A Cartographic Depiction and Exploration of the Boy Scouts of America's Historical
Membership Patterns

BY
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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the historical membership patterns of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) on a regional and council scale. Using Annual Report data, maps were created to show membership patterns within the BSA's 12 regions, and over 300 councils when available. The examination of maps reveals the membership impacts of internal and external policy changes upon the Boy Scouts of America. The maps also show how American cultural shifts have impacted the BSA. After reviewing this thesis, the reader should have a greater understanding of the creation, growth, dispersion, and eventual decline in membership of the Boy Scouts of America. Due to the popularity of the organization, and its long history, the reader may also glean some information about American culture in the 20th century as viewed through the lens of the BSA's rise and fall in popularity.

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A Listing of Terms/Acronym

AYP   -- Annual Youth Population

ABC   -- Annual Boy Crop

BP   -- Robert Baden-Powell

BSA   -- Boy Scouts of America

GSUSA   -- Girl Scouts of the United States of America, commonly known as Girl Scouts

LCI   -- Local Council Index

LDS   -- The Church of Jesus Chris of Latter-day Saints

OA   -- Order of the Arrow

WOSM   – World Organization of the Scouting Movement

YMCA   – Young Men's Christian Association

Unless otherwise indicated, The Boy Scouts of America may be shortened to *Boy Scouts*, *Scouting*, and *BSA* within this text. Any reference to the International Scouting Movement or Scouting as founded by Lord Baden-Powell and its subsequent international branches will be clearly denoted.

Scouting Density refers to the Scouting membership in a region in comparison to the maximum membership possible in that region. It is not a reference to the land area represented in the mapping polygons.

Scoutmaster or *Scouter* pertains to adult leaders within a troop, pack, or other Scouting unit, and is separate from youth members

Key Words: Scale, Boy Scouts of America, Mapping, Membership Patterns, Thiessen Polygons

Author's Preface

Although I completed all of Cub Scouting, I only lasted in the Boy Scouts for a few months. I did not become interested in studying the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) until I worked at Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico as an adult. Philmont is the BSA's largest high adventure base, and the largest youth camp in the world, consisting of 214 square miles in the New Mexican Rock Mountains and playing host to nearly 30, 000 Scouts annually. I served on staff for seven summers and witnessed record breaking attendance nearly every year. Scouting seemed vibrant and healthy when observed at Philmont, but folks there were confident that Scouting was in trouble. It is that discrepancy that led to this thesis. Although I grew up in the Cub Scouts and have spent most of my collegiate summers working for the organization, I have attempted to minimize my pro-Scouting bias in this thesis wherever possible. There is a concluding paragraph that includes my opinions about the future of Scouting which should be clearly identifiable to the reader.

Introduction

Previous studies of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) have treated the organization as either a nationally homogeneous group or as separate case studies focused on individual troops. This thesis observes the BSA through a greater range of scales and so fills a vacancy in the literature on the organization. It explores the national and, to some extent, the local scale and also examines Scouting on a regional as well as council scale. For instance, regional-scale examination is critical to understanding Utah and the southern states. National-scale studies overlook the much higher membership of troops chartered through the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (known colloquially as the Mormon Church), and also do not account for lagging membership in the American South. Further west, rural vs. urban geography is apparent in Scouting patterns in states like Kansas and Texas. In cities in those states, Scouting is popular, while in more rural areas, it is difficult to find enough youth to form a troop.

Council-scale study is also valuable. Historically, the shift of middle class white families from city centers to suburban areas significantly changed the demographics of council membership in the 1950s and 1960s; this demographic shift is difficult to show using national or even regional scales. The resulting high membership in the suburbs and low membership in city centers has been felt in large metropolitan areas for the last sixty years and has contributed to measurable changes in BSA policy. Parsing through data on the regional and council scales and using that data to create maps of spatial patterns of changing membership is integral to understanding how the BSA has grown, changed, and sometimes withered along with shifts in American culture. For example, religion is a part of culture that impacts the BSA unevenly across the United States. The Boy Scouts of America is closely tied with religious organizations

and is uniquely reliant on chartering partnerships with local churches, mosques, and temples for

sponsors and meeting places. Therefore, regions with prominent religious organizations that

promote BSA membership to their constituents and leaders trend toward a larger membership

than regions with prominent religious organizations that do not make the BSA a priority.

Politics also affects the BSA unequally. For example, states such as California have gone

as far as to impose restrictions on judges and city fire departments to keep them from being

active in the BSA because of its then-current policies in regard to openly gay Scouts and

scoutmasters. There are several ways the BSA has been politicized throughout its history; the

California example is a relatively new trend but could influence membership in the future.

Adding new scales of study to the discourse on the BSA over its history is the backbone

of this thesis. The Boy Scouts of America has been asymmetrically affected by several different

facets of culture over its history: volunteerism, race, wealth inequity, and patriotism are just a

few that will be examined in this thesis. By diving into the organization's past at both coarse and

fine scales, a better understanding of their membership can be reached, not only regarding the

BSA's past and present situation, but also regarding its future.

The factors that drive BSA membership are constantly evolving. New membership

policies, such as those admitting openly gay adults and youth, deserve further examination on the

regional and council scale. Further, the BSA needs to invest its time and money in exploring

regional- and council-scale effects of America's changing racial landscape. Scholars and

policymakers who treat the BSA as the same all over the country are certain to misunderstand the

complexity of the organization. Failure to examine the organization on a scale that includes the

intricacies of regions creates poor policymaking, which limits the effectiveness of the BSA to build membership and promote its vision for America's youth.

An Exploration of the Literature Regarding the Boy Scouts

The Boy Scouts of America has received plenty of attention from the academic community. Histories of the organization and its founders can be located with ease, both from the academic community (Rosenthal, 1986; Anderson, 2000; Hillcourt, 1964; Jeal, 2007; Rowan, 2007; Whitmore, 1970; Wadland, 1978) and directly through the BSA (Peterson, 1984; Wills, 2009). Valuable social studies of the BSA are harder to locate and are naturally specific to a field of study; sources are derived from an array of disciplines including, folklore and sociology (Kunz, 1969; Mechling, 2001), education (Pearlman, 2007; Hintz and Thomson, 2012), social capital (Putnam, 2000; Norris and Indlehart, 2003), environmental conservation (Marsden, 1998; Jordan, 2010), social history (Macleod, 1982; Macleod, 1983), political sciences (Arneil, 2010), and geography (Janssen, 2009; Gagen, 2004; Gagen, 2007; Cupers, 2008). Despite the breadth of these disciplines, the study of the BSA has never been explored on a regional or council scale by academics.

The Boy Scout movement has motivated an abundance of study around the world. The study of Baden-Powell's Scouting movement and the trappings of imperialism and empire in early 20th century Britain have attracted many scholars (Mills, 2013; Johnston, 2012; Rosenthal, 1986) who are interested in the origins of Baden-Powell's youth movement amidst a crisis of masculinity and the insecurities of the British Empire. However, this project focuses on the geographic distribution and history of the Boys Scouts of America and touches on Baden-

Powell's Scouting movement only insofar as it led to the birth of the BSA. The next section covers academic literature that deals with the Boy Scouts of America, with specific attention applied to works pertaining to the history or geography of the movement.

Studies on the Boy Scouts of America

The Boy Scouts of America generally has been understudied by geographers, although there is some work from the discipline. Discussing pedagogical methodology in teaching human geography to undergraduate students, Chacko (2005) shows that using youth movements as a focus of study (including the BSA as one of the examples) can assist students in relating to the field of human geography. Cupers (2008) provides a comparison of camp layouts and constructing nationalism/individuality in "Governing through Nature: Camps and Youth Movements in Interwar Germany and the United States." Cupers relates the motivations of youth organizations in Germany as compared to the Boy Scouts of America, and what the construction of summer camps reveals about those organizations' goals for the youth and therefore the future of the nation. Gagen (2004, 2007) explored the construction of masculinity in reaction to the progressive movement, while Janssen (2009) studied the construction of bodies and maturities in relation to space. Neither of Gagen's works treats the Boy Scouts of America as the primary subject but they do frame the BSA as a reaction to the climate of the period (Gagen, 2004; Gagen, 2007). Using the British model as an example, although much of the work is comparable within the BSA, (Mills, 2013) dissects citizenship training in the non-formal, non-school, non-traditional world of scouting. The works of Mills, Gagen, and Janssen illustrate how most analysis of the Boy Scouts of America has treated the organization as homogenous

nationally – that all parts of the country experience membership fluctuation equally, which is simply not the case.

Some of the most influential work informing this research has been produced by academic practitioners in fields outside geography. The single most important source for this project outside of the Annual Reports and Local Council Indices published by the BSA is David Macleod's *Building Character in the American Boy: The Boy Scouts, YMCA and their Forerunners* (1983). Macleod describes the cultural movements that progressive reformers were responding to in creating the YMCA and the Boy Scouts of America. He points to psychologist G. Stanley Hall's work on adolescence as providing the scientific basis for the Boy Scouts of America. Macleod uses information such as this to show how the Boy Scouts of America evolved from the same causes that gave rise to the popularity to the YMCA, and his breakdowns of Scouting demographics are more detailed in regards to age and race than in other studies. In that sense, his research is most similar to that undertaken here; this work expands on his by adding explanatory maps and regional/council evaluations of trends described at broader scales in his text.

The study of the Boy Scouts of America and the construction of masculinity and gender has been a recent popular trend in the social sciences. These studies pertain to this project through their depictions of an expanding policy of inclusion in Scouting from straight boys, to girls, and now to openly homosexual youth. One of the finest works about the Boy Scouts of America studies folklore and the construction of masculinity as observed at a scout camp in the high Sierras (Mechling, 2001). Mechling's book, *On My Honor*, shows how the policy of the Boy Scouts of America, the guidance of the scoutmaster, and the nature of boys combines to

construct masculinity. The author observed the camp for nine two-week periods between 1976 and 1999, and condensed all these observations in to one semi-fictionalized campout in order to make the book more accessible to the general reading public. *On My Honor* succeeds in separating the routine world of Scouting from the often politicized world of corporate Scouting and serves well as a counterpoint to the trend of studying the movement on a macro scale. Mechling's book stands out through its rigorous observation, its accessibility, and the conclusion that Scouting "happens" on a troop scale, lending agency to the scoutmasters and Scouts rather than promoting homogeneity under the premise of national office policy.

The comparative study of both likeminded and dissimilar youth movements is important to any examination of the Boy Scouts of America. Breakdowns of the demographics, policies, and outcomes of organizations like the Girl Scouts of America (GSUSA), 4-H Clubs, and Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) provide a glimpse into how society engages in creating similar groups with different populations and policies. To this end Barbara Arneil (2010) and Mary Rothschild (1981) have written separate comparisons of the Scouting movements for boys and girls. Rothschild compares the differences in policy and leadership in the first forty or so years in the two gendered organizations. Arneil's article is especially compelling in its evaluation of national membership and diverging trends from the 1980s onward through the contemporary period. Both point out the differences in each group's foundation as well as their divergence in the 1980s. Arniel and Rothschild show that the foundation of the BSA was a response to a panic over masculinity and empire; in contrast, the Girl Scouts found purpose in creating opportunities for girls beyond domestic life. The BSA originated in a position of

authority, while the Girl Scouts were more flexible and operated from the comparative fringe of society.

Just as Arneil discussed the initial correlations and subsequent divergence of BSA and GSUSA policy, the BSA policy of restricting membership to openly homosexual scouts and adults began to change. When Arneil (2010) published her article the BSA still had an ironclad restriction on open homosexuals as Scouts and as adult leaders. As recently as 2012 the Boy Scouts of America reaffirmed their position that open and avowed homosexuals did not represent appropriate role models for boys as promoted by Baden-Powell and James West; a position which was upheld in the California Supreme Court in 1998 and by the United States Supreme Court in 2000. The aftermath of those court cases is a major part of Arneil's analysis, as well as the basis for articles by Hostetler and Pynes (2000) and Jones (2001). These writers lambast the narrow mindedness of the BSA while some applaud the forward thinking policy shifts of GSUSA in the 1980s, which continues to adapt to changing times. However, the Boy Scouts are not without their defenders. Salzman (2001) and Donohue (1994) published defenses of the BSA's restrictive membership policies after the civil rights revolution of the 1970s. The newest wave in policy discussion has not penetrated academia yet, but it will shortly. The Boy Scouts of America voted in 2013 to allow gay boys in scouting, with the new policy going into effect on New Year's Day 2014. Early estimations of the effect of the rule shift appeared in articles in the *Chronicle of Philanthropy* authored by Donovan (2013), and Blum (2013). Research at the time indicated that regardless of the outcome of the vote on the proposed membership change, the BSA would lose donations from one end of the political spectrum or the other, and early statistics have upheld those predictions.

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Donations are one way to evaluate how important society deems an organization; another way is volunteer membership. Robert Putnam's book *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (2000) is authoritative regarding social capital in America since the end of the 19th century. The study of social capital, which is the investment of personal time to build interpersonal relationships within a community in order to strengthen social networks and therefore the community as a whole, has frequently been measured in volunteering and participation in organizations like the Boy Scouts of America. Works on social capital relate to the present research by studying the correlation between community involvement, volunteering, and organizational membership in the BSA. Times of high social capital inputs in Putnam's text correlate with times of high membership in the Boy Scouts of America. While Putnam also evaluated larger trends in American culture as well as other civic organizations, Polson et al. (2013) measured the effect of Scouting on encouraging its participants to become active members in their communities later in life. Their study investigated the correlation between a participant's time in scouting, and the degree that this formative experience affects the likelihood of community involvement as an adult. In a response to Putnam's text, Norris and Inglehart (2003) studied how gender influences social capital; their study included references to youth organizations like the BSA but did not measure the organization specifically. Their study concluded that a majority of volunteer organizations are strongly sex-segregated, and that the general characteristics of how men and women socialize differently has a tangible effect on their participation in community organizations. Norris and Inglehart showed that Putnam's analysis would have benefitted from considering gender. The work of Elizabeth Helbling (1986) explored what factors motivate volunteers to work in youth-serving organizations. By measuring

what these volunteers have in common, Helbling helped determine what traits volunteers find attractive in a youth-serving organization.

The backbone of the historical element of this paper comes from two in-house BSA sources. The BSA frequently produces histories of itself in-house in a format which I would refer to as "coffee table" books. Two of these are Peterson (1984) and Wills (2009), written for the 75th and 100th anniversaries of the BSA, respectively. Although not critical histories, these books are useful for a few reasons: they outline which history the BSA feels is important, they provide insight into the intentions of the BSA in reference to policy changes, and they outline a general history of the program. The books also include truncated biographies of the founders of the Scouting movement and the BSA, which for the scope of this project proved adequate.

Studies of the BSA's Founding Figures

In addition to the general histories of the BSA, the organization has tendered an abundance of biographical histories detailing the lives of its founding members. The originators of the Scouting movement domestically and abroad have secured their fair share of "Great Man" histories. The creators of the Boy Scout movement were reformers from the progressive era; but two were more responsible than the others for the imaginative and ideological construction of scouting. Robert Baden-Powell was vital to Scouting movement because he invented it with his book *Aids to Scouting and NCOS* in 1899. The Scouting movement was considered a visionary new approach to education, removing children from the formal classroom and thrusting them into the informal outdoors. The first author to address the subject of Robert Baden-Powell's life was William "Green Bar Bill" Hillcourt, a famous professional scouter who published a regular column in *Boys' Life* magazine. Originally published in 1964, the book has been reprinted since

and is popular among Scouting enthusiasts. The book is popular due to the support it receives from the Boy Scout movement, its uncritical appraisal of Baden-Powell's life, and the blessing it received from the widow of Robert Baden-Powell. Lady Olave Baden-Powell is listed as a co-author on the book, but it is safe to assume that Hillcourt did most of the heavy lifting. The foremost biographers of Robert Baden-Powell, however, are Michael Rosenthal (1986), William Hillcourt (1964), and Tim Jeal (1989 & 2007); their books are studies of the life and times of Baden-Powell. Jeal's books have the advantage of being the newest biographies of the Edwardian general and have benefitted from the works of his predecessors (Rosenthal, 1986; Hillcourt et al. 1964). At times, Rosenthal takes a more critical approach to Baden-Powell's life, offering evidence that the founder of Scouting may have been a suppressed homosexual; Jeal argues that the evidence put forth by Rosenthal is a reflection of the sexual modesty of the time more than anything at odds with modern BSA policy. As far as academic histories on Baden-Powell are concerned, the two by Jeal and the one by Rosenthal include the best research, citations, and appropriately critical perspective.

Ernest Thompson Seton is important to the history of Scouting for his celebrity, the inclusion of Indian lore in his Woodcraft Indians, and for his influence on Baden-Powell during the latter's construction of the Scouting movement in England. Seton's background as an author, illustrator, and naturalist all contributed to the attention he has received from academics. He is most well-known for his studies of animals, and although his work in youth movements is admirable, his most famous publication is *Wild Animals I Have Known* (1898). At one point in his career he was involved in an ideological conflict against the likes of naturalist John Burroughs and Teddy Roosevelt over the proper writing style of a naturalist. The tussle of

wordsmiths was known as the "Nature Fakers" debate (Fiamengo, 2010). There are numerous biographies of Seton and his work with the BSA (including Wadland, 1978 and Anderson, 2000). Seton was officially a part of the Boy Scouts of America from only 1910 through 1915 as the Chief Scout Executive; and his largest contribution to Scouting came from his Woodcraft Indian movement. The eventual merit badge system implemented by Baden-Powell is strikingly similar to the totem system incorporated in Seton's Woodcraft Indians (Morris, 1970).

Daniel Carter Beard in many ways is a parallel figure to Ernest Seton in that he was also an illustrator, a national celebrity, and a progressive era reformer interested in founding his own youth organization. Although Beard never engaged in an ethical debate with a president, as Seton had, he did illustrate the first edition of Mark Twain's book *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Similar to Seton's Woodcraft Indians, Beard founded the Sons of Daniel Boone, which substituted pioneering lore for Native American lore. Less academic work exists about this founder of the Scouts because he was not as notable beyond scouting. The dissertation of Allan Richard Whitmore in *Beard, Boys, and Buckskins: Daniel Carter Beard and the Preservation of the American Pioneer Tradition* (1970) is one of the few academic works detailing Beard's life.

If Baden-Powell, Beard, and Seton were the imagination behind American Scouting then James West was the muscle. West was the administrator who piloted the BSA from a small organization propped up by the YMCA to its eventual monopolization of the Scouting movement in America. Edward Rowan (2007) wrote a book covering the Chief Scout Executive's life and accomplishments; however, most information about West for this research was drawn from Peterson (1984) and Wills (2009). West's legacy with the BSA is vast, and still leaves a sizable

imprint today. West was responsible for translating the inherently nationalistic and empire

brandishing nature of Baden-Powell's Scouts into a uniquely American perspective by capturing

folklore from Beard's and Seton's movements. He is an important figure to understand in

relation to this project due to his sizable contribution in securing a future for the BSA as well as

his significant policy crafting that is still at the forefront of the culture wars involving the BSA

today.

Various fields have produced literature reinforcing the importance of non-formal

education, including the geosciences (Hintz and Thompson, 2012), mining (Meyer, 2012), and

agriculture (Terry, 2013). Terry finds that from the time of the first merit badges to today,

agricultural badges have not been as popular as those required for rank advancement, or those

that stress outdoor recreation. In his study he discusses the discrepancy in attention that the BSA

pays to urban and rural boys by examining the number of agricultural merit badges. Terry also

notes that some merit badges are mandatory for rank advancement and because all of the

agricultural merit badges are not required to move up in the ranks, they do not have as many

participants as first aid, swimming, or cooking. The BSA expanded the number of agricultural

merit badges in the 1920s, following the formation of the Department of Rural Scouting in 1928.

Chief Executive Scout West called the new merit badges "of particular interest to rural and farm

boys." However, agricultural merit badges, designed primarily for rural boys, were never made

requirements for advancement, and subsequently are not as popular as some other merit badges;

over the entirety of BSA history only two merit badges that could be considered agricultural

have been awarded more than one million times (Terry, 2013).

Thesis Goal

As noted, there has been a limited literature on the Boy Scouts of America undertaken by geographers, and histories on the organization either focus on the first few decades and the ramifications of the Progressive era or are authored by amateur historians interested in the story and mythology of scouting. This thesis aims to shoehorn itself somewhere between the two disciplines of geography and history by creating and exploring maps of the historical membership patterns of the BSA, thereby contributing to a historical geography, if you will, of this important American institution. The underlying framework of this thesis is to use membership information from the Boy Scouts of America's Annual Reports and Local Council Index to generate maps of the distribution of membership. This thesis will add a new scale of study to the literature on the BSA, which has either been investigated in fine scale case studies of troops and camps, or at the national or global scales (Honeck, 2013). However, simply making recent maps of the current situation is not enough; I will also show maps throughout time to demonstrate how membership dynamics have changed since the BSA's inception in 1910, up through the most recent available figures in 2009. Membership data and the maps produced from them will be used as tools to visualize patterns of stability and change over time at a range of scales in an effort to better understand the dynamic drivers of participation in the BSA.

Data and Methods

From its inception the BSA has kept records of membership. Annual reports were kept as early as 1911 and became publicly available in 1916. Boys first registered in 1913, three years after its founding in 1910, but scoutmasters have been tallied from the very beginning. Today the Annual Report and the Local Council Index (LCI) are valuable tools for this research.

Unfortunately, the reports are only available in a print format and data must be entered by hand. The Local Council Index was first produced in 1971 – the report shows membership for each council across the country including officers, Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Tiger Cubs, Webelos, Explorer Scouts, Varsity Scouts, Venturing Scouts, and available youth populations for each of them. It is from these two reports that the data for mapping the evolution of the Boy Scouts of America was harvested. Table 1 below shows examples of the range of scales of the administrative units of the BSA.

Prior to 1971 the BSA only recorded data in its annual reports at a regional and national level. The onus of responsibility was on the councils to keep track of their own membership information and the resulting data were not collected by the national council. Council data were recorded in council offices but were not centralized at the national level. One council contacted in conjunction with this project

Scale	Smallest Example	Largest Example
Troop	Block	Town
District	Part of a Big City	Many Counties
Council	A Large City	Montana
Area	New York or Chicago	The Dakotas
Region	New York & New Jersey (1910-1969)	West of Rockies

Table 1: *Hierarchical scale of different units in the BSA from small to large.*

could only provide membership information back to when they switched to digital record keeping. National scale data are useful for determining major trends in the BSA, but regional level lacks the detail necessary to examine some finer geography such as rural versus urban participation in the BSA, however it is still significantly more valuable than just national scale data.

