

Geographic Data Science - Lecture VII

Grouping Data over Space

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Today

- The need to group data
- Geodemographic analysis
- Non-spatial clustering
- Regionalization
- Examples "in the wild"

The need to group data

*Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not
simpler*

Albert Einstein

The need to group data

- The world is **complex** and **multidimensional**
- **Univariate** analysis focuses on **only one dimension**
- Sometimes, world issues are best understood as **multivariate**. E.g.
 - Percentage of foreign-born Vs. *What is a neighborhood?*
 - Years of schooling Vs. *Human development*
 - Monthly income Vs. *Deprivation*

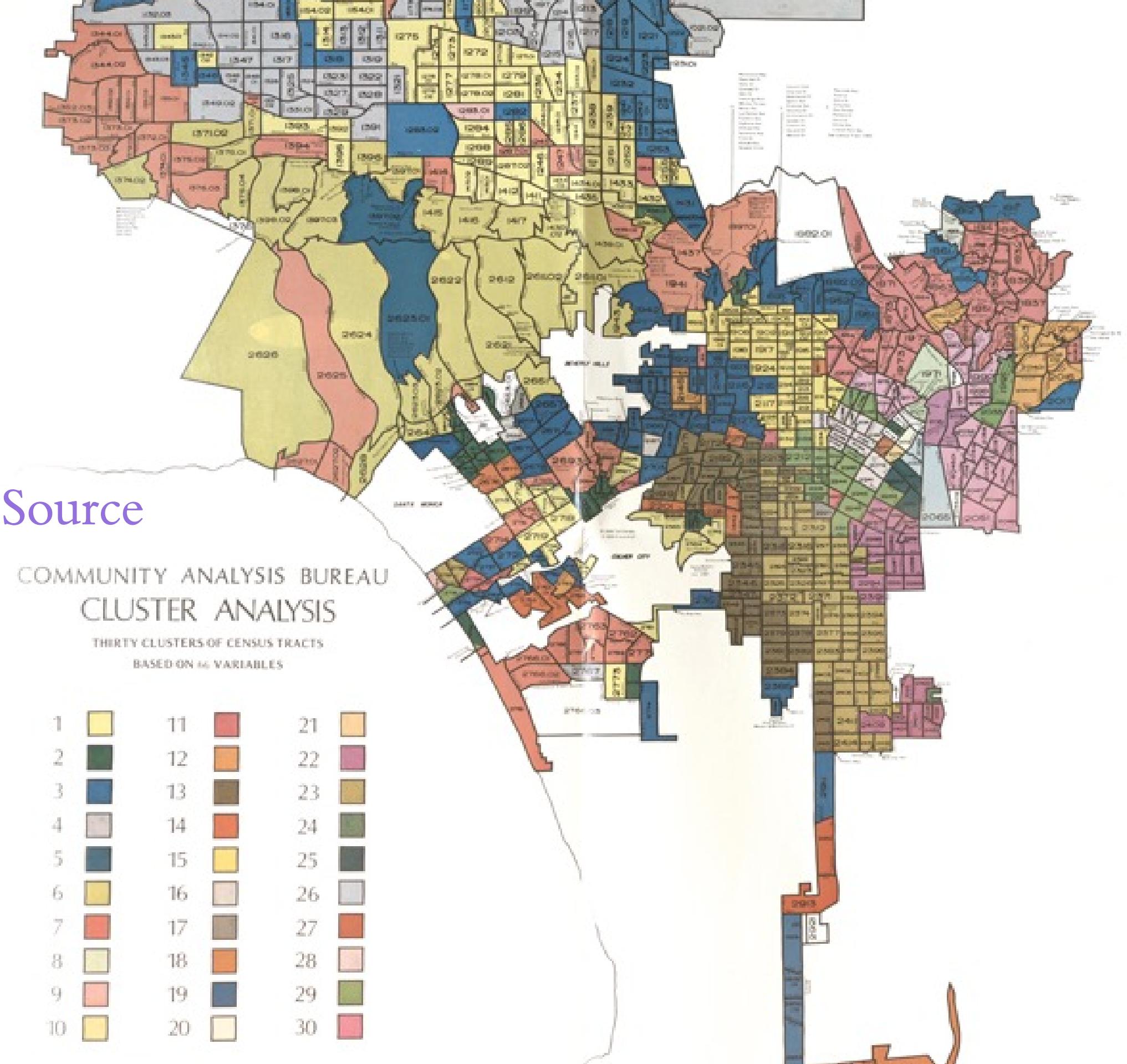
Grouping as simplifying

- Define a given number of categories based on many characteristics (multi-dimensional)
- Find the category where each observation *fits best*
- Reduce complexity, keep all the relevant information
- Produce easier-to-understand outputs

