972.6	1939.3	1939.3	1939.3	33.3	1939.3
Regional Development and Planning	1972.6	1940.5	1940.5	1940.5	32.1	1940.5
Aging	1972.7	1941.4	1941.4	1941.4	31.3	1941.4
Industrial Geography	1972.7	1941.9	1941.9	1941.9	30.8	1941.9
Energy	1972.7	1941.3	1941.3	1941.3	31.4	1941.3
Environmental Perception	1972.8	1940.8	1940.8	1940.8	32.0	1940.8
Applied	1973.0	1940.4	1940.4	1940.4	32.6	1940.4
Cartography	1973.0	1939.6	1939.6	1939.6	33.4	1939.6
Biogeography	1973.2	1940.9	1940.9	1940.9	32.3	1940.9
Urban	1973.2	1942.4	1942.4	1942.4	30.8	1942.4
Geomorphology	1973.7	1942.9	1942.9	1942.9	30.8	1942.9
Socialist	1974.4	1941.0	1941.0	1941.0	33.4	1941.0
Remote Sensing	1974.4	1942.6	1942.6	1942.6	32.1	1942.6
Geographic Perspectives on Women	1974.8	1944.3	1944.3	1944.3	30.5	1944.3
Mathematical Models and Quantitative Methods	1975.3	1941.4	1941.4	1941.4	33.9	1941.4
Native American						

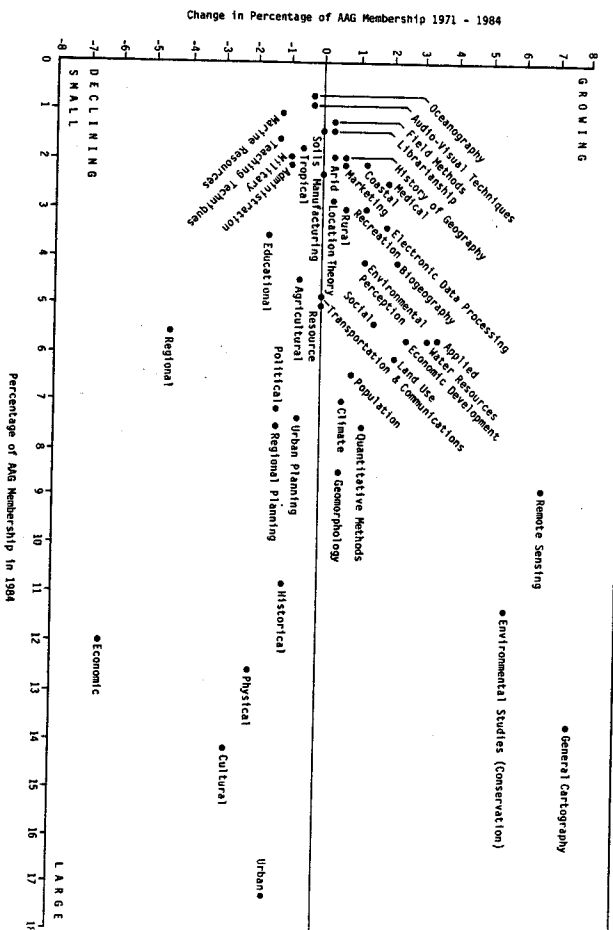
Source: Calculated by authors from May 1984 AAG membership records.

cline. Yet, much of this may be associated with shifts to more specialized divisions of the field—for example, to social (as in Marxian analysis of economics), location theory, marketing, economic development, or applied.

Among the popular topical labels, the older and more general systematic ones are clearly in decline. Economic most seriously and Urban, Cultural, Physical, and Historical to a lesser extent, while Cartography and Remote Sensing are the most rapidly increasing. The less popular topics (e.g., Soils or Field Methods) are at the same time more stable, with only slow rates of increase or decline. Despite its significance to the discipline, the Regional proficiency is smaller than Population or Climate and in fairly

rapid decline, supporting our earlier conclusion that it is not the basis for any substantial or stable community of interest.

