

A Geographical Investigation of Football and its Fans at Auburn University

by

Orion Michael Stand-Gravois

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Auburn University
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science

Auburn, Alabama
May 7, 2012

Copyright 2012 by Orion Michael Stand-Gravois

Approved by

Philip Chaney, Chair, Associate Professor of Geology and Geography
Tom Martinson, Emeritus Professor of Geology and Geography
Gregory Kowalski, Professor of Sociology

Abstract

In Auburn, AL, football, and especially college football, reigns supreme. Particularly, interest is placed on the Tigers, the team representing the local institution, Auburn University. This research paper investigates the spatio-temporal role of football at Auburn University and presents findings that are indicative of the spatial characteristics of Auburn's football fan region and their relationship with the team. Sources used to map Auburn's fan region included records of 2010 season ticket holders and Auburn booster club locations and membership figures. The fans are predominantly found in Alabama and Georgia. Heavy concentrations are seen in Auburn, as well as major urban centers with close proximity to Auburn such as Atlanta, Birmingham, and Montgomery. Questionnaire surveys of Auburn fans found that the majority of participants had attended Auburn and/or had family members who had attended Auburn. Fans commonly mentioned words like family, tradition, and atmosphere when describing why they liked Auburn Tigers football.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost I offer my sincerest gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Philip Chaney, who has shown unwavering confidence and support in my work throughout the entire process. Dr. Chaney was very instrumental in my decision to become a Geography major several years ago as an undergraduate and I am very thankful for having the opportunity to work with him during my graduate studies. Without his assistance, encouragement, and patience, none of this would be possible.

I would also like to thank my other committee members: Dr. Tom Martinson and Dr. Gregory Kowalski. Dr. Martinson, along with Dr. Chaney, is someone that strongly contributed to my interest in Geography as an academic subject. His lectures on the geography of Latin America were among my favorite classes at Auburn. I feel honored that he took time out of retirement to help with my work. Dr. Kowalski's Sports in America sociology class helped me realize the validity of sports research. I greatly appreciate his willingness to be a member of my committee as I know he is very busy with his own department.

The Auburn University Ticketing Office, Alumni Association, and Special Collections and Archives Department have all provided assistance with my data collection and much of this would not be possible without their help.

Thanks to all my classmates that have been so supportive during my graduate career. Specifically, I would like to thank Avery Werner for editing some early drafts of

my work. Thank you to Sherry Faust, who has always provided positive words and smiles. Finally, thank you to my girlfriend, Carrie Melius, and my parents, Jim Gravois and Lucille Stand, for all your love and support during this process.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgments	iii
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures	x
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Sports Geography	7
Studies of Sports Region Mapping	8
Studies of Sports Fan Characteristics	18
Chapter 3: Methods	23
Chapter 4: Geography of Football in America and the South	27
Origin and Evolution of Football in the America and the South	27
Factors in Popularity: Modernity, Violence, and Religion	40
Importance in Contemporary Culture and Society	44
Chapter 5: Origin and Evolution of Football at Auburn University	51
Auburn's Transition from a Road Team to a Home Team	57
Economics of Auburn University Football and Impacts on Local Community ..	71
Summary	76
Chapter 6: Spatial Characteristics of Auburn's Football Fan Region.....	77
Season Ticket Holders	77

Booster Clubs.....	84
Auburn Radio Network.....	86
Alumni and Current Students.....	87
Google Search Frequencies.....	89
Summary of Auburn Fan Region.....	92
Chapter 7: Spatial and Demographic Characteristics of Auburn Football Fans.....	93
Distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium.....	94
Rural / Urban.....	96
Gender.....	98
Age.....	100
Marital Status.....	102
Games Attended.....	104
Relationship with Auburn University.....	108
Importance of being an Auburn Tiger.....	112
Auburn University license plate ownership.....	112
Time spent tailgating.....	114
Most important reason for attending.....	116
“I like Auburn Tigers football because...” responses.....	118
Summary.....	120
Chapter 8: Summary and Conclusions.....	121
References.....	125
Appendix 1: Copy of survey.....	133
Appendix 2: Survey results for each question.....	136

Appendix 3: “I like Auburn Tigers football because...” responses..... 142

List of Tables

Table 1: Google search frequency leaders for “college football”	17
Table 2: States with most Auburn regular season games played.....	53
Table 3: Cities with most Auburn regular season games played	54
Table 4: Alternate / neutral cities with most Auburn regular season games played	55
Table 5: Auburn’s most played regular season opponents	56
Table 6: Host cities of opponents with most Auburn regular season games played	56
Table 7: Top 10 states with most Auburn season ticket holders	77
Table 8: Top 10 states outside of the South with most Auburn season ticket holders ..	79
Table 9: Top 15 counties with most Auburn season ticket holders	80
Table 10: Top 15 counties with most ticket holders per 10,000 residents.....	81
Table 11: Top 20 MSAs with most Auburn season ticket holders	83
Table 12: Top 10 MSAs outside of the South with most Auburn season ticket holders	83
Table 13: Top 10 MSAs with most Auburn season ticket holders per 10,000 residents	83
Table 14: Top 20 Auburn University booster clubs with highest membership	85
Table 15: Top 10 Auburn booster clubs outside South with highest membership	86
Table 16: States with most living addressable alumni.....	88
Table 17: Home states with most Auburn University undergraduates in Fall 2011	89
Table 18: Home Alabama counties with most undergraduates in Fall 2011	89
Table 19: Google search frequency leaders for “Auburn football”	90