Two research trips were made to the Boy Scouts of America's National Headquarters in Irving, Texas in order to mine data from documents not available online or in digital format. The first trip, in the spring semester of 2014, yielded regional scale data every five years from 1911 to today. The second trip, in the fall semester of 2014, resulted in the collection of council scale data from 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001, and the most recent year of available data, 2009. The second trip was crucial, because the council level data provide a much greater level of detail (400 data points nationwide for council-level data versus 12 data points in the regional data) and are more useful in determining the forces driving membership within the BSA than any regional level map could disclose. Further fine-tuning of the datasets was performed after the trip to prepare them for entry into ArcGIS because none of the data included spatial information. The shapefiles for the maps of BSA regions were created by referencing maps found online (Annual Reports). Following the pattern obtained from the data, the regions primarily conform to state boundaries, occasionally crossing state lines but always sticking to county borders. In the most extreme example, Wyoming is sectioned off into four different regions even though it has only ever contained a handful of councils.

Annual Reports to Congress

The Boy Scouts of America has submitted a report to congress annually since the organization received a charter in 1916, defining it as a patriotic institution in America. Originally that report was a basic outline of membership and goals of the organization, nothing more than a pamphlet. The report has changed significantly from its original format to today's expanded version. The gathering and compilation of statistics have improved for the BSA, and more budget information is now included. The Annual Report is primarily a platform for the

Boy Scouts to promote itself to Congress for all the good work it is doing, and for outlining some of the concerns that the BSA has for the youth of America as well as the country in general. The BSA reports on its branches, major events in America, initiatives, and national service projects. In 1971 the Annual Report included a section titled The Local Council Index to show detailed membership data on councils to Congress, and allow Congressional Representatives to see how Scouting was doing in their districts. Eventually the Local Council Index was split out of the Annual Report and became a separate report. The Annual reports to Congress were the source for all maps prior to 1971. The Local Council Index, whether it was a part of the Annual Reports or not, was used to gather membership information for all maps dated 1971 or later. A majority of the Annual Reports can be accessed through the University of Kansas Library; missing reports were available at the BSA headquarters, including all Local Council Indices.

Local Council Index (LCI)

As described above, beginning in 1971 the BSA began printing a Local Council Index as part of The Annual Report to Congress. For the first time this document reported statistics on membership, available population, and location about every council across the country instead of reporting just the regional memberships. Utilizing the same information that had been available in past Annual Reports, but this time at a more detailed scale, maps showing membership in all the branches of Scouting are possible. In 2001 the BSA had only four regions, but each region included about 60 – 70 councils; mapping at the Council level means a much more detailed, informative, and compelling map. There are 410 additional data points in the 1971 map than there are in the 1966 map – this is due to the finer scale membership information available as a part of the Local Council Index. I recorded membership information for the Cub Scouts, Tiger

Cubs and Webelos, as well as Boy Scouts, Explorer Scouts and Venture Scouts. In addition, I recorded the Available Youth Population statistic kept by the BSA. The Available Youth Population tracks the number of youth that could potentially be enrolled in a Scouting program. For Venture Scouts it would be all boys and girls between 16 and 21 years old. For Tiger Cubs, it would be boys age 7. The Available Youth Population was used to normalize data. However, the way that the BSA has defined this statistic has changed over time. At times it has been an extrapolation of the population of 12-year-old boys, and at other times it has been 12-16 year olds. For this project, every effort was made to make the Available Youth Population consistent and comparable between all time periods.

Available Youth Population (AYP)

The Available Youth Population (AYP) data must be normalized in order to create ratio level data for purposes of comparison. This is important because councils come in different sizes. The largest councils have over one hundred times as many members as the smallest councils. These numbers come directly from the Annual Report and Local Council Index, when available; when they are not available from these sources, they are created from census data. The BSA reports its membership as displayed in Table 2; the Available Youth Population (AYP), the baseline for the participation percentages, does not include all available youth, but instead includes all youth that are likely to join. Some branches, like

BSA Branch	Age Range	Coed?	AYP
Tiger Cubs	7	No	7
Cub Scouts	8-10	No	8-10
Boy Scouts	11-18	No	11-13
Venture Scouts	14-21	Yes	14-16
Varsity Scouts	14-21	No	14-16

Table 2: Explaining the Available Youth Population (AYP) statistic in BSA Annual Reports and Local Council Indices.

Explorer Scouts, and eventually Venture Scouts, are co-ed, their membership statistics and AYP include boys and girls. The BSA assumes that if a youth has not joined Boy Scouts by age 14, or Venturing by age 17, then that youth is very unlikely to ever join Scouting. I have adjusted all of the Available Youth Populations to use the entire population of available youth for a branch, as opposed to the BSA method. As a result, the percentages I present in this project are lower than those presented in the Annual Reports and Local Council Indices. It is simpler to convert all of the different AYP and altered membership population measurement methods to this standard than to attempt to adjust to the BSA's modern AYP statistic.

Methodology (Mapping)

The next challenge was figuring out which was the best method to map all of the new data. The first, most obvious, solution would be to trace existing polygons of the councils to portray the membership. Unfortunately, this method is impossible considering time and resources for two reasons. First, the digitization process would be lengthy, arduous, and rely on approximations of county and state line adherence that are unknown. Secondly, the layout of councils has been an ever changing project for the BSA as it attempts to streamline administrative services to each of the councils. The trend for the last four decades has been to consolidate two councils into one so that they can streamline the structure of the council. This means that each of the maps for 1971 and later would need to be completely redone on an annual basis with the new council shapes. Not only would this be a huge investment of time, but no trustworthy example of the boundaries of these councils on a national scale could be found in all of my research. Because there are no reliable map resources to reference for these boundaries, the methodology laid out by the NHGIS (National Historic Geographic Information System) for

recreating or estimating boundaries does not work here (www.NHGIS.org).

Point-based graduate symbols were a potential solution for mapping the data from the Local Council Index. Using the points obtained from Wikipedia's Geohack service, each of the cities containing a council headquarters was mapped and is represented by the circles in Figure 1. Graduated circles representative of the Scouting participation within each council were created, using different size circles to represent a proportion of membership among the available youth population. However, this approach would leave the west barren – states like North Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming, could be devoid of any representation, even though there are definitely Boy Scouts in all of them, due to periods without a council headquartered within the state. A better solution would ideally incorporate representative polygons in order to place information in every part of the country where Boy Scouts are located.

Dot mapping using representative polygons – shapes that outline the approximate boundaries of a unit when creating an accurate outline that otherwise would be too time consuming or impossible due to lack of information – is another option for displaying data. Some options for creating the polygons required for dot mapping include tessellation (triangles, squares, or hexagons), weighted points, or using Thiessen polygons to approximate historic councils and
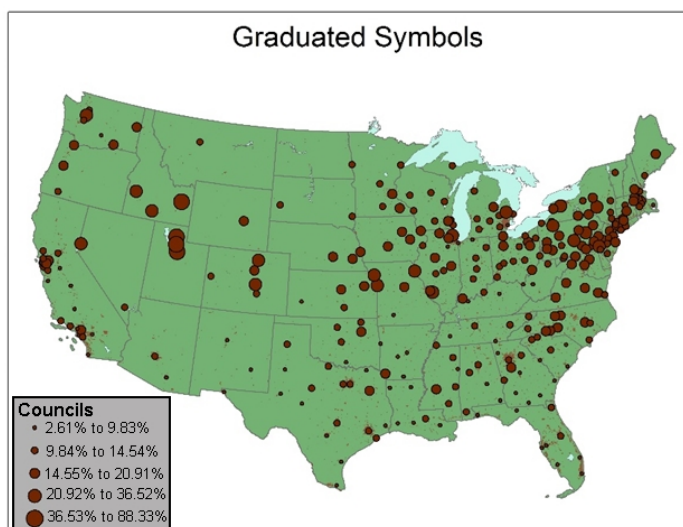

Figure 1: *Graduated symbols representing membership ratio Scouts/Available Boys. Points are the headquarter cities for each council.*

display data. Dot mapping with representative polygons compares a value within the attribute table randomly dispersed through the polygon layer, the higher the rate of the phenomena, the closer the dots are grouped (Gruver, 2014). Similar to the third option (and the one ultimately adopted), Thiessen polygons can be used to generate representative shapes for the councils. Thiessen polygons, which are also known as Dirichlet Regions (Domains) or Voronoi polygons, are shapes created from a layer of vector points (Boots, 1980; Mark, 1987). Connecting all of the points, and meeting the Delauney criterion, generates a Triangulated Irregular Network (TIN) and then bisecting the connecting lines creates the polygons. The value of these polygons is that any point within them is closer to the vector point it was created from than any other point in the network. Using Thiessen polygons to represent the councils is not a perfect method; however, it is essential to create polygons to fill the role of historical council shapes which are not available. Thiessen polygons retain the data from their point source in ArcGIS.

Even though the dot map does an excellent job of portraying the Boy Scout membership in space, it cannot normalize the data against available boy population. It correctly shows that there are more Boy Scouts in cities than in the country, but does a poor job showing which parts of rural areas have disproportionately higher Boy Scout membership than others. The largest problem with dot mapping is that it compares the membership data from the BSA to the area of the polygon and not to a base population. This means the charts can't be normalized.

Figure 2 and Figure 3 are both examples of dot maps. Figure 2 focuses on the Northeastern part of the United States to show how dot maps display urban areas (seen along the coast) and rural areas inland. Figure 3 gives a broader impression of how a dot map of the BSA would look over the entire continental

Figure 2: *Dot map example for the Northeastern Region of the United States, note how this mapping style is directly linked to the area of the Thiessen polygons from which it*

United States. Pay special attention to the open space in the west where it appears that Scouting has much lower participation than it actually does. Due to dot mapping's weighting based on area, instead of an available population, as in choropleth mapping, it was dismissed as an appropriate mapping method.

Figure 3: *Dot map of the United States*

A third method for displaying the data, shown in figure 5, is using the digitized points to create a choropleth map based around Thiessen polygons; the steps required to make this map are displayed below in figure 4 and discussed in detail in the next section.

Figure 4: *Step by step process for creating a Thiessen polygon map.*

Chosen Layout

I elected to use Thiessen
Polygons as the basis for Choropleth
maps. To use this method I needed to
select a method of defining numerical
breaks between classes. Originally I
chose to use modified Jenks-Fisher
Breaks in my maps. Fisher pioneered
natural breaks as an improved method

Figure 5: *The Northeast Region showing the value of weighted colors within Thiessen polygons.*

for determining statistically significant ways to divide data for analysis. His work focused on

minimizing variance within groups (Fisher, 1958). George Jenks expanded on Fisher's work by

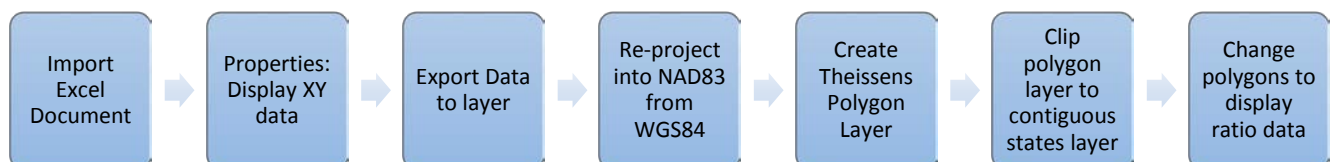improving the detail of Natural Breaks and specifically applying them to choropleth maps. Jenks'

study compared the natural breaks method to several other grouping methods (Jenks, 1971). By

calculating the error for each method by determining grouped differences from actual values, he

found that Natural Breaks were the most accurate. Using accuracy indices, he calculated a

modification to Natural Breaks that mathematically yielded the most accurate choropleth groups

possible (Jenks, 1971).

Although the Jenks-Fisher method is excellent for choosing the breaks in individual

maps, it is inconsistent when applied to a series of maps, since the break points change from map

to map, depending on the underlying data. After the first couple of rough drafts using the Jenks-

Fisher method, I switched to equal intervals between data levels to improve the ability to make

comparisons between similar maps in different years. For the projection, the Albers Contiguous

23

United States was used since it is familiar to many readers and provides more accurate area, for the contiguous United States. I decided to confine my mapping and analysis to the contiguous United States, because Alaska and Hawaii do not illustrate any significant trends that cannot be observed in the lower 48 states. I used NAD83 (North American Datum 1983) as my datum.

In sum, the data collection and management proved to be more arduous than initially anticipated. The largest surprise was that datasets were not accessible digitally and would need to be transferred by hand. The absence of maps in previous examinations of the Scouts in genuinely surprising. Perhaps because many of my sources were from BSA-associated authors or produced by the BSA itself, this perhaps was something the organization was not interested in promoting; or, more likely, the time it took for me to make these maps was something that the authors of the history texts did not care to pursue. It is disappointing that there are not membership data at a finer scale than regional until so late in the history of the Boy Scouts. Frustratingly, the 1916 map is on a state level, and then fidelity is reduced to a regional scale for the next 55 years in this research. That being said, the broad scale maps are useful, while the finer scale maps eventually improve the quality and detail of the project.

Chapter 2: Early Scouting

The decade leading up to the foundation of the BSA along with its first few years of operation was a dynamic time. The policies and values of founding members have entrenched themselves in BSA tradition over time and form the basis of many of the organization's modern controversies. Important early choices regarding gender, race, religion and other issues integral to regional- and council-scale membership over the next century were decided in the BSA's foundational years.

The Boy Scouts of America was born during the Progressive era in Britain in the mid to late 19th century. A reformist movement was responding to increasing urbanization due to factory work that drew country dwellers into cities. The movement's leaders were also concerned about how youth were spending their time. Diminishing outdoor play, shrinking adult supervision, and expanding hoodlumism led to the creation of programs to control boys' free time and to combat the perceived feminization of male youth, a trend known as the "Crisis of Masculinity."

Progressive era reformers were spurred on by the work of psychologist Granville Stanley Hall. David Macleod (1982) describes the importance of Hall's work: "Psychologist G. Stanley Hall introduced the term 'adolescent' around 1890, as a progression to maturity from 8-12…. 'The dawn of puberty… is soon followed by a stormy period, when the very worst and best impulses of the human soul struggle against each other….'" (Emphasis added, p. 8). Thus it was vital for progressives to influence youth during this formative period.

Reformers sought to create social control and structure for boys, structure that often originated from the time period's most notable public institution, the church. At the beginning of

the 1900s, youth-serving organizations were almost exclusively tied to religious organizations. The YMCA dominated for a time but smaller, more creatively named, organizations existed as well and often borrowed their naming conventions from their parent churches or medieval folklore. Robert Peterson (1984) describes boys' clubs at the turn of the century in America:

> "If a boy's family was church going and protestant he might join the Christian Endeavor, the Epworth League, the Baptist Young People's Union of the Southern Baptist convention, or perhaps one of the more colorful groups with names like the Circle of Ten, Knights of King Arthur, the Princely Knights of Character Castle, Brotherhood of St. Andrew, Knights of the Holy Grail, or the Young Crusaders of the Church Temperance League."

These groups were the predecessors of the Boy Scouts of America but failed to corral the interest of boys to the same extent. The Scouts were a revolutionary concept upon their introduction, clearly not for their attachment to religion or their concern with the wellbeing of boys, but for pedagogical choices, including the merit badge system and focus on outdoor adventure. A British-born but Canadian-raised young naturalist by the name of Ernest Thompson Seton was one of the founders of these revolutionary ideas.

Ernest Thompson Seton

Earnest Thompson Seton was born in England but raised on a farm in Ontario, Canada. He went on to become one of the most influential founders of the Boy Scouts of America. Seton was a trained naturalist and writer who published his first book, *The Mammals of Manitoba* (1886), at the age of 26. His breakthrough came in 1898 when he published *Wild Animals I Have Known* (1898). Seton accrued his wealth from his stories, and his stories accrued from his

love of the outdoors. He spent long stretches of time exploring the North American wilderness and had developed a reverence for the Native Americans who lived on the land before Europeans, specifically Shawnee Chief Tecumseh (Rosenthal, 1986).

When a group of local boys vandalized property on his estate, named Cos Cob in Connecticut, Seton invited them to join him on a campout, and he later established an annual summer camp. In 1902, he wrote a set of articles for *Ladies Home Journal* that illustrated how he taught ecology, hiking, camping, and American Indian lore to the boys. He called the organization the Woodcraft Indians, and their manual was titled the *Birch Bark Roll*. Seton's totem system was an innovation in youth-serving organizations, and it was such a success that six years later, Baden-Powell mirrored it when he created merit badges for the Scouting movement, with Seton's permission.

Dan Beard

Daniel Carter Beard grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1850. Dan Beard's first career was as a surveyor but he was also a skilled illustrator and writer, so much so that he was asked to illustrate the first edition of Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (Peterson, 1984; Wills, 2009). In June of 1905 he founded the Society of the Sons of Daniel Boone and, using his connections in publishing, he advertised the program to boys and their parents. Unlike the Woodcraft Indians, the Sons of Daniel Boone mythologized pioneers instead of Native Americans (Wills, 2009). Beard's illustration and storytelling talents were admired by Baden-Powell, but the Sons of Daniel Boone's greatest influence was upon the Boy Scouts of America, not the British Scouting movement. The similarities between the Sons of Daniel Boone and the Woodcraft Indians to the Scouting movement founded by Baden-Powell illustrate

the importance of men like Beard and Seton in the pedagogical foundation of the Scouting

movement. Seton's and Beard's teachings on self-reliance, Native American lore, the pioneer

spirit, as well as physical skills like knot tying, campfire management, hiking, and camping were

fundamental contributions. Both Beard and Seton both would go on to hold leadership positions

in the Boy Scouts of America, which used their celebrity and experience to grow membership.

The founder of the worldwide Scouting movement, however, was not an American, but a British

war hero.

Robert Baden-Powell

Born and raised in London, Robert Baden-Powell was the eldest son in an upper-class

family. He attended a private school named Charterhouse and earned an officer's commission

after graduating (Jeal, 2007). During his 34 years in the Army he fought throughout the British

Empire including in the Afghan Wars, on the Indian subcontinent, and campaigns in Africa

fighting the Ashanti, Matabeles, and Zulus (Peterson, 1984). The defining moment of Robert

Baden-Powell's career came in 1899, when he was posted in South Africa to deter a revolution

by the Dutch Settlers (or Boers) in the Transvaal Republic (Jeal, 2007). Colonel Baden-Powell

was taken under siege by approximately 7,000 Boers; his force of 700 was no match, so Baden-

Powell secured Mafeking as a fortress and prepared to wait out the siege. Public support for the

war grew back home in England where the "Siege of Mafeking" was national news. Frequent

updates in the paper made Baden-Powell a national celebrity and labeled him a certified hero and

defender of the crown. Despite his disadvantage, BP's forces lasted 217 days until a rescue force

relieved the pressure.

Just prior to the siege Baden-Powell had published a book entitled *Aids to Scouting and*

NCOs (Baden-Powell, 1899). The book was intended as a training manual for the military. Baden-Powell was frustrated at a general lack of masculinity among the troops and wrote his book to remedy their slack physiques and wilderness survival skills; he was responding to the "Crisis of Masculinity" that reformers across America and Europe were concerned with (Jeal, 2007). Upon his return to England, Baden-Powell learned that his *Aids to Scouting and NCOs* instructional pamphlet was being used by boys across the country as a guide to outdoor adventure.

In the early 1900s, camping had been an activity only undertaken by the army; *Aids to Scouting* changed how Britain approached camping and gave boys across England a guide for outdoor play. Since *Aids to Scouting* had been written for soldiers, it needed to be re-written for a new audience. Youth leaders asked BP to rewrite the book for boys.

Robert Baden-Powell, now Lord Baden-Powell, researched subjects that interested boys, including "King Arthur, the Zulus of Africa, American Indians, Pacific Islanders, the Boys' Brigade in England, the Bushido of the Japanese, Ernest Thompson Seton's *Camp Games*, and Dan Beard's *Boy Pioneers*" (Parson, 2008; Peterson, 1984). Lord Baden-Powell met with Ernest Seton to discuss *The Birch Bark Roll*, and Seton's totem system and he left the meeting determined to adapt it to his merit badge system (Jeal, 2007).

The final element of creating the Scouting movement was field research. From the 29th of July, 1907 until the 9th of August, 1907, boys from around England joined Lord Baden-Powell on Brownsea Island in Poole Harbor to learn about tracking, camp skills, woodcraft, natural lore, and citizenship (Jeal, 2007). Baden-Powell's overseas experiences, the research at Brownsea Island, the study of different cultural depictions of chivalry, and meetings with other youth

educators led to the publication of *Scouting for Boys* in 1908.   The Scouting movement grew

quickly in England, and copies of *Scouting for Boys* swiftly traversed the Atlantic as scout troops

began forming in the United States.

William Boyce

The first scout troops were formed in the United States in 1908 in response to the

publication of *Scouting for Boys.* Despite having no overseeing entity, troops were present in the

states of Kansas, Kentucky, and New Jersey as early as 1908. Even more troops joined the

Scouting movement the next year (Peterson, 1984).

The man who officially brought Scouting to the United States was a newspaper magnate

from Chicago who found himself in England on a business trip. William D Boyce was born to a

farming family in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania in 1858. By the age of 34, Boyce owned two

newspapers in Chicago, the *Chicago Saturday Blade,* and the *Chicago Ledger*. He employed a

network of young boys to peddle his papers (Peterson, 1984).

Boyce filed incorporation papers in the District of Columbia for the Boy Scouts of

America on February 10, 1910. The purpose was to "to promote, through organization, and

cooperation with other agencies, the ability of boys to do things for themselves and others, to

train them Scoutcraft, and to teach them patriotism, courage, self-reliance, and kindred virtues,

using the methods which are in common use by Boy Scouts" (Peterson, 1984).

Boyce set out to popularize the Boy Scouts of America in the face of other entrepreneurs

trying to promote their own brand of Baden-Powell's Scouting program. He faced competition

from creatively named organizations like William Randolph Hearst's American Boy Scouts, as

well as The Boy Scouts of the United States, the National Scouts of America, the

Leatherstocking Scouts, and the Peace Scouts. The difference was the determined leadership of BSA executives Edgar M. Robinson and James E. West.

Edgar Robinson

Edgar M. Robinson led a delegation of YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) men who offered to help William Boyce and the BSA in its first few months. The YMCA had 60 years' experience working with boys and already operated 400 summer camps with 15,000 annual participants (Peterson, 1984). The organizations were founded on similar principles: "[T]he BSA and YMCA focused on creating order and social control in the middle and upper class. These 'Character Building' organizations filled gaps between the family, church, and school" (Macleod, 1982, pg. 6).

In 1910, the YMCA had two things the BSA lacked, credibility and infrastructure. To combat this deficit, Robinson set up the BSA national headquarters in New York City and served as the organization's first Chief Scout Executive (Wills, 2009). The office was promptly buried under letters from parents who wanted to start local troops. Robinson gathered a consortium of experts on youth recreation and social work to lay the foundation for a long-lasting organization. The list included officers from the YMCA and leaders of Big Brothers, the American Red Cross, the Playground and Recreation Association of America, the settlement movement, and Public School Athletic Leagues. In addition, the committee included prominent citizens Ernest Thompson Seton of the Woodcraft Indians and Dan Beard of the Boy Pioneers (Peterson, 1984). These organizations and citizens formed the National Committee on Scouting and were the first step towards an organization led by experts instead of businessmen.

Under Robinsons' tenure the map of the Boy Scouts of America began to take shape.

