

# Web Mapping & Analysis

## Good (Web) Maps

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# Today

- Visualisation
- (Web) Maps
- Choropleths

# Visualisation

# *What?*

*“Visual representations of datasets designed to help people carry out tasks more effectively”*

Munzner (2016)

# *When?*

A human “superpower”:

- *Keep* the human in the loop
- *Augment* memory/internal representation
- *Ask* new questions rather than only *answer* existing ones

# *Why?*

- Bridges **human and machine**
- Relies on **vision** (high-volume, parallel throughput)
- External representations work around **limits** of **internal** cognition/memory

# *How?*

*what-why-how*



*data-task-idiom*

Most ineffective designs are due to a poor match

*Domain-specific → Abstract form*

# *How?*

Vis is multi-use:

- Exploring
- Checking pre-conceived ideas
- Long-term use in workflows/processes
- Presentation

A tool that serves well for one task can be poorly suited for another



# Elements (and limitations)

- Computer (time)
- Human (memory & attention)
- Display (capacity)

# Design trade-off's

- Beauty Vs Elegance
- “No picture can communicate the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth” (Munzner, 2016)
- ...

(Web) Maps

# Tufte (1983)

*“The most extensive data maps [...] place millions of bits of information on a single page before our eyes. No other method for the display of statistical information is so powerful”*