Table 20: Spatial and demographic characteristics of fans surveyed	94
Table 21: Selected responses for living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium	95
Table 22: Selected responses for urban and rural residents.....	97
Table 23: Selected responses for males and females.....	99
Table 24: Selected responses for age.....	101
Table 25: Selected responses for marital status	103
Table 26: Selected responses for home game attendance.....	105
Table 27: Selected responses for away game attendance	106
Table 28: Selected responses for fan relationship with Auburn University	109
Table 29: Selected responses for fan relationship with Auburn University	110
Table 30: Selected responses for Auburn University license plate ownership.....	113
Table 31: Selected responses for time spent tailgating.....	115
Table 32: Selected responses for most important reason for attending games	117

List of Figures

Figure 1: Auburn University athletic expenses and revenues for 2009-2010 year	1
Figure 2: Fans show their loyalty to Auburn through various markers	2
Figure 3: Fans show their loyalty to Auburn through various markers	3
Figure 4: Toomer’s Corner scenes over the years	4
Figure 5: Frequency of Google searches for “college football” by metro region	17
Figure 6: Frequency of Google searches for “college football” by state	17
Figure 7: College Football National Champions 1869-1899	30
Figure 8: College Football National Champions 1900-1919.....	30
Figure 9: College Football National Champions 1920-1939.....	31
Figure 10: College Football National Champions 1940-1959.....	31
Figure 11: College Football National Champions 1960-1979.....	32
Figure 12: College Football National Champions 1980-1999.....	32
Figure 13: College Football National Champions 2000-2010.....	33
Figure 14: NCAA Football Bowl Subdivision (Division I-A) members.....	34
Figure 15: NCAA Football Championship Subdivision (Division I-AA) members	35
Figure 16: NCAA Division II members.....	35
Figure 17: NCAA Division III members	36
Figure 18: NFL teams in 1920.....	38
Figure 19: NFL teams in 1940.....	38

Figure 20: NFL teams in 1960.....	39
Figure 21: NFL teams in 1980.....	39
Figure 22: NFL teams in 2010.....	40
Figure 23: Head coaching salaries for FBS members in 2010.....	46
Figure 24: Assistant coaching salaries over \$250,000 in 2010.....	47
Figure 25: On-campus stadiums with capacities over 80,000 in 2010	48
Figure 26: Locations of Auburn regular season games through 2010.....	54
Figure 27: Locations with most Auburn games played	55
Figure 28: Alternate and/or neutral locations with most Auburn games played	56
Figure 29: Most played away games at home of opponent	57
Figure 30: Frequency and location of Auburn game sites- 1890s	58
Figure 31: An increase in home games accompanies the stadium growth	58
Figure 32: Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association- 1895	59
Figure 33: Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association- 1920	59
Figure 34: Before Jordan-Hare Stadium.....	60
Figure 35: Southern Conference members- 1932	62
Figure 36: Southeastern Conference members- 1933.....	62
Figure 37: Southeastern Conference members- 1992.....	62
Figure 38: Scenes from Auburn’s train depot.....	63
Figure 39: Frequency and location of Auburn game sites- 1930s	66
Figure 40: Frequency and location of Auburn game sites- 1970s	66
Figure 41: Frequency and location of Auburn game sites- 2000s	66
Figure 42: Land clearing at future site of Auburn Stadium.....	67

Figure 43: Stadium expansion under Jeff Beard.....	68
Figure 44: Auburn Stadium becomes Jordan-Hare Stadium	69
Figure 45: Historic city of Auburn population and Auburn University enrollment	70
Figure 46: Auburn’s historical stadium capacity and attendance rates.....	70
Figure 47: Tailgaters enjoy friends and food circa 1980s.....	74
Figure 48: “Stress-free” tailgating setups offered by Tailgate Guys	75
Figure 49: Residential locations of 2010 Auburn football season ticket holders	78
Figure 50: Residential locations of 2010 Auburn football season ticket holders	78
Figure 51: County per capita leaders for season ticket holders	81
Figure 52: Auburn booster clubs by location and membership size	85
Figure 53: Auburn football network radio coverage map.....	87
Figure 54: Google search frequency leaders for “Auburn football” by metro area.....	90
Figure 55: Google search frequency leaders for “Auburn football” by city.....	91
Figure 56: Google search frequency leaders for “Auburn football” by Alabama city ..	91
Figure 57: Residential locations of Auburn fans surveyed.....	94
Figure 58: Living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium	96
Figure 59: Residential land type	98
Figure 60: Gender of participants	100
Figure 61: Age of participants	102
Figure 62: Marital status of participants	104
Figure 63: Frequency of fan attendance.....	107
Figure 64: Frequency of fan attendance by gender.....	107
Figure 65: Relationship with Auburn University.....	111

Figure 66: Relationship with Auburn University.....	111
Figure 67: Fan ownership of Auburn University license plates	114
Figure 68: Time spent tailgating at Auburn games.....	116
Figure 69: Single most important reason for attending games	118
Figure 70: “I like Auburn Tigers football because...” fan response word cloud	119

Chapter 1: Introduction

The game of football originated in the Northeast United States, and has since spread across the country. It has grown to be more than just a game, as it now often fosters community-bonding and place pride (Zelinsky 2001). While its popularity is widespread, it is primarily in the Southern states that the college game reigns supreme (Rooney 1986, Pomerantz 1988, Weiss 1990, Rooney and Pillsbury 1992, Barnhart 2000, Walsh 2006). In Auburn, Alabama, Auburn University Tigers football is among the defining features of the local landscape and culture. Influencing (and being influenced by) the city, the growth of football has mirrored that of Auburn.