Figure 6 only shows cities in which BSA councils were registered in 1911. There was no

register of youth available in the first records of the organization. The agglomeration of councils

in the New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania region can be attributed to the

foundation of the organization in New York City as well as the absorption of thousands of

members from Beard's Sons of Daniel Boone and Seton's Woodcraft Indians that were based

near New York. The Midwest also was filling with councils, and the map generally conforms to

the population patterns of the era. The many Midwestern councils can also be attributed to the

presence of newspaperman and founder William Boyce who called Chicago home. The Midwest

and the Northeast were much more densely populated, both in overall population and Scouting

membership, than the West or South. These factors at least partially explain these latter regions'

slower introduction to the Boy Scouts of America.

Robinson was an administrator at heart, but he still brought clarity to the chaos that was the Boy Scouts of America in its first few months of incorporation. He attacked the crisis of masculinity that he perceived to be affecting the American
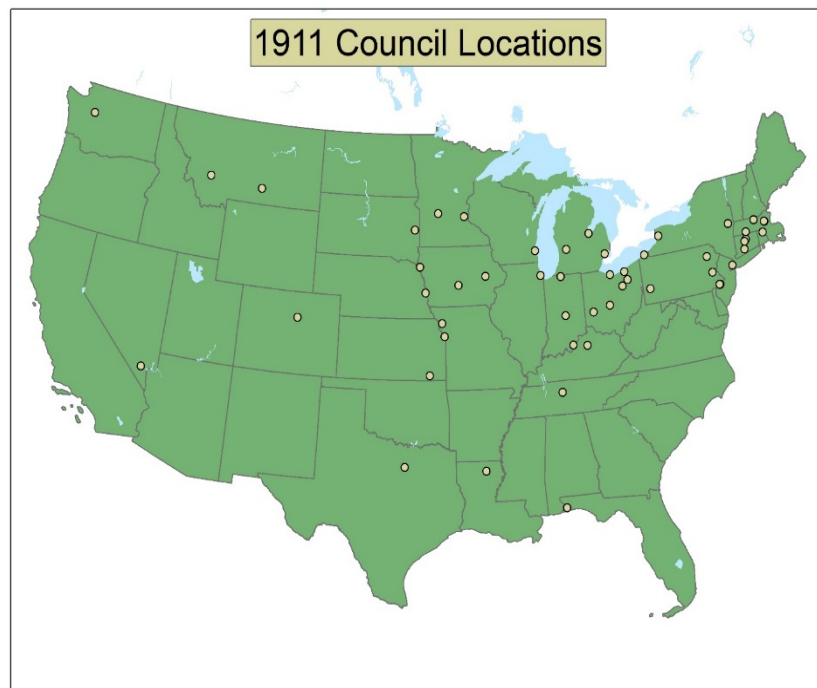

Figure 6: *The location of all council headquarters in 1911*

boy. He described the typical feminized male as "the boy who has been… so carefully wrapped

up in the pink cotton wool of an overindulgent home [that] he is more effeminate than his sister"

(quoted in Macleod, 1982).

The first Executive Secretary of the Boy Scouts of America, Robinson was crucial for

laying the bedrock of the BSA and bringing order out of the chaos. At the end of his six-month

term, Robinson elected to return to the YMCA. He left the organization well prepared for

expansion and in the capable hands of James West.

James West

James West was a well-connected and highly capable lawyer from Washington, D.C. His

background and reputation appealed to the BSA, and so it hired him as Edgar Robinson's

replacement. James West's first challenge as Chief Scout Executive was to push the BSA to the

forefront of the American Scouting scene. His primary competition was William Randolph

Hearst's American Boy Scouts. Hearst's group was more militaristic than the BSA and also

focused on hiking, camping, and marching. However, they marched with real guns and studied

military tactics, techniques that deviated from the BSA curriculum.

An anecdote that exemplifies West's forceful leadership is his handling of the

"Americanizing" of Baden-Powell's Scout Oath and Scout Law. West appointed a 500-person

committee to generate suggestions, then promptly disregarded all recommendations and added

"to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight" to the Scout Oath, as

well as, "brave, clean, and reverent" to the Scout Law (Peterson, 1984; Wills, 2009). James

West believed that religious instruction was essential to building character in young boys. In

fact, every branch of the World Organized Scouting Movement (WOSM) includes a reference to

religious study and spirituality in its oath. However, the BSA is one of the few that includes

"reverence" in its law as well (Rohm and Osula, 2013). The commitment to religion as a part of

the BSA's fabric sets up the ground work for several relatively public controversies and lawsuits

in the contemporary period

West's commitment to including religion as an integral part of the BSA likely helped

build one of the organization's strongest relationships. Comparing regional distributions within

the map of scoutmaster (adult leaders of Scout troops) membership from 1913 (Figure 7) and

Boy Scout membership in 1916 (Figure 8) shows a massive change in Utah. In response to

West's promotion of religious principles, the LDS Church (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-

day Saints) abandoned its independent fledgling Scouting program and adopted the BSA as its

official program for boys over eight years old beginning in 1913. Figure 7 shows Utah as a state

with some of the lowest scoutmaster numbers in the country, however it was off the charts in

membership in 1916
(Figure 8). The change
can be attributed the
LDS Church's change
in policy.

The Latter-day
Saints were the first
major religious group
to formally adopt the
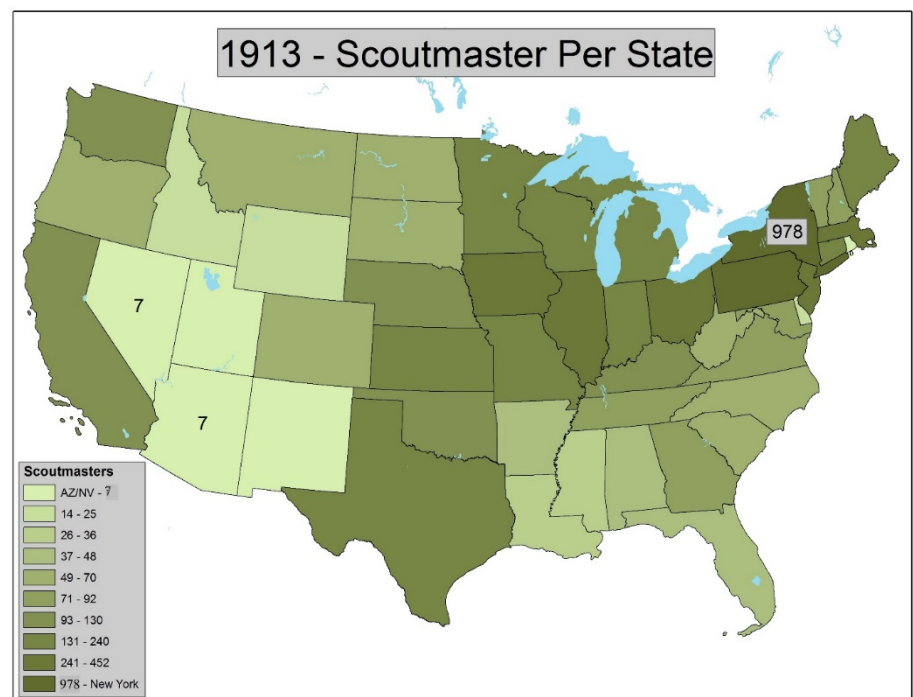Boy Scouts of America

Figure 7: Scoutmasters per state in 1913

and are the BSA's largest chartering body to this day. The Catholic Church was skeptical of the

BSA's relationship with Protestants, largely because the YMCA – a Protestant organization –

had been so integral to the early success of the Boy Scouts. However, after further discussion,

the Catholics pledged support in 1917. The BSA's close relationship with many churches has

remained at its core and today the number of religious chartering organizations has ballooned to

71.5% of all chartering organizations (Banks, 2013). Among non-religious chartering

organization, parent-teacher groups other than PTAs constitute the largest proportion of charters,

followed by a non-affiliated group of citizens (Fact Sheet, 2014). James West was integral in

forging this vital relationship early in BSA history (Fact Sheet, 2014).
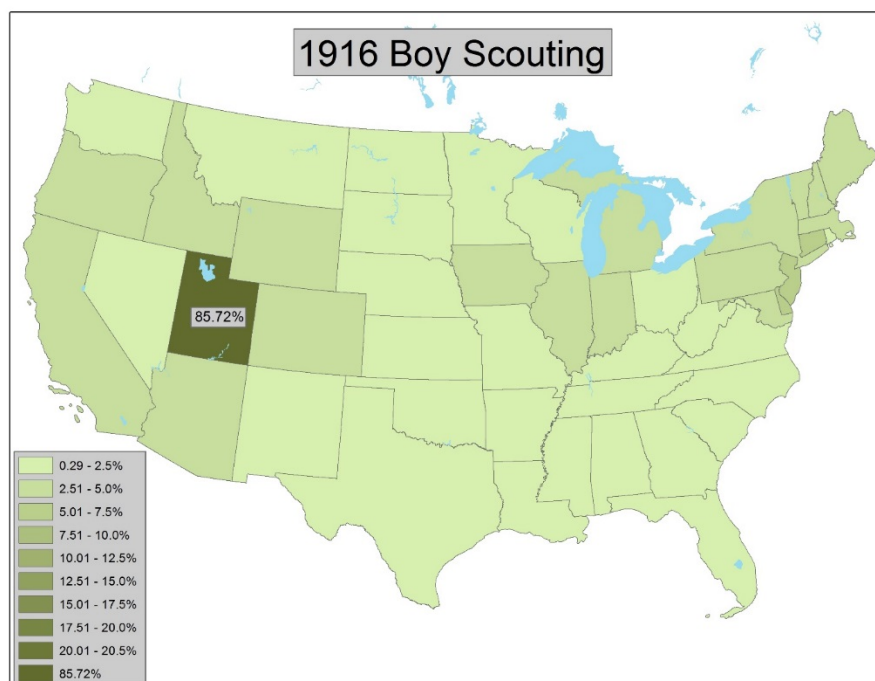
Figure 8: *Percent of available boys enrolled in Scouting in 1916.*

The value of a relationship with a chartering organization is not limited to financial and social support. An early observer of the BSA puts it, "Another interesting feature of this social agency [Boy Scouts] is the low overhead expense which

it is possible to maintain because of its working through existing organizations" (Martin, 1925).

As Figure 7 shows, prior to the addition of the LDS church there was a low density of

scoutmasters in southern and western states, high density in the Midwest, and even greater density in the Northeast.

It is apparent that the southern region lagged behind the rest of the country in adopting the BSA. Some possible explanations for the BSA's struggle in penetrating southern states focus on the religious make-up of the region. Modern religious patterns in Scouting reveal that participation of Southern Baptist parishioners is notably lower than for comparable religions such as Methodists or Lutherans (Fact Sheet, 2014). The Southern Baptists have a majority of their membership in the southern United States (Pew Research Center. 2016). Another possible explanation could be the perception of the BSA, founded in New York, as a "northern" organization. The BSA was founded just 45 years after the conclusion of the Civil War, and the South was still recovering from the impact of the war. Any perception that an organization was associated with "northern Yankees" could have been a hindrance to gaining support.

The Great Plains, on the other hand, a similarly low-population region, had a greater percentage of membership than the American South. The relative absence of Scouting in the West other than Utah may be attributable to low overall populations, distance from the BSA's office in New York, and general rurality.

The Handbook and Uniforms

The *Boy Scout Handbook* was important for creating the movement, but also because it brought uniformity to troops geographically disconnected. The first official *Scout Handbook*, penned by Ernest Seton, combined his own *Birch Bark Roll* and Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys*. It was only a temporary solution. In 1913, a revised edition entitled *A Handbook for Boys* brought a finishing touch to the original *Scout Handbook* and added details about uniform,

patches, and advancement. The new handbook was introduced along with the first official uniform and re-ignited a debate over the Boy Scouts of America's relationship with the military.

For some scouts, the uniform was a major attraction. As Julian Saloman put it, "[T]he two things that gave Scouting great impetus and made it very popular were the uniform and Teddy Roosevelt's jingoism. Prior to World War I, I think the preparedness movement had more to do with the growth of Scouting than anything else. All of a sudden everybody wanted to get into a uniform of some kind or other" (Peterson, 1984). However, many citizens, especially immigrants, were not as enthusiastic about the uniform. As Fielding Chandler put it "…[I]n those days there was some idea that the boys would graduate from Scouting into the Army'' (Peterson, 1984). Compounding the problem was the lingering confusion between the BSA and the American Boy Scouts. After an incident in which an American Boy Scout was shot while practicing drill, BSA National Executive James West issued a statement confirming that the BSA had no stance on the military and did not allow its members to practice with loaded rifles.

Boys' Life

The Boy Scout Handbook was useful for standardizing the program across the country but wasn't published often enough to serve as a newsletter or administration tool for the office in New York. It became increasingly important for the growing BSA to find an efficient way to distribute information to all of its members and on March 1911, an enterprising 18-year-old scout named Joseph Lane found a solution. He began a magazine named *Boys' Life*, which was an unofficial publication for Scouts across the country. The BSA bought the magazine from Lane in 1912 and introduced *Scouting* magazine, geared towards scoutmasters, a year later. The handbook and magazines connected Scouting members, thousands of miles apart, to BSA

headquarters. They offered quick updates regarding policy and news about the organization and unified isolated Scouts and troops as part of something bigger than themselves.

The first years of the BSA were highlighted by rapid expansion as the first administrators organized Scouting in the United States and adapted Baden-Powell's ideas to an American context. Figure 9 shows that between 1912 and 1913, Scouting grew across most of the country.

Scoutmasters signed up rapidly in the Northeast and the Midwest. The Northeast was home to the National Office and included the headquarters of Seton's Woodcraft Indians and Beard's Sons of Daniel Boone. When these two large youth organizations were folded into the BSA many of the youth and adults transferred over. There was high scoutmaster enrollment in most of the Midwest, especially in states surrounding Chicago, which was founder Boyce's hometown. His newspaper network extended into states near Illinois. Areas that had already been exposed to Scouting showed support more rapidly than parts of the country that were just being introduced to the national movement.

The South added scoutmasters but not at the same pace as the more populous Midwest and East Coast. Figure 9 displays raw data, and is not normalized due to a lack of an available normalizing population statistic, unlike future maps. Therefore, lower numerical expansion in the Southeast can be attributed partially to those states' lower populations. The West Coast saw small positive change and the Intermountain West saw very few scoutmasters enroll between 1912 and 1913. For unknown reasons, Minnesota was a clear outlier in that, not only did scoutmasters not join the relatively new program, but many of the existing scoutmasters exited the BSA. In 1912, Minnesota had comparable scoutmaster membership to Illinois, with the latter having only 6 more leaders. The following year Minnesota regressed below 200 adults and

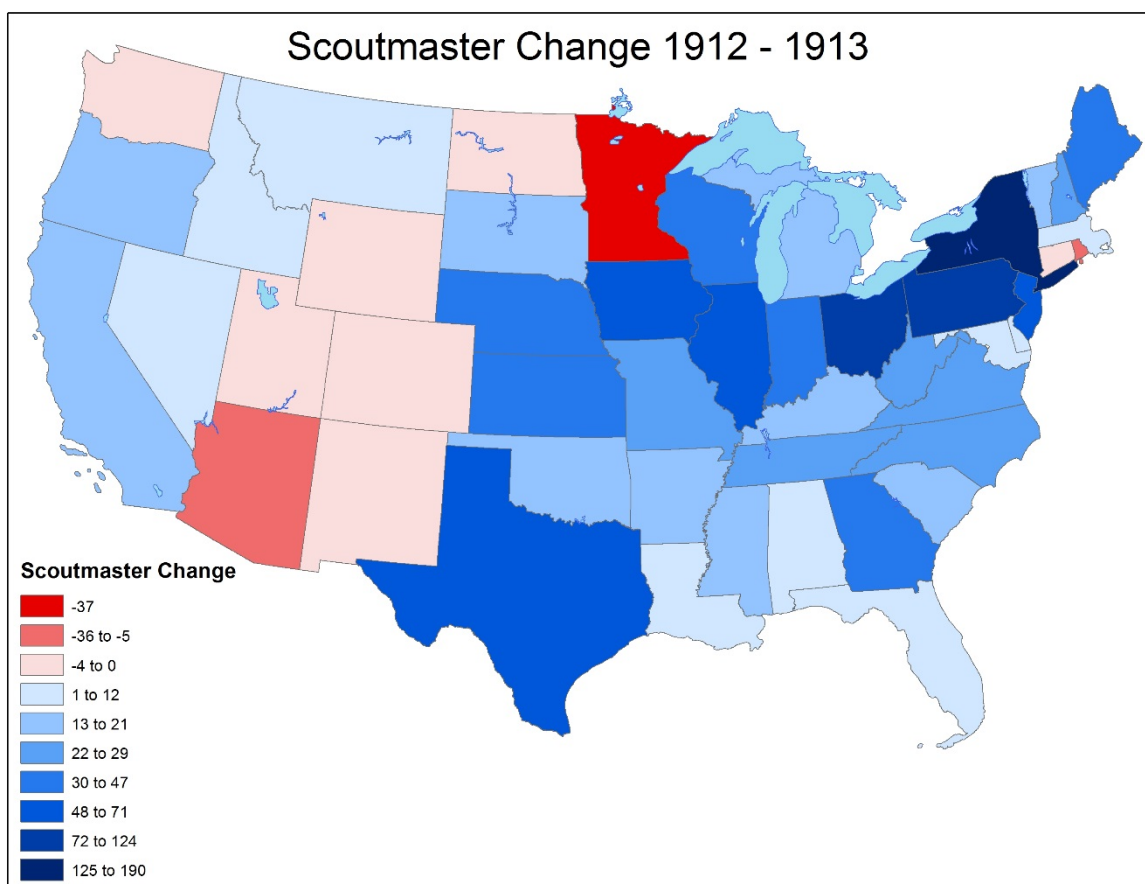*Figure 9: Scoutmaster change between 1912 and 1913*

Illinois grew to over 300 (Annual Reports, 1912 & 1913). It is possible that, with such a small

sample size, an important policy shift or change in opinion within the state, could have triggered

the disproportionate loss of Scoutmasters. It is also possible that the numerical outlier was

triggered through a clerical error in the reporting.

Chapter 3: (1916 – 1941)

In 1914, 107,000 boys and 25,800 male volunteers were registered with the BSA (Peterson, 1984). To handle the new membership, the BSA divided the country into eight administrative districts. In 1920, these eight districts were divided into twelve regions. Data were recorded by the districts and regions and these data were provided in annual reports to Congress. The change in record keeping from states to regions meant a loss in fidelity for the maps in this thesis. However, beginning in 1971 the BSA recorded data on a council scale.

Figure 10 shows the first 31 years of youth BSA membership. It illustrates the strong and steady growth the organization exhibited in its early years. The bump from 1916 to 1917 could be related to the incorporation of both The Order of the Arrow and Lone Scouting. The accelerated growth beginning around 1933 is largely a result of the introduction of the Cub Scouts in 1930.
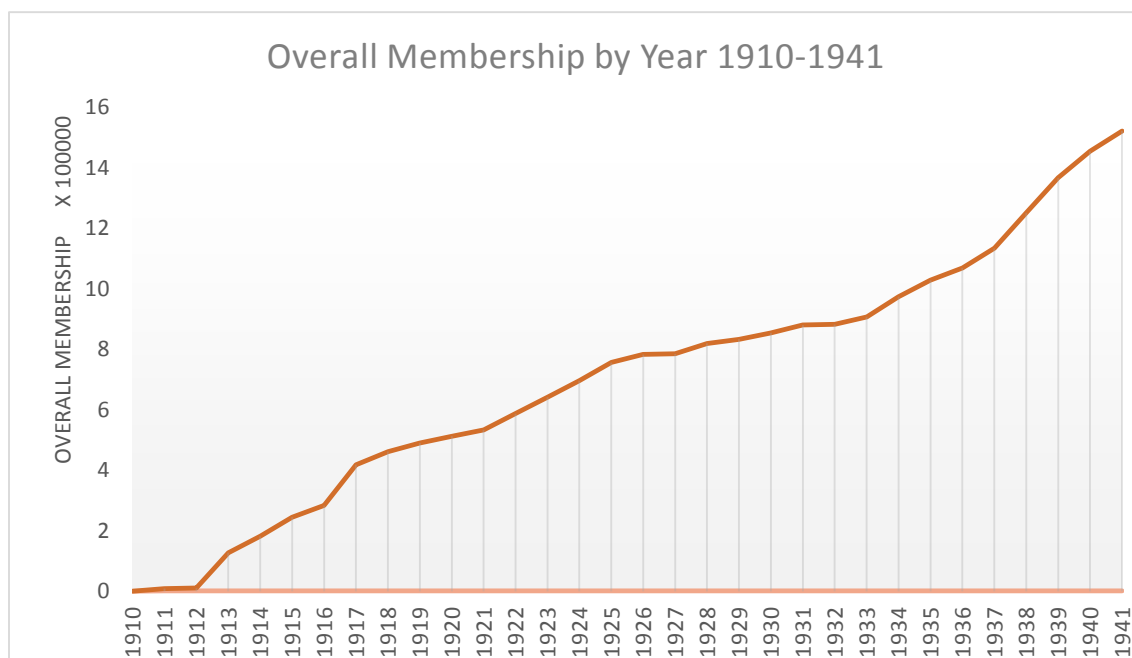

Figure 10: *Total BSA membership between 1910 and 1941. No information on youth membership was available until 1913.*

The BSA gained membership every year between 1913, which was the first year youth membership was recorded, and 1941, when the USA entered WWII. Figure 10 illustrates the consistent upward trend in raw membership over the first 31 years of the BSA. Although membership was on the rise, there was interest for new BSA programs. The first addition came in 1915 at a summer camp named Treasure Island.

Order of the Arrow (OA) and the Lone Scouts

Around 1915, boys wanted more than badges and activity. They sought fraternity. That year, an honor society was founded at the Philadelphia Council's Treasure Island Summer Camp. It was called Order of the Arrow (OA) and was influenced by Seton's *Birch Bark Roll* as well as the Leni Lenape tribe that used to inhabit Treasure Island. The society was an invention in youth organizations because boys were nominated for membership by other Scouts who were already in the OA (Wills, 2009). The Order quickly diffused across the country and in 1921 was recognized as an official BSA program (Peterson, 1984). Order of the Arrow served as an incentive, beyond badges and rank, for older boys to remain active in scouting. Keeping older youth active in Scouting has been a challenge since the early years of the BSA. The OA is just one of many programs that have aimed to fix this membership deficit.

A different program was designed to integrate boys who lived in isolated rural communities. Lone Scouting was aimed at boys who lived in areas without enough potential members to form a troop. William Boyce, founder of the BSA, began the program for boys who sold his newspapers in small communities across the Midwest.

