

Perceptual Dialectology: Why and how do maps mean things?

Dr. Thor Sawin

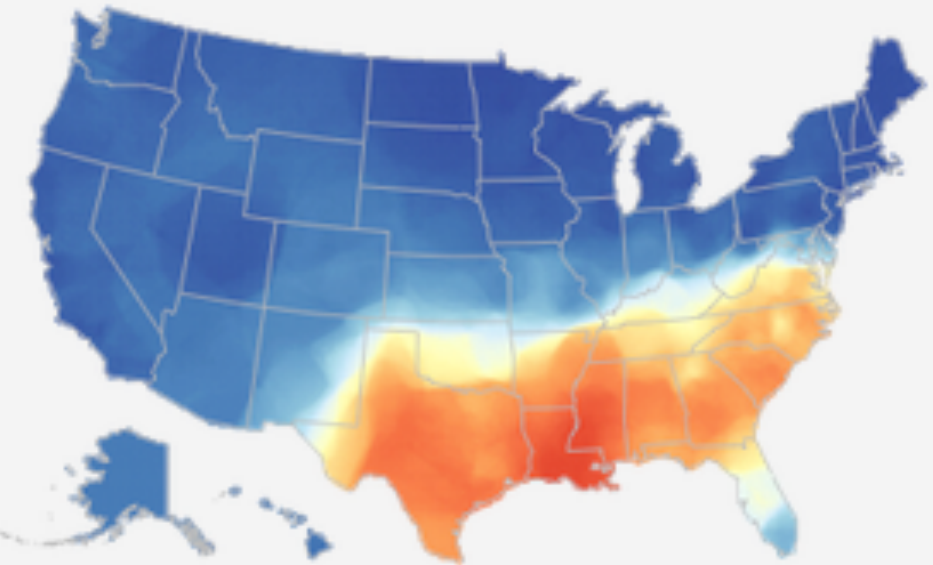
Monterey Institute of International
Studies

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How would you address a group of two or more people?

y'all

What does “y’all” mean?



Least similar

Most similar

Indexical link: Step #1, The Correlation

What do you need in order to make a correlation?

What data did you use to make a correlation between “y’all” and Southerners? Be as specific as you can!

Indexical link: Step #1, The Correlation

- What did you come up with?
- Metadiscourses – discourse about discourse
- Metadiscursive events – rarely do these stop at a mere correlation

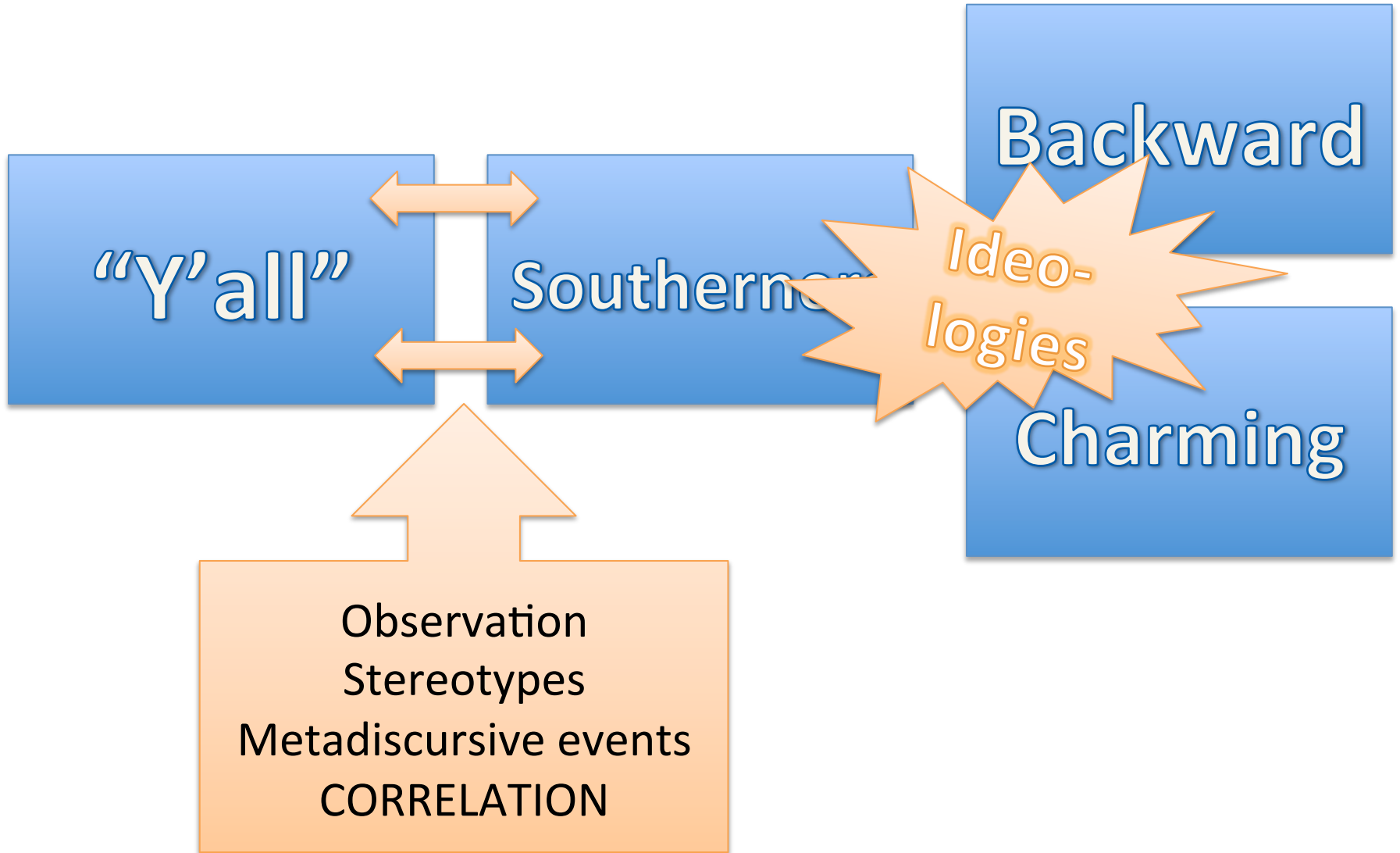
Merely a correlation?