On seven or eight Saturdays each fall, Auburn's population surges as the campus and city are invaded by tens of thousands of football fans. Their impact is felt in a variety of ways but most notable is the economic contribution that they make. It is estimated that sports fans are responsible for over \$35 million being channeled into the city of Auburn's economy every year (Gumprecht 2003). Football is by far the top earner among sports at Auburn University (Auburn University Athletics 2010, Figure 1).

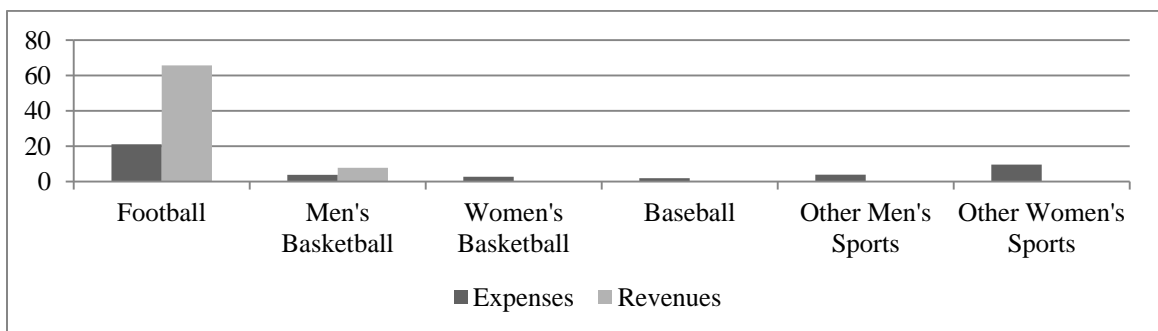


Figure 1: Auburn University athletic expenses and revenues for 2009-2010 athletic year in millions of dollars.

In addition to the economic impact of intercollegiate athletics are the impacts on local culture and the associations between fans and their team of choice. Through bumper stickers, clothing, yard signs, and many other markers, affiliation with a team is the way that many fans define themselves (Figures 2-3). At Auburn University, the built sports landscape defines the campus, a testament to the importance of sports to the students and alumni. Jordan-Hare Stadium, home of the Tigers, has a capacity of 87,451 that is nearly twice that of Auburn's total population of 53,380, and is probably the most well-known built image of Auburn's campus, along with the iconic clock tower on Samford Hall (Auburn University Athletics 2011, U.S. Census Bureau 2010). Fans enjoy pre- and post-game tailgating rituals that are often as much a part of the football experience as the game itself (Gumprecht 2003). Businesses downtown display their support for Auburn and many restaurants include Auburn football-themed menu items (Gumprecht 2003). In the event of an Auburn victory, fans traditionally gather around the oak trees on the corner across from Toomer's Drugstore, an historic downtown pharmacy adjacent to campus, and celebrate by draping rolls of toilet paper on the trees (Figure 4).



Figure 2: Fans show their loyalty to Auburn through clothing, vehicle decorations and body art.



Figure 3: Loyalty to Auburn is displayed through restaurant signs (top), yard signs (middle), and sidewalk art (bottom).



Figure 4: Though business names and fan attire have changed, and trees have grown up to be covered in toilet paper, Toomer's Corner continues to serve as a place for Auburn fans to gather and celebrate.

While individual fans may attend for different reasons, most seem to have a deep emotional attachment with the team, the campus, and with each other based on their love for Auburn. Inside the stadium, marching band fight songs and the pre-game eagle flight differentiate Auburn's football experience and traditions from those of other schools and teams. An often spotted t-shirt on Auburn's campus features a photograph of Jordan-Hare Stadium and reads "The best time you will ever have with 87,451 of your closest friends". The slogan speaks to the idea that the shared love of Auburn football makes friends out of a variety of people, who, without their mutual support of Auburn, would not have a common bond.

St. John (2004) describes the extreme devotion to college football by Alabama citizens:

"I grew up in Alabama—possibly the worst place on earth to acquire a healthy perspective on the importance of spectator sports. If you were a scientist hoping to isolate the fan gene, Alabama would make the perfect laboratory... The sport that inspires true fervor—the one that compels people there to name their children after a popular coach and to heave bricks through the windows of an unpopular one—is college football. A recent poll by the Mobile Register found that 90 percent of the state's citizens describe themselves as college football fans. Eighty-six percent of them pull for one of the two major football powers there, Alabama or Auburn, and 4 percent pull for other teams... To understand what an absolute minority nonfans in Alabama are, consider this: they are outnumbered by atheists" (St. John 2004, 1-2).