The areal proficiency data suffer the same weaknesses associated with the labels for topical proficiencies, but they are suggestive of current structure in the pattern of regional specialization and of recent changes in the levels of interest for different parts of the world. The two-dimensional space recovered from a multidimensional scaling of cross-identifications between areal proficiencies for all AAG members who listed two or three regional labels (stress equals 0.30) is shown in Figure 5. The center of the space is occupied by World, USA, North America, Anglo America (now a some-



**Figure 4.** Percentage changes in declarations of topical proficiencies, 1971-1984, plotted against the number of members that claimed proficiency for each topic in May 1984.

what dated term), and USSR. The major world regions are clearly preserved, but organized with increasing specialization (or decreasing geographical coverage) toward the periphery. Thus Africa appears close to the center, while increasingly narrow subdivisions are arranged outward beyond it and toward the edge of the space. Within Canada, the Maritimes, Prairies, British Columbia, and Northwest Territories appear as more specialized than Ontario or Canada as a whole.

The ordering of sectors around the periphery shows several interesting features, all of which appear intuitively reasonable. Quebec appears within the Canadian sector, but close to Europe; West Indies and Caribbean are the most African of the Latin American divisions; Scandinavia appears within a Polar group of North Pole, N.W.T. and South Pole, rather than in Europe; and Southern South America has stronger affiliations with Africa than with the divisions of Latin America.

The relative sizes and growth rates of the regional labels between 1971 and 1984 are

shown in Figure 6. The U.S. is large and growing, while Anglo America is declining as a term of identification. All of the regions of North America are evidently in decline. Finally, as with topical proficiencies, the narrower interests remain small and stable, largely, one suspects, because of the stability of individual career interests. The overall impression is of a discipline that is increasingly concerned with local, North American problems, leaving specialization in distant regions to a few older, established professionals whose expertise is narrowly focused and rarely extended to continental scales.

**The Department as a Structuring Institution**

We previously identified some of the major types of institutions that shape the development of disciplines. Through their selective promotion of ideas and individuals, funding agencies, publishers, and the employers of geographers condition the demands for dif-

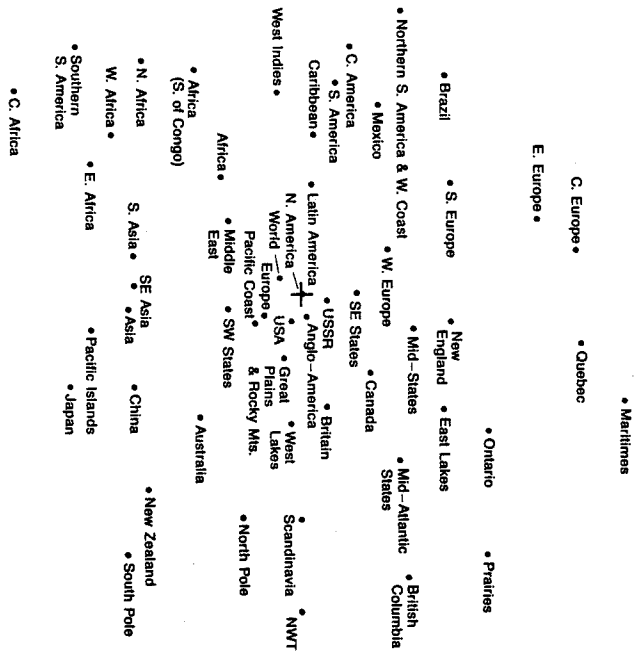


Figure 5. Two-dimensional non-metric scaling solution from cross-identifications with areal proficiencies, May 1984.

ferent specializations. Among these, major Ph.D.-granting university departments play a particularly important role in influencing the career paths of individual geographers; they also represent an important work environment for many. The 1984 data reveal that about half of the AAG members hold Ph.D.s. While 234 universities, worldwide, contributed to this output, only 54 were cited 10 or more times by AAG members as the sources of their doctorates.

The advantage of focusing on Ph.D. geographers is that a generally high standard of expertise is associated with this level of training. Research and teaching specialization at this level may be associated with a strong standing both within geography and among scientists generally. Nonetheless, the extension of this analysis to other levels of training would provide additional insight on the roles that departments play in structuring the pattern of specialization.

Some of the most crucial and taxing decisions that university departments must make concern the diversity and specialization of their faculty and programs. An ecological view of disciplines provides interesting speculation on this issue. For example, Blackburn (1973, 1145) maintains that scarcity of information "gives a competitive advantage to intellectual specialists," and this route may be seen as desirable from an individual-career perspective. He goes on to observe "that the longer an academic field matures, the more intense and diversified the degree of specialization within its ranks." The pursuit of diversity is a common strategy among geography departments. It assures greater stability within departments, promoting individual survival through the assignment of territorial responsibilities (e.g., courses) and provides a rationale for growth ("we must cover the field").