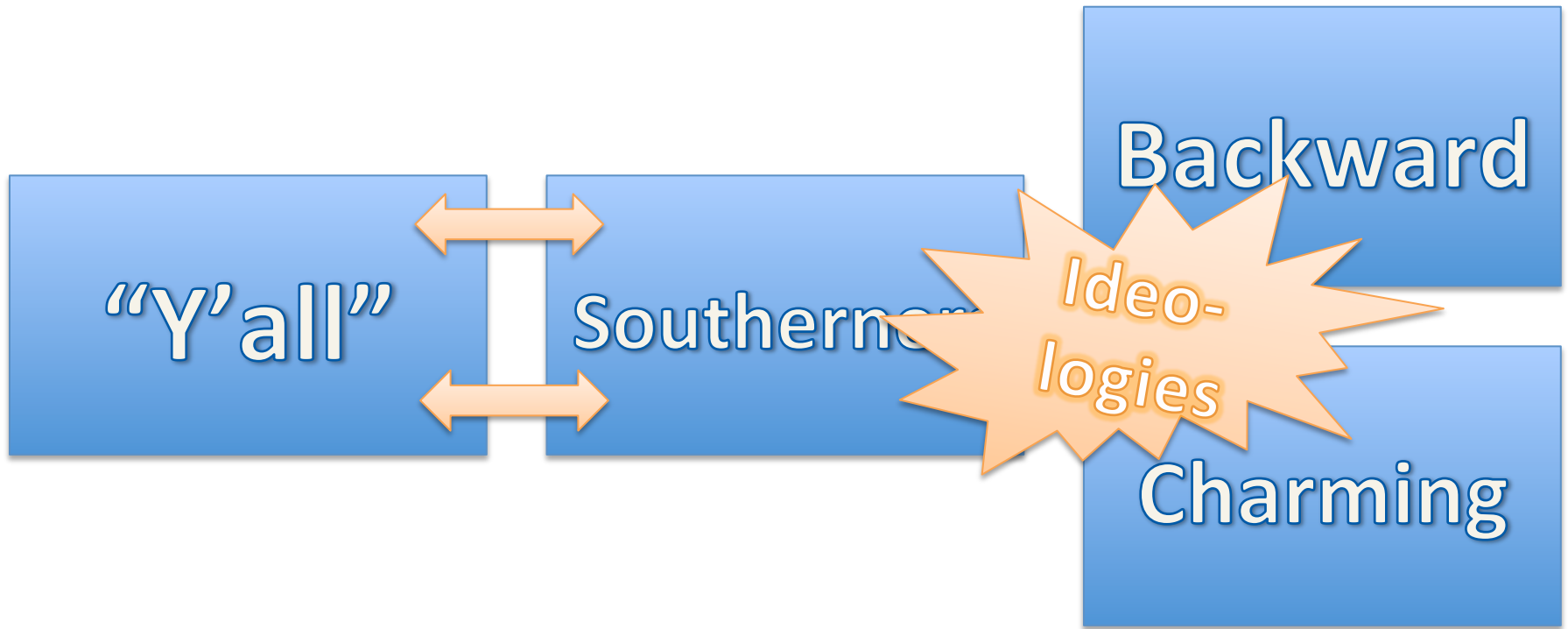
So far we had “y’all = Southerners”

What does “Southernness” mean to you?

What experiences/artifacts created those beliefs in you? Be specific!

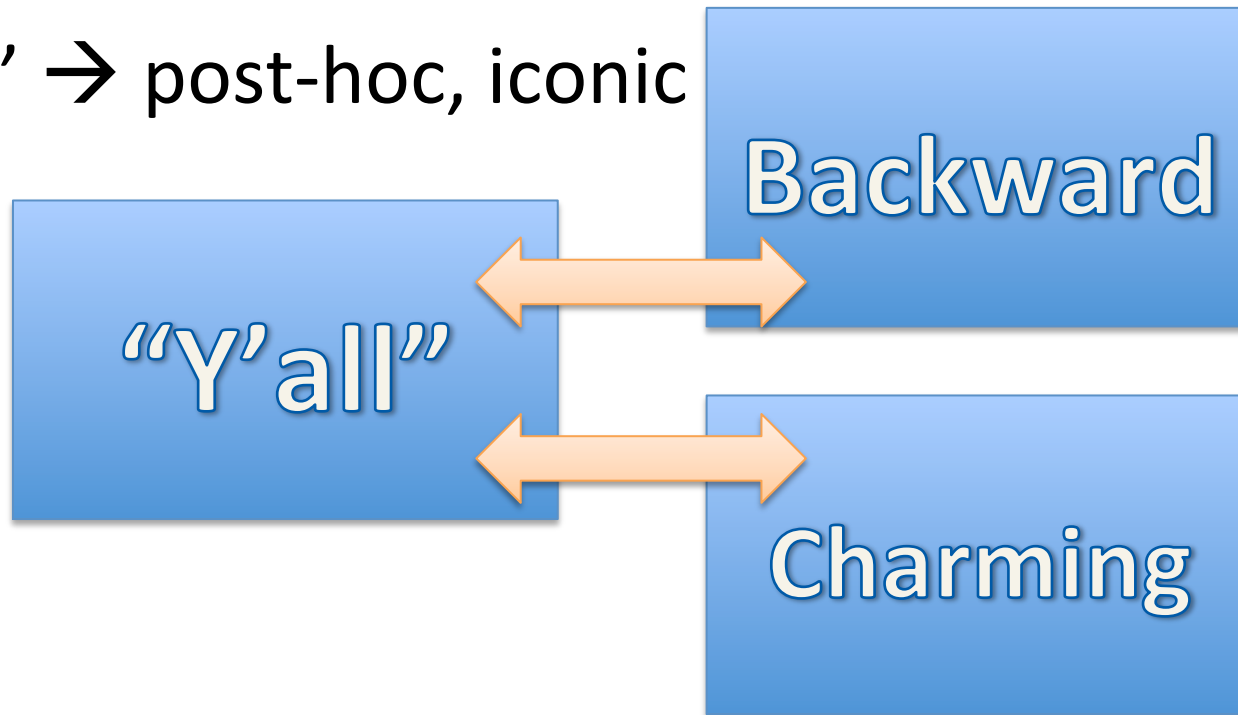
What processes are underway in this clip to shape what “Southernness” means?





"Y'all" can mean charmingness or backwardness now

“Drawl” → post-hoc, iconic



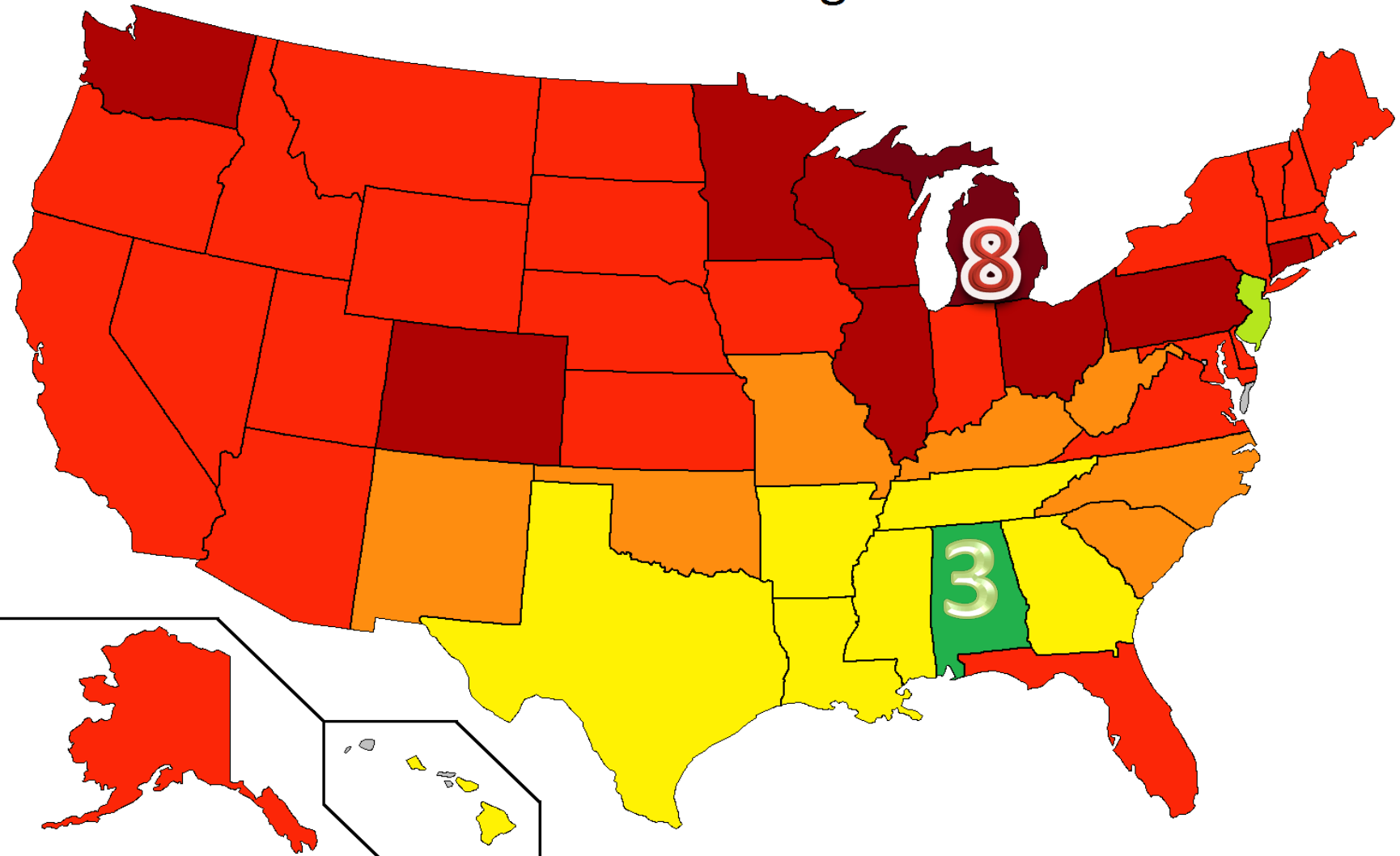
Now you can say things about language that
it’s less PC to say about the people- the
people are “erased”!