Geodemographic analysis

Geodemographic analysis

- Technique developed in 1970's attributed to Richard Webber
- Identify similar neighborhoods → Target urban deprivation funding
- Originated in the Public Sector (policy) and spread to the Private sector (marketing and business intelligence)



CDRC Maps

DATA CHOOSEN

Classifications Retail

Select a map:
2011 Area Classif/n of OAs

[Download this data](#)

MAP OPTIONS

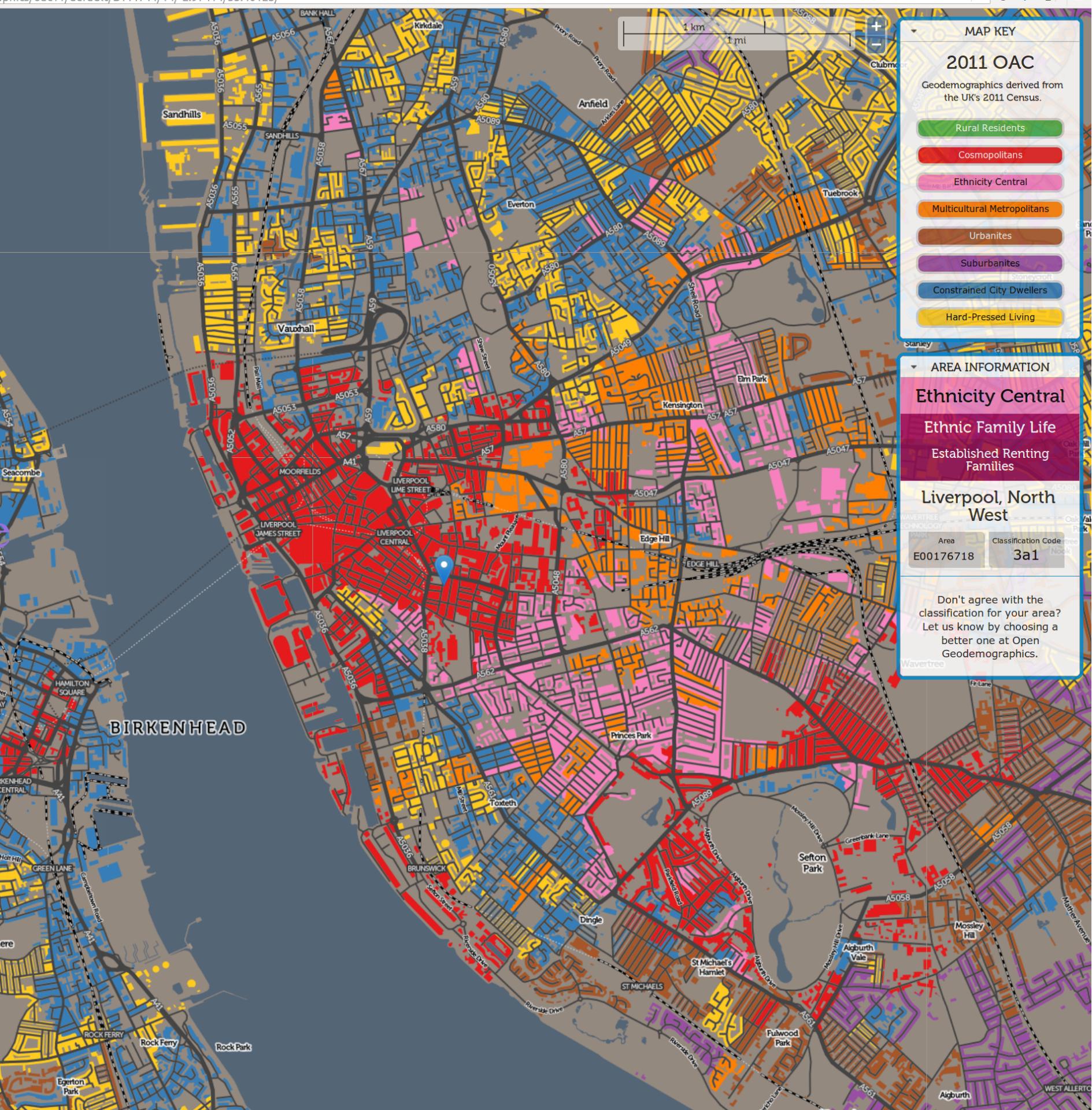
Layers: Land Labels

Toggle: Retail Centres

Download: retail centre locations

Postcode: L19dw Go

Source



How do you segment/cluster observations over space?

- Statistical clustering
- Explicitly spatial clustering (regionalization)