In contrast to the diversity approach, spe-

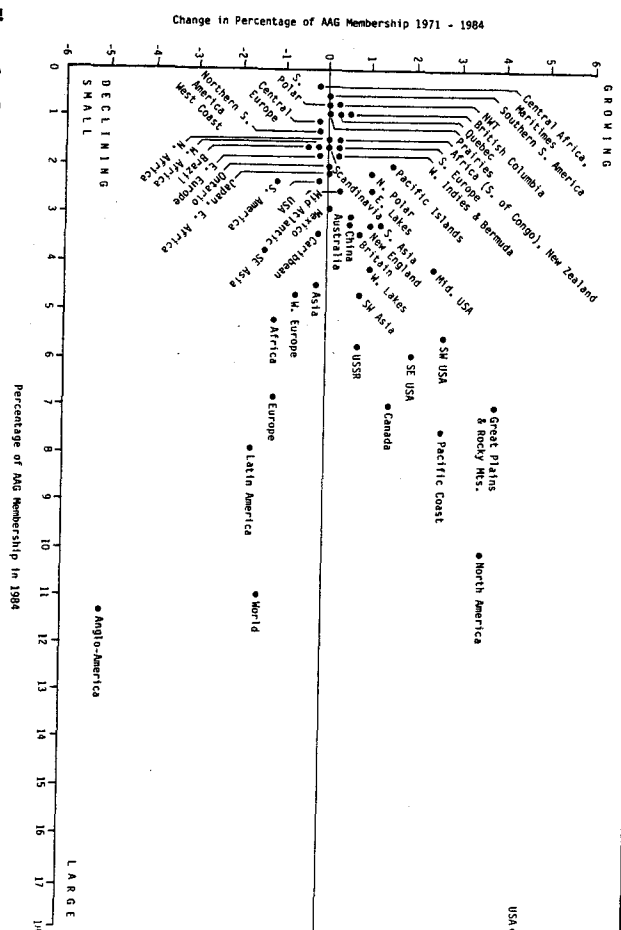


Figure 6. Percentage changes in areal proficiencies, 1971-1984, plotted against the number of members that claimed proficiency for each region in May 1984.

cialization at the departmental level may be seen as a high-risk strategy. It has been used rarely in American geography. Nonetheless, the ecological analogy holds that productive hot spots of specialized new innovation may thrive, at least for short periods, until the specialty becomes integrated into the mainstream of the science. This aggregation of specialists at a single location allows for short communication links, high levels of information exchange, and shared enthusiasm for new breakthroughs (geography at the University of Washington in the late 1950s?).

Analysis of Diversity

Given the significance of the specialization-diversity issue in geography, it would be instructive to compare diversity of interests at different scales of organization and in differing organizing structures. For example, do departments produce more or less specialization than specialty groups, or than the discipline as a

whole? How do the levels of specialization compare for the graduates of different departments and for the members of specialty groups? What are the levels of specialization for different age cohorts of geographers? The Shannon-Weaver information statistic,  $H$  provides a convenient measure of the degree to which a population is fragmented into distinct categories and offers a way of answering such questions (Hutchinson 1970).

If  $p_i$  denotes the probability that a randomly chosen individual is in class  $i$  out of  $m$  possible classes, then:

$$H = -\sum p_i \log p_i$$

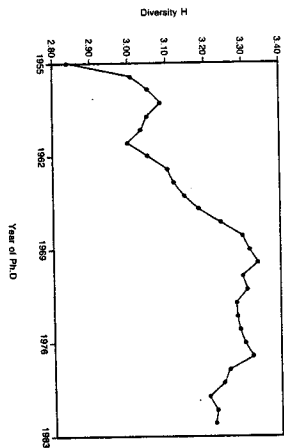
In practice  $p_i$  is estimated from the proportions of a sample,  $p_i = n_i/N$  where  $N$  is the sample size and  $n_i$  the number observed in class  $i$ .  $H$  has several advantages as a measure of diversity of interest or degree of specialization. For a given number of classes it is minimum,  $H = 0$ , when all individuals belong to one class and maximum,  $H = \log m$ , when each class has

**Table 4.** Diversity indices (Shannon-Weaver information statistics) of specialty group membership, computed from cross-membership data and ranked by increasing diversity