Lone Scouting was incorporated in January of 1915 and was unassociated with the BSA. It used a magazine, *Lone Scout,* to connect the group's isolated members. At its peak, two thirds

of *Lone Scout's* content was member generated (Peterson, 1984). The BSA offered a similar program to Lone Scouting named Pioneers that never achieved comparable success. Pioneers never attained the same membership as Lone Scouting because it required adult supervision. Lone Scouting was youth led and successfully empowered its members to track their own progress. In 1924, the BSA bought Lone Scouting to replace its sputtering Pioneers program. Upon absorption, Lone Scouting had 45,000 members and had a total of 523,470 members over a decade (Peterson, 1984).

The Pioneers program and Lone Scouting were the BSA's first attempts at reaching youth without middle-class backgrounds, and beyond the city limits. This was important outreach for an organization that was founded to help middle and upper class white boys, but now aimed to reach all boys.

Expanding its efforts in 1924, the BSA announced the Committee on Rural Scouting. The Committee was launched in conjunction with 4-H to find the best way to develop merit badges and material for boys who lived in the country (Wills, 2009). Other youth-serving organizations had previously attempted to fill this void with programs designed specifically for rural youth. The Farm Boy Cavaliers provided a curriculum uniquely targeted at youth on the farm (Riney-Kehrberg, 2011). Most programs failed to gain traction in the rural environment, but successful programs like Lone Scouting, 4-H, and the Grange were exceptional in overcoming the geographic isolation of rural boys and girls.

In 1916, six years after its founding, the Boy Scouts of America had passed 200,000 members. Figure 11 shows that the distribution of membership was greater on the Northeast and Pacific Coasts. Utah was a clear outlier in the American West. The "I states" (Indiana, Illinois,

43

and Iowa) displayed membership greater than the states around them. Much of the Great Plains

and the South lagged behind the rest of the country.

In 1916, the BSA was awarded an official congressional charter recognizing its impact on

America's youth. The charter granted the BSA formal protection for its name, insignia, and

terminology (Annual Report to Congress, 1916). Following the grant of its Congressional

charter, the BSA filed a suit against the American Boy Scouts and filed an injunction forbidding

the rival organization from using the terms "Scouting," "Scout," and "Boy Scout." These legal

actions essentially destroyed the American Boy Scouts. At its demise, the American Boy Scouts

claimed an inflated membership similar to the BSA's 200,000; however, scholars estimate it

actually had around 3,000 members (Peterson, 1984). The charter from Congress and legal

actions undertaken gave the BSA an effective monopoly on male American Scouting. However,

as the membership of the American Boy Scouts indicates, the BSA was already much larger than

any competition.
The BSA did see
an overall
membership spike
the following
year, but that
might also have
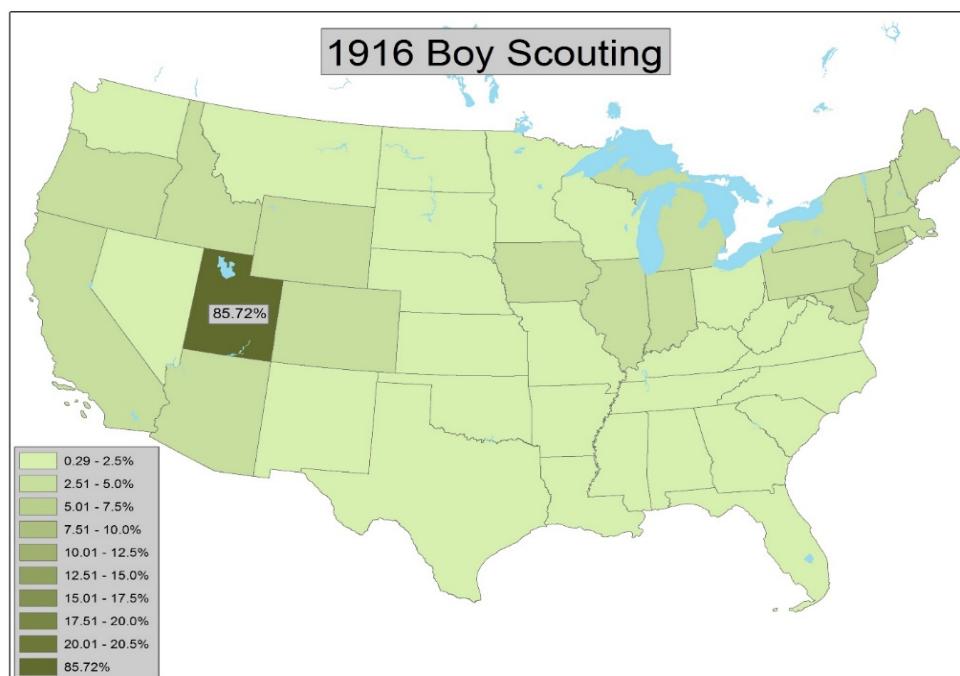been linked with
the onset of
World War I.

Figure 11: *Boy Scouts per Available Boy Population sorted by state in 1916.*

Scouting Goes to War

The slogan, "He kept us out of war," was a part of the campaign that returned Woodrow Wilson to the White House in 1916 and effectively piggybacked on the isolationist sentiment felt across America. However, isolation did not last and the expanding conflict in Europe led to America joining the war in 1917. At the time America declared war, the largest uniformed body in the country was not the United States Army, which stood at 200,000 members. It was the Boy Scouts of America with its 268,000 members (Peterson, 1984).

The day after Congress declared war, the Boy Scouts' National Executive Council pledged support to the war effort. During the next few years, the organization showed its support through victory gardens, coastal lookouts to monitor shipping lanes, and supply drives. Boy Scouts also went door to door selling Liberty Loan Bonds during all five wartime drives. Scouts only sold bonds after adult salesmen had already canvassed a neighborhood; despite second pickings, Scouts sold 2,238,308 bonds worth $335 million during the war.

The BSA did more than sell war bonds. Drives for peach pits and nut hulls provided the charcoal for soldiers' gas masks. Scouts completed a national survey of black walnut trees for important wartime wood needs like airplane propellers and gun stocks, identifying 21 million board feet (Peterson, 1984). They also carried 30 million dispatches for government agencies.

Communities across the country celebrated their Scouts' wartime contributions. Regarding the increased notoriety of scouting, Claude Thompson remarked, "Hardly a week went by that we weren't called out to march in a parade or help with traffic control for one" (Peterson, 1984). Scouts' helpful nature, on display during World War I, captured public attention. Enrollment rose sharply in 1916 and steadily increased over the course of the war.

Figure 12 displays data supporting the strong growth in regions that were already strong for the BSA. The Northeast and Pacific coasts only added to their membership lead, while the South still struggled to add Scouts at the same rate as the rest of the country.

Figure 12 illustrates the effect that each state had when it was folded into a region. The BSA began recording membership on a regional scale between 1916 and 1921; although it would have been preferable to continue mapping participation on a state-level, this was no longer a possibility. California, Nevada, and Arizona offset Utah's high membership with comparatively sparse enrollment, but much greater population. Many states with higher enrollment than their neighbors vanish into their regions; their high membership was neutralized by lesser participation in the other states nearby. In a similar way, Rhode Island's low membership is neutralized when compared to the high membership of Long Island and Connecticut.

The South and Upper Great Plains had low ratios in each state within the region – Scouting had not penetrated these parts of the country as effectively as it had others. However, the BSA had achieved national prominence despite lagging membership in the South and Great Plains. It was known as a group that did good works, producing tangible results and upstanding young men.

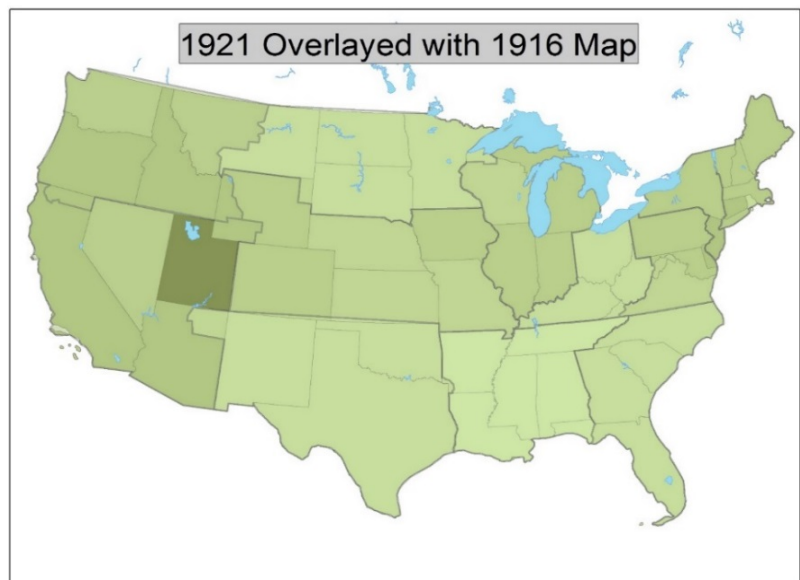Thus far, Scouting had grown steadily in good

Figure 12: Overlay of 1916 map and 1921 map to show how states enrollment contributed to membership in their region.

economic conditions. However, the Great Depression was looming and Scouting was tested by a faltering economy.

The Great Depression

After WWI, Scouting grew and so did its infrastructure. The national office in New York City now boasted 274 employees, a 4,000 percent increase from 1911 (Peterson, 1984). However, the Depression of the 1930s was hard on the BSA. Figure 10 illustrates that membership continued to expand but at a reduced pace. Troops across the country took measures to ensure that local boys could stay in the program. Dues were lowered to five cents, and some families paid for campouts with food when budgets were tight. BSA workers in the national office saw an average 15 percent pay cut, if they were not laid off (Peterson, 1984). Fortunately, many scout troops already owned the necessary materials to keep operating: uniforms, camping supplies, and good leaders. Troops that could not afford the fees of a paid scout camp pitched their tents by a local stream or in a nearby forest.

Regions hit hardest by the Dust Bowl and Great Depression saw the greatest loss of membership in the BSA. However, industrialized parts of the United States saw a growth in membership that compensated for the declining number of Scouts in agricultural regions. Figure 13 shows a surprising boom in membership in the Upper Great Plains, Midwest, and New England. Membership fell in the middle Great Plains and Texas, two areas immensely affected by the Dust Bowl, as well as the South. The differences in how the Great Depression affected membership between regions can partially be attributed to rural-to-urban migration. Farming families left their homesteads and moved to cities, bringing scout membership with them, especially in the Central and Southern Great Plains. The upper Great Plains is a clear outlier to

this migration towards cities. Despite having a lower membership gain in raw numbers than Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan, the upper Great Plains saw a greater ratio of membership gain, although the reasons for that are unclear.
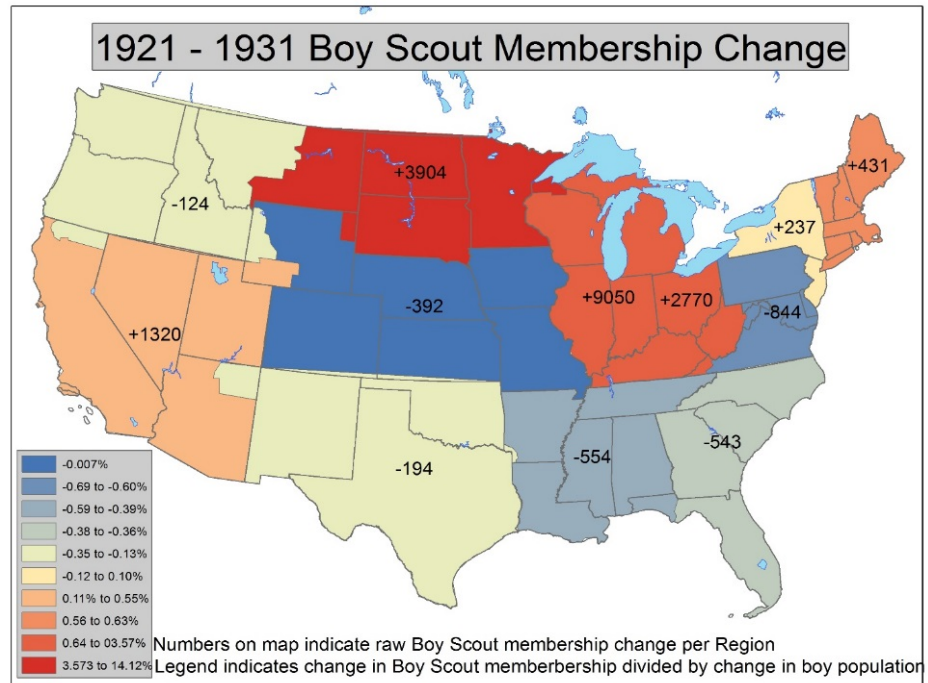
Figure 13: Change over a decade from 1921-1931, reflecting the Great Depression's impact on Scouting.

Franklin D. Roosevelt called on Scouts to gather home furnishings, clothing, and anything else folks could spare to give to those hit hardest by the Great Depression. By the end of the drive, 1.8 million items had been collected (Peterson, 1984). The drive illustrated Scouting's value; parents and boys were still eager to get into a BSA Uniform, and in 1934 membership had almost reached 1 million.

Figure 14 shows that Scouting was healthiest in the Pacific and Northeast regions in the mid-1930s. Participation in the Great Plains and upper Midwest grew to between 7.5 and 10 percent of available boys. The Gulf States and Southeast still lagged behind the rest of the country. Since the foundation of the BSA, these regions had struggled. The relative poverty of the South and the comparatively low support the BSA received from the Baptist Church, the

dominant religion in the that part of the country (Fact Sheet, 2014), help explain why these two regions showed stunted membership numbers through the first couple of decades of the BSA (Local Council Index, 2013).

The Younger Boy Problem

During the Great Depression, the BSA added a new program that served boys who were not old enough to join Scouting's ranks but who were clamoring to be a part of the program, and many of them were already unofficially active. The question for the BSA was how to best engage these enthusiastic youngsters. Ernest Seton was asked to create a program for younger boys in the first years of the BSA. The program he created was called Cubs of America with a totem of a bear cub (Peterson, 1984). Unfortunately, Seton left the BSA before the program was implemented. Coincidently, Baden-Powell invented Wolf Cub Scouting for young boys in England around the same time. Inspired by Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*, Baden-Powell's organization featured a wolf as its mascot (Peterson, 1984).

Wolf Cub Scouting diffused into the United States through the Pacific Northwest because of its popularity in British Columbia. The BSA felt pressure to create its own rendition of Baden-Powell's program, and they called it Cub Scouts. Cub Scouting was ultimately designed by Dr. H. W. Hurt who studied Baden-Powell's Wolf Cubbing, Seton's Woodcraft program, and a similar group popular in California, the Boy Rangers of America (Peterson, 1984). Seton corresponded extensively with Dr. Hurt while he designed the program, which explains the similarities between Seton's original proposal and Hurt's final product. Released in the Northeast as a trial program in 1929, the Cub Scouts became official on a national scale the following year (Peterson, 1984). Figure 15 shows Cub Scouting's membership in its first

decade. It gained membership more quickly than the Boy Scouts, benefitting from the reputation of its parent organization.

The First Jamboree

To mark its 25th anniversary, the BSA's national office planned its first Jamboree in Washington, D.C. The gathering would have brought Scouts and scout leaders to the nation's capital from all over the country. However, an outbreak of polio forced President Roosevelt to cancel the event and the expected 20,000 Scouts and volunteers had to abandon their travel plans.

The first Jamboree was held two years later, in 1937, when 27,232 Scouts and scouters camped out on the National Mall in Washington (Peterson, 1984). National Jamborees were not their only major events. Local Scouting conventions filled sports arenas and civic halls across the country. As figure 14 illustrates, the BSA continued to fill in the middle of the nation with Scouts. Only the deep South lagged behind, while the Western coast and New England continued to dominate membership. Notice how Scouting in the
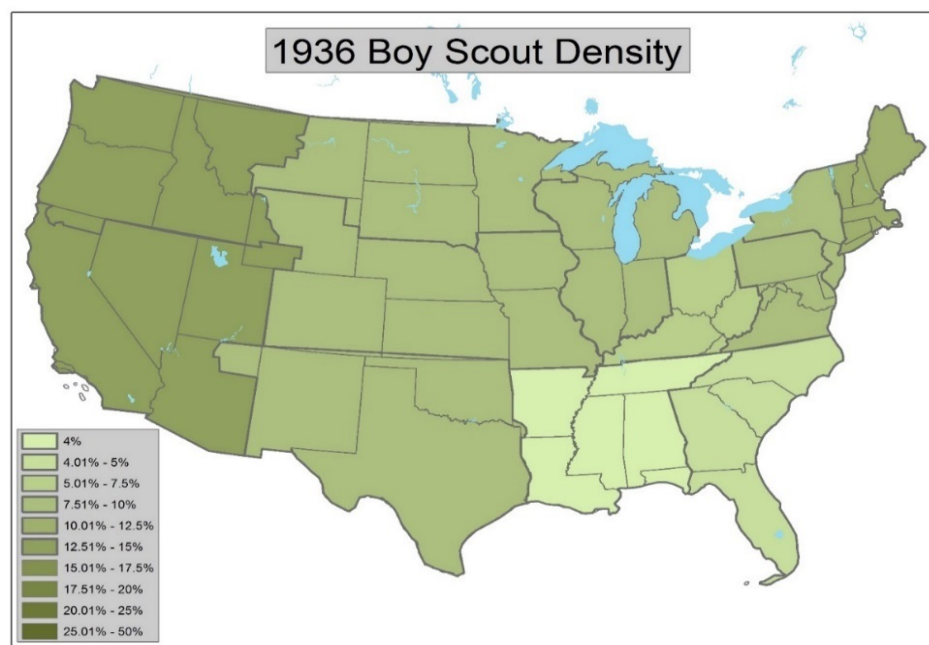
Figure 14: BSA density and distribution in 1936.

Great Plains was now much more evenly distributed than it had been earlier in Scouting's history.

Cub Scouting Soars

Cub Scouting confused the BSA National Executive Council. The program was successful, and council members were concerned that demand from Cubs would turn the program into a carbon-copy of the Boy Scouts. BSA leadership specifically built their program to reach boys between the ages of 12 and 18, and it was thought that the pedagogical approaches pioneered in the Boy Scouts would not be as effective on a younger audience. BSA leaders wanted to keep the two programs similar but separate. They recognized that younger and older boys had varied interests. While younger boys enjoyed the uniforms like their older brothers, constructed play was more effective in holding their attention. The National Executive Council was committed to keeping Cubbing and Scouting separate, "We must keep Cubbing sharply different from Scouting in order not to unconsciously imitate or parallel Scouting. Keep Cubbing different! Keep it home-centered!" (Peterson, 1984, pg. 133).

One of the key differences between the two programs was their meeting places. Cub Scouts usually met in the Den Leader's home, while
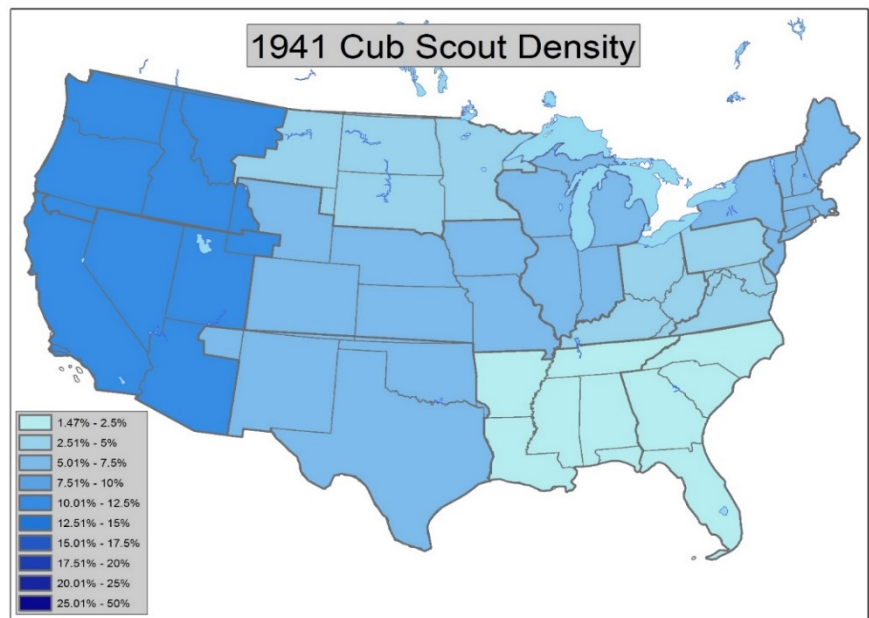
Figure 15: Cub Scouting density in 1941.

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a majority of Boy Scout troops met in public places associated with their chartering organization. A senior Boy Scout Den Chief was originally intended as the leader of each Cub Scout Pack. However, the de facto leader of a Pack was a mother, more often than not. Slowly the BSA recognized mothers' importance in Cubbing and in 1932, the Den Mother became an officially recognized member of each Pack's leadership team. In 1936, den mothers were allowed to register with the BSA, and in 1948, den mothers were required to register with the BSA. They were held to the same standard of leadership that their male cohorts had been required to meet since the foundation of the organization (Peterson, 1984). By 1941, Cub Scouting reached 270,000 members and was rapidly expanding.

Despite the differences in its program, Cub Scouts was immensely popular, as Figure 15 shows. The maps for 1941 representing each program (Figure 15 for Cub Scouts and Figure 16 for Boy Scouts) illustrate that families that enrolled their older boys in the Boy Scouts were as likely to enroll their younger boys in the Cub Scouts. The regions with the highest and lowest participation rate are the same in both maps (Figures 15 & 16). Note that although the regions are similar between maps, the percent membership was still higher for Boy Scouts than Cub

Scouts.

From 1916 through 1941, Scouting saw continuous expansion, with acceleration in the 1930s during the later years of the Great Depression. On a national scale, membership trends were good but growth was not evenly distributed. On a regional scale, the Pacific Northwest and New England areas remained the strongest parts of the BSA. Despite the Dust Bowl, the Great Plains membership grew over this period. The progressive reforms that the BSA was responding to, the crisis of masculinity and rural-to-urban migration, were strong geographic and cultural influences during this period. The great popularity of the program, the impending Second World War, and subsequent economic growth meant that the

Figure 16: *BSA density in 1941.*

BSA was well positioned to continue expansion in the coming years.