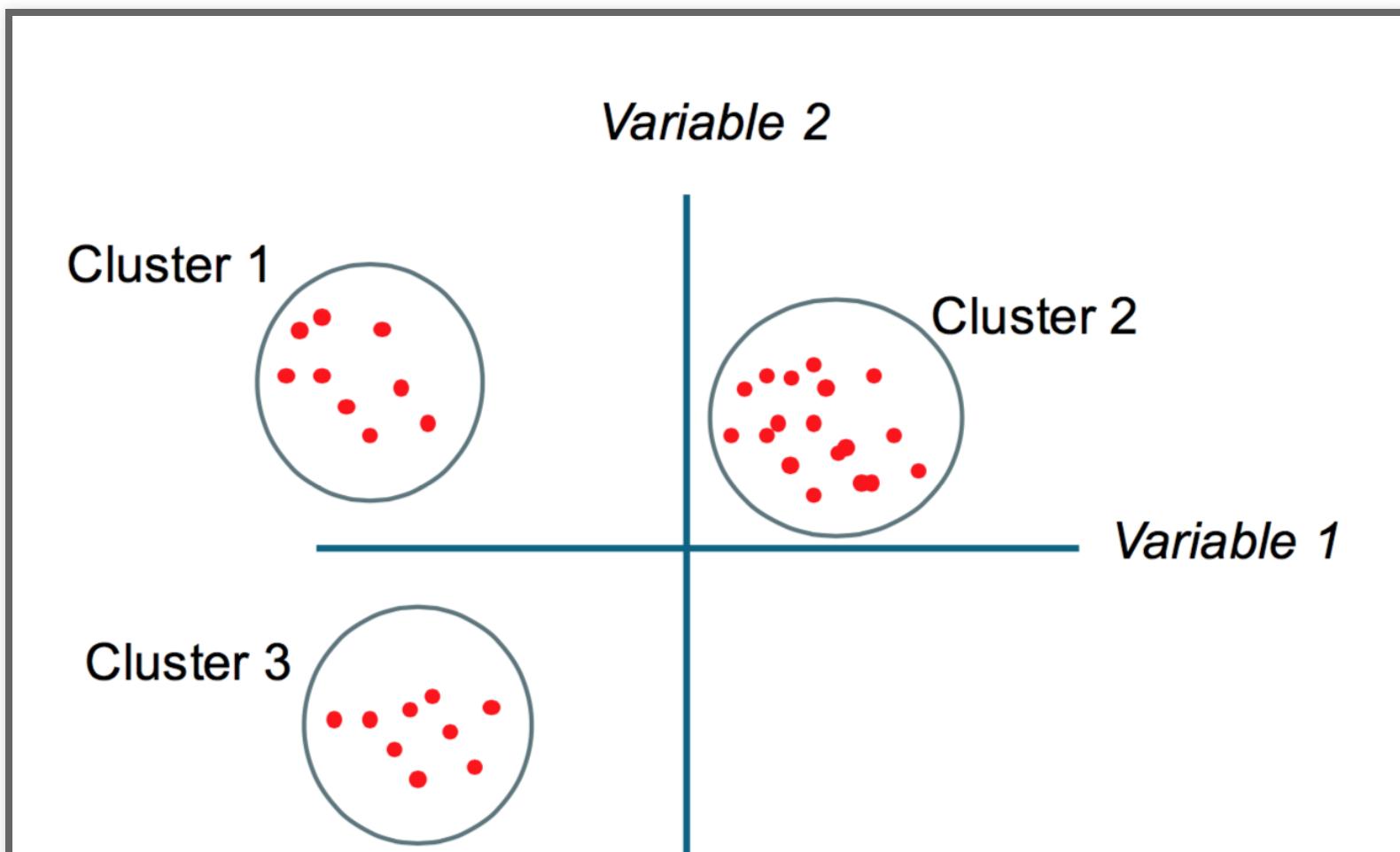
Non-spatial clustering

Split a dataset into groups of observations that are similar within the group and dissimilar between groups, based on a series of attributes