	H	Total cross-memberships
Geomorphology	2,626	207
Remote Sensing	2,772	240
Industrial Geography	2,802	111
Water Resources	2,814	203
Coastal and Marine	2,816	99
Climatology	2,817	152
Aging	2,819	45
Transportation	2,905	145
Biogeography	2,934	119
Native American	2,967	33
Sociologist	2,973	64
Canadian Geography	3,005	62
Bible	3,036	43
Mathematical Models and Quantitative Methods	3,049	179
Cartography	3,053	309
Chinese Geography	3,057	59
Culture Ecology	3,080	99
Regional Development and Planning	3,084	210
Population	3,112	178
Soviet	3,113	85
Urban	3,114	366
Medical	3,121	85
Rural Development	3,135	107
Energy	3,143	130
Environmental Studies	3,185	246
Applied	3,191	291
Political Geography	3,192	168
Environmental Perception	3,215	144
Latin American	3,217	139
Asian	3,225	92
Africa	3,229	89
Geographic Perspectives on Women	3,232	107
Geography in Higher Education	3,236	108
Recreation	3,244	125
Historical	3,251	224
All females	3,353	
All males	3,391	
All members	3,409	
Theoretical maximum	3,555	

Source: Calculated by authors from May 1984 AAG membership records.

the same number of members. It is easy to calculate and increases as the number of classes increases. With 35 Specialty Groups, the Association as



**Figure 7.** Diversity of specialty group membership in May 1984 (Shannon-Weaver information statistic) for Ph.D.s graduating by year from 1955 to 1983.

a whole has a very high level of diversity of 3,409, compared to a theoretical maximum of 3,555. The distribution of members across groups is relatively uniform, as evidenced by Table 2. The interests of the Association's female members, at 3,353, are slightly less diverse than those of its males, at 3,391, and both are less diverse than the Association as a whole. The diversity of interests of the members of each specialty group, found by computing H across the corresponding row of the cross-membership table (the diagonal terms in this table are zero), is shown in Table 4. As one might expect, the highest diversities are associated with those specialties found to be in the center of the discipline in our earlier scaling analysis, and the lowest are associated with the more isolated, peripheral specialties. Members of the Geomorphology group have few other memberships, and these tend all to be in the same subset of groups, whereas members of the Recreation and Historical and third memberships.

Three-year running means in diversity of interests of each year's Ph.D. graduates, computed from the specialties and year of Ph.D. reported by the members of the Association in 1984, are shown in Figure 7. Many current specialties were not available to the graduates of the early years of the period shown, which may account for the low diversities of interests among graduates of 1955-65. There is some evidence of a decline of diversity in the 1980s, which may indicate a narrowing of focus. However it seems to us that the more reasonable

**Table 5.** Diversity indices (Shannon-Weaver information statistics) of specialty group membership for Ph.D. graduates and current faculty of major departments, ranked by diversity of Ph.D. graduates

Department	Diversity of Ph.D. graduates		Diversity of current faculty	
	H	N	H	N
Illinois	3,345	109	2,663	28
Michigan	3,328	117	2,197	9
Wisconsin-Madison	3,276	140	2,733	38
Minnesota	3,276	140	3,054	40
Syracuse	3,275	106	2,623	20
Michigan State	3,261	116	2,665	22
Clark	3,216	132	2,379	19
UCLA	3,206	116	2,867	38
UNC Chapel Hill	3,206	45	2,441	14
UC Berkeley	3,194	117	2,580	19
Washington	3,138	106	2,587	22
Rutgers	3,112	43	2,815	38
Chicago	3,088	144	2,364	17
London	3,078	49	1,332	5
Northwestern	3,051	105	0,637	3
Georgia	3,029	49	2,452	19
Indiana	3,012	67	2,576	37
Pennsylvania State	2,993	79	2,940	32
Louisiana State	2,969	71	2,399	18
Columbia	2,964	56	2,079	6
Pittsburgh	2,963	43	1,792	8
Kansas	2,919	84	2,880	31
Maryland	2,908	37	2,650	22
Ohio State	2,885	98	2,498	37
Iowa	2,884	95	2,865	26
Oregon	2,869	51	2,369	12
Nebraska-Lincoln	2,849	28	2,352	13
Florida	2,771	43	2,352	13
Tennessee	2,724	24	2,488	15
Oklahoma	2,708	24	2,274	16
Oregon State	2,699	46	2,138	12
Colorado	2,645	38	2,918	26
Toronto	2,614	29	2,659	18

Source: Calculated by authors from May 1984 AAG membership records.