Sports geographers are concerned with the characteristics of sports spaces. The great economic and cultural impacts of sports have caused researchers to take their study seriously. Central themes include "the exploration of sports activity on the earth's surface and how the spatial distribution of sport has changed over time; the changing character of the sports landscape and the symbiosis between the sports environment and those who participate in it; and the making of prescriptions for spatial and environmental change in the sports environment" (Bale 2003, 5).

My study focuses on investigating the spatial dimensions of Auburn football fans and their socio-demographic characteristics. My main research questions are:

1. How has football evolved over time in the United States and what factors support its popularity in the South?
2. How has football evolved over time at Auburn University, and what are its impacts on the local area?
3. What are the spatial dimensions of Auburn's football fan region?
4. What are the spatial and demographic characteristics of Auburn fans?

Addressing these four questions will provide a greater understanding of Auburn University football fans and their impact on the economy and cultural landscape of the region. This research will contribute to the overall body of work on sports regions, and particularly on fan regions, which have not received much attention. Chapters 2 and 3 provide an overview of the field of sports geography and the methods used to investigate the four major research questions listed above. Chapters 4-7 address questions 1-4, respectively. Chapter 8 provides summary and conclusion.

Chapter 2: Sports Geography

Sports geography is the study of sports origins, their spatial diffusion, and their impact on landscapes and people (Bale 2003). The geographical study of sports likely began during the age of exploration and colonialism as accounts were taken of newly discovered sports and their spatial and cultural characteristics, but received little academic interest until the latter half of the 20th century. Rooney's (1969, 1974) work on player production and sports regions led the way for modern sports geography research.

Major areas of research in sports geography include the mapping of sports regions (Lehman 1940, Rooney 1969, Rooney 1974, Shelley and Cardin 1984, Rooney and Pillsbury 1992), the study of sports landscape characteristics (Oriard 1976, Bale 1994, Raitz 1995), and patterns of sports facility construction, their economic impacts, and their role in downtown redevelopment efforts (Baade 1996, Comer and Newsome 1996, Noll and Zimbalist 1997, Austrian and Rosentraub 2002). Recent topics of study in sports geography include the re-creation of home identities at a Pittsburgh Steelers fan bar in Fort Worth, Texas (Kraszewski 2008), the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in identifying potential ski towns in the Rocky Mountains (Silberman and Rees 2009), the creation of lesbian community spaces at women's professional basketball games (Muller 2007), the changing historical patterns for Major League Baseball's (MLB) All-Stars by racial distribution (Winter and Sommers 2006), the changing spatial organization of women's soccer in Adelaide, Australia (Rumney 2011), and the impacts of the 2010 World Cup on urban renewal in South Africa (Steinbrink et al. 2011).

Studies of Sports Region Mapping

Sports regions are mapped with respect to three main criteria: the sport(s) played, the players, and the fans. Rooney and Pillsbury (1992) mapped sports regions of the United States based on the sports played and the attitude toward sports. McConnell (1995) observed the spatio-temporal patterns of major college football based on historical Associated Press poll (AP) rankings. Studies based on athletes and their spatial origins have been performed by Lehman (1940), Rooney (1969), Yetman and Eitzen (1973), and International Mapping (2004), among others. Studies of fan regions include Baldwin (2005) and Branch (2006).

Rooney and Pillsbury (1992) defined the landscape of sports participation by dividing the United States into ten different regions. The Sports for Sport's Sake region, located in the north-central United States and Alaska, is characterized by high sports participation and low emphasis on winning. The Rocky Mountain region is characterized by outdoor and individual-oriented sports. The Cowboys and Mormons region, located in the area west of the Rocky Mountains and east of the Cascade Mountains and California, enjoys high participation in church league sports and sports reminiscent of their frontier heritage, such as fishing and rodeo. People in the Pacific coast region participate in a great number of sports and their professional football and baseball production is high, especially in California. Texas and Oklahoma offer very few sports, but place high emphasis on football and baseball. South Florida has high participation rates in a wide variety of sports that are promoted by the cultural diversity of the region. The Eastern Cradle, consisting of New England through the mid-Atlantic coast area, is the birthplace of many sports because of its historic role as an entry point to America and the site of its

early development, although today only basketball remains highly popular. The Carolina sub-region is unique for its love of stock car racing and people here prefer basketball among team sports. The Mills and Mines region, covering West Virginia, much of western Pennsylvania, and eastern Ohio, embraces physical sports such as football and boxing. Midwestern states, such as Illinois, Kentucky, and Indiana, are known for basketball and producing quality basketball players, especially in the urban centers. These regions were mapped by Rooney and Pillsbury, who analyze various participation factors in 85 sports.

The Deep South is a region whose sporting culture is so heavily dominated by football that it has been termed the “Pigskin Cult” (Rooney 1986, Rooney and Pillsbury 1992). They relate that “since the 1950s, the region has moved inexorably toward football hysteria. In many southern towns, slower-maturing boys with athletic potential are held back in the eighth or ninth grade so they will be better football players in high school and college” (Rooney and Pillsbury 1992, 4). Football fever has done much to break down class and racial barriers in the region. High school football is extremely popular and is surpassed only by college football. Louisiana, Mississippi, and Georgia are among the top producers of professional football players in the country (Rooney 1986).