Perceptual dialectology

- What do people believe about language varieties?
 - Which ones and where?
 - What they “mean” (indexically)
- These beliefs often stand in for beliefs about people

Where do people speak the most 'correct' English?

Preston Michigan



South			North		
Rank	Attribute	Mean	Rank	Attribute	Mean
1	Casual	4.66	1	No drawl	5.11
2	Friendly	4.58	2	No twang	5.07
3	Down-to-earth	4.54	3	Normal	4.94
4	Polite	4.20	4	Smart	4.53
5	Not nasal	4.09	5	Good English	4.41
		*	6	Down-to-earth	4.19
6	Normal [Abnormal]	‡3.22	7	Fast	4.12
7	Smart [Dumb]	‡3.04	8	Educated	4.09
8	No twang [Twang]	‡2.96	9.5	Friendly	4.00
9	Good English [Bad Eng.]	‡2.86	9.5	Polite	4.00
10	Educated [Uneducated]	‡2.72	11	Not nasal	3.94
11	Fast [Slow]	‡2.42	12	Casual	3.53
12	No drawl [Drawl]	‡2.22			

Figure 20. Ratings for speech in the north (Area 2 in Figure 19) and South (Area 1 in Figure 19) for twelve attributes (Preston, 1999: 366)

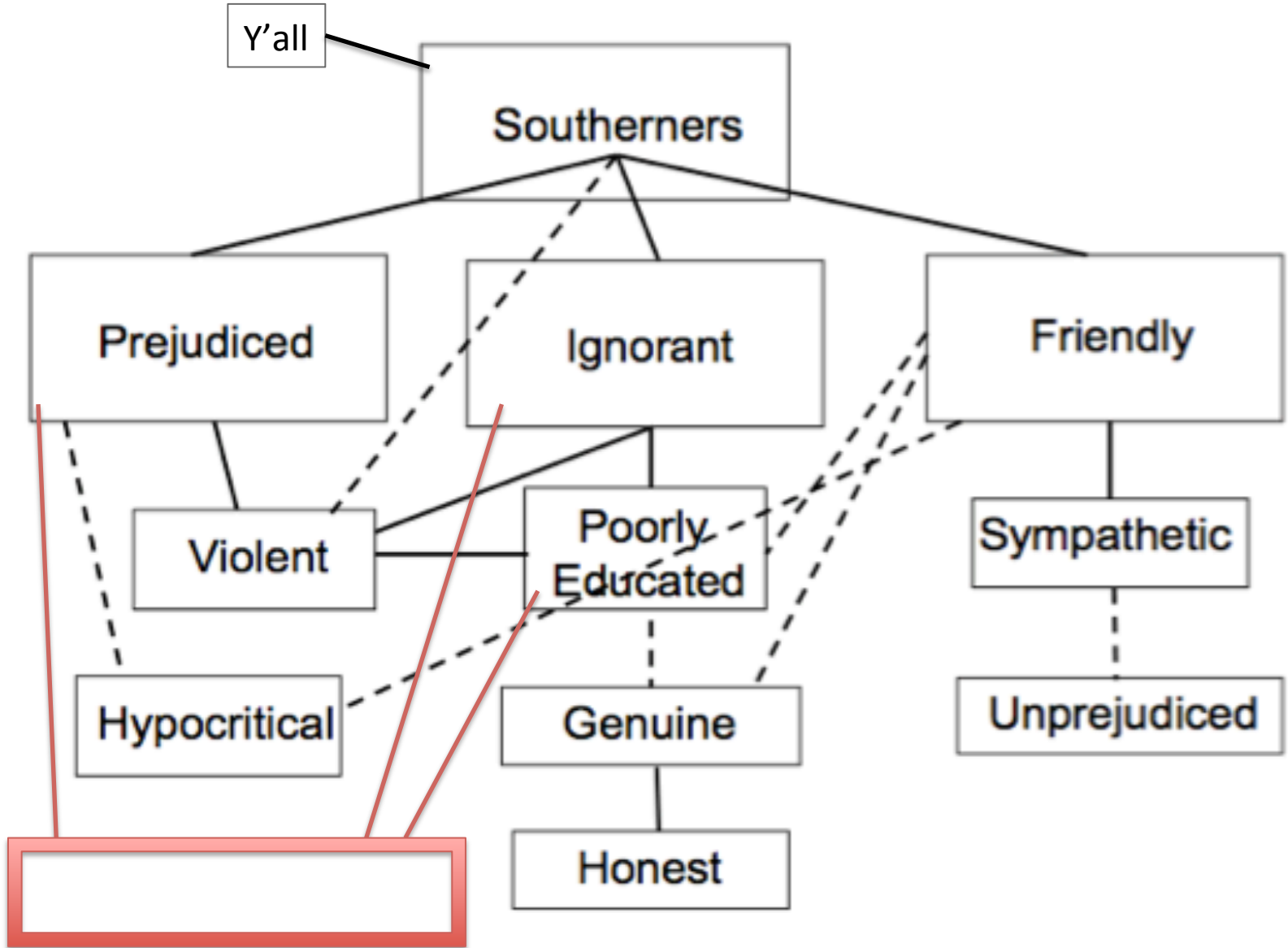
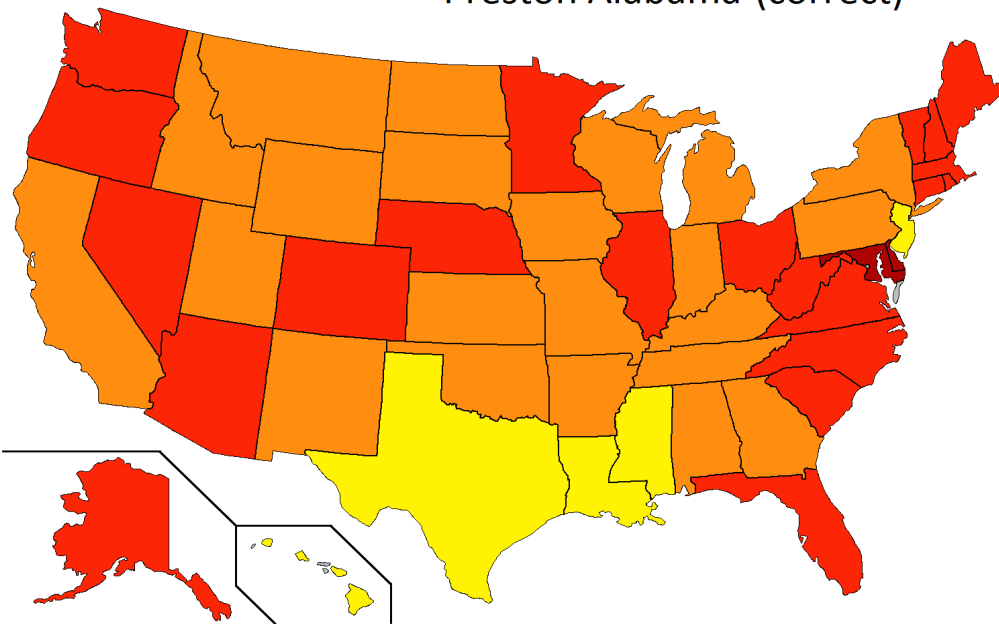