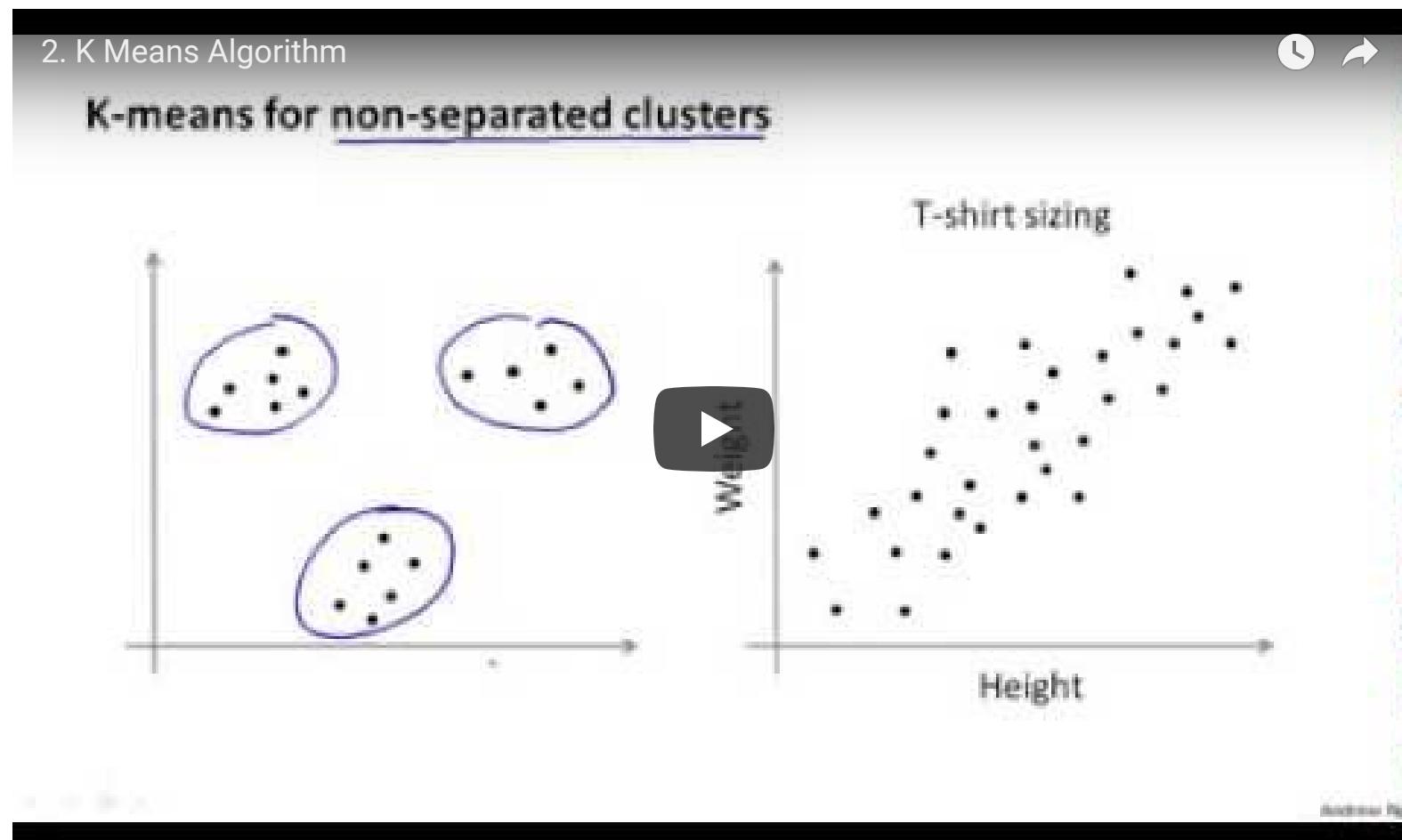
Machine learning

Unsupervised

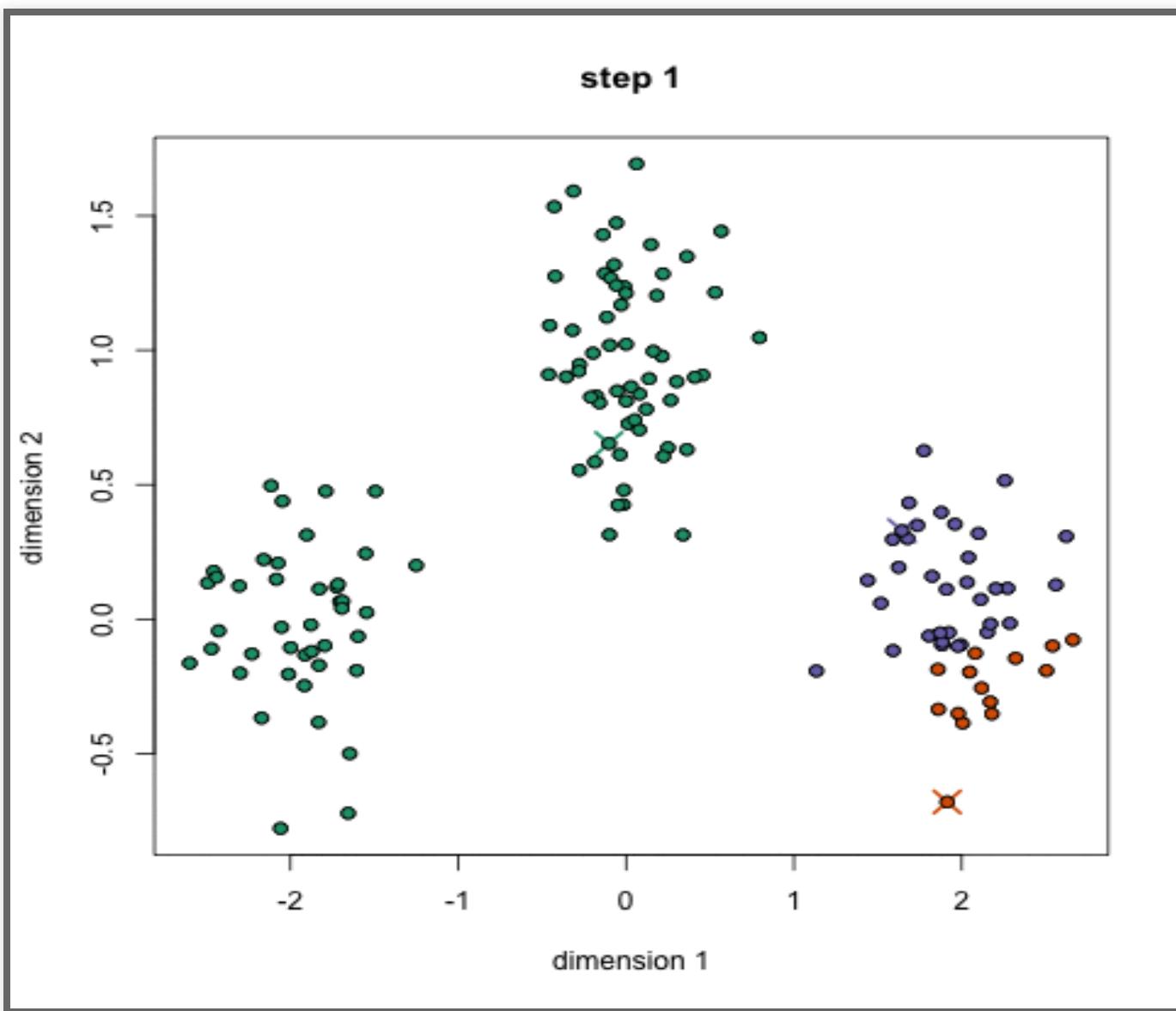
Intuition



K-means [Source]



K-means [Source]



More clustering...