Chapter 4: (1941 – 1971)

During and after World War II, the Boy Scouts of America observed steady growth in its membership in reference to the available boy population. This growth most likely can be attributed to a growing sense of nationalism, increased efforts by the BSA in public service projects, recruiting in underserved communities, the availability of volunteers to lead Scout troops, and after the war, more money and time for Scouting activities (Peterson, 1984) (Wills, 2009). The raw membership of the BSA shot up after the war thanks to the baby boomer generation. However, the organization saw the first glimpse of approaching challenges beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s as America embraced the Civil Rights movement. Figure 17 shows the steady growth from 1941 to the membership apex in 1971. Notice the relatively gradual increase from the mid 1950s to the early 1960s; this is the front end of the baby boomers.
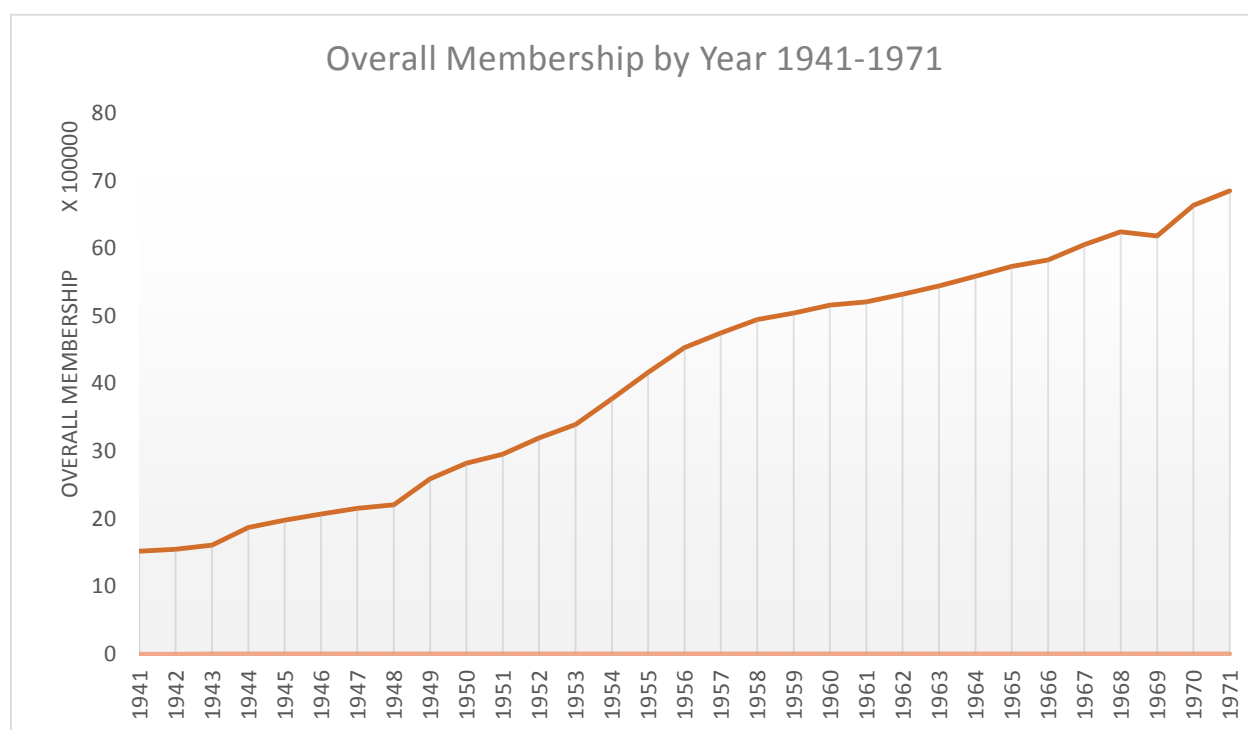
Figure 17: *Raw BSA membership between 1941 and 1971*

The noticeable dip in 1968 was a premonition of the BSA's fate following the departure of the baby boomer generation.

Scouting in WWII

In the buildup to World War II there were signs that things were shaking up in world Scouting overseas. An indicator of unrest in Europe was the dissolution of Scouting in the Soviet Union in 1924 and in Germany in 1934. In the Soviet Union, Scouting was replaced by The Young Pioneers; the organization promoted Communist ideals and was designed to replace the Boy Scouts who were associated with democratic Western governments. The Hitler Youth (*Hitlerjugend)* supplanted Scouting in Germany. The new program represented fascist ideals and was a platform for the Nazi party to indoctrinate German youth with racist views. Traditional Scouting was not useful to Hitler or Lenin, since teaching young men independence and self-reliance did not create the devout loyalty to the state needed to implement either communist or fascist ideals.

Although Scouting was banned in fascist Germany and the communist Soviet Union, it remained healthy in America and played an important part in preparing for the coming war. In cooperation with the federal Office of Civilian Defense, the BSA began an Emergency Service Corps made up of older Boy Scouts who received advanced training in first aid and disaster relief (Peterson, 1984). The Scouts also assisted in another liberty bond drive although they were not directly selling the bonds. At the behest of President Roosevelt, Scouts posted 1.6 million advertisements for government defense bonds and stamps. The Treasury asked the BSA to deliver War Bond pledge cards and, although they weren't selling bonds directly, the efforts of the BSA were credited with raising roughly $1.8 million towards the American effort (Peterson,

1984). Scouts across the nation also collected 5,000 tons of aluminum scrap.

Prior to the war the population centers on the West and East coast had the greatest membership in the Boy Scouts. Figure 18 shows that over the course of the war, those same regions bolstered their membership more than other parts of the country, although membership grew across the country. Some places such as the region around Ohio, Kentucky, and West Virginia, added fewer scouts, but still experienced a membership increase. The states in this region traditionally lagged behind the upper Midwest and East coast regions. Against normal trends the Pacific-Southwest region including California, Nevada, Utah, and Arizona was also on the low end of added enrollment over the course of the war, but it is possible that the previous
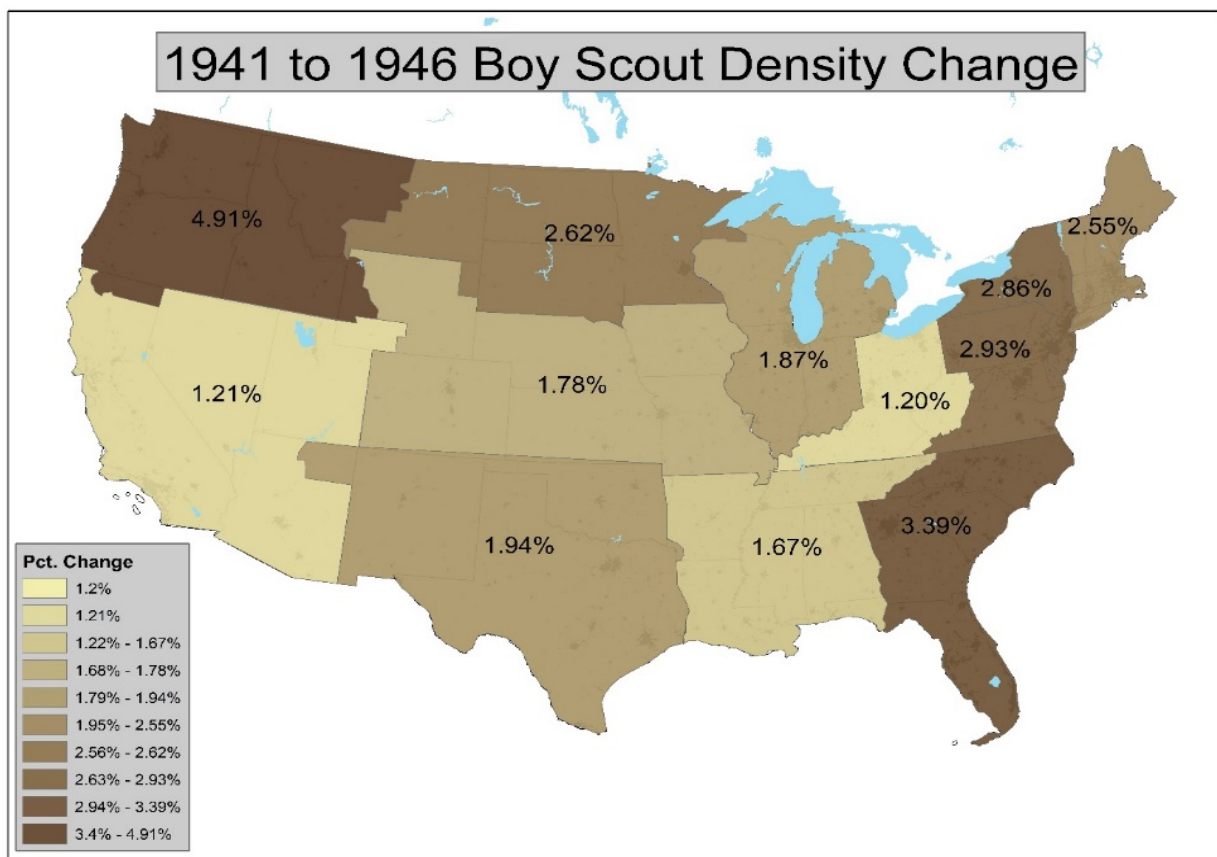

Figure 18: *Increasing membership density in the Boy Scouts from 1941 to 1946.*

years of above average enrollment had saturated the Scouting market on the west coast. The Pacific-Northwest showed the greatest gain. That region had been gaining membership at a rate comparable to the region to its south since Scouting reached the west coast, but it sustained its high increases through the war period. Atypically, the second largest membership increase was in Region 6, the Southeastern part of the country. Some of these increases could be attributed to ramped up industrialization during the war. As manufacturing increased, jobs were created in cities, and regions that had been primarily agricultural saw increased rural to urban migration which brought youth into contact with the Scouts in those cities.

The Scouts had three councils in Hawaii when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. During the attack, Scouts were guarding roads and putting out fires and in the aftermath more Scouts were mobilized to deliver messages, administer first aid, and assist with damaged island infrastructure. The work that Scouts did in Hawaii was the beginning of a trend. Over the course of the war the BSA responded to 69 official requests for service assistance from the American Government all across the country (Peterson, 1984). Many of these were resource drives and the Scouts were more than up to the task. The Scouts were responsible for some staggering collection statistics during the war: 5,898 tons of rubber, 17,400 tons of tin cans; 20,800 tons of other scrap metals, 750 tons of milkweed floss for life jackets, 591,000 tons of recycled paper; so much was gathered that the storage facilities overflowed and they were asked to stop (Peterson, 1984). Other drives for non-scrap materials included a collection of 10 million books for soldiers and 7,000 tons of clothing to relieve the battle torn nations of Asia and Europe. Victory Gardens in World War II were much more effective than they had been in World War I; 184,000 Scouts prepared gardens, and as many as 126,000 Scouts helped farmers

low on manual labor prepare their crops for harvest (Peterson, 1984).

Scouting was not simply a pastime for boys during the war but also a resource for the communities they were in, and service performed during World War II set up the BSA for an increase in postwar membership. The community-oriented work performed during the war provided exposure to the public of the good works for which the BSA was capable. People saw organized, intelligent, and driven young men putting their communities first in a time that called for tight communities perhaps more than any before. Although Scouting's boom following the war cannot be solely attributed to the goodwill invested during the war, it was certainly an important contributing factor.

Scouts in the Fight

In addition to all of the work by their younger counterparts on the home front, many senior Scouts and Scoutmasters were called to go overseas and fight. Despite losing troop leadership to the war effort, replacements were easily found to lead units (Peterson, 1984), and Scouting maintained a steady increase in membership through World War II. Sea Scouts, the BSA's branch for older Scouts interested in boating, were seen as especially valuable recruits because of their training on the water; by mid-war some 75,000 Sea Scouts were serving in the military, many as officers. The WWII period represents a coming of age for the BSA; 1941-1945 formed the foundation for the impending membership increase, and they were recognized on a national scale as a patriotic and valuable organization.

More than just in terms of membership, WWII was a time of transition for American Scouting. Unfortunately, just before the onset of World War II, Daniel Carter Beard, one of the

most revered of Scouting's founders, passed away. Beard had represented the ideal American Scout throughout the BSA's infancy; his presence as "Uncle Dan" had been maintained up until his death in the summer of 1941, and he had remained active in *Boys' Life* and ran the national Court of Honor. In addition, James West retired from the BSA in 1943, marking the loss of another of American Scouting's important founders. West's administrative talent had allowed the Boy Scouts to monopolize the Scouting scene at its inception, and his determined leadership kept the organization on top (Peterson, 1984). Dr. Elbert K. Fretwell was chosen as the heir to West's position as Chief Scout Executive.

Scouting's Post-War Expansion

After the war concluded, the Boy Scouts of America continued to steadily gain membership, while waiting for the baby boom generation to reach Cubbing age in 1954. This period was ideal for increased enrollment and involvement in the BSA. The Boy Scouts of

> *"The Boy Scouts are so much a part of the American picture that it is hard to believe they have been around for only thirty-five years. There are so tangled up in the vocabulary, humor, ideals and daily life of the nation that one would think they had been around as long as the Grange or the W.C.T.U* [Womens Christian Temperance Union] .... *Probably the secret is that the Scouts, instead of playing soldier or cops-and-robbers, actually participate in the life of their communities. During the war they have sold Bonds, collected scrap materials, assisted ration boards and other civilian boards.... Who can tell how much the Boy Scout movement has done to relieve the blackout of the Seven Ages of Man – Those years when a boy is too old to have nothing useful to do and too young to be allowed to do it."* (Saturday Evening Post, 1945)

America had proven its ability to do good and had achieved a national reputation for its wartime service. Apart from its good reputation the BSA benefitted from a period of good jobs. Many men of the family were able to earn enough for their wives to stay at home and housewives were invaluable in coordinating the Scouting logistics for their children. The national office was surprised at the rapid growth; the BSA found itself gaining 200,000 members per year during the height of the baby boom (Peterson, 1984). Before World War II the idea of such swift expansion

would have seemed ridiculous, but suddenly booming membership became a reality.

The Boy Scouts also were active overseas in the post-war period, using their resources to rebuild Scouting in Europe and Asia while the Marshall plan was rebuilding the same countries' economies. The global Scouting community had been torn apart by WWII, including Scout organizations going underground in places like Germany, the Soviet Union, and Italy. Although it had little impact on the overall geographic distribution of the BSA, the assistance of American Scouting to their overseas counterparts was vital in returning Scouting to many countries in Europe. Only in the Soviet bloc did Scouting continue as an underground phenomenon, only to emerge in the 1990s with the fall of the U.S.S.R.

Domestically, families were focused on their children after the war, and time was carved out of the daily schedule specifically for Scouting. Society expected that parents would be active as volunteers in their children's activities and this was true for Scouting as well – some troops had more volunteers than they knew what to do with. Scouting had accrued a certain level of respect among youth, and although it is perhaps true that it has never been "cool" to be in scouting, it was not as socially ostracized in the 1950s and 1960s as it is today. Nicknames like "Boy Sprouts" and "sissies" were still fair game by peers, but a majority of non-Scouts admired their Scouting peers or did not care either way if a classmate was in the Scouts. As Robert Peterson puts it, *"Peer pressure pushed boys toward Scouting rather than away from it"* (Peterson, 1984).

After the war the overall membership of the BSA, including all Scouting programs, increased, although Boy Scout membership actually decreased – the huge increase in Cub Scout enrollment covered the loss of Boy Scouts. The changing membership pattern after the war was

a combination of many factors: the baby boom, public opinion of Scouting, and the growing

popularity of the Cub Scouts in 1949. In 1954, when the first baby boomers became eligible for

Cub Scouts under the new membership guidelines, the total enrollment in Scouting jumped

378,131 members (Peterson, 1984). The growth was shared among all three branches of Boy

Scouting, but not at an even ratio. Cub Scouting passed Boy Scouting as the BSA's largest

branch in 1956 (Macleod, 1983), although in some ways this can be seen as a reflection of the

BSA's record keeping that made every boy over 14 years old an Explorer. However, Cub

Scouting was growing much faster than Boy Scouts and was on track to pass them shortly; on

top of this, Boy Scouting has always struggled to retain its older members, so it is likely that

these boys 14 and older were a low percentage of total membership at that time.

An example of this statistical change can be seen by comparing Figure 19 and Figure 20;

across the country the distribution of density remained consistent while almost every region

dropped somewhere between 2% and 3%. This was not a national loss in membership nor a gain in population, but reflects a change in record keeping methods. Between 1946 and 1951 the BSA changed how it tracked and tabulated the annual
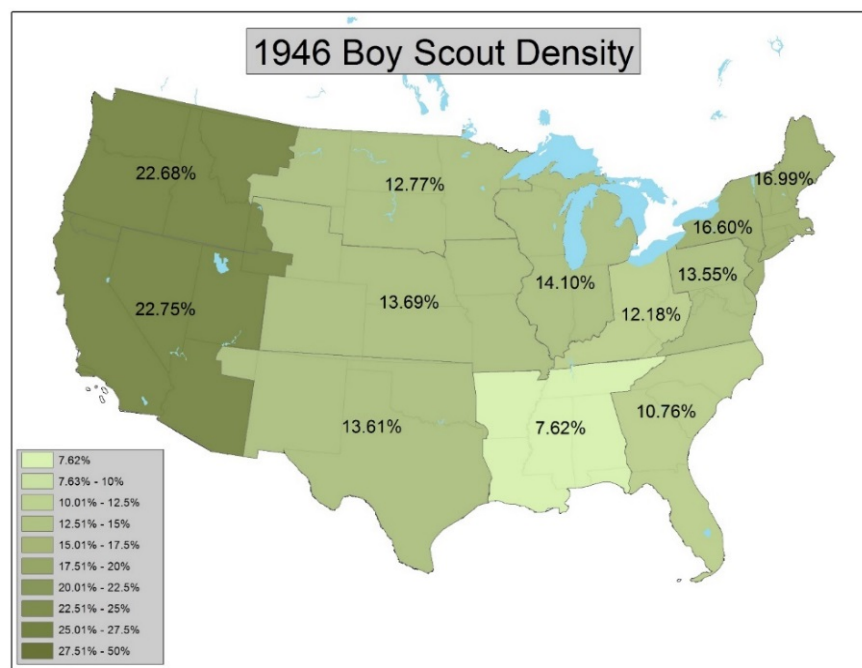
Figure 19: Boy Scout percent enrollment one year after the war.

boy crop (ABC). In 1946 and prior, the BSA had based its enrollment figures on the boys who

would be coming of age to join scouting. However, in the 1950s they included boys who would

be entering into Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Explorers. This greater number of boys who could

be in Scouting reduced the ratio of boys active in Scouting, even though the raw enrollment in

Scouts went up over this period.

In another
change of policy,
Explorer troops could
now operate
independently of a Boy
Scout troop, which
freed them to undertake
activities more suited
for older boys who
craved more
independence and
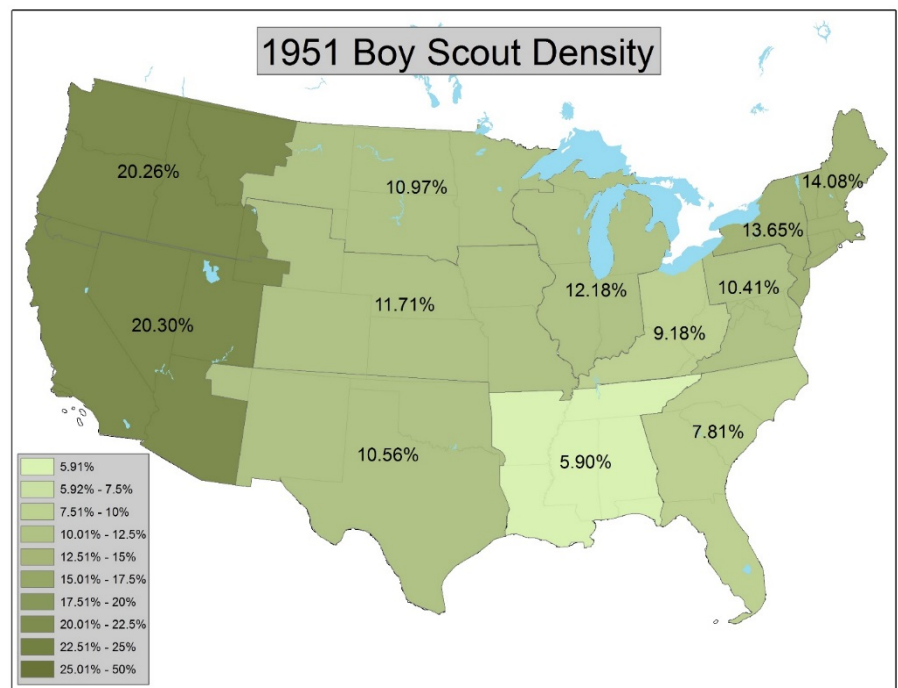
Figure 20: Boy Scouts in 1951, a few years before the first baby boomers were old enough to join Cub Scouts.

adventure in their scouting. Explorer Scouts changed again in 1959, and once more down the

road 1998. Exploring did a lot of good for BSA membership because it opened up the doors for

more non-religious, non-civic entities to become sponsoring members. In 1969 the new

Exploring program allowed unregistered girls to be participants in activities, and in 1971 the

limitation was lifted altogether and girls could become full members of Explorers and the Boy

Scouts of America. Figure 21 displays the state of Exploring across the country, and is the first

map utilizing council-scale data. It marks the year girls were fully admitted into the program.

Membership in Exploring is linked to councils selling the program to local youth more than

regional trends, with the exception of the western regions which had higher participation than

other parts of the country.

Figure 21 is a choropleth map of Explorer Scout participation across the US. High

participation in and around Utah is easily picked out. The differences between the distribution of

Explorer Scouts and Boy Scouts could yield interesting revelations about the distribution of

female participation in traditionally male dominated youth serving organizations.

The admittance of girls was a first in Scouting and a fundamental change of direction for

Figure 21: *Explorer Scouting in 1971.*

the organization; now Scouting was for every American youth of the appropriate age, instead of just for boys. Cub Scouting also saw some changes as the advancement steps became more easily accessible for younger members. In 1941 the rank of Lion was phased out and Webelos, a separate advancement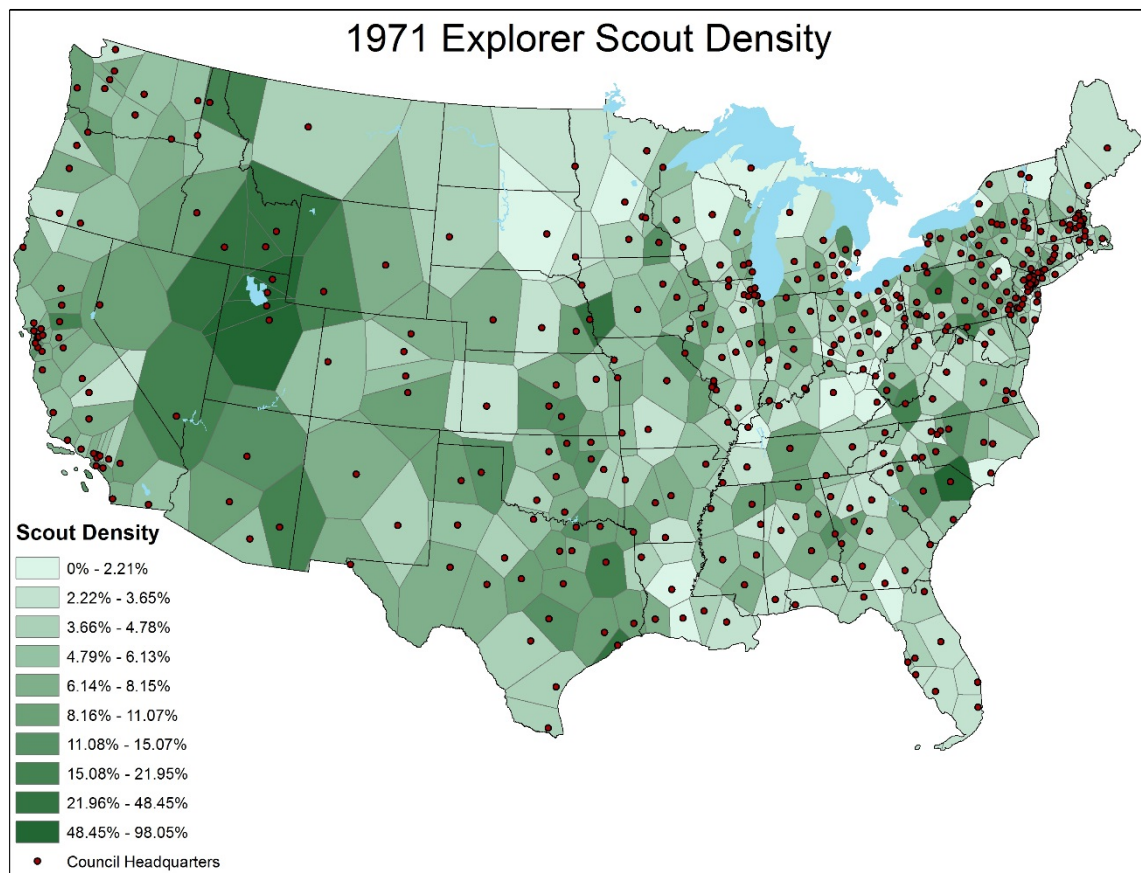 program for Cubs preparing to enter Boy Scouts, was introduced. Changes in the Cub Scout program show that, although the BSA sometimes was slow to catch on, programs for younger boys were becoming as popular as the main program. The play, camaraderie, and camping opportunities for Cub Scouts all were attuned to what boys that age hungered for. Attention to the program, the positive changes, and the realization that the Cub Scouts was not only meant to be different from the Boy Scouts but also a core program for the Scouting Movement (and not just a preparatory organization), all affirmed the BSA commitment to young boys.