Figure 16. A hypothetical (partial) US regard network (or “attitudinal cognitorium,” see Figure 12) for a southern identity

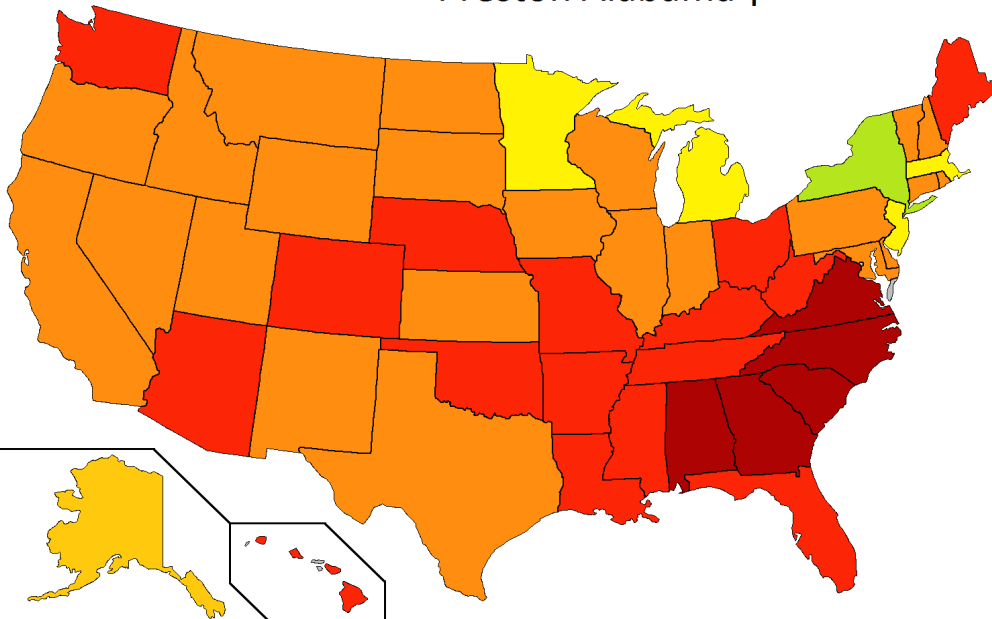
Preston Alabama (correct)



Michigan- Alabama language war

What do
Southerners think
of themselves?

Preston Alabama pleasant



Are Michiganders'
and Alabamans'
beliefs
symmetrical?

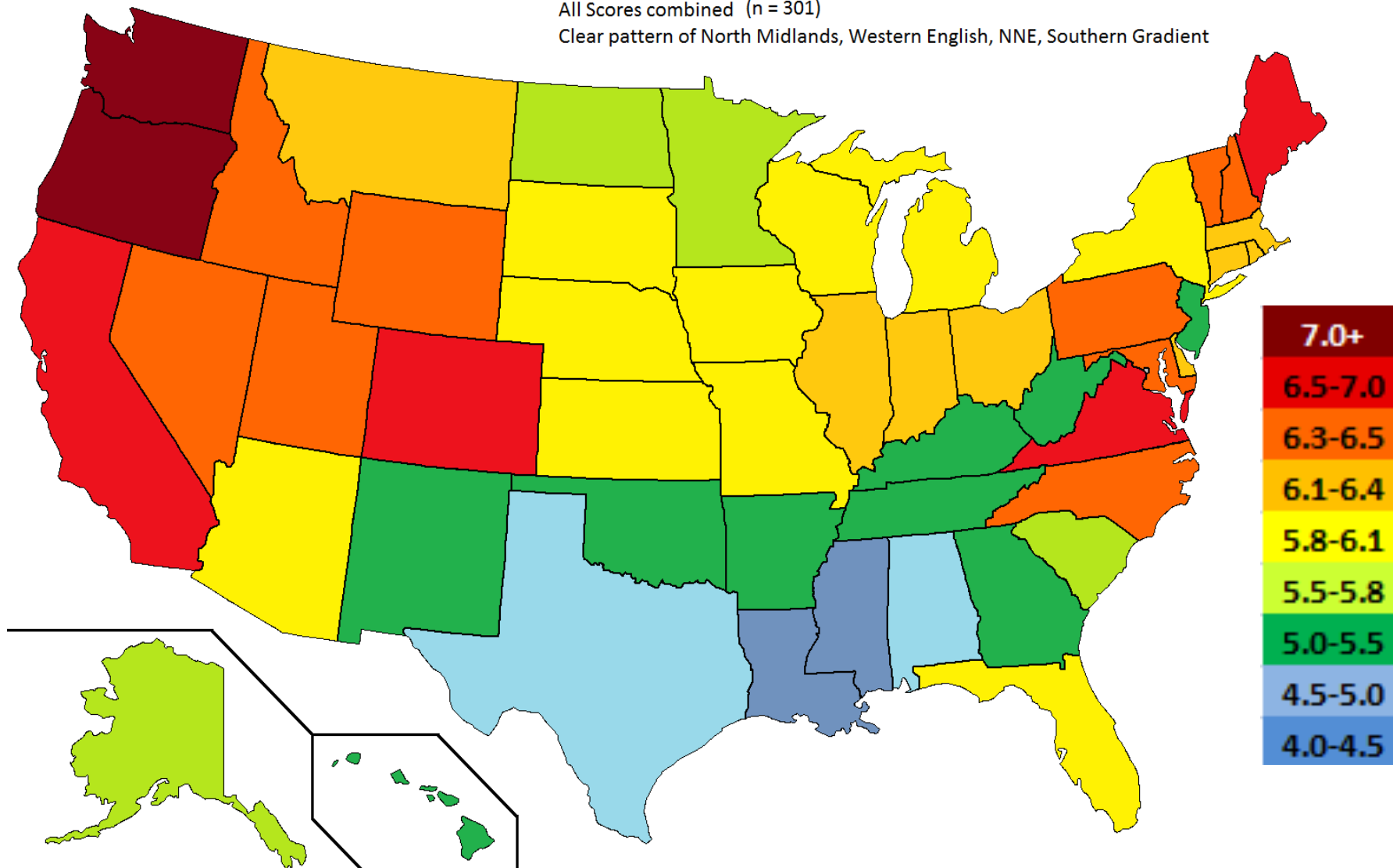
Why South Carolina?