- Hierarchical clustering
- Agglomerative clustering
- Spectral clustering
- Neural networks (e.g. Self-Organizing Maps)
- DBScan
- ...

Different properties, different best usecases

See [interesting comparison](#) table

Regionalization

Unsupervised Spatial Machine Learning

*Aggregating basic spatial units (**areas**) into larger units
(**regions**)*

Regionalization

Split a dataset into **groups** of observations that are **similar** within the group and **dissimilar** between groups, based on a series of **attributes**...

...with the additional constraint observations need to be **spatial neighbors**

Regionalization

Duque et al. (2007)

Regionalization

- All the methods aggregate geographical areas into a predefined number of regions, while optimizing a particular aggregation criterion;
- The areas within a region must be geographically connected (the spatial contiguity constraint);
- The number of regions must be smaller than or equal to the number of areas;
- Each area must be assigned to one and only one region;
- Each region must contain at least one area.

Duque et al. (2007)



Algorithms

- Automated Zoning Procedure (AZP)
- Arisel
- Max-P
- ...

See [Duque et al. \(2007\)](#) for an excellent, though advanced, overview

Examples

Census geographies

Environment and Planning A 1995, volume 27, pages 425–446

Algorithms for reengineering 1991 Census geography

S Openshaw, L Rao[†]

School of Geography, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT, England

Received 22 April 1994; in revised form 6 October 1994



[Re-Imagining the City in the Age of Social Media](#)

Livehoods offer a new way to conceptualize the dynamics, structure, and character of a city by analyzing the social media its residents generate. By looking at people's checkin patterns at places across the city, we create a mapping of the different dynamic areas that comprise it. Each Livehood tells a different story of the people and places that shape it.

[> MORE](#)

[Using Machine-Learning to Study Cities](#)

Our research hypothesis is that the character of an urban area is defined not just by the types of places found there, but also by the people that make it part of their daily life. To explore this idea, we use data from approximately 18 million check-ins collected from the location-based social network foursquare, and apply clustering algorithms to discover the different areas of the city.

[> MORE](#)

Livehoods

Current Maps


[> New York City](#)

[> San Francisco](#)

[> Pittsburgh](#)

[> More Maps](#)

News and Press

Livehood at ICWSM

Our work with Livehoods won the best paper award at ICWSM in Dublin this June! [Watch the video from our presentation.](#)

Livehoods on CBC Radio

Justin was on the CBC Radio program Spark talking with host Nora Young about the Livehoods Project. [Listen to the full interview.](#)

Livehoods in the Atlantic

Livehoods appeared as the Map of the Day on the Atlantic's Cities blog. [See their post about us.](#)

Wired Insider

Wired's Insider blog says Livehoods is "taking a big swing" at mining insights into "cultural habits and how societies flow." [Read the full post.](#)

[> MORE](#)

Recent Tweets

@tiffehr

Best map/location mashup I've seen in quite some time: <http://livehoods.org/maps/nyc#> (Via <http://roomthily.tumblr.com>)

@Werner

Livehoods is a cool CMU research project to visualize cities through the use of social media (@foursquare in this case) <http://ww.ly/IJZ3We>

@tomcoates

The 'Related' tab on <http://livehoods.org> is the best. See which neighboring places people travel too. Algorithmic divination of commuting!

@brainpicker

Forget neighborhoods, it's about Livehoods — Carnegie Mellon maps the dynamic character of cities through social media <http://j.mp/HzmkoN>

@kellan

clearly i live on the wrong side of the bqe - <http://livehoods.org/maps/nyc>

[> MORE](#)

Subscribe to our newsletter

Find out more about Livehoods and get updates on future developments by subscribing to our mailing list.

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

Recapitulation

- Some problems are truly highly dimensional and univariate representations are not appropriate
- Clustering can help reduce complexity by creating categories that retain statistical information but are easier to understand
- Two main types of clustering in this context:
 - Geo-demographic analysis
 - Regionalization



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