Southern football strength was emphasized by McConnell (1995), who created a composite Associated Press college poll for the years 1936-1995 by taking the final polls from each year and awarding the teams a certain number of points based on their position in the poll (#1=25pts, #2=24pts, etc.). The overall top 25 included 14 teams from the South, which had increased in poll frequency over the decades. The early years of

college football were dominated by schools in the North, but over time (and culminating with the rise of the Miami Hurricanes, Florida Gators, and Florida State Seminoles in the 1980s and 1990s), the successful teams are found in the South.

Using a sample of approximately 14,500 players from 136 teams for the years 1961-67 and census figures for 1960, Rooney (1969) calculated total and per capita production levels of college and professional football players at state and local levels. He found that the highest per capita professional player production levels were concentrated in the Deep South. Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Alabama, and Georgia led the nation in state-wide per capita production, respectively. Though college player per capita production at the state-wide level did not produce the same figures of Southern dominance (leaders were Ohio, Texas, Utah, Delaware, and Mississippi, respectively), ten of the top eleven counties in per capita college production were located in the South with seven located in Texas alone. Among big cities, those located on the manufacturing belt (Cincinnati, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Toledo) had high per capita outputs, as did Atlanta and Dallas. Deficit areas for football production were Eastern cities and Midwestern states. High production rates in Texas and Oklahoma were thought to be influenced by an above average cultural emphasis on rugged individualism, militarism, and place pride (Rooney 1970). Rooney (1986) later found that high schools in the South purposefully shunned other sports in favor of football. These other sports were underdeveloped in comparison to the rest of the country and the attempts of Southern schools to expand sports by “diluting the football effort usually meet with strong opposition” (Rooney 1986, 3).

Yetman and Eitzen (1973) added to Rooney's (1969) study by discovering which variables are associated with above-average production of college players. Variables were grouped into four categories: socioeconomic characteristics, occupational structure, degree of urbanization, and racial composition. It was found that player-production increased as median income, percent of white-collar jobs, and population increased. The assumed reasons for this probability were that counties with high median incomes would be more likely to have quality playing facilities, high populations, and a greater proportion of residents attending college. One notable finding was that counties with African-American populations above the national median had higher production rates, but African-Americans generally live in counties with high rates of poverty.

Lehman (1940) analyzed the spatial production of professional baseball players. He wanted to know if talented players tended to come more from certain areas of the United States than others. Birthplaces for players listed in baseball annual guidebooks from 1912, 1916-1921, and 1923-1939 were gathered and those born outside of the United States were omitted. It was estimated that most players listed were born between 1885 and 1915, so state populations from 1890, 1900, and 1910 were averaged together. Data for each state were generated based on their contribution of athletes in proportion to their total white population. African-Americans were not included because they were not yet allowed to play in the major leagues. The leaders of production were California, Arizona, North Carolina, Texas, and Mississippi. Large cities supplied more than expected. San Francisco, Oakland, and Los Angeles led all cities, contributing to California's lead among states. Cities in states located in the southern part of the country

generally produced more than their northern counterparts. Lehman speculates that this may have been due to the longer playing season in the southern United States.

Several player-production maps by International Mapping (2004) were created to show where spatial hotspots were for different sports and positions. Athletes were mapped according to their place of birth. It was found that while California leads overall production of National Football League (NFL) players (as well as MLB and the National Basketball Association (NBA)), it was states in the Deep South, led by Louisiana, that dominate per capita rankings. Regardless of position, the Deep South dominates per capita production. Louisiana leads for quarterbacks and linebackers, while Mississippi leads for linemen and running backs. For linebackers, linemen, and running backs, Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi were in the top three for each player position. The top eight states for running backs were all located below the Mason-Dixon Line. Quarterbacks had the most spatial diversity as Pennsylvania, Iowa, and Montana followed Louisiana in per capita rates. For baseball, California produced three times as many players as second place Texas, however, it was the state of Alaska, whose five MLB players and tiny population made it the leader for per capita production, followed by California, Mississippi, and Delaware. For basketball, California and New York led overall production while Mississippi and South Dakota led in per capita production. Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio were found to have both high overall and per capita production.

Rooney (1974) wrote that fan regions may expand or contract over time depending on factors such as whether the team had a winning or losing season and where the team is located in proximity to its competitors. His description of the history of the

Atlanta Braves baseball franchise illustrates this point. After leaving their original home in Boston for Milwaukee in 1953, the Braves received widespread support in the state of Wisconsin, taking away support from the Chicago Cubs, whose fan region extended north into Wisconsin. At the same time, the Boston Red Sox fan region expanded due to the loss of competition from the Braves in the area. As the Braves improved during the 1950s, their fan region grew to include parts of Minnesota, the Dakotas, and Illinois, and home attendance increased. When the Minnesota Twins began play in 1962, they lured many fans away from the Braves. As the Twins fan region expanded, the Braves fan region contracted and the team moved to Atlanta following the 1965 season. This move created a fan region in Georgia that, due to the absence of other teams in surrounding states, expanded to include much of the South (Rooney 1974).