- Alabamans thought it was more 'correct' than them yet equally 'pleasant'
- Low number of Alabama respondents, and those old maps have kept being used to represent the South

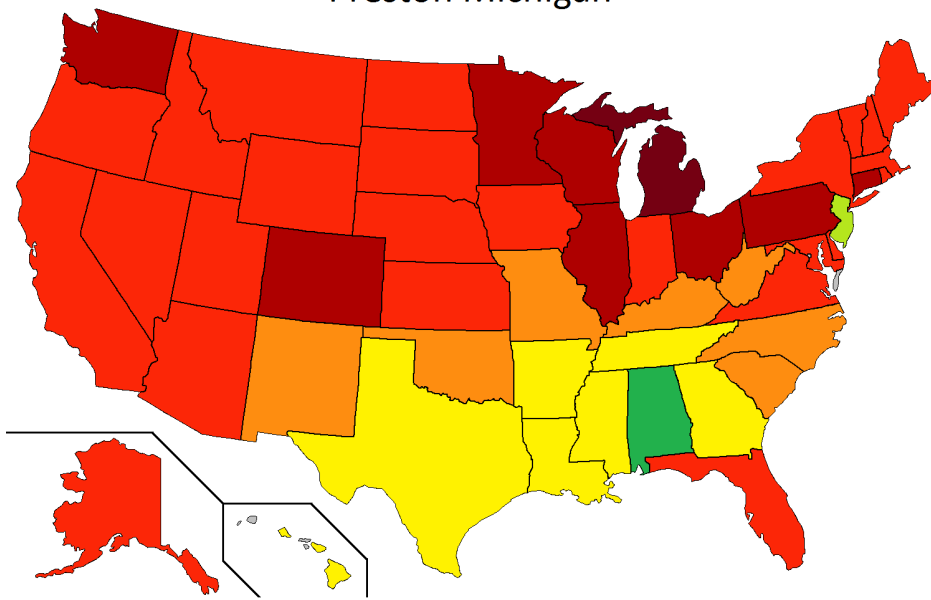
South Carolinians

All Scores combined (n = 301)

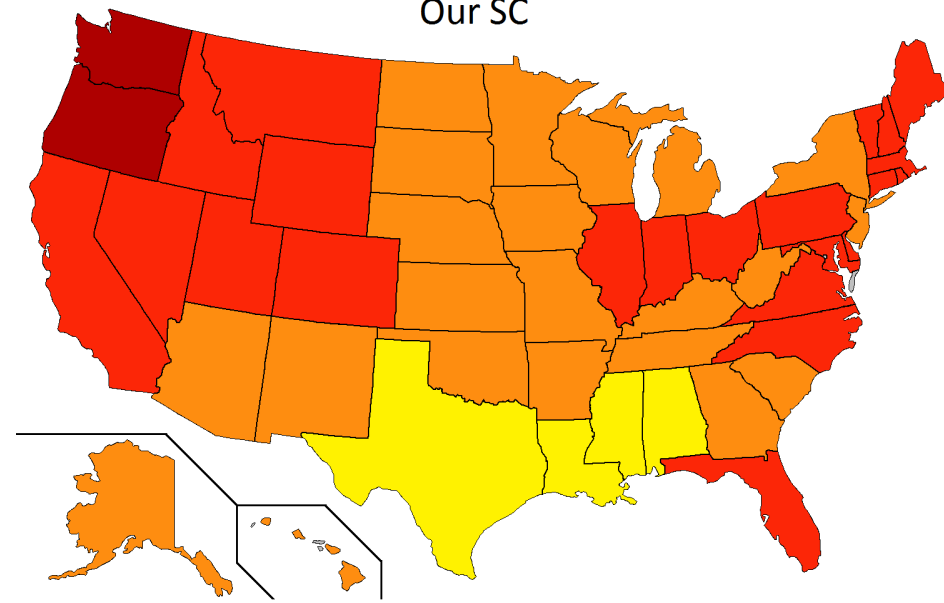
Clear pattern of North Midlands, Western English, NNE, Southern Gradient



Preston Michigan



Our SC

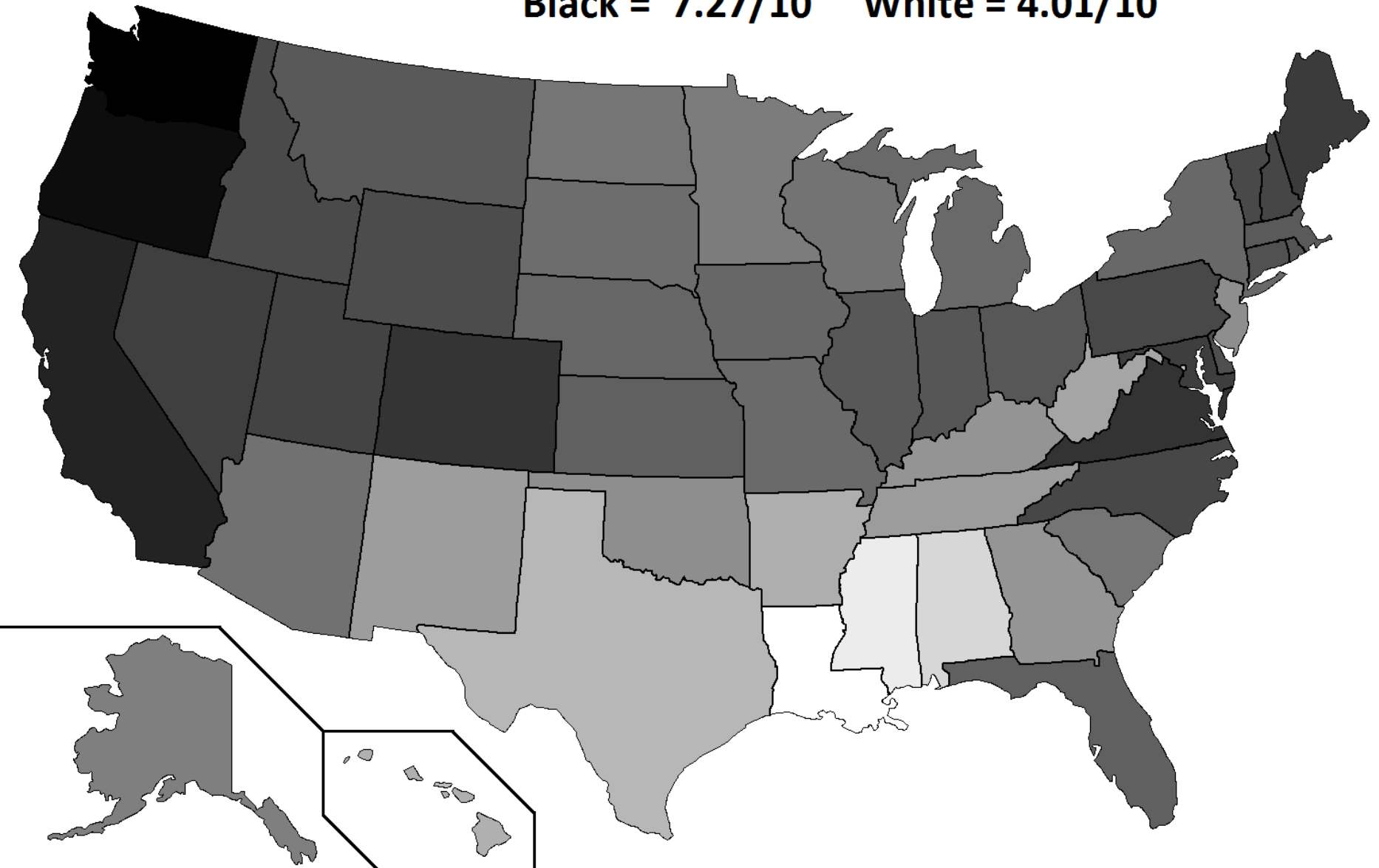


- Preston's (1998) Michiganders showed wider range of scores
- Northwest, Colorado, North Midlands shared highs
- New Jersey and AL/MS/LA shared lows
- Different treatment of Upper Great Lakes, North Midlands

All South Carolinians

absolute scale, n = 301

Black = 7.27/10 **White = 4.01/10**



Pacific Northwest

“no news” is
“good news”



North Midlands



“no news is good news”

What is the indexical value of:

“he run good”?

