

Digital Atlas of American Religion

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Abstract

Our poster presentation will introduce DAAR, the Digital Atlas of American Religion (<http://www.religionatlas.org>). DAAR is a web-based research platform with innovative data exploration and visualization tools to support research in the humanities.

Time and location are essential components of humanities exploratory research; however, GIS technology, especially in its web form, does not support the easy exploration and visualization of the complex spatio-temporal data manipulated by humanists. DAAR presents researchers with an integrated solution stemming from several fields including GIS, visualization, and classification theory.

Researchers using DAAR are provided with the following exploration/visualization techniques: maps, cartograms, tree maps, pie charts, and motion charts. Using these tools and methods, researchers can explore patterns, trends, and relationships in the data that otherwise are not apparent with traditional GIS or statistical software. DAAR allows researchers to understand the multiple dimensions and diversity of religion across geographies, or within geographies. Paired with historic census data, it allows them to explore relationships to give better context and meaning to the patterns and trends. Maps provide the spatial patterns and relationships, tree maps show relative strength and relationships, charts show trends, cartograms reveal relative numbers of adherence, and motion charts animate trends over time.

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