Shelley and Cartin's (1984) research on the geography of professional baseball fan support was performed by surveying college undergraduates throughout the United States. Respondents were asked where they were from, which team was their favorite, and how much they cared about baseball on a scale of 1-10. Extreme localization was found in the study. In most cities that had teams, over 90 percent supported the local team. The highest rates were found in St. Louis and Milwaukee, where the Cardinals and Brewers had each won pennants. The lowest was in Minneapolis-St. Paul, where the local Twins had recently finished with the worst record in the league. Regions that were located between two or more teams showed division in who they supported. In regions distantly located from teams, and among respondents who cared little about baseball, highly publicized "national" teams like the New York Yankees and Los Angeles Dodgers were preferred. In some cases, minor league affiliations affected major league fandom.

Rochester, New York favored the Baltimore Orioles because of their farm team connection to this franchise. The study distinguished three types of teams: those with strong local and national support (New York Yankees), those with strong local and consistent minor support throughout the country (Atlanta Braves), and those with only local support (San Diego Padres).

Branch (2006) travelled through Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York in an effort to locate and map the boundary line between the fan territories of MLB's Boston Red Sox and New York Yankees. Methods used for determining the allegiance of a given town included interviewing locals and observing the displays and inventories of team gear at local stores. From his findings, Branch estimated that the border was just west of the Connecticut River, dividing Connecticut, and then extending north along the New York state line. "Red Sox Nation" was said to include all of New England plus the northeastern half of Connecticut and the New York border towns of Hoosick and New Lebanon. "Yankees Country" could claim the remainder of Connecticut and almost the entirety of New York State. A poll of Connecticut adults on their baseball allegiance (Schwartz et al. 2011) confirms some of Branch's findings. Fairfield and New Haven, both of which lie west of the Connecticut River, have more Yankee than Red Sox fans. Hartford and New London, which had more Red Sox fans, are located on the Connecticut River east of the boundary drawn by Branch. Shelley and Cartin's (1984) findings also showed Fairfield to be in Yankee territory, while Hartford favored the Red Sox by a slight margin.

Rosemann and Shelley (1988) investigated the spatial distribution of college football radio networks and their relationship to a team's fan region. A team's radio

coverage map can be used as a good indicator of the spatial extent of their fan base. Types of coverage range from single station local coverage to multi-state coverage. Spatial patterns generally followed a distance-decay pattern, where coverage decreased as distance from the team's home increased, though features such as state borders can influence the shape and extent of a fan region due to the generally higher cost of attending out-of-state universities than in-state ones. Some notable radio networks were those of the University of Oklahoma and Notre Dame University. Oklahoma's coverage map includes a station in Bakersfield, California because of the historical migration of residents during and following the Dust Bowl. Additionally, stations are located in places that are linked to Oklahoma's economy through the oil industry, such as Lafayette, Louisiana. Notre Dame's status as the premier Catholic sports university and the scattered population of Catholics in United States has resulted in an extensive national network.

Baldwin (2005) attempted to map team territories of professional baseball, basketball, football, hockey, and college football in an ongoing internet-based project. Fans who participate are asked to report where they live and to select their favorite team. A given location or area is then assigned a color to represent the team with the most fans. A major problem with this project is accuracy. The survey is self-selected for internet users, meaning that they must seek out the website and choose to participate, rather than being contacted at random. Many of the fans who have participated thus far have found the project through message boards of their favorite teams, which has led to some misrepresentations as one team's fans may have voted hundreds of times while another's fans may be unaware of the survey. One measure taken by Baldwin to decrease the

inaccuracies was to only allow fans to vote once. As time progresses, more votes should bring increasing accuracy to the map.

Silver (2011) has adjusted Baldwin's (2005) college football data based on a comparison of revenues received by each team. Where Baldwin's map had higher- or lower-than-expected numbers of fans in comparison to the team's revenues, new estimated values were assigned. These spatial units of team territory were then applied to a map of 210 television media markets. A team's number of fans was then adjusted according to the population of college football fans within each market and the amount of market territory covered by the team. Populations of fans for each market were estimated based on their frequency of Google internet searches for the term "college football". Birmingham, Alabama was found to make these searches about five times as often as New York City, relative to overall search traffic (Table 1, Figure 5). Birmingham led metro regions, the top eight of which were located in the South. The top three metro regions—Birmingham, Dothan, and Montgomery—are all located in Alabama, though there is some state overlapping (Table 1). Among states, Alabama led search frequencies, followed by Nebraska, South Carolina, Oklahoma, and Mississippi, respectively (Table 1, Figure 6). Across all 210 markets, results showed that the ten most popular teams were Ohio State, Michigan, Penn State, Notre Dame, Texas, Texas A&M, Auburn, Alabama, Florida, and Clemson, respectively.

Table 1: Google search volume frequency leaders for “college football”.