interpretation of the data, given the recent origin of many specialties, is that it indicates the relative ease with which individuals in the profession, particularly those graduating since 1960, are able to modify their interests in response to changing demand. This interpretation suggests that the diversity of interests of the 1980s cohorts will eventually increase to the levels of earlier cohorts. Unfortunately the lack of longitudinal data prevents us from testing this interpretation directly. The diversities of current interests among

**Table 6.** Membership of specialty groups by sex, May 1984, ranked by percentage female

	% female	% male
Geographic Perspectives on Women	84.5	15.5
Medical	37.4	62.6
Aging	37.3	62.7
Environmental Studies	30.5	69.5
Cartography	29.3	70.7
Biogeography	29.0	71.0
Sociologist	28.4	71.6
Recreation	26.1	73.9
Population	26.0	74.0
Cultural Ecology	26.0	74.4
Native American	24.0	76.0
Environmental Perception	24.0	76.0
Water Resources	23.4	76.6
Rural Development	22.8	77.2
Africa	22.0	78.0
Urban	21.8	78.2
Regional Development and Planning	21.6	78.4
Coastal and Marine	21.6	78.4
Remote Sensing	21.2	78.8
Energy	20.7	79.3
Latin American	20.3	79.7
Geography in Higher Education	19.2	80.8
Historical	19.1	80.9
Applied	19.1	81.9
Asian	18.7	81.0
Geomorphology	18.7	81.3
Industrial Geography	17.8	82.2
Mathematical Models and Quantitative Methods	17.5	82.5
Chinese Geography	16.0	84.0
Climatology	15.9	84.1
Bible	14.8	85.2
Political Geography	14.6	85.4
Canadian Geography	14.3	85.7
Soviet	13.8	86.2
Transportation	8.3	91.7
All group members	23.4	76.6

Source: Calculated by authors from AAG membership records.

Ph.D. graduates and among current faculty of the most productive departments, defined as those identified as department of Ph.D. by more than 20 members, ranked by decreasing diversity of Ph.D. graduates, are shown in Table 6. Departments such as Minnesota, Michigan Wisconsin-Madison, and Illinois produce graduates with a broad spectrum of current interests, whereas more specialized departments, such as Ohio State, Kansas, and Col

**Table 7.** Sex by university of Ph.D. for those universities identified as such by at least 20 AAG members, ranked by percentage female

	% female	% male
Colorado	26.7	73.3
Pittsburgh	23.1	76.9
UNC Chapel Hill	18.8	81.2
Oregon	15.2	84.8
Minnesota	15.1	84.9
Oregon State	14.8	85.2
Clark	13.0	87.0
Columbia	12.2	87.8
UCLA	12.2	87.8
Johns Hopkins	12.1	87.9
Wisconsin-Madison	11.3	88.7
Iowa	11.0	89.0
Michigan	10.8	89.2
UC Berkeley	10.5	89.5
Ohio State	10.3	89.7
Maryland	9.2	90.8
Washington	9.2	90.8
Syracuse	9.1	90.9
Harvard	9.1	90.9
Chicago	9.1	90.9
Kansas	8.8	91.2
Rutgers	8.7	91.3
Northwestern	8.6	91.4
Louisiana State	8.5	91.5
Illinois	8.1	91.9
London	7.7	92.3
Indiana	7.3	92.7
Toronto	6.7	93.3
Oklahoma	6.7	93.3
Michigan State	6.1	93.9
Pennsylvania State	4.4	95.6
Tennessee	4.2	95.8
Florida	3.0	97.0
Georgia	2.7	97.3
Nebraska-Lincoln	0.0	100.0
All members with identified Ph.D. university	12.0	88.0

Source: Calculated by authors from May 1984 AAG membership records.

Note: Values are based on degrees declared by graduates of both geography and non-geography departments for each university.

diversification among graduate students than among faculty. But it would again seem more reasonable to assume that interests are comparatively narrow at the time of graduation and that some department's graduates are more responsive, or better able to respond than others, to later career pressures for diversification, for a variety of reasons.

