

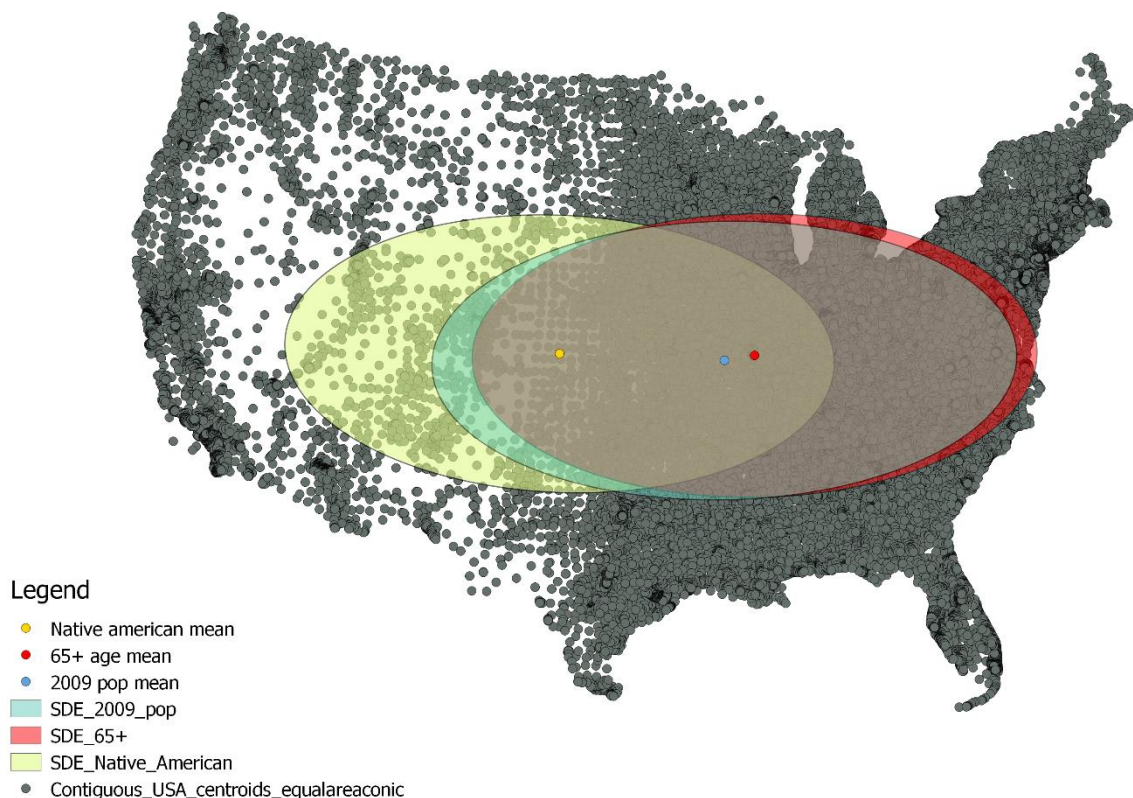
Comparative centographic study of demographic groups in the US

Location: Contiguous USA

Level of detail: Census tracts

Coordinate Reference System (CRS): North America Albers Equal Area Conic CRS

Contiguous USA counties overlaid with means and standard devotional ellipses of demographic variables



The map above shows the location of the centroids of each census tract in contiguous USA. The map is also showing the centroid of census tracts weighted by certain demographic variables: the overall population in 2009, the population aged 65 and above, and the Native American population. These demographic groups are respectively plotted in blue, red and yellow. Moreover, we added standard deviational ellipses around each group centroid to gain further insights into the dispersion of these groups across the country.

We observe that the blue centroid of the total population is located towards the middle-east side of the country. This makes sense under the light of American history as settlers arrived on the East Coast and slowly moved towards the West. Interestingly, this centroid seems exactly centered in the middle of the country's height (middle of the vertical axis). This suggests that American settlement waves were primarily involved with East-to-West migration and that the population settled without any bias towards the North or South as the settlements moved further towards the West. The shape of standard deviational ellipse of the 2009 population reinforces this conclusion because the ellipse is stretched horizontally between the West and East, which suggests large population concentration on the West and East coasts and uniform distribution between the North and South.

When looking at the red centroid for population of elders, we notice a slight shift towards the North East which suggests that Americans that are 65 and more tend to live more towards the North East than the average population. The shape and orientation of the red ellipse does not seem to differ from the blue population ellipse. Finally, we look at the yellow centroids of the Native American population which, as expected, is clearly shifted towards the West compared to the other two centroids. This can be explained by historical factors such as the forced displacement of the Native population towards the West. However, I did expect the centroid to be significantly more shifted to the West as many Native tribes live in Wyoming reservations. It would be very interesting to look at the distribution of Native population on the East side of the country to better understand the position of the yellow centroid. More specifically, I would like to understand what proportion of eastern Native population have moved East for economic reasons versus the proportion of Natives with ancestors sent to American Indian boarding schools on the East coast.