The National Good Turn

The post war boom was utilized by the BSA for some of its biggest and most successful national Good Turns. Strong national leadership, a large volume of resources at its disposal, and a huge team on the ground meant that the BSA was poised to do good. Every two years the organization launched a new concentrated effort to improve the country – the first event in 1950 led to the gathering of 2,000 tons of clothing for donation as a part of the post-war Marshall Plan effort in Europe. 1952 was a get out the vote campaign that left 30 million Liberty Bell shaped reminders on citizens' door handles; voting reminders were a staple of the national Good Turn movement in presidential election years. 1954 sent Scouts to the woods to do conservation work in parks, rural areas, and public wilderness across the country. As a result, 6.2 million trees were planted, 55,000 bird houses were erected, and 41,000 conservation exhibits were put on public

display. The 1956 get out the vote campaign was the largest in Scouting's history when 36

million door hangers and 1.35 million posters were distributed. In 1958, the national Good Turn

was the distribution of 40 million preparedness handbooks created by the Office of Civil Defense

Mobilization on safety. The voter awareness campaign of 1960 was the final Good Turn, until

project SOAR (Save Our American Resources) took over beginning in 1970 (Peterson, 1984).

Along with high participation in national Good Turns came high subscriptions to *Boys' Life*

magazine. In the late 1960s the magazine boasted 2.65 million subscribers which included

350,000 non-scout readers. The magazine was the 17th largest in the United States (Peterson,

1984).

The Civil Rights era began in the 1960s and the Boy Scouts of America was eager to

meet it. Figure 22 shows the BSA experienced lower membership ratios in traditionally strong

regions including both coasts and the states bordering Lake Michigan. Region 12, which

includes Utah and California, fell from 20.30% to 12.29%. However, there were also some gains

in traditionally weak regions. The region surrounding Mississippi leapt from 5.90% participation

to 9.23% participation; that's a 56% increase. The map lines up well with political boundaries,

gains coming to traditionally conservative parts of the country, and dipping membership ratios in

liberal areas.

The BSA used the new decade as an opportunity to embrace cultural diversity, which had

not been much of a focus for the organization since their inception. They did this through

increased recruitment efforts in low-income rural areas such as the Appalachian Mountains and

in the downtowns of major cities. The movement of middle-class people from city centers to

suburbs made it increasingly difficult for the BSA to organize troops and packs in America's

downtowns; the BSA's National Executive Council launched the Inner-City Rural Program in 1965 to bring a more targeted approach to membership (Peterson, 1984).

Adult volunteers are crucial to Scouting,

Figure 22: *Boy Scout density in 1961.*

and in poor downtown and rural areas, adults are difficult to find with the time and resources to

manage a Scouting unit. Where adult volunteers participate, Scouting succeeds. Scouting

teaches the individual to be a free thinking, self-reliant, and resourceful, as well as how to be an

active member of a community, and how to develop self-confidence and initiative; the skills

reinforced by Scouting are directly contrary to those exploited by gangs in their recruitment.   As

a part of the Inner-City Rural Program, sponsored by the BSA, over a six-years period
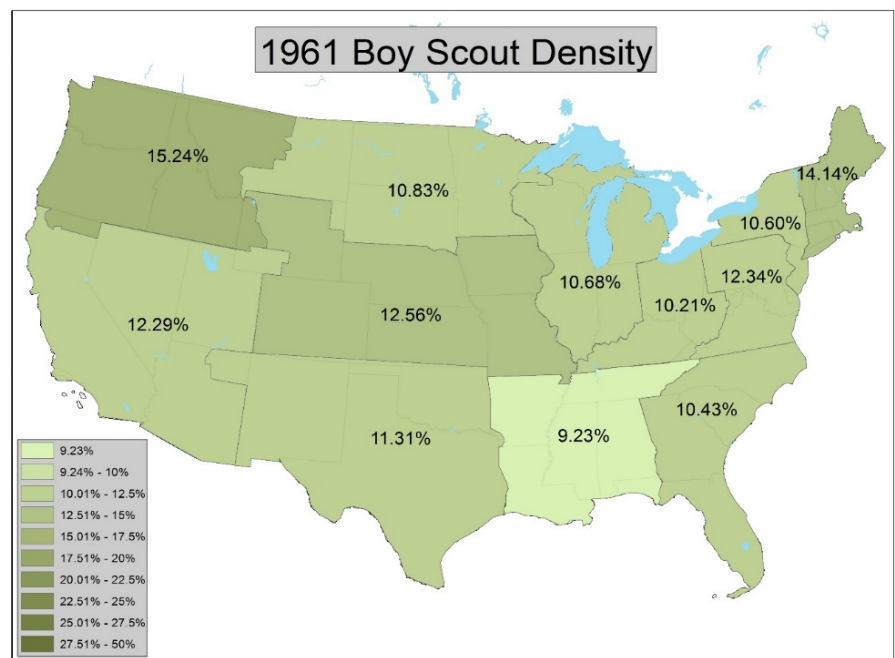
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researchers monitored 18 different inner city and rural areas (Wills, 2009). A Scoutmaster in

Chicago named Clarence Phillips who was the Denmaster for two packs, a Scoutmaster for two

troops, and an Explorer Post Chief said "I'm going to turn all these gang boys into Boy Scouts.

After all, a Scout troop is nothing but a gang – a gang under proper supervision…a gang with

direction" (Peterson, 1984). Mr. Phillips was able to recruit one quarter of the boys in his

housing project into Scouting, including members from two prominent local gangs.

Some gangs perceived Scouting as a threat to their own recruitment. The BSA launched

a campaign to form Scouting units in public housing projects and to recruit members of minority

populations. In Philadelphia the solution was Block Scouting, a system where all the members

of a pack, post, or troop were from the same block in the hope of cutting down on travelling

through gang-contested territory for weekly meetings. The efforts put forward by the BSA to

bring Scouting safely to urban centers was a good step towards improving membership; however

it did not have a significant impact on national or regional trends.

Regional trends shown in figure 23, that maps Scout density for 1966, shows modest

gains when compared to the membership in figure 22, just five years earlier. The relationships

between regions largely remained the same, with the West coast dominating and the South

finally beginning to equalize with the areas around it. By this point, New York and New Jersey

were two of the states with the lowest membership in the country. Unfortunately for the BSA,

the baby boom generation was coming to an end. The high water mark for membership [6.3

million] came in 1971 on the BSA's 61st anniversary, but the writing was on the wall – in 1969

the BSA posted its first overall drop in enrollment in 59 years (Peterson, 1984).

Tables 3 and 4 show membership information for the BSA's 12 regions between 1946 and 1976. Growth was universal during this period, but was not uniform among programs. Table 4 shows that Boy Scout membership fell between 1946 and 1956; however, once baby boomers were old enough to join, beginning in 1957, there was a significant rise in membership, as well as an increased percentage of membership, measured by the ABC (Annual Boy Crop).

Many authors such as Wills (1984) and Peterson (2009) have referred to the post war period as "Scouting's Golden Age," even though the proportion of boys who enrolled in the Scouts dropped – the dramatic increase in the raw number of
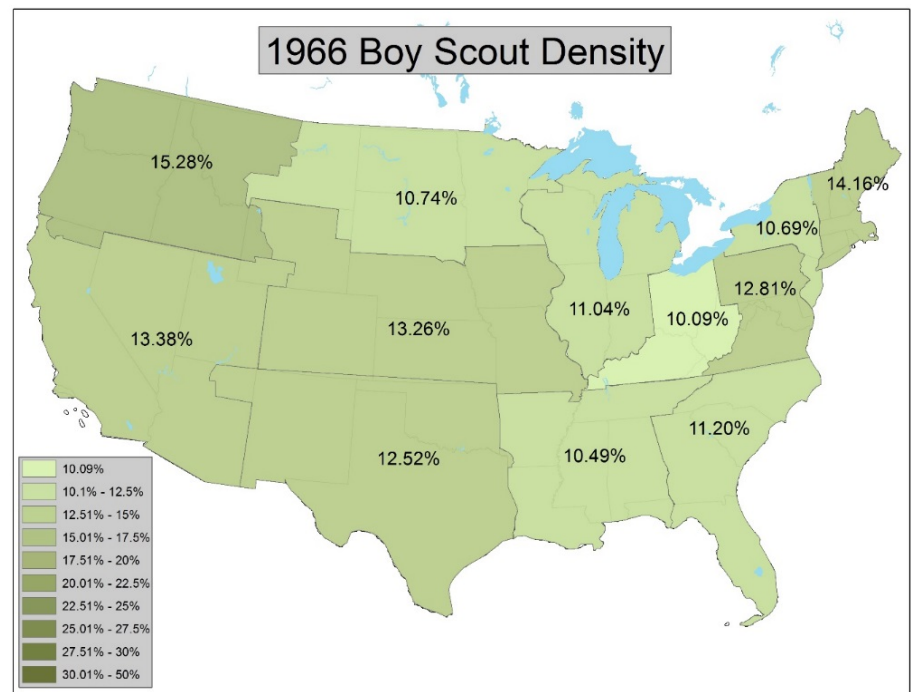
Figure 23: *Boy Scout Density in 1966, the last year baby boomers were Scouting age.*

boys that were of age to join Scouting is all that kept Boy Scout membership rising. As mentioned before, the BSA did not have a losing membership year until 1969, but this was because of the surge in Cub Scouting in the post-war era. All twelve regions uniformly posted increasing membership and membership per ABC data

for the twenty years shown in the data. Region 5 in the Deep South saw an increase in raw Scout

membership of 614% over the twenty years displayed in the tables; for a perpetually low

membership ratio region, that was an impressive gain and indicative of positive growth that can

be attributed to a raw injection of membership from the baby boomers.

Cub Scouts per Region

Year	1946	1956	1966	RAW'46	RAW'56	RAW'66	RAW'76
(1)MA, VT, NH, ME, CT, RI	12.92%%	27.99%	37.41%	32,657	106,254	126,240	93,583
(2)NY, NJ	12.25%	23.13%	29.22%	56,296	210,626	232,617	176,321
(3)PA, VA, MD, DE, DC	8.45%	23.07%	32.77%	41,245	167,015	208,376	167,131
(4)KY, OH, WV	8.66%	19.78%	28.01%	35,395	119,614	142,647	107,252
(5)AL, AR, LA, MS, TN	4.04%	12.16%	23.91%	20,381	81,376	125,145	104,764
(6)FL, GA, NC, SC	5.24%	13.99%	23.16%	22,107	84,343	124,074	101,967
(7)IL, IN, MI, WI	13.65%	27.41%	37.30%	81,098	263,406	337,851	256,753
(8)CO, IA, MO, KS, NB, WY	14.89%	30.27%	44.61%	51,557	148,910	187,105	135,548
(9)NM, OK, TX	12.85%	25.45%	39.19%	46,523	135,004	181,394	134,871
(10)MN, ½ MT, ND, SD	12.21%	24.89%	36.51%	18,858	55,335	68,100	49,242
(11)AZ, CA, NV, UT	26.77%	41.13%	52.76%	30,460	96,490	107,537	77,077
(12)ID, ½ MT, OR, WA	25.18%	37.56%	40.97%	61,633	214,299	264,763	203,130

Table 4: Cub Scout membership as discussed in this chapter, last column represents the total (positive) change in raw membership.

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Boy Scout % per Region

Year	1946	1956	1966	RAW'46	RAW'56	RAW'66	RAW'76
(1)MA, VT, NH, ME, CT, RI	16.99%	12.51%	14.16%	75,124	83,110	118,161	43,037
(2)NY, NJ	16.60%	9.32%	10.69%	133,505	148,578	212,617	79,112
(3)PA, VA, MD, DE, DC	13.55%	9.77%	12.81%	115,519	123,817	203,589	88,070
(4)KY, OH, WV	12.18%	8.17%	10.09%	87,345	86,459	130,246	42,901
(5)AL, AR, LA, MS, TN	7.68%	6.45%	10.49%	67,305	75,538	138,479	71,174
(6)FL, GA, NC, SC	10.76%	7.51%	11.20%	79,405	79,192	152,857	73,452
(7)IL, IN, MI, WI	14.10%	9.46%	11.04%	147,108	159,139	247,157	100,049
(8)CO, IA, MO, KS, NB, WY	13.69%	10.11%	13.26%	82,975	87,044	140,305	57,330
(9)NM, OK, TX	13.61%	9.11%	12.52%	86,206	84,593	146,563	60,357
(10)MN, ½ MT, ND, SD	12.77%	8.84%	10.74%	34,510	34,395	50,715	16,205
(11)AZ, CA, NV, UT	22.68%	13.38%	15.28%	45,162	54,943	80,184	35,022
(12)ID, ½ MT, OR, WA	22.75%	12.94%	13.38%	97,500	129,227	215,993	118,493

Table 3: Boy Scout membership as discussed in this chapter, last column represents the total (positive) change in raw membership.

Conclusion

In 1969 the United States of America landed on the moon. The first astronaut out of the lunar lander, Neil A. Armstrong, was an Eagle Scout, and the man after him, Buzz Aldrin, was a Tenderfoot. Earlier in the day the two space-bound Scouts radioed their greetings to about 35,000 Scouts camping out at Farragut State Park in Idaho, at the Seventh National Jamboree (Peterson, 1984). As of 2007, 66.34% or 207 of all 312 NASA astronauts had been a part of Scouting (usscouts.org). Compared to the realities of the world, at the time Scouting was being founded by Baden-Powell, Seton, and Beard, the idea of a man on the moon was reserved exclusively for science fiction. The stark difference between the world when Scouting was formed in 1908 and the world in 1971 meant that the BSA was threatened with becoming "out of date." In response, the BSA funded a study in 1964 conducted by market-research firm Daniel Yankelovich, Inc. (Wills, 2009) (Daniel Yankelovich Inc, 1964). The study found that the Scouts were still well regarded by Americans, but boys themselves thought Scouting skills were losing their relevancy. Youth were bored and did not enjoy the rigid structure of the Scouts. Many boys also reported that Scouting wasn't teaching them to be adults but was reinforcing childlike behavior, the exact opposite of what the BSA was trying to accomplish (Peterson, 1984). It was concluded that Scouting was indeed "too organized" and "kind of out of date" for many boys, and this led to the introduction of the Improved Scouting Program in 1972, and the BSA's quest for relevancy in the 1970s.

Chapter 5: (1971 – 2000)

In 1971, Scouting hit its high-water mark for membership. The ensuing decline was due to evolving cultural values, a changing economy, and an inflexibility from within Scouting itself. This chapter explores the membership changes that took place between 1971 and 2001, the regions that experienced membership loss, and what the BSA did to attempt to hold onto its place in American culture.

The New Scouting Program

The Yankelovich study showed the BSA that the country's youth considered Scouting out of touch with the times. The BSA reacted with several drastic changes in operation and nomenclature. Known as the Improved Scouting Program, the modifications brought more focus to Scouting in the inner city (Wills, 2009). As a part of the new plan, the BSA pledged to take on the drug abuse epidemic with Operation Reach. The program aimed to show that community, family, and meaningful relationship were more rewarding than the temporary high of drugs (Peterson, 1984).

Figure 24 below accurately shows the difficulty that the BSA had penetrating the inner-cities. The high membership ratios in rural New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and New Hampshire are offset by the much lower
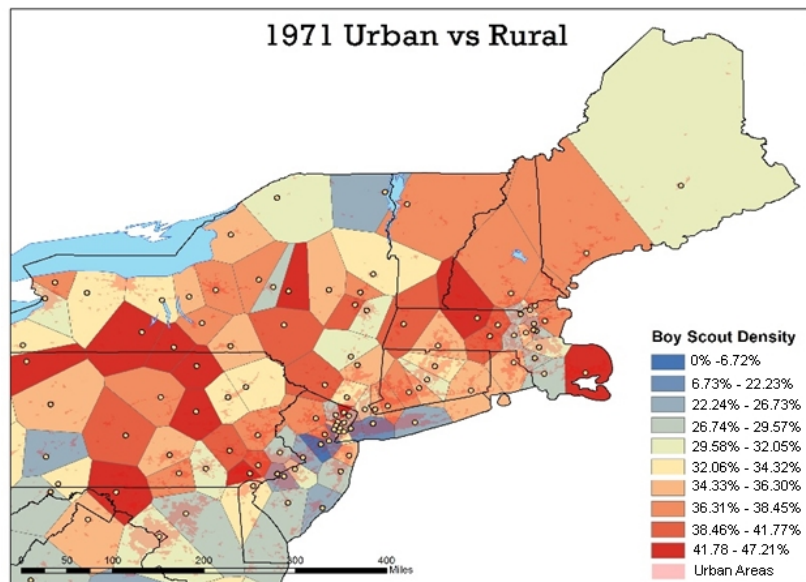

Figure 24: Boy Scout density in the Northeast. Small yellow circles are the council headquarters and were used to generate the Theissen Polygons

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percent participation surrounding Boston, New York City and coastal New Jersey. The divide between urban and rural areas in Scouting was not new in 1971, but the ability to portray the phenomenon with finer scale maps reveals patterns at a finer scale.

Explorer Scouting began admitting girls, and to accommodate the new membership standards, the Boy Scouts of American rebranded itself as Scouting/USA. The Girl Scouts, GSUSA, underwent a similar rebranding and modernizing program (Arneil, 2010). However, for the Boy Scouts the name change to Scouting/USA upset many conservative Scouts who felt that it was one more step in the destruction of the Scouting tradition Baden-Powell established.

The BSA also made minor modifications to the Cub Scouts. It dropped "to be square" from the Cub Scout pledge. Originally, it indicated fairness and equality, with its ancestry reflected in programs like Teddy Roosevelt's Square Deal. "Square" had come to mean uncool and referred to people who rigidly abided by all the rules and did not have any fun. "Square" was an image the BSA was keen to get rid of.

The Improved Scouting Program introduced other changes to Scouting as well. To make the BSA relevant both to youth in cities and the country, the BSA altered *The Scout* Handbook and advancement requirements. Merit badges such as tracking, signaling by semaphore, canoeing, Morse code, pioneering projects, tree identification, and many parts of outdoor first aid were dropped from the handbook. First aid for rat bites, hiking in the city, introducing a guest speaker at a troop meeting, and how to help your parents around the house replaced these outmoded merit badges (Peterson, 1984).

The changes in the Scouting program indicated a shift in emphasis from rurality and camping to urban life and a concentration on civic duty. The Improved Scouting Program

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relabeled Scoutmasters as "managers of learning" to reflect the new emphasis on emotional support. The BSA's attempt to reach new populations of youth in depressed rural areas and inner cities created an intense backlash from the traditionally conservative core membership of the Boy Scouts of America (Peterson, 1984). Abandoning an emphasis on nature and promoting emotional support struck many Denmasters, Scoutmasters, and Explorer Post Chiefs as an attack on their leadership style and a softening of the BSA (Wills, 2009). Some of these volunteers and leaders with a military background or no-nonsense style directly opposed the emotional support and "personal growth agreement conferences" the Improved Scouting Program recommended.

After the implementation of the Improved Scouting Program, BSA membership continued to decline. Many in Scouting blamed the Improved Scouting Program for the membership loss. However, the BSA was not the only youth program experiencing a declining membership. 4-H and GSUSA also experienced falling membership; however, 4-H and the Girl Scouts, were not as severely impacted as the BSA (Putnam, 2000). Overall, the country saw a decrease in civic engagement in the 1970s and 1980s (Norris and Inglehart, 2003).

The Improved Scouting Program did not have the modernizing effect that the BSA intended. Removing traditional merit badges from the handbook alienated the Scouting traditionalists which resulted in practically none of the changes introduced by the Improved Scouting Program surviving beyond 1978. In 1978, a new Chief Scout Executive rescinded the changes introduced by the Improved Scouting Program and returned the organization to a more traditional approach. The BSA's inability to effectively update its program in the 1970s probably hurt it over the long run. The Girl Scouts of America (GSUSA), on the other hand, implemented important procedural and membership changes in the 1980s and, as a result, navigated its way

through a period of a downturn in civic engagement more comfortably than the Boy Scouts of America (Arneil, 2010). Both organizations realized that much had changed in the world since Scouting was founded but only the Girl Scouts found a solution that salvaged declining membership.

The Older Boy Problem

Since the inception of Scouting, it has been difficult to keep boys in the program until they turn 18. Scouting is an attractive proposition to boys, especially younger ones, who like to get outside and play in the woods. However, the civic teachings of Scouting and the long progress to Eagle take their toll on boys who want to participate in other activities. In the early years the merit badge system and tangible value that comes with being an Eagle Scout helped keep many boys in the program, but the dropout rate was still high. Today, about 96% of Scouts never earn the BSA's highest rank.

Introduced in 1911, Sea Scouting began when a boat was donated to the BSA. It was not a program initiated by the National Office, but rather the office's reaction to circumstances. The program successfully kept older boys in Scouting. Eventually, Sea Scouting became a branch of Senior Scouting, the first official title given to the programs aimed at keeping older boys in the mix. As a result, Sea Scouting became a model for other programs designed to keep older boys in the BSA, eventually leading to Air Scouting, Explorer Scouts, and Senior Scouting, a bureau that oversaw all programs aimed at keeping older youth active in the BSA. Senior Scouting had a couple of goals. An original goal was for members to hold leadership positions in Cub Scout Packs. A second goal was for these members to help organize Air Scout and Sea Scout posts in conjunction with their local troop. The BSA introduced Air Scouting, a program designed for

Scouts interested in Aviation, in the midst of WWII. The program put Scouts in airplanes to observe pilots during flights. It joined Sea Scouting under the wing of Senior Scouting.