“he runs good”?

“He runs good” only means something because there is an opposition with “he run good”.

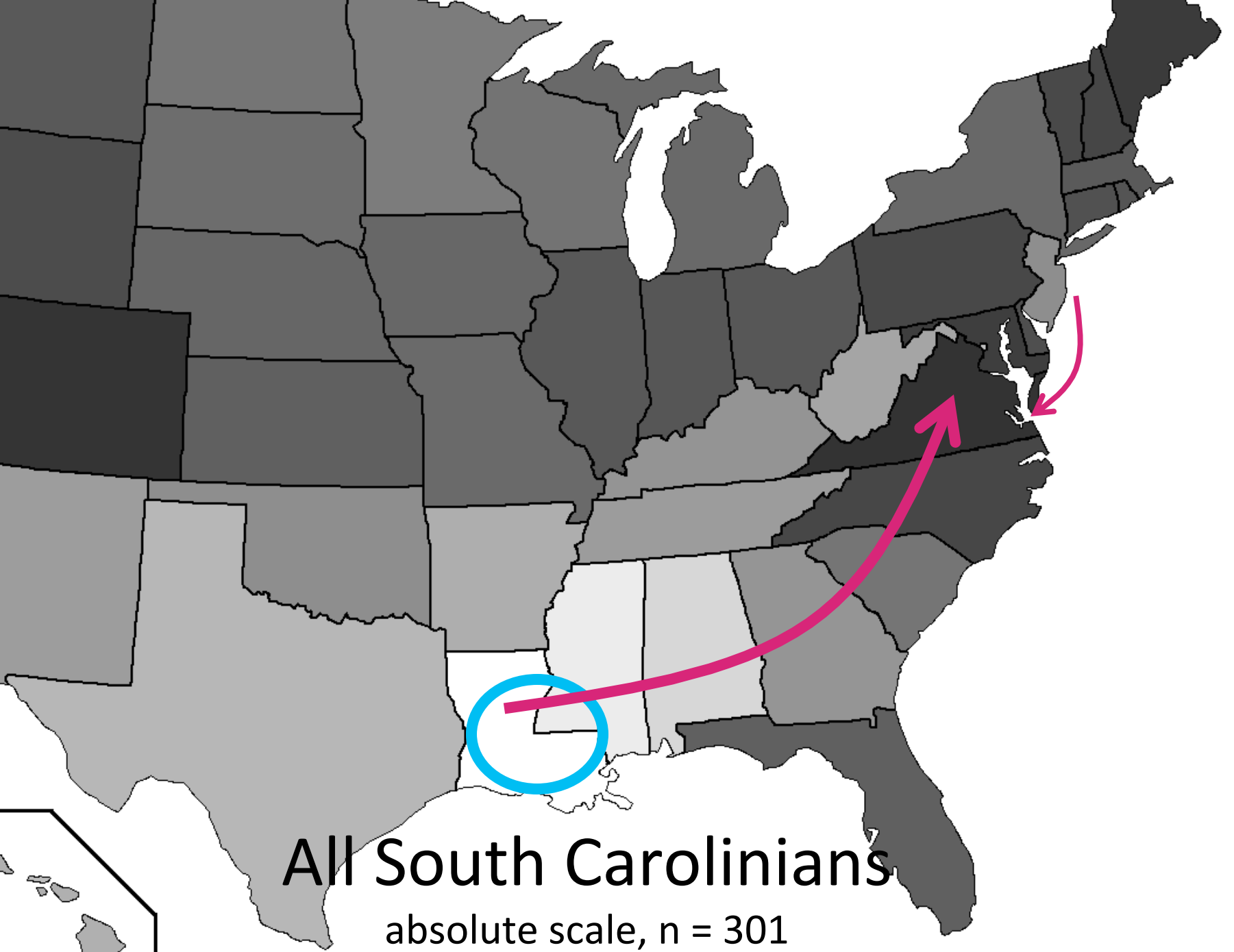
Washington is only “correct” because other places aren’t.



THINK THAT NORTHERN STATES WOULD BE BETTER AT ENGLISH

★ - INDICATES MAJOR STATES THAT HAVE BIG CITIES SEEM TO BE MORE DEVELOPED W/ ENGLISH.



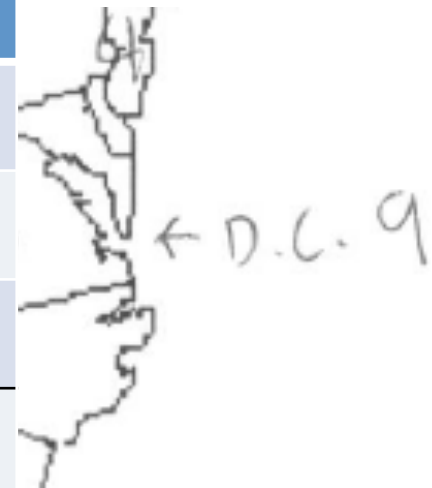


All South Carolinians

absolute scale, n = 301

Virginia apex (I-20 to I-95)

State	Score (n = 301)
LA	4.01
MS	4.25 (+0.24)
AL	4.52 (+0.27)
GA	5.37 (+0.85)
SC	5.77 (+0.40)
NC	6.36 (+0.59)
VA	6.62 (+0.26)
MD	6.48 (-0.14)
PA	6.35 (-0.13)
NJ	5.45 (-0.90)



South, but not the “wrong kind” of Southern



alot of French influence
Can't understand them

5 3 5 6
2 Mex 2
French

Conflicted beliefs

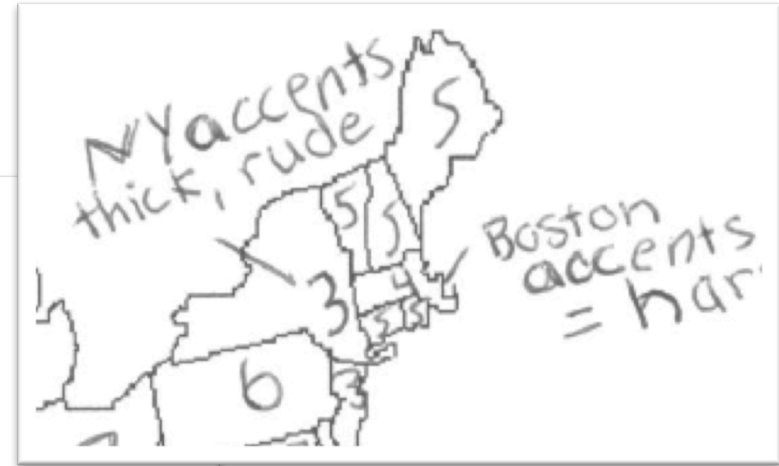
Linguistically secure SC'ians

- More secure about America's language in general (6.82 vs. 5.92)
- MN/WI/IA/MI = the anti-SC?