State	Vol.	Metro	Vol.	City	Vol.
1. Alabama	100	1. Birmingham	100	1. Birmingham	100
2. Nebraska	69	2. Dothan	96	2. Oklahoma City, OK	64
3. South Carolina	62	3. Montgomery	86	3. Atlanta, GA	56
4. Georgia	56	4. Columbus-Tupelo-West Point, MS	76	4. Columbus, GA	48
5. Oklahoma	55	5. Huntsville	75	5. Austin, TX	45
6. Mississippi	54	6. Columbus, GA	72	6. Tampa, FL	43
7. West Virginia	47	7. Oklahoma City, OK	71	7. Orlando, FL	42
8. Louisiana	47	8. Lincoln-Hastings, NE	70	8. Dallas, TX	39
9. Idaho	46	9. Omaha, NE	68	9. St. Louis, MO	36
10. Iowa	45	10. Panama City, FL	67	10. Houston, TX	35

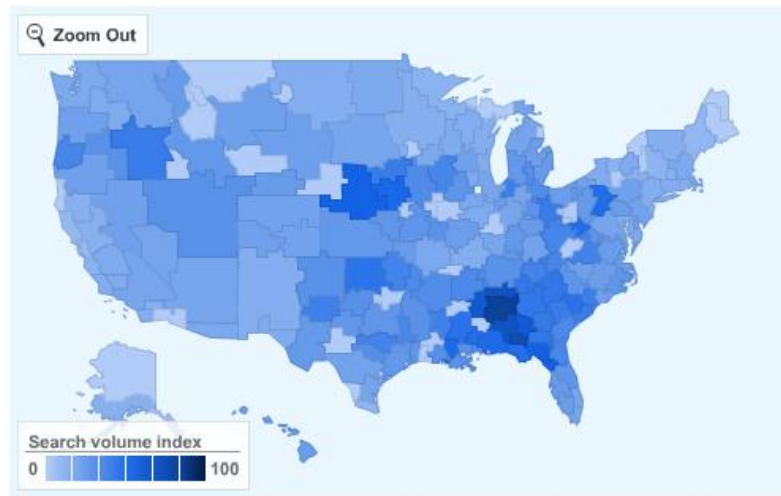


Figure 5: Frequency of Google searches for “college football” by metro region.

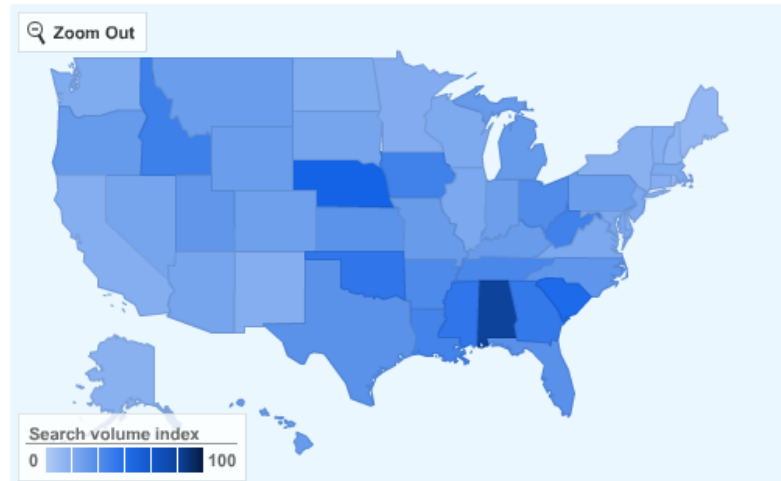


Figure 6: Frequency of Google searches for “college football” by state.

All these studies attempted to map different aspects of sports from a regional perspective. They all dealt with some of the central questions of sports geography research, such as “Where are different sports played, and why?”; “Who are the players?” and “Who are the fans?”. Their findings and methods have influenced this project.

Studies of Sports Fan Characteristics

The football landscape consists of not only a football field or stadium. The fans also contribute to and participate in the festive atmosphere of the sport. “Grown men carry banners or wear hats denoting their favorites the same way that youngsters emulate their idols. Like alumni returning to a class reunion, they act in the stadium in ways different from the way they act in the work world, but similar to their behavior in nostalgic, bygone days” (Beisser 1977, 128). The area surrounding the stadium is transformed as people gather. For fans of the home team, the space that surrounds the stadium may be considered sacred because it is the site of a favorite ritual. The landscape may be scenic, both in reality and in the way it evokes local and team pride and a sense of belonging for fans. This emotional connection between humans and their environment could be described as topophilia, or “love of place” as identified by Tuan (1977). Fans’ mutual support of a team can be a strong unifier and promotes casual sociability (Melnick 1993). “The group spirit, the idea of the group with the sentiment of devotion to the group developed in the minds of all its members... serves as a bond that holds the group together or even creates it” (McDougall 1920, 88).

Coakley (1982) defines the role of sport in society from two opposing viewpoints. The structural-functionalist approach describes sport as something that inspires and

integrates. On the other hand, conflict theory suggests that sport serves as a false unifier that controls people. “One of the key functions of the religious institution from a sociological perspective is to help maintain social cohesion, a critical imperative facing any society. To put it more simply, what the religious institution does for society is bind people together through ritual and belief by offering common values and goals toward which they may strive... Cannot a similar case be made for the binding, integrating, and organizing functions of sport fandom?” (Wann et al. 2001, 199).

Cialdini (1976) was the first to examine the BIRGing phenomenon among sports fans. BIRGing, or “basking in reflected glory”, is the tendency for people to share in the success of others with whom there is an association. In some cases, those who associate themselves with successful others have actually played an instrumental role in that success. However, in the case of sports fans, the role played in the success of their team is minimal. Regardless, many sports fans, when discussing a victory, will say “we won” and place themselves within the team collective. Though the fan won nothing, their association with a winning team is a source of pride and one to identify with.