The first purposeful moves to address the older boy problem came in the 1920s and were initiated in England. Baden-Powell introduced the Rover Scouts in 1922 with *Rovering to Success* (Baden-Powell, 1922) and several American troops adopted the program before the BSA officially did. Although Rover Scouts officially became a Scouting branch in 1933, it was never successful. In 1919, 55.6% of boys in Scouting were 12 or 13 years old, meaning the remaining 14-18 year olds made up less than half of BSA membership (Macleod, 1983). It was clear that older boys were not remaining in Scouts.

Many troops came up with their own solutions to the retention deficit. In 1924, the Salt Lake Council introduced the Vanguards program which attracted boys with advanced outdoor adventures. The first Explorer Scouts appeared in the Pacific Northwest in the 1930s in places like Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington. They had a variety of names such as Foresters, Engineers, and Rangers. They engaged in more advanced hiking and camping, similar to the Vanguards program. In 1936, the national office recognized the success of these pioneer programs for older youth and launched Explorer Scouts, the first official program aimed at retaining Scouts in their teens (Peterson, 1984).

Explorer Scouts became the most popular of the early branches of Senior Scouting. Introduced as a trial in 1933 and officially adopted in 1935, Explorer Scouts stressed high adventure camping trips and more outdoor participation for 13 and 14-year-old boys (www.seniorscoutinghistory.org). High adventure was intended to mean camping with more independence and risk.

The BSA eventually opened multiple high adventure bases specifically suited to this type of camping. Northern Tier in Ely, Minnesota, began canoeing expeditions in 1923; Philmont Scout Ranch near Cimarron, New Mexico, was donated to the BSA in 1938; Sea Base in the Caribbean Sea, but based in the Florida Keys and Bahamas, began sailing adventures in 1980; and, most recently, the Summit Bechtel Family Scout Reserve in West Virginia opened in 2014. These camps give troops and posts places to go in the summer that were larger and more challenging than local scout camps.

Although Exploring reached the height of its popularity in the 1980s, some people wanted a non-coed program that focused on high adventure. Varsity Scouting was introduced in 1984 to fill this void and as a remedy for families who were seeking a more traditional Older-Scout program. Varsity Scouting was similar to Exploring because Scouts went on advanced hiking, canoeing, and backpacking trips; however, the program was only for boys.

Despite the name, and the fact that the role of Scoutmaster was occupied by someone called the Coach, there was no official sports affiliation in Varsity Scouts (Peterson, 1984). The programs included sports and teams but also put an emphasis on more advanced camping and hiking. It allowed Scouts to go rock climbing, mountain biking, white water paddling, and experience other adventure sports. Varsity Scouts garnered 50,000 members within a year of introduction, (Wills, 2009) and many of the original councils to adopt the program were in the West in areas with high LDS Church membership. Although not indicated in any text, it seems clear that Varsity Scouting was designed with the LDS Church in mind. The existence of Varsity Scouting highlights the relationship that the BSA maintains with chartering organizations, especially one as important as the LDS Church.

The BSA introduced Venture Scouts in 1998. The program was proposed in 1995 but took three years to reach fruition (Wills, 2009). In the 1990s as the outdoor Exploring program showed rapid expansion in its membership, Venturing was a response to this growth. Isolating outdoor element within Exploring and spinning it into Venture Scouting allowed the new program to continue to grow without the constraints of the Exploring program. The membership in Venturing saw a 94% enrollment increase in the decade and showed that older youth were hungry for outdoor high adventure. This was the type of program that the BSA was searching for to solve the "older boy problem." The age range for Venturing was set at 14 to 20 years old, and the organization has stayed strong through the modern period. It reflects some interesting demographics not present in other facets of the BSA. Although the age range is from 14 – 20, the core of membership is between 16 – 19 years old. The oddest part is that there are more nineteen-year-olds than fourteen-year-olds (Wills, 2009). This inversion of the typical age range in Scouting is a bright sign for the BSA as a whole. However, there are still many places where Scouting needs to make progress, and the inner city is one of them.

Reaching Urban Youth

As Varsity Scouting was a solution to the older boy problem, the BSA sought new solutions to their low membership in inner cities. It was difficult to keep Scouting enrollment steady in America's urban centers. Often a troop would spring up, only to disintegrate a few years later after the original Scoutmaster's son or daughter was done with the program. Recruiting other youths' parents proved difficult due to lack of funds and spare time. To stabilize inner city scouting, establishing consistent, reliable, quality volunteers was a must. One creative solution was to approach CEOs of corporations to identify young executives in their

company who could lead a Scout troop.   Enlisting young executives was a local attempt at fixing

the problem of a lack of volunteers in major cities. Optimistically, it was a sign that recruitment

in large metropolitan areas was improving, but realistically, it was a drop in the bucket for areas

that have been traditionally underserved by the BSA. Efforts would need to be improved if the

Scouts were going to overturn their image as a middle-class, Caucasian organization.

Fortunately, the Scouts were ready to up the ante in the next decade.

Beginning in the late 1980s and continuing through the following decade the BSA

launched project "Hispanic Emphasis" (Wills, 2009). The program was focused on outreach to

the quickly expanding Hispanic population in the United States. The BSA funded Hispanic

temporary professionals in their councils in Texas and California; many became full time

employees in their councils the next year (Peterson, 1984). The director of BSA professional

recruiting, Ponce Duran, said this about the program: "Many Hispanic families, for example,

have no history of Scouting. [The Program] will show off the many opportunities available to

women and minorities in Scouting" (Wills, 2009).   The initiative created 608 Cub Scout Packs,

Explorer Posts, and Boy Scout Troops in the targeted areas. A secondary goal of the program

was to keep Hispanic youth out of gangs in their communities. An Explorer Post in the city of

Salinas, California, serving youth at risk in danger of joining local gangs attained a membership

of 250 shortly after its foundation. (Wills, 2009).

Figure 25 shows the percentage of membership change between 1981 and 1991. Although the Mormon cultural hearth around Utah shows the nations most significant membership percentage losses, it remained the strongest section of the country by a broad margin. The overall trend for this map is diminishing membership, but some councils puncuate an overall trend with bright blue gains scatterred along the west coast and midwest.

The map shows that, for most councils, participation is directly correlated to the available youth in the council; that is to say, most points match the shading of the polygon behind them. However some outliers can be found in northern Florida. Simliliar to the 1971 map for Explorer Scouts, the councils based near Orlando and Jacksonville have membership that is not on par with the large number of available boys within proximity to their council headquarters. There are also scattered councils in the West and Midwest where Scout participation is below what the available youth would suggest. These councils' rurality provides at least a partial explanation for their low membership. Historically, councils like these do not attract members as effectively as councils in cities.

Prominent Patriotism

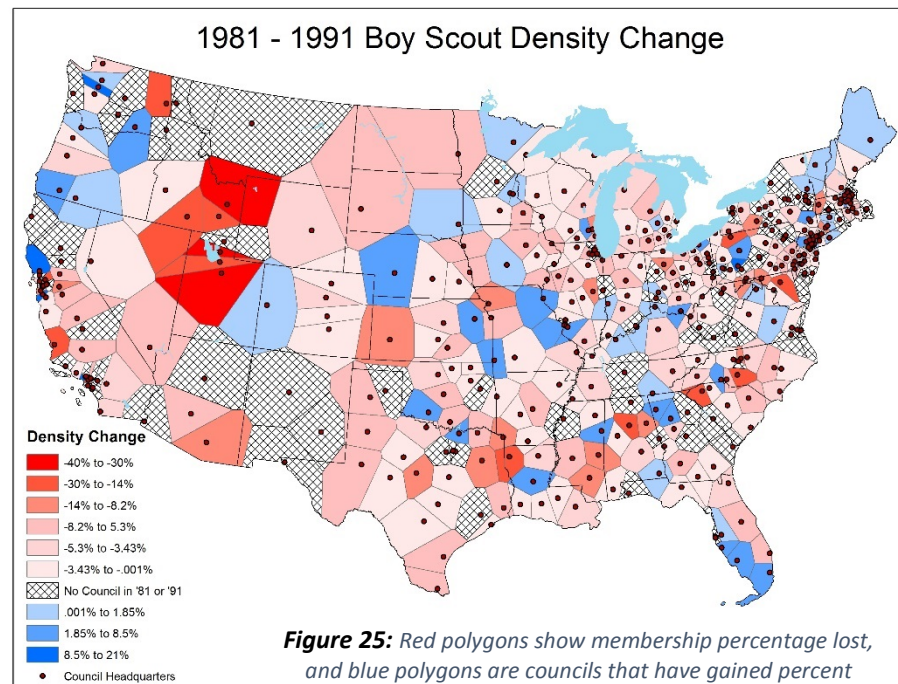Ronald Reagan became president in 1980 and was swept into office on the back

Figure 25: *Red polygons show membership percentage lost, and blue polygons are councils that have gained percent membership. Red dots are the city the council is based in (and the center of the Thiessen polygon. Cross-hatched polygons did not have a council in either 1981 or 1991*

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of a new conservatism that harkened to a return to what made America great. The nostalgic attitude promoted by this period of patriotic expression was also directed towards the BSA, which helped boost membership during the Reagan years. In 1980, membership increased for the first time since 1973 (Wills, 2009). The uptick in membership may have been related to increased exposure of the Boy Scouts of America as a part of their involvement in the 1980 United States Census. The BSA volunteered its members' services as a part of the 1980 census. Millions of Scouts across the country reminded Americans to report their information in the census, and were a part of making the 1980 census one of the most thorough censuses in U.S. history (Wills, 2009). Although Wills cites the new nationalism that followed Reagan's election and the publicity from the national Good Turns, it seems more likely that the improving economy and an increase in dispensable income might be better explanations for improving membership statistics.

In 1982 Cub Scouting underwent a major change in an effort to better serve youth and increase enrollment. At the national meeting in Atlanta, GA, Tiger Cubs were introduced for seven-year-old boys (Wills, 2009). Tiger Cubs were loosely affiliated with a Cub Scout Pack. The idea was a hit, and after two years 200,000 seven year olds were Tiger Cubs. The program was designed for seven year-olds exclusively and therefore was completely reliant upon new membership, which makes the initial 200,000 members that much more impressive.

Figure 26 shows the membership percentage change for all councils from 1991 to 2001. Areas that are hatched out did not have a council in either of those two years so change could not be shown. The map shows losses, some significant, in many parts of the country. Much of the deep south is struggling in Figure 26, as is the west coast. The Midwest appears to be showing

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primarily modest gains.
The overall
membership shows that
there were significant
losses early in the
decade shown, but that
membership losses
levelled out
approaching 2001.
Gains in the council
near Phoenix appear to
be an outlier in this
map.
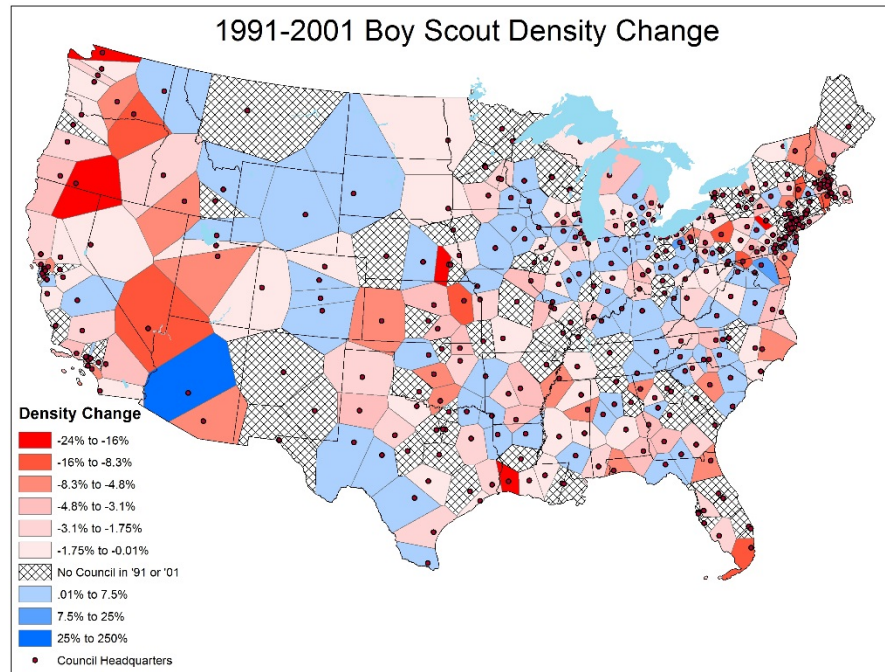
Figure 26: *Red polygons show membership percentage lost, and blue polygons are councils that have gained percent membership. Red dots are the city the council is based in (and the center of the Thiessen polygon. Cross-hatched polygons did not have a council in either 1991 or 2001*

Weaknesses can be seen in the rural south and in the upstate portions of many Northeastern states. This council level map emphasizes that, although Scouting was declining across the country, it held strong in pockets that had developed a Scouting tradition or were well managed.

Scouting Defined

Beginning in 1996, the Boy Scouts of America began hiring the polling company Harris Interactive to measure the value in Scouting. Although the first large scale evaluation of the program was the Yankelovich study in 1964, Harris undertook a study called "The Values of Men and Boys in America" in 1996. The study polled school age males and a cross section of

adult males to compare and contrast the value inherent in Scouting. The general conclusion was

that Scouting works (Wills, 2009). Boys who had been in Scouting for at least five years showed

higher moral fiber than their non-Scouting counterparts. An example of how Harris and the BSA

define "high moral fiber" is the following statistic: more than 75% of former Scouts agree that

they should not do something wrong even if it guaranteed future success, while less than 50% of

non-Scouts shared that sentiment (Wills, 2009). The set of studies was repeated in 2006 and the

results were consistent; Scouting successfully builds character in American boys.

Conclusion

The defining trend of the 1970s was consistent and slow membership loss. The 1980s

were a good time for the BSA because it appeared that an improving economy and the repeal of

the Improved Scouting Program marked tentative enrollment increases for the decade. The

1990s continued the plateau pattern of the preceding decade without major dips or rises in

membership. In fact, in 1996 there were approximately 300,000 more members in the BSA than

in 1981, when the losses of the 1970s were reversed. Enrollment in the organization was nothing

like it had been in the late 1960s but it looked as if America's largest youth leadership

organization was safe. Unfortunately for the Boy Scouts of America, there was no time to rest

on its laurels; things were about to get much worse.

Chapter 6: (2000 – Present)

Scouting Enters the 21st Century

Scouting marked its 90th anniversary in 2000 with a celebration to rekindle the Scouting spirit. As a part of the festivity, the BSA recognized Scouting's volunteer leaders with banquets and awards. It was another attempt to rekindle the enthusiasm that had driven Scouting to over 7 million members in the early 1970's. As figure 27 shows, the BSA had seen a rapid decline in membership in the 70s before levelling off in the 80s, and resuming a slower decline in the 1990s. The following year the nation was rocked by the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Across the nation an immediate response came from the BSA – Scouts donated bottled water and food for rescuers, local troops donated cots for emergency personnel to sleep on, and the National Executive Council pledged the unflinching support of the Scouts to the cause.

Testimonials from New York and around the country after the events of 9/11 vouch for the importance of Scouting in a time of national crisis. As one observer reported, "It was like having a slice of pie back home, sitting on the front porch in midsummer, watching fireflies flash through the night air. It was like watching America's hope return to our streets. When I saw those Scouts, handing out bottles of water and blankets, collecting donations, somehow I knew everything was going to be alright (Wills, 236)". Patriotic displays of public flag waving occurred across the country from D.C. to Arkansas to Utah. Scouts from Idaho Falls, Idaho, united their community by placing flags in every third yard in their city.
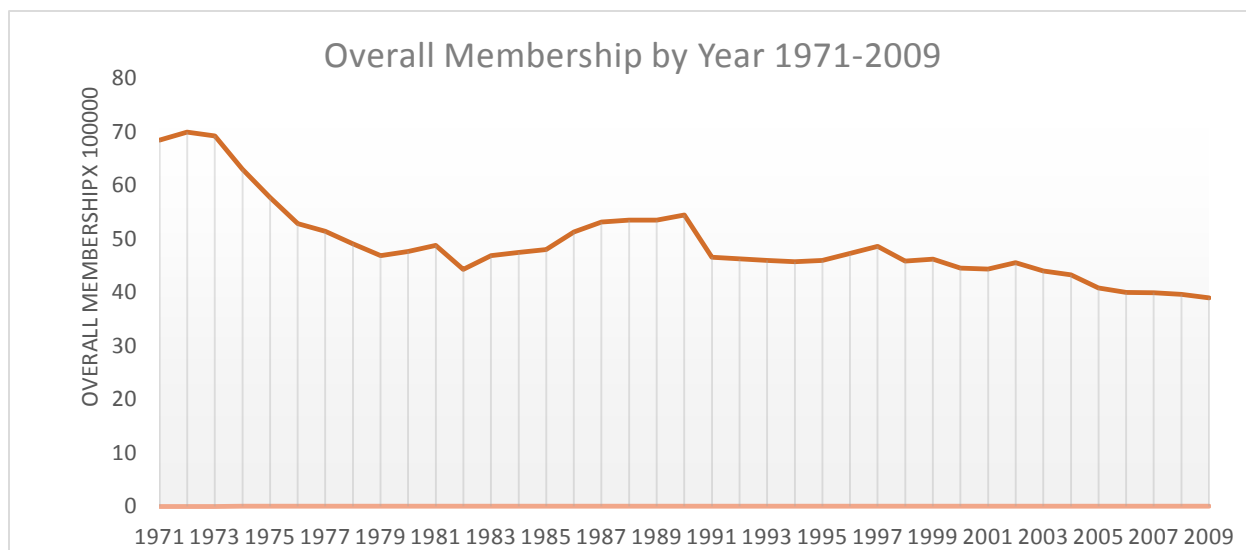
Figure 27*: Overall BSA membership between 1971 and 2009.*

Following the events of September 11th the Boy Scouts recorded a 120,147 gross

membership gain from 2001 to 2002. Although this increase of roughly 2.6% was small in the

context of total membership, it highlights that a sense of nationalism was a force driving

enrollment in Scouting (Annual Report, 2009).

The BSA introduced Scoutreach in 1989 in an effort to reinforce Scouting in minority

communities. Scoutreach was the modern embodiment of the Inter-Racial Service from the 20s,

and the Inner-City Rural Program, which tried to spread Scouting in to America's downtowns in

the 60's. Scoutreach began in inner cities across the country, notably New York. By 1993 the

program had created 55 troops with more than 2,000 members (Parenti, 1993). Scoutreach had

almost no impact on the national membership numbers, however, and urban centers continued to

be under-enrolled when compared to the suburbs. In fact, from 1992 to 1994, Scouting lost

51,555 members overall, many more than Scoutreach added (Annual Report, 2009).

In the new millennium, Scoutreach continued to focus on the Hispanic-American

community but broadened to Asian-Americans as well. Troop 452 from San Jose, California,

used Chinese-language schools that form the backbone of the Chinese-American community as its chartering organization. The troop found great success, not just with Chinese Americans but with other Asian-Americans in San Jose (Wills, 2009).

Social Controversies

Some of the BSA's largest changes have come slowly. Although officially founded as a non-segregated organization, the BSA deferred to local custom when it came to integrating troops in southern states. Although the first Black troop formed in 1911, integration took longer. It was not until 1974, 20 years after *Brown v. Board* desegregated public schools, that the last council, the Old Hickory Council of Winston-Salem North Carolina, was forced to desegregate (Demby, 2013). The slow pace of desegregation is representative of many policy changes the BSA has undertaken.

As early as the 1980s private citizens studying the BSA pointed to the three G's – God, Girls, and Gays – as being the largest membership and moral challenges facing the BSA (Mechling, 2001). An early difference between James West's and Robert Baden-Powell's Scouts is illustrated in the BSA Scout Law. West personally added "A Scout is reverent" as the final point of the BSA Scout Law. Baden-Powell did not include any reference to reverence in his movement's Scout Law. The policy still stands that any Scout who is openly atheistic or agnostic can be expelled from the Scouting program. If members are not open atheists or agnostics, they can stay in the organization as long as their religious stance remains private. As with the "Don't ask, don't tell" military policy that ended in 2010, Scouts forced to keep their personal religious beliefs or sexual orientation a secret must be conflicted. The expectation of trustworthiness outlined in the Scout Law is viewed at being directly at odds with closeted

homosexuality and secret atheism.

In 1993, the U.S. Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the BSA's right as a private organization to deny membership based on religious stance in *Welsh v. Boy Scouts of America.* Other court cases that upheld the BSA's Freedom of association were *Seaborn v. Coronado Area Council* in 1995, and *Randall v. Orange County Council, Boy Scouts of America* in 1998. The courts have ruled that freedom of association" or "expressive association" protects the Boy Scouts of America's membership policies (Koppelman and Wolff, 2009). The BSA wins all of its court cases because, as a private organization, it sets its own membership standards. However, winning in court did not translate to victory in the court of public opinion.

The BSA has been in the news in recent years over its refusal to admit homosexual Scouts and volunteers. In 2000, the United States Supreme Court upheld the BSA's ability to deny membership to an openly homosexual Assistant Scoutmaster from New Jersey in *The Boy Scouts of America v. Dale*. The Supreme Court "reversed the New Jersey Supreme Court and held that a state may not, through its nondiscrimination statutes, prohibit the Boy Scouts from adhering to a moral viewpoint and expressing that viewpoint in internal leadership policy and that the New Jersey Supreme Court's decision violated Boy Scouts' First Amendment right of freedom of association" (Greenhouse, 2000; BSAlegal.org, 2010).

The BSA affirmed its commitment to excluding open homosexual Scouts and leaders as recently as 2012 following the results of a two-year study (BSA National Council, 2012). In May of the same year the BSA took a member vote on allowing openly homosexual youth into Scouting (Demby, 2013; Eckholm, 2015; Fowler and Campoy, 2013). There were both outspoken support and opposition to the inclusion of gay youth. The new policy passed with

61% approval and went into effect January 1, 2014 (Weise, 2013; Membership Standards

Resolution, 2015). New national membership statistics emerged showing the BSA lost around

200,000 members in the year after the change in membership policy (Dockterman, 2014) but it

was able to keep key churches, including the Catholic, LDS, and Methodist churches, involved in

Scouting (Banks, 2013). The controversial decision led to a break-off of some groups, most

notably Florida-based Trail Life USA, which also banned Jews and Muslims (Parks, 2013).

Thus far this splinter organization is no threat to the BSA and can only claim one half of one

percent of the membership when compared to the BSA.