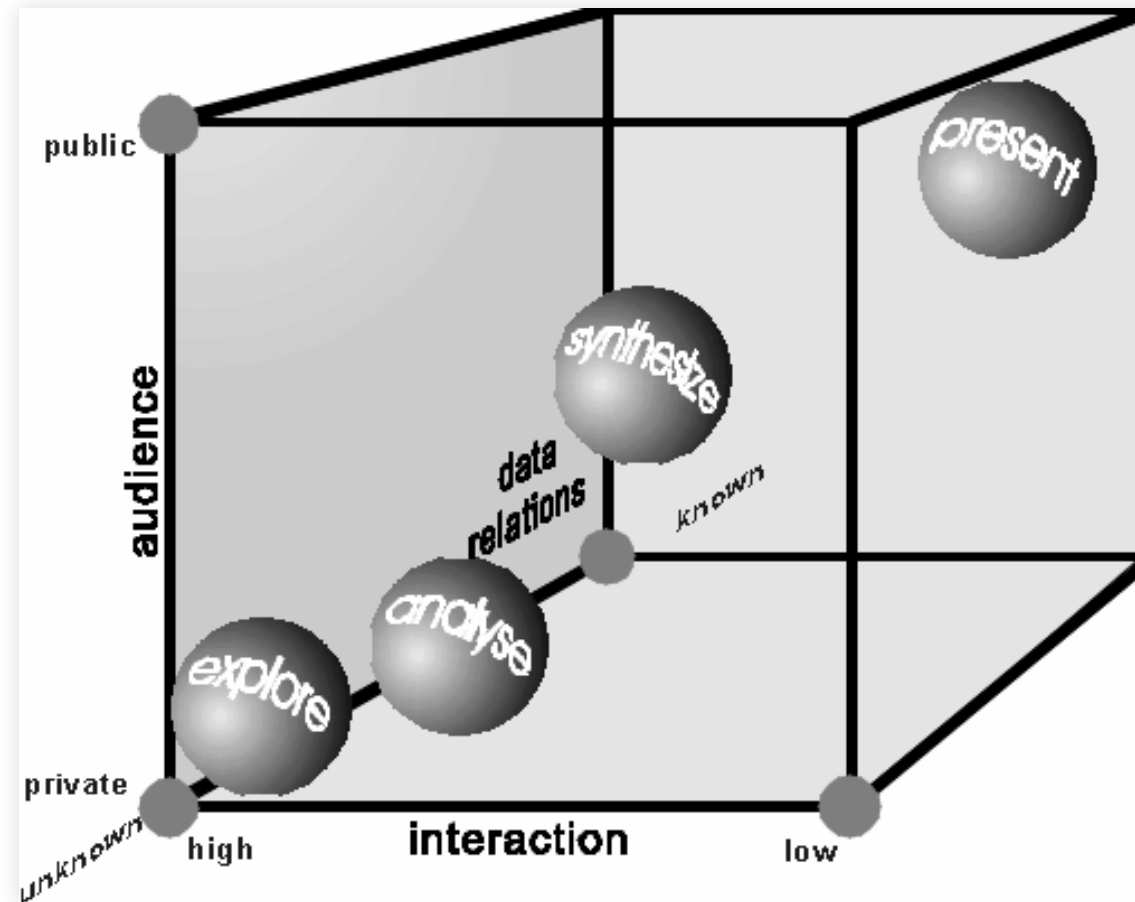
# Designing good maps

Maps can fulfill several needs, looking very different depending on the end-goal

MacEachren & Kraak (1997) identify three main dimensions:

- Knowledge of what is being plotted
- Target audience
- Degree of interactivity

# Map Cube



[Source]

# Choropleths

# Choropleths

*Thematic map in which values of a variable are encoded using a color gradient of some sort*

- Encode **value** using the **color** channel