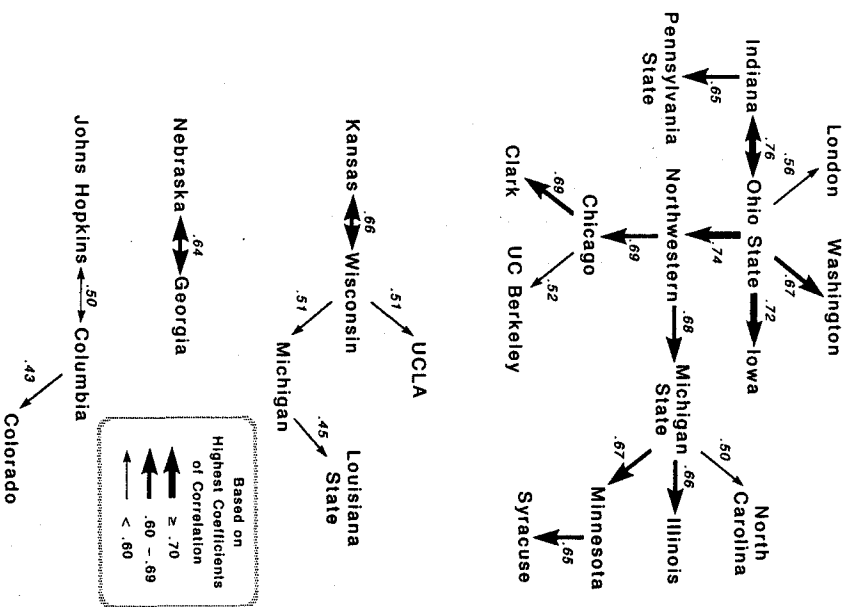
**Gender Effects**

The effects of gender on specialization have already been noted in the form of diversity indices. The memberships of each specialty group by sex for May 1984, shown in Table 6, indicates a strong association between gender and specialty. After Geographic Perspectives on Women, the most female specialty groups are clearly those strongly associated with current social concerns, including Medical, Aging, Population and environment. Also, Cartography has a high percentage of female members. At the other end of the spectrum are the male-dominated specialties, particularly Transportation.

There are also strong links between gender and department of Ph.D., shown in Table 7. The gender balance is clearly highly variable between departments, and in turn affects the balance across specialties through the structuring effects of the Ph.D.-granting institutions. Unfortunately the membership data are not sufficiently complete to allow us to examine relationships between gender balance among students and the corresponding balance among faculty of these institutions. The relative influences of gender of faculty and specialty of faculty in determining the gender balance among graduating Ph.D.s are difficult to determine from these data, so this linkage remains an interesting question.

**Similarities among Departments**

To explore the relative positions of departments within the subject matter space of the discipline, the numbers of Ph.D. graduates who are currently members of each specialty group were tabulated by department of Ph.D. In the analysis that follows only departments with more than 35 tabulated memberships are shown. Pearson correlation coefficients were then cal-



**Figure 8.** Elementary linkage analysis of correlations between specialty group membership patterns for Ph.D. graduates of major departments, May 1984.

culated between the membership totals by specialty group, including zeroes, for each pair of departments, and the resulting correlation matrix was used as the basis for Elementary Linkage Analysis.

The results are shown in Figure 8. The first major grouping is centered around Ohio State and Indiana and include other major departments strongly associated with the spatial analysis paradigm, such as Iowa, Washington and Northwestern. The strong link between Kansas and Wisconsin is due largely to interest in cartography, while the reason for the Nebraska-Georgia link is found in common branches of

physical geography. Colorado is particularly weakly linked to the fourth group, suggesting a uniqueness of interests among its graduates and the correlation between Johns Hopkins and Columbia is only slightly larger. The low linkage for Louisiana State may reflect the unique nature of its combined programs in geography and anthropology. In general, however, the matrix of correlations revealed an exceptionally high degree of intercorrelation, giving credence to the notion that there is a strong level of agreement in the way that graduates from different departments respond in their choice of specialization.

## Conclusions and Conjectures

### The Growth of Specialization

The comments that follow attempt to link the empirical findings of the previous section with the earlier discussions on the structures of knowledge and organization in geography. Data on affiliations with specialty groups for AAG members have provided a handle on the importance of specialization in geography and on the unfolding nature of its divisions. The recent formal organization of these groups has given important focus to geographers who share common research interests.

The emergence of increased specialization in geography has been aided by the integrating effects of new technologies, which have reduced the significance of spatial limits to communication, and by the declining significance of social/cultural boundaries (as defined by age, sex, and language). Along with such facilitators of social communications as annual meetings, language translation services, sabbatical leaves, and equal employment opportunities, these developments have made it easier to access larger and larger pools of possible communicants, thereby enhancing the opportunities for even greater levels of specialization in the future. Although there are recognized benefits from this process, they must be balanced against the isolating effects that increasingly narrow specialization portends.