Linguistically secure SC'ians

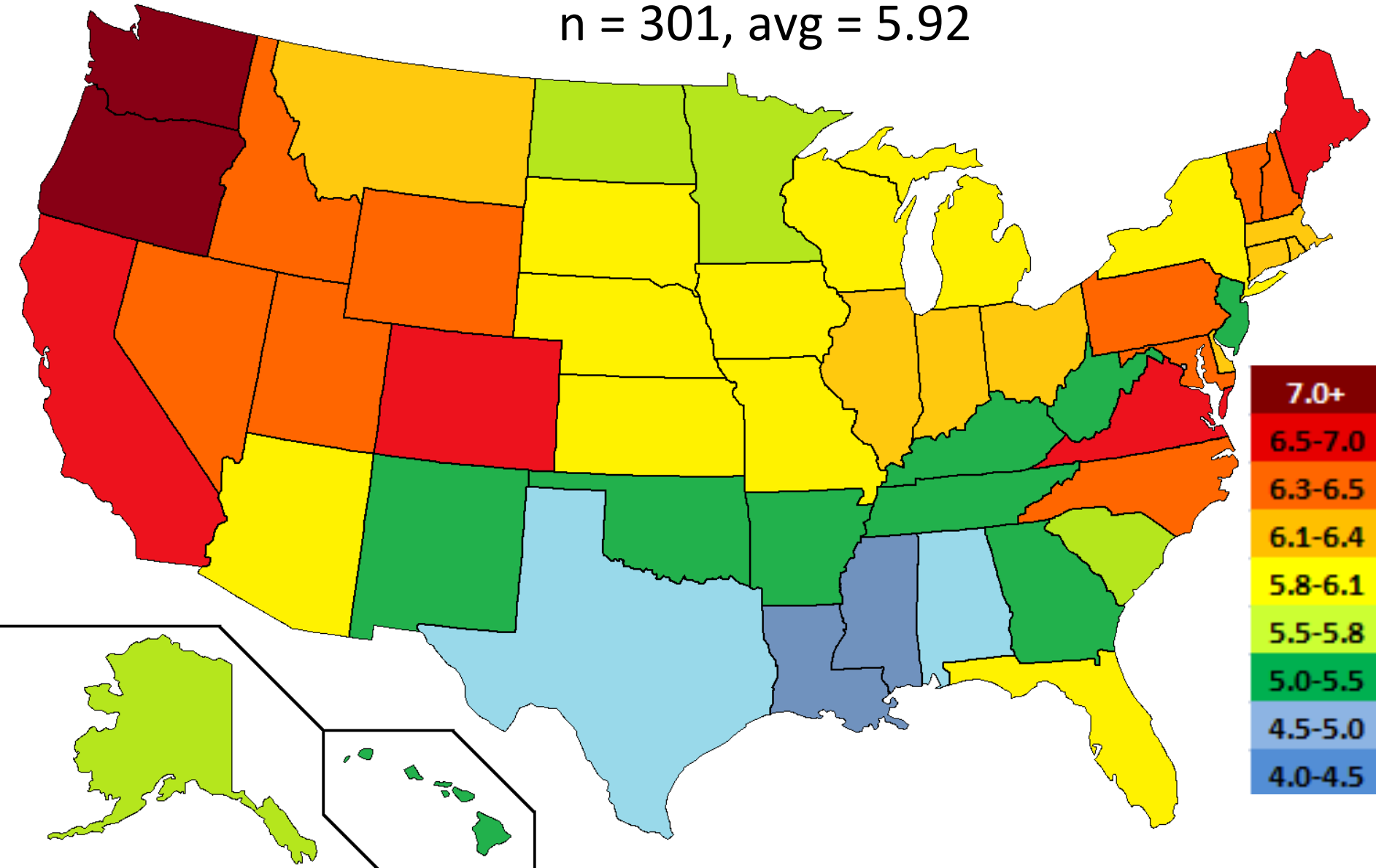
- NY/NJ = another anti-SC?