- Values are **classified** into **groups** (bins)
- **Information loss** as a trade off for **simplicity**



# Classification choices

- N. of bins
- How to bin?
- Colors

# How many bins?

- Trade-off: detail Vs cognitive load
- Exact number depends on purpose of the map
- Usually not more than 12

How to bin?

# Unique values

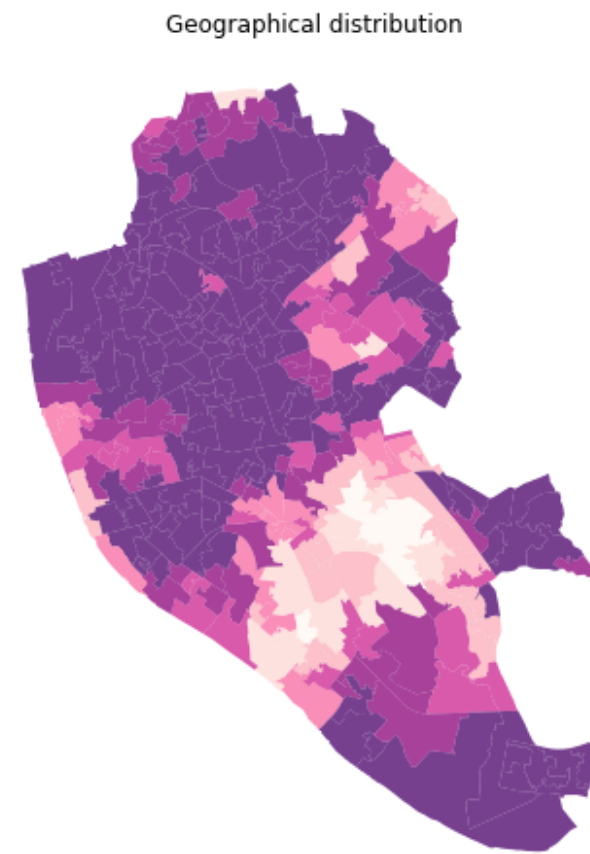
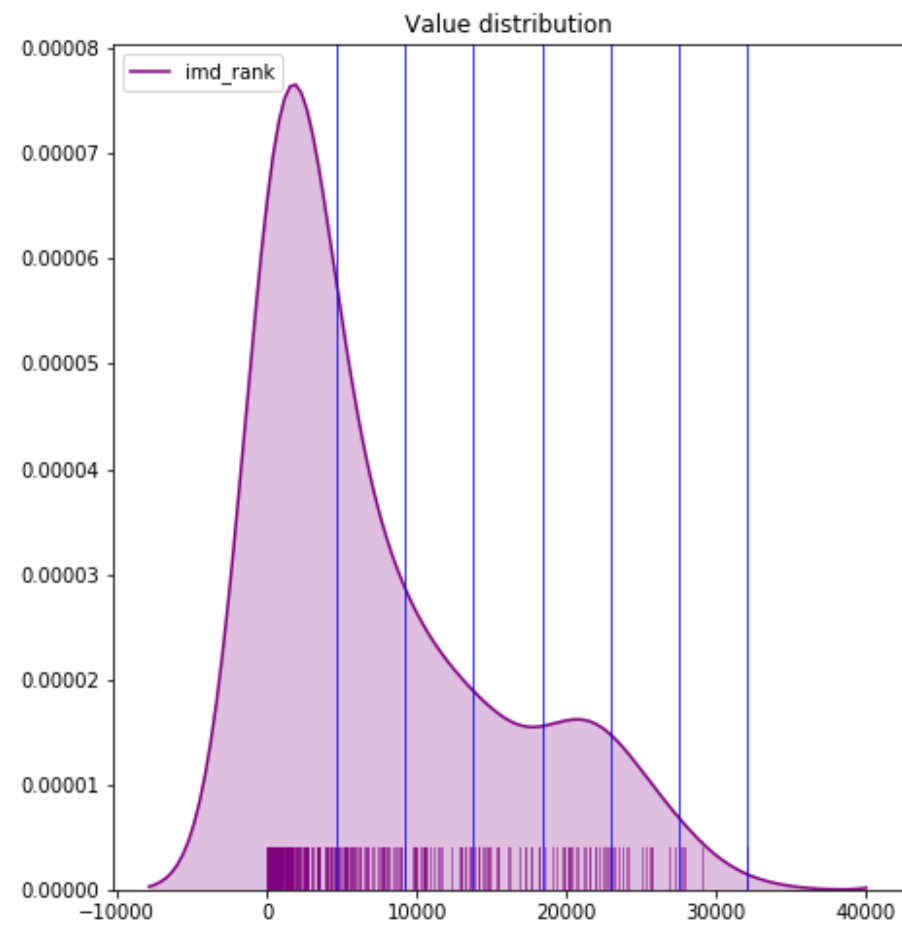
- Categorical data
- No gradient (reflect it with the color scheme!!!)
- Examples: Religion, country of origin...