### Structural Affinities and Isolation among Specialty Groups

A multidimensional scaling of cross-memberships among the constituents of AAG specialty groups has revealed patterns of both affinity and isolation. The clusters of similarly linked specialties accord well with three of geography's major traditions (Pattison 1964). The man-land theme is most central, represented in Figure 2 by historical geography and environmental studies; the breadth of this tradition is seen in the high measures of diversity for these specialties (Table 4) and in their linkages to several other specialty groups (Fig. 3). Figures 3 and 4 also identify the clear existence of spatial and earth-science traditions, each formed by cohesive membership linkages among a small set of related specialties. Because of the breadth and number of their linkages, cartography, applied geography, and historical

geography occupy central positions in the space of geographic specialization, and may provide a core of intellectual and technical binding among the man-land, spatial, and earth-science traditions. In contrast, our analysis reveals no common core for the area-studies tradition, except indirectly, through systematic specializations.

Broad interest in regions is a declining specialization in geography. Regionally-oriented specialty groups are revealed as peripheral to the more systematic specialties and, as Figure 3 illustrates, their linkage to the more central specialties is through systematic divisions, such as medical geography, population geography, political geography, and historical geography. This pattern is at odds with the general public's conception of geography and with what many prominent geographers have advocated. De Blij (1987) sees areal specialism as a global outreach that may be more clearly associated with geography than any other discipline. Yet, Harvey (1984, 4) is concerned that recent tendencies to fragment for professional purposes have resulted in geography's failure to "build appropriate popular understandings to deal with a world undergoing rapid geographical integration. . . ." Have we, as Johnston (1985, 337) suggested, "disengaged" from the world?

Popular interest in places was the theme of a recent Presidential Address to the Association by Peirce Lewis (1985). Seeing this as a legitimate interest, he advocates that educating geographers in the art and science of describing places warrants a more prominent position on our agenda. There is need to articulate teaching and research agenda that are consistent with our acquired technical skills and theoretical understanding, and with the outside world's perception of geography. The acceptance of this idea may lead to a more central position for regional geography.

In contrast to the decline and to the lack of a revealed core in regional geography, the specialized branches of physical geography have cohesive membership linkages and have experienced recent growth (Figs. 2, 3 and 4). Yet, the cluster of these specialties peripherally, relative to the general pattern of specialization in geography, accords with the perception of an uneasy relationship between human and physical geography. In Britain, Worsley (1985) has argued for the recognition of separate disciplines, with separate university de-

partments (as in Sweden and Holland), while Orne (1985) has argued the cause of integration. Lewis (1985) says that students of human geography need training in physical geography to interpret landscapes, but Johnston (1986) finds only the "vernacular" interpretation of physical geography as physical environment of broad interest to human geography. Is a vernacular link sufficient or does unity require a deeper epistemological bond? Is this to be found in a revived regional geography? Or is the unity of our discipline derived from other traditions?

Additional insights into many of these questions might be gained from the analysis of alternative data sets. For example, the relative abundances of presentations and journal articles might be used to monitor the progress of specialties. Surveys of linkages based on telephone calls, electronic mail, letters and joint attendance at meetings may suggest "invisible colleges." Members might be tracked between papers and sessions at the AAG Annual Meeting as a basis for establishing affinities and linkages. Although such surveys would provide an independent basis for evaluating and extending the conclusions reached in this paper, they are likely to require careful experimental design.

The importance of these kinds of analysis lies in their potential for establishing benchmarks of structure and change in the practice of geography. Annual specialty group membership data provide a basis for tracing trends in the discipline and for examining specific questions which go beyond the context of the present paper. For example, the Association has recently established GIS and Microcomputer specialty groups. Were their members drawn from across the Association, or from specific segments, such as those who previously identified less than three groups, or from members of specific groups? Can the membership be modeled as those who rarely identify specialty groups, those with lifetime affiliations to certain groups, and those who change affiliation in response to current trends? And what are the associated motivations?

### Social Imperatives in Geography

The empirical analysis of cross-memberships in AAG specialty groups reveals cohesive groupings of specializations, each derived from well-established intellectual roots. But there are

also divisions, some distinguished by the nature of research problems, and others, to a lesser extent, by the alignment of geographers according to demographic and social attributes (for example, age and sex were considered in this study). The high level of diversity of memberships for some specialties, and for the graduates and faculty of many academic units (departments), would appear to provide evidence of both intellectual and social bonding, even among disparate specialists.