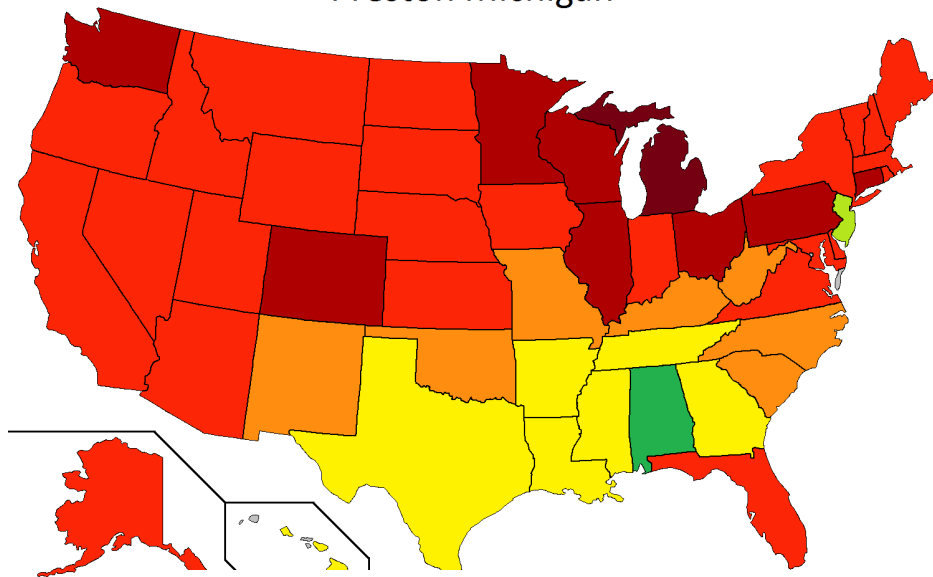
All South Carolinians

choropleth map,

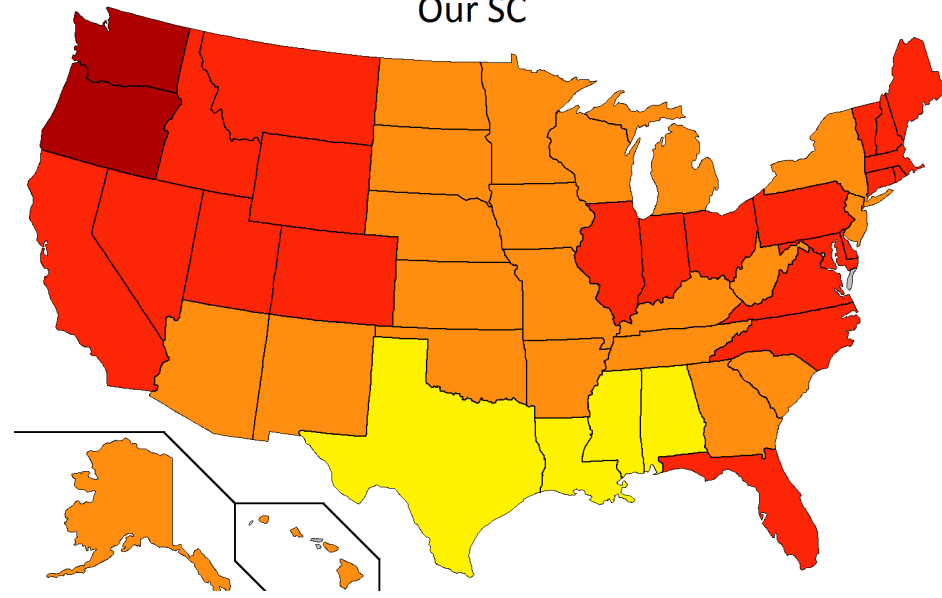
n = 301, avg = 5.92



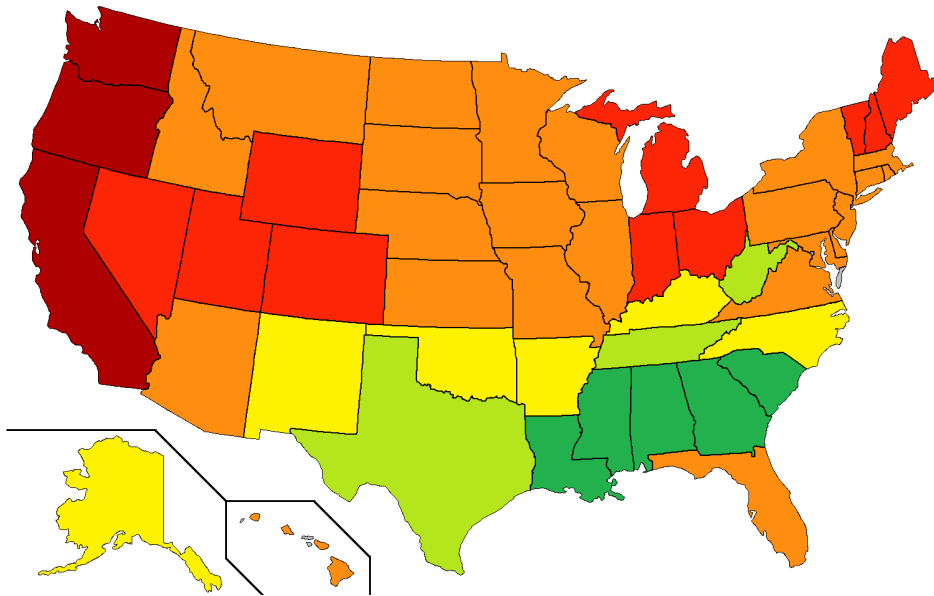
Preston Michigan



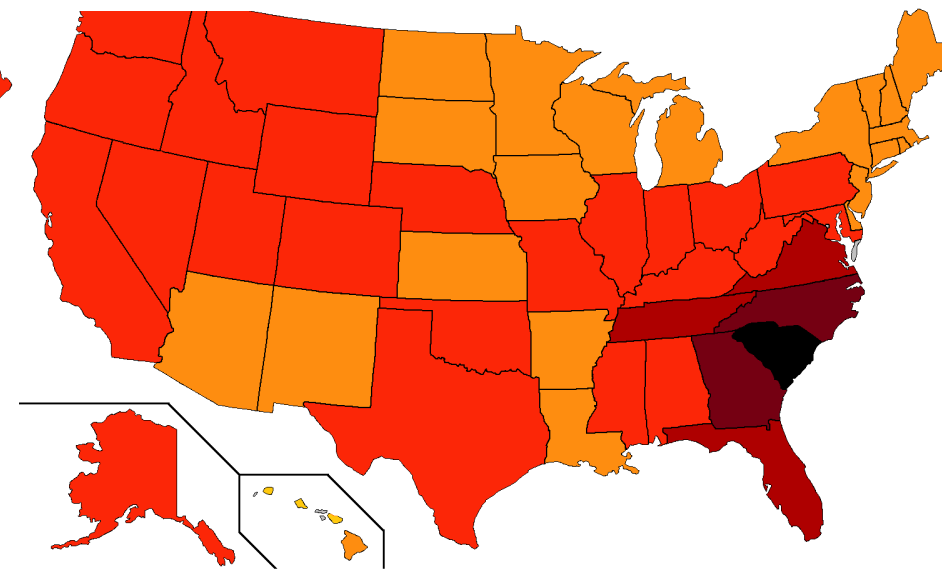
Our SC



- Preston's Michigan similar to insecure South Carolinians
- Secure South Carolinians spread security more broadly than Preston's Michiganders



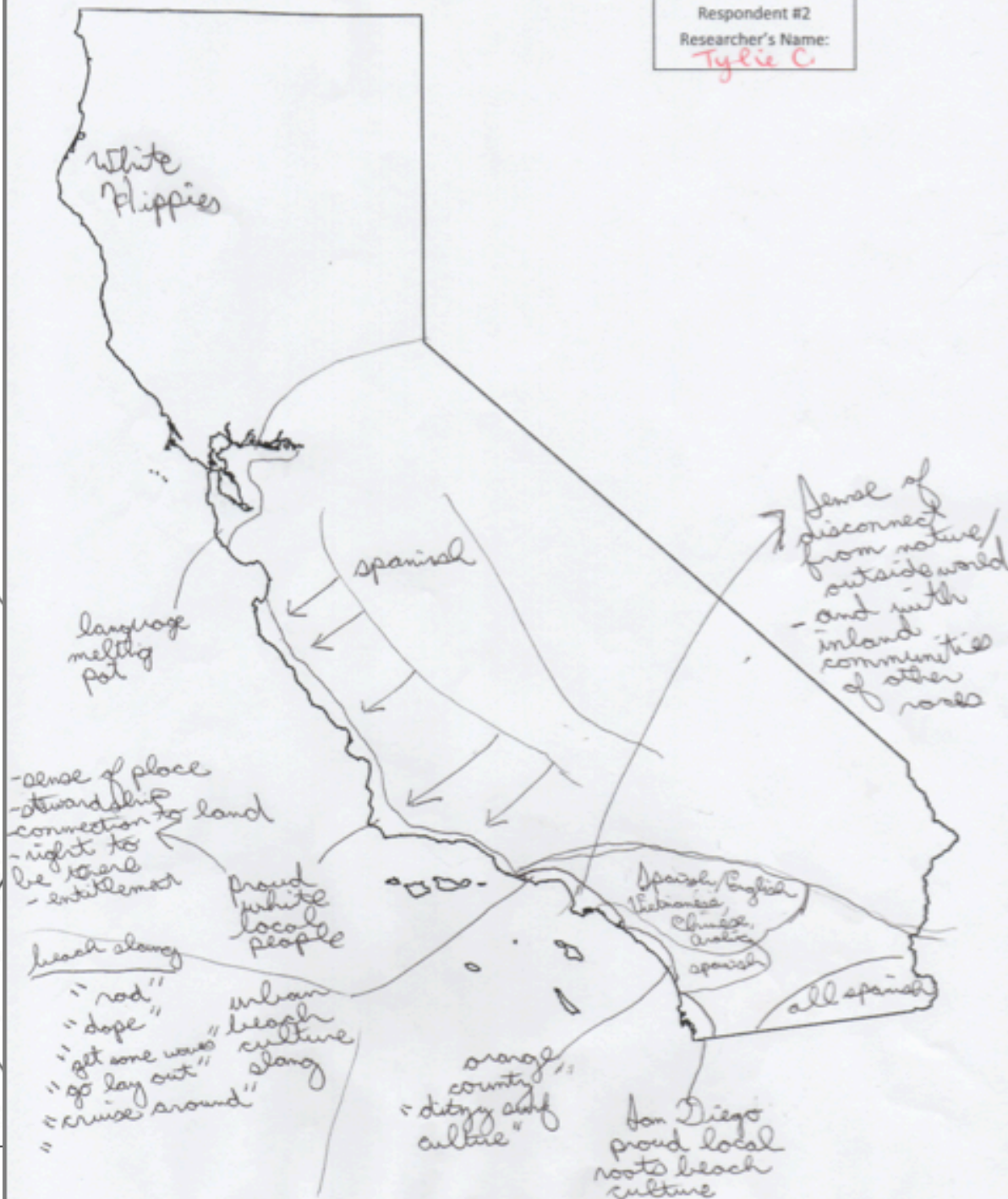
Our SC insecure



Our SC secure

What did you guys find in California?

- Where were high numbers?
- Where were low ones?



Y'all learned what "y'all" means – what does "hella" mean?

- A linguistic form
- A correlation between the form and people
- Ideologies about those people's attributes
- People get erased
- Form = attributes
- Form can be used to perform those attributes