# Unique values

# Equal interval

- Take the **value** span of the data to represent and split it equally
- **Splitting** happens based on the **numerical value**
- Gives more weight to outliers if the distribution is skewed

## equal\_interval

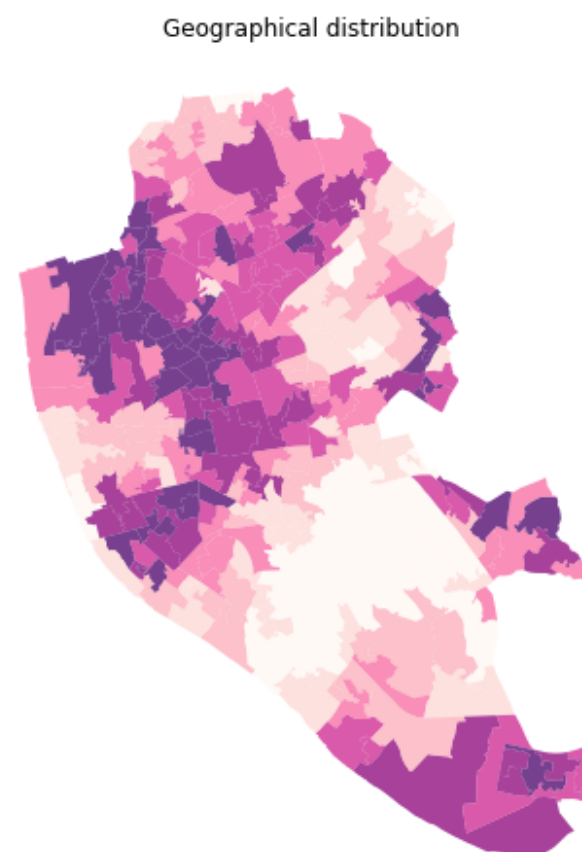
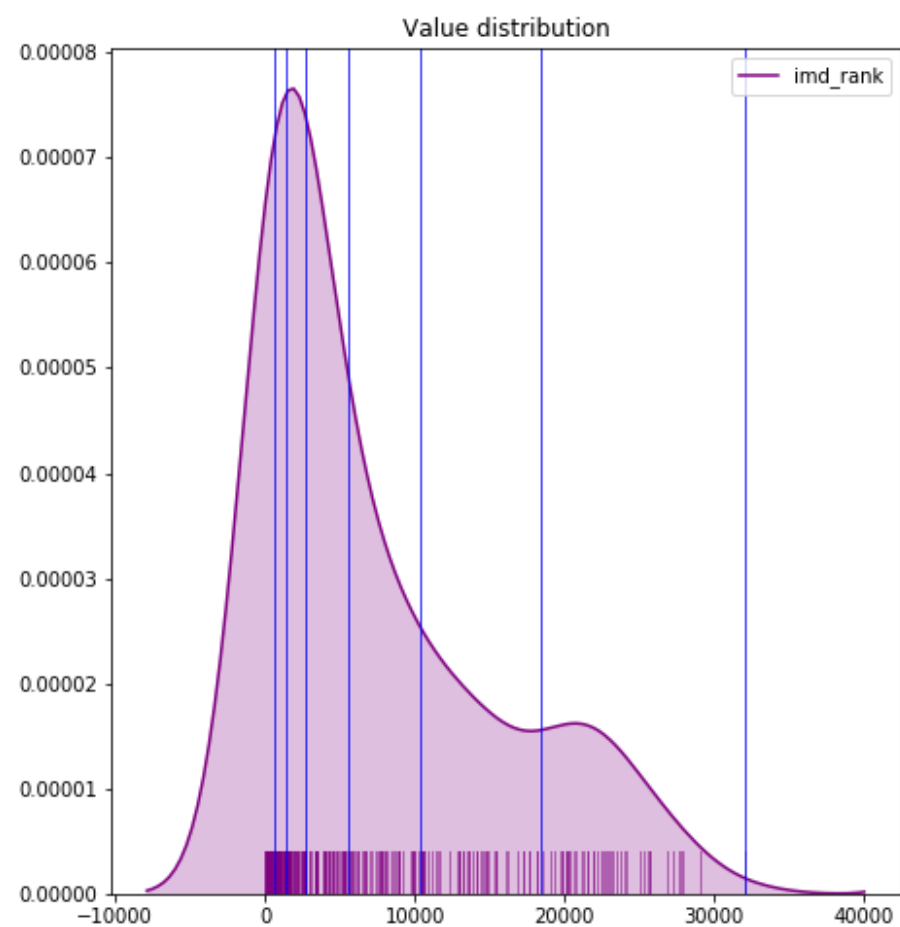


# Quantiles

- Regardless of numerical values, split the distribution keeping the same amount of values in each bin
- **Splitting** based on the **rank** of the value
- If distribution is skewed, it can put very different values in the same bin



## quantiles



# Other

- Fisher-Jenks
- Natural breaks
- Outlier maps: box maps, std. maps...

# Color schemes

Align with your purpose

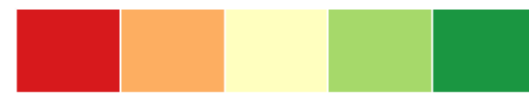
- **Categories, non-ordered**



- Graduated, **sequential**



- Graduated, **divergent**



**TIP:** check **ColorBrewer** for guidance

# Tips

- Think of the purpose of the map
- Explore by trying different classification alternatives
- Combine (Geo)visualisation with other statistical devices



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