The social basis for geography as a discipline, made up of identifiable specialties, has been discussed by Johnston (1983) and Harvey (1984), and documented by Grano (1981) for the case of Finland. But, more generally Storer (1972, 229) notes how the term "discipline" refers to both a body of knowledge and to a group of scientists. The mutual interdependence of these conceptions of discipline suggests that, as with other divisions of labor, there are social roots to the present structure of geography.

Our proposed empirical/pragmatic view of knowledge is neutral to the social and institutional influences that guide the development of disciplines, but individuals' career paths are not; they are guided by the rewards that society allocates for different choices and for different levels of performance, however judged. In turn, these decisions guide the emergence of new paradigms, shape the identity of the discipline's core(s), provide the basis for linkages among specialties, and determine their persistence.

As mediators in the choice of career path by individuals, a variety of institutions contribute to structuring the perceptions of purpose, opportunity, and constraint that guide a discipline's development. The Ph.D.-granting departments of geography were given special attention in this analysis. Though some departments are more focused than others, they are seen to share the same fundamental traditions, and to show generally high levels of diversity in the declared research interests of their graduates and faculty.

The apparent contradiction between the intense specialization of individuals and the diversity of departments as a whole is consistent with the career interests of individuals and with the growth prospects for departments. Surviving instincts often bring forth a social solidarity of geographers in the name of the department.

regardless of their differences in specialization, to protect their niche among professionals. A parallel situation exists at the more general level of the Association as a whole. The Association has a higher level of diversity than any of its component specialty groups, and it is because of this that it can seek to provide the empirical bridge among geographers of diverse philosophies and purposes, and to speak for the discipline as a whole.

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# Cattle and Sheep from Old to New Spain Historical Antecedents

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**Abstract.** The transfer of cattle and sheep from Spain to Mexico during the sixteenth century raises questions about regional evolution and variability of livestock economies in the source area, the regional and socioeconomic roots of the emigrants, and the ecological and economic integration of specific animals, management methods, and related products within New Spain. Such issues of diffusion, cultural adaptation and transformation must be disentangled before interpretation is attempted, and this paper focuses on the Old World antecedents. Traditional nineteenth-century patterns of livestock herding in different regions of the Iberian Peninsula were already established in Roman times and changed but little during the Islamic period. Long-distance sheep transhumance is verified prior to the Christian reconquest and was greatly amplified thereafter. Yet late Medieval Spain was not a great ranching frontier, but an agrosystem in which farming and livestock raising always formed a complementary but interlinked economy. This duality was expressed in different forms of land ownership: cultivated land was intricately subdivided and carried clear title, while pasture zones remained to some degree in the public domain. Sheep raising, both within the mixed, Mediterranean economy and in the form of long-distance transhumance (the *Mesta*), was broadly familiar throughout Castile and was reflected in similar counterparts on the Mexican plateau. But cattle raising was small-scale and of subordinate importance in Spain, except in the estuarine marshland below Seville. Whereas the early cattle owners in Mexico came from all over Spain, their highly extensive management style appears to derive from

the Marismas of Sevilla. This evidence may be explained by the interplay of cattle owners and cattle herders as they adjusted to a new ecology in the tropical lowlands.

**Key Words:** agrosystem, diffusion, *Mesta*, Mexico, Spain, ranching, transhumance.

CULTURAL and historical geographers working in eastern North America have until recently focused almost exclusively on European-derived culture spheres viewing native American contributions as minor or peripheral. By comparison, Latin Americanists, both geographers and anthropologists have concentrated their attention on indigenous roots, paying only nominal attention to Iberian components.

Latin Americanists, in their perception of Spain as seen from Hispanic America, have tended to assume a monolithic, common cultural hearth, even though sixteenth-century Spain consisted of a dozen or so culturally distinctive regions (Foster 1960). On the other hand, North Americanist geographers have sought to disentangle the multiple strands of European elements intertwined in the different spheres that emerged between the Lawrence River and the Georgia seaboard. This has also been explicitly interested in what Harris (1977) has called "the simplification of Europe overseas," i.e., the process whereby the great cultural variety encompassed by the North European immigrants was reduced to a much simpler and relatively homogeneous American and Canadian cultural repertoire.

These different preoccupations of research