A major concern for the Boy Scouts of America is program funding, primarily donations

from large corporations. Scouting's observers (Blum, 2013) suspect that one factor behind the

policy change was diminishing corporate support, largely on grounds that the organization's

membership policies were discriminatory. Unfortunately for the BSA, many of its funding

entities saw the choice to allow gay Scouts but not gay Scoutmasters as a half step and those that

had ceased monetary support never reintroduced it. Corporate pressure is still on the BSA to

acknowledge the writing on the wall and align with the political and social views of the present,

not the antiquated perspectives of the 1910s. As of late 2015, it appeared that pressure had the

desired effect. The new Chief Scout Executive, Robert Gates, the same man who lifted "Don't

Ask, Don't Tell" from the United States military, led the Executive Council in a vote that

repealed the ban on openly homosexual adult leaders (Eckholm, 2015). Membership trends and

their distribution, in response to the more inclusive policy, are still firming up. However, it looks

like the BSA retained the support of some of its largest chartering organizations, including the

LDS church, the Scouts' largest sponsoring body (Whitehurst, 2015). The outcomes of this

decision are still unsure, although it looks as if the LDS church will remain, despite protests from some of its members (Fletcher Stack, 2015). Despite the good news in keeping both the LDS and Catholic Churches, the BSA likely will lose some membership as a result of the policy change. Only time will tell how the inclusion of openly gay Scouts and Scoutmasters will affect enrollment.

Women have tried to gain access to the BSA with some success. Today, both Explorer Scouts and Venture Scouts are open to male and female enrollment, while the Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Varsity Scouts remain exclusively male. The BSA has been sued over female membership in the Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Varsity Scouts, but has never lost. These three branches of the BSA are pedagogically intended for exclusive male membership – the idea being that male Scouts learn to socialize with other males.

Since a policy shift in 1988, the BSA has encouraged female volunteer leadership. Some of the court cases and policy changes that led to women leaders are *Schwenk v. Boy Scouts of America* in the Oregon Supreme Court in 1976 and *Quinnipiac Council v. Commission on Human Rights & Opportunities* in the Connecticut Supreme Court in 1987 (BSAlegal.org, 2012). Social pressure and the need for volunteers both influenced the policy change, despite court cases like *Mankes v. Boy Scouts of America* in 1991, *Department on Human Rights v. Boy Scouts of America* in 1992, and *Yeaw v. Boy Scouts of America* in 1998 that maintained the BSA had the right to disallow female membership as it saw fit. The courts ruled in favor of the BSA because it was founded for boys and that the BSA was open to women at some levels.

On top of the Boy Scouts of America's struggles with the three Gs, there has been pressure on the organization to protect its youth from sexual predators. What has come to be

known as the "perversion files," formally known as the Ineligible Volunteers List, is a set of private documents within the BSA national office that includes all people who are not permitted to be leaders. Observers of Scouting have pointed out that by nature Scouting attracts pedophiles to its volunteer leadership because "it's where the boys are" (Boyle, 1994). The Boy Scouts of America realized there was a major problem and implemented the Youth Protection Program in 1986 to exclude dangerous individuals (Potts, 1992).

The Boy Scouts have settled several sexual predator cases privately, but some have made it to court. In 2012, approximately 20,000 pages of the "perversion files" were made public in a Washington state court case. Beyond questions of inclusion, the "perversion files" and the BSA's problem with pedophiles, brought into question the organization's ability to keep children safe. Parents were concerned that 20,000 pages of documents existed on dangerous people who should not only have been banned from Scouting, but also could have been criminally charged. Needless to say, this did not bode well for membership numbers, which fell when news broke about the cases.

Scouting Modernizes

The positive effects of exposing boys to nature is an important concept in the BSA. Each year it looks for new ways to engage youth with the outdoors. For example, the Boy Scouts is exploring what play means in an increasingly digital world and have updated their merit badge program to include more relevant training for the 21st century. The BSA promotes career programs like the Explorer Scouts and has introduced new merit badges such as Game Design, Programming, and Robotics (scouting.org, 2015), while letting outdated badges, such as Masonry, Rabbit Raising, Consumer Buying, and Signaling expire. Many programs were

overhauled in 2015 and 2016 including Cub Scouting and Venturing (Wendell, 2014).

Investigations like the Yankelovich study (Daniel Yankelovich Inc, 1964) and the current Harris Polls (Harris Interactive, 2005) reflect the Boy Scouts' attempts to stay modern. Articles in popular magazines like *Esquire* asking "Are There Still Boy Scouts?" (Sager, 2014) beg for answers to whether and how the BSA has fallen from relevancy. Despite doubts and challenges, today Scouting persists in every corner of the United States. The organization operates within inner cities and rural regions alike.

However, patterns of membership growth have been inconsistent throughout BSA history. In the beginning, when its survival hinged upon the ambition of executives and their ability to dominate competitors, membership grew and Scouting continued to grow at a stable clip through the Progressive era. In America, Scouting was gaining a strong reputation, but not with an even spatial distribution. The maps throughout this thesis have shown that Scouting began in and around the hometowns of its founders. High membership around New York and Chicago was the beginning of Scouting's dispersion across the country. Low economic status, low populations, and rurality in some areas of the country meant that Scouting actually caught on quicker along the Pacific coast than it did in the Great Plains or Southern Regions. As the Pacific Coast's enrollment rose, the East Coast levelled off and then began to decline in the 1950s-60s. Contrary to its history, the Southern part of the United States began seeing improved membership numbers in the 1950s-60s when compared to traditionally strong regions like the East Coast. As it stands today, the LDS cultural hearth, as well as the Pacific coast, and the Midwest, remain as the areas with the highest portion of Scouting membership.

The Legacy of the Good Turn

Scouting was founded as a citizenship training program for boys in response to a perceived crisis of masculinity around the turn of the 20th century (Macleod, 1983). The organization has used the allure of play, hiking, and camping to engage Scouts in the character-building lessons of the outdoors. The intended outcome is twofold: Scouts learn to have fun and survive in nature and are simultaneously trained to be productive members of society.

One way the BSA builds up youth is through the daily Good Turn. The Good Turn exists on an individual and at the national scale. This service exists as a reminder of a Good Turn that an unknown scout performed in helping William D Boyce through the London fog and as a tool to engage Scouts in building their community (Peterson, 1984). Occasionally, the BSA will concentrate all of its resources to tackle a national-scale problem. The sale of war bonds and liberty loans during WWI added credibility to the young organization and began Americans associating the BSA with patriotism and nationalism. The service performed by Scouts during the Great Depression at the request of President Roosevelt was helpful for the country, and the drives mounted during WWII utilized the organization's scope to meet wartime recycling quotas. Voter-awareness campaigns and conservation work in the 1950s were enormous endeavors and provided lessons in civic engagement for the Scouts involved.

The BSA struggled to gain national attention in the 1970s. National Good Turns like project SOAR, Save Our American Resources, and Operation Reach, which aimed to show that the superficial high of drugs paled to strong relationships within a Scout's family and community (Peterson, 1984), did not produce the same enthusiasm as the earlier efforts focused on coordinating responses in times of national crisis. There is little evidence that these more recent

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projects did much to counter dwindling BSA enrollment. The membership struggles of the BSA during this period were probably not primarily due to underwhelming response to national Good Turns, however.

In Figure 28 below, red is a negative change of membership percentage. Some of the councils in the South and across the country experienced growth in the 8 years shown in this map. The legend indicates that gains were modest, but many losses were not. The largest gain of 11.2 percent was nowhere near enough to offset the membership decreases of 25 percent in some councils. In this period, a council that maintained its membership performed well. Some
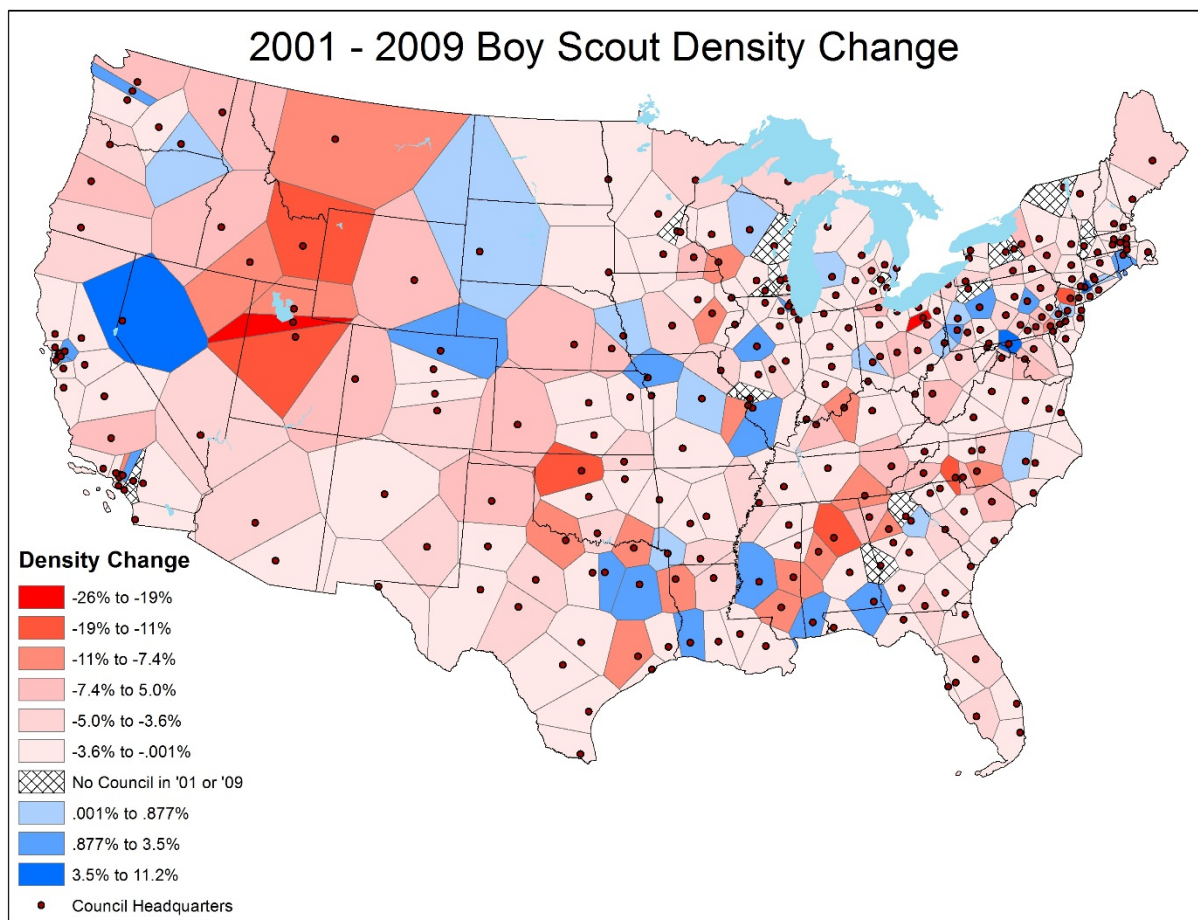

Figure 28: Change in percent membership in the Boy Scouts between 2001 and 2009. Red shows councils losing membership percentage, and blue shows gains. Council headquarters are the red points, and councils that did not exist in 2001 or 2009 are cross hatched.

parts of the map exhibiting this good performance can be seen around St. Louis and Kansas City. Several councils in this area show modest gains, and a majority of the councils reporting a loss can at least say that their membership decline was minor. It is unmistakable that the LDS cultural hearth saw plummeting membership density between 2001 and 2009. Significant losses above five percent surround Salt Lake City and make up the entirety of the state of Idaho. There is also a strip of high percentage losses in the low density western parts of Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and the panhandle of Texas. A separate area showing low enrollment can be seen stretching from around New Orleans, to the Northeast, all the way up to the border between Tennessee and North Carolina. Although these swaths of departing members appear correlated, there is no easily apparent reason for the proximity of membership losses.

Core Values

The BSA's core values, outlined in the Scout Oath and Law, have remained unchanged since 1910. The perception that the BSA is an American institution, unflinching in the face of changing times, is both a strength and weakness. The mythologized outdoor lifestyle the BSA celebrates, and its founders' tributes to pioneers, frontiersmen, and Native Americans are not reality for most Americans. Technology and specialization have led to increasing urbanization, leaving only roughly one out of five Americans living in rural areas. The rural to urban migration was just beginning when the BSA was founded, and in many ways the worldwide Scouting Movement was a response to increasing urbanization. Simultaneously, the development of parks within cities meant that people could find natural areas closer to home. The development of green spaces was an important evolution in city planning but could not replace the countryside. However, there is plenty of anecdotal evidence from BSA history of

troops hiking and camping in large urban parks.

The BSA's quest for relevancy competes with a waning sense of community in American society (Putnam, 2000) and a membership that sees adventure in the digital space as alluring as outdoor exploration. As the American Scouting movement balances technology, traditionalism, and adventure in nature, it needs to decide which founding values fit in the modern era and which policies need to be dropped. Americans have tended to disengage from community life since the 1960s. Americans were 25% less likely to vote in the 1996 presidential election than in the 1960 election and membership, as well as participation, is down in civic organizations overall (Putnam, 2000). This societal disengagement is a serious threat to an organization that relies on volunteers to operate. A study by Gallup Poll News in 2010 confirmed that even though individuals who join Scouting achieved higher levels of education and made more money than their peers, fewer boys were joining (Clifton and Johnson, 2010).

Where Scouting Happens

Scale has been near the heart of this thesis, with an important point being that Scouting ought to be considered on a finer scale than the entirety of America. With the exception of the national Good Turn, Jamborees, and High Adventure bases, Scouting happens on a local scale. An example of a small scale impact is the community service project required to obtain Scouting's highest rank. Life Scouts are required to fulfill a service project for their community to receive Eagle Scout. It is estimated that Scouts' Eagle projects contribute more than 3 million hours of service annually (worth $67.5 million) to American communities. Scouts have contributed more than 100 million hours since 1963, when projects became a requirement of the award (Malone, 2012). All projects have enhanced local communities because it is a

requirement of the project that it does not benefit the BSA. Apart from the Eagle Scout service project, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and over a million volunteers perform an enormous amount of service annually. In 2013, Scouting volunteers performed an estimated 17 million hours of service. At $22.55 per hour, the independent sector value of volunteer service (independentsector.org, 2013), Scouting provided over $383 million worth of service to America in 2013.

Money, Membership, Manpower

The stay-at-home moms of the 1950s and 1960s were an important part of getting kids into Scouting. However, dual-income families have become more common, as have single-parent households (Vespa, Lewis, and Kreider, 2012). Although research shows that parents have been spending more time with their children, many parents feel like their children's schedules are more hectic (Pew Research Center, 2015). Reports indicate that it is quality of time with kids, instead of quantity, that makes a positive impact in their lives (Schulte, 2016). Considering this information, it is surprising that Scouting has not seen a rise in enrollment from parents searching for more quality time. Instead, the opposite continues to happen. New reports estimated that there were 980,000 BSA adult volunteers in 2014, which would be the first time that the BSA adult volunteers dropped below a million in decades (Annual Report, 2009). The volunteering given to Scouting has been phenomenal and a critical part of its success; in 2013 Scouting was fortunate to receive an average of approximately 20 hours per month from its approximately 1 million volunteers for a grand total estimated 246.8 million hours of volunteerism which has an approximate value (based on the $22.55 per hour rate) of $5.57 billion annually. The BSA provides resources for volunteers to learn and to improve their

abilities as volunteers. Studies have shown that volunteers with the BSA highly value learning opportunities, and performing well for the BSA is important to them (Pearlman, 2007). Simply put, volunteering is essential to the success of the BSA and with diminishing volunteer membership, the organization will suffer.

Conclusion

This thesis uses maps to visualize membership patterns within the BSA's history. Some trends that were observed include, a historical dispersion from the East Coast and Midwest towards the West over time, a slow start for the Deep South, a long-term strength in Utah and the surrounding area, and a general move from rural areas towards city suburbs. The Boy Scouts of America has 106 years of history and will continue to write its story in the decades to come.

The future of Scouting looks secure, but far from prosperous. As figure 29 shows, the golden age of Scouting began in the 1940s and lasted up until the 1970s. Since that time, the BSA has experienced a downward trend both in its participation rates among available youth and its raw numbers. Other civic groups across the country have suffered from a downturn in membership, as well. Organizations such as the Girl Scouts, Kiwanis, and The Lions Club have all seen declines, although Kiwanis and Lions Club losses have been greater (Putnam, 2000). It is a complex trend with many possible explanations, and the truth probably lies in a combination of factors.

Although the BSA won all its court cases from the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, Scouting lost in the court of public opinion (Gallup 2010) due to hesitancy to abandon traditional membership policies. The Scouts were perceived as a patriotic and positive organization but became politicized. As a youth serving organization the BSA uniquely relies on currying the favor of its members and their parents, more than other civic groups. It is likely that the very public court cases that the BSA found itself embattled with near the turn of the century alienated some parents. On the flip-side, the adoption of current membership standards also alienated a different subsection of their member's parents. In addition, increasing pressure from sports and other activities has co-opted youths' discretionary time.

Competition with sports is not new and has factored into children's' schedules since the beginning of the BSA. The YMCA, which focused on athletics, originally helped launch Scouting. Today, the Y is better at retaining the membership of older youth than the BSA (Macleod, 1982), possibly because the Y's emphasis on sports is more appealing to older boys and girls. The pressure for youth to focus on sports at the sacrifice of other activities has increased in recent decades, but public outcry over pay-to-play sports has actually driven down
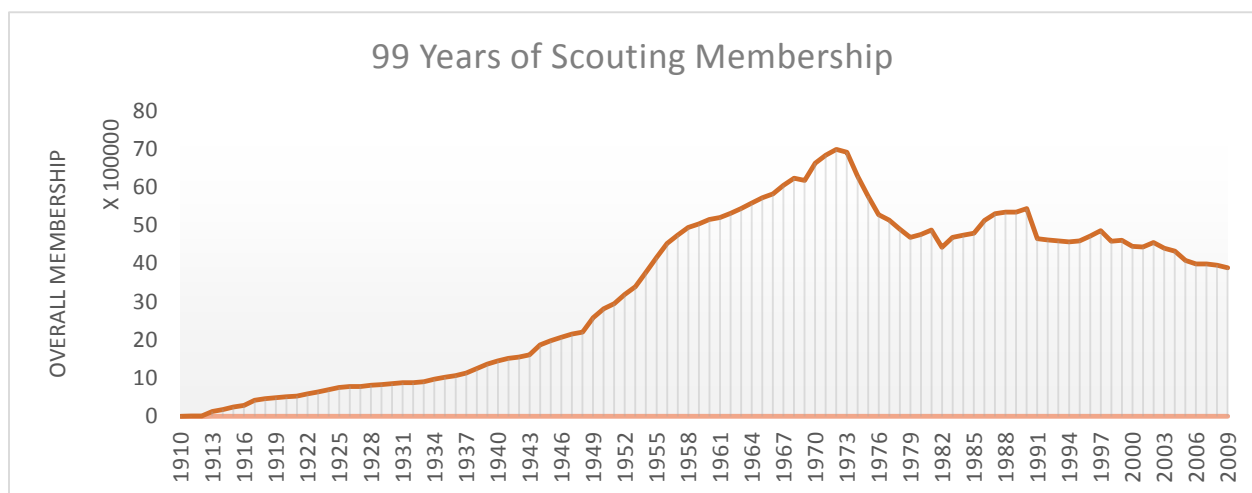

Figure 29: *Overall BSA membership for the organizations entire history.*

youth participation in many sports (Masson, 2015). However, extra practices and travel for youth who do participate in sports mean that youth have less time for Scouting. The BSA is also fighting for the time of the youths' parents.

Another hurdle faced by modern Scouting is the struggle to capture youth's attention with technology. As youth spend more time engaged with media and immersed in their screens, less and less time is being devoted to outdoor activities and the Scouts. A recent study by the Pew Research Center indicated that the average U.S. teenager spends 9 hours per day exposed to media (Pew Research Center, 2015). While it is not impossible for Scouting to find a way to further align its programs with technology, the task may be daunting to an organization that has historically operated in spaces purposefully removed from cell phone service, charging stations, and Wi-Fi.

The Boy Scouts of America is a massive organization and has been for most of its history. The BSA is a part of the larger World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM). The BSA is more popular in raw numbers, as well as in ratio of boys who participate in America, than almost any other branch of the global Scouting movement. This raises the question, what about American culture has made Scouting such a success in The US? A limitation of the research conducted here is that at its smallest scale it only explores the geography of Scouting on a council scale despite there being levels of Scouting (i.e. district, troop) smaller than the council. Further research into smaller scales may reveal yet more about what makes the BSA more successful in some parts of the country than others. A comparison of the BSA versus other WOSM members could reveal what makes the Boy Scouts of America so much more successful. It is important to remember that Scouting happens as a collection of individual Scouts and the

adults that lead them on a local level, but data are not uniformly available on membership at the more detailed scales. While statistics such as "the BSA has influenced over 100 million young men and women in its 105-year history" are impressive, it is easy to be lost in the magnitude of the number, but it is crucial to remember that each one of these Scouts had an individual effect on their communities.

Further Research

This research has raised numerous questions that are worthy of future research. One topic for future research into the geography of the Boy Scouts of America would be a comparison of the organization against other WOSM (World Organized Scouting Movement) programs to decipher what makes the BSA membership figures so much higher. The BSA has the highest raw membership numbers and, I presume, would also have one of the highest participation rates among other nations with WOSM programs.

Research into the geography of BSA involvement in inner-cities would also be interesting. The scope of that project went beyond the constraints of this thesis. The organization has traditionally struggled in urban cities, specifically amongst low-income and minority populations. If a researcher could invest the time into researching and mapping major urban centers such as Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York, the small-scale breakdown of districts and troops in those areas would make a very interesting project.

Finally, it would be fascinating to see a temporal map of BSA membership patterns presented through an overlay of Thiessen Polygons. Utilizing sliver polygons to show the individual membership trends for each year of data (in this project on a council scale that may mean 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001, 2009 slivers) surrounding the central council point. The talent to

create such a map is beyond and the scope of this work, but it would be valuable information and an effective story-telling map.

Author's Final Perspective

It is as simple to be caught up in the vast size of the organization as it is to be dragged into the politicization of the BSA. The Boy Scouts of America has found itself caught in recent decades between liberal and conservative values, and the choice to attempt to meet both parties half way, whether on the matter of girls, god, or homosexual membership, has only convinced some on both sides that the BSA has lost either the adaptability or conviction of a bygone era. Scouting is not for everybody but for those who are active, the chief lessons are not discrimination, blind patriotism, or xenophobia; takeaways are self-reliance, critical thinking, the value of community, hard work, and determination. People with different moral and political world views can argue all day over the values of Scouting but at the end of the day the BSA is an organization that builds youth into contributing citizens through outdoor experiences. It is important for people who want to politicize the organization or destroy it, to remember that the purpose of the BSA is to help youth grow into responsible adult citizens and that the vision of the BSA is "… to prepare every eligible youth in America to become a responsible, participating citizen and leader...". I believe that preparing youth for the challenges of the future through responsible civic engagement training in an outdoor setting is something that every American should support (www.scouting.org, 2015).

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