Also associated with BIRGing is the proclamation by some of their fandom through bumper stickers, banners, and team clothing. Cialdini (1976) predicted and confirmed that college students would be more likely to wear team apparel on a Monday after a football victory than on a Monday after a loss. His interpretation of these results was that many students wore the apparel following victories “in order to display their connection with the successful team and thereby enhance their esteem in the eyes of observers to the connection” (Cialdini 1976, 369). The positivity inspired by football wins also led to an increased pride in the university. The use of descriptors like “we”

following victories was contrasted by opposite descriptors such as “they” following losses. This negative association is known as CORFing, or “cutting off reflected failure”.

Team identification has been found to increase self-esteem and may reduce depression. Fans with strong levels of identification are likely to have a positive outlook on life. Levels of identification decrease as fans become geographically farther from their team and feelings of attachment are reduced. These distant fans tended to increase their identification as the team won (Branscombe and Wann 1991). High team identification leads to both enduring and temporary social connections. Fans with high identification (often known as “die-hard” fans) were more likely to BIRG and less likely to CORF than “fair-weather” fans with low and moderate levels of identification (Wann and Branscombe 1990), more likely to be more positive about the team’s current and predicted future performance (Wann and Branscombe 1993), more likely to feel greater integration and loyalty to the institution as a whole and a desire to graduate from the institution (Wann and Robinson 2002), and more likely to view fellow fans as trustworthy (Wann and Polk 2007; Wann et al. 2008).

The moods of die-hard fans are more strongly affected than those of fair-weather fans in reading about their team in the newspaper. Mood responses were influenced by the positive or negative viewpoint of the article and whether or not the author was a fan of the team of the reader. The most positive moods came from positive articles from an author that was a fan, followed by positive articles written by non-fans, negative articles written by non-fans, and negative articles written by fans (Wann and Branscombe 1992). These findings supported the idea that highly identified fans were more likely to BIRG, but viewed CORFing as disloyal. High levels of group-esteem have been found to have

associations with evaluations that reflect positively on sports teams (Murrell and Dietz 1992). A study of Alabama football fans found that highly identified fans are more likely to BIRG and display their positive association with the team than fans with lower identification (Muscanell et al. 2008).

In some cases, the common patterns of BIRGing and CORFing do not hold true for fans. The Chicago Cubs are probably the best example of a team that has an extremely loyal fan base despite consistent failure. The Florida Marlins, on the other hand, is a relatively successful team that has won two World Series championships since joining the major leagues, yet suffers from very low attendance. Many Marlins fans have expressed negative opinions about the front office management and their commitment to fielding and retaining a winning ballclub. These less common occurrences have been described as BIRFing (basking in spite of reflected failure) and CORSing (cutting off reflected success) (Campbell et al. 2004).

Research shows that fans who attend Division I football games are more likely to go in order to support their favorite team, coach, university, and community. Division I-A has recently been renamed Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) and I-AA is now called Football Championship Subdivision (FCS). Attachments were stronger for these fans than for those who attended lower division games. This strong attachment, along with heavy media coverage and large fan bases, allows Division I-A (FBS) teams to sell more licensed products. In higher divisions of play, fans have their strongest identification with the team, while the lower levels are more likely to identify with a player (Robinson et al. 2005).

For his Sport Fan Motivation Scale (Wann 1995), eight common motives of sport fans were identified: eustress (positive stress), self-esteem, escape, entertainment, economic, aesthetic, group affiliation, and family. These motives were examined and compared using a 23-item Likert scale. Further studies confirmed the initial findings that males scored higher overall and on the eustress, self-esteem, escape, and aesthetic subscales, while females again scored higher on family motivation levels (Wann et al. 1999).

While surveying college football fans in the South during the 2005 and 2006 seasons, Bain-Selbo (2008) discovered that fans described the college football experience in a way that was very similar to the way someone might describe a religious experience. Words used by fans to describe game day, such as fellowship, passion, spirit, love, and heaven, can often be associated with religion and/or church. Some fans responded that no words could sufficiently describe the experience. More than half of the participants used the words friendship, fellowship, or community. When asked to rank various aspects of their lives, church narrowly beat out college football as the place where they had “the deepest and most positive emotional experiences” (Bain-Selbo 2008, 3). When asked where they experienced a significant sense of community, college football was found to provide less of this sense than family and friends, but more than church or work.

Chapter 3: Methods

Jones (1997) suggests that due to the potential weaknesses of a single methodology approach, mixing qualitative and quantitative methods in sport fan research is appropriate and beneficial to the final product. Therefore, I used qualitative and quantitative methods in analyzing Auburn University football and its fans, which included both archival research and questionnaire surveys. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software was used to create most maps.

To answer the first of my four research questions, on the evolution of football in the United States and its popularity in the South, I reviewed relevant literature and used information from the National Collegiate Athletic Association's (NCAA) official website to create current maps of the different divisions and maps of Division-I national champions by era. The maps of National Football League (NFL) teams by era were based on league records from the NFL official website. For the coaching salary maps, I used information from the 2010 USA Today – National Sports Law Institute coaches' salary database. For the map of the highest stadium capacities, various internet lists were consulted and confirmed through each school's official website. I assigned this data to attribute tables of various geographical shapefiles and displayed them in ArcMap.

For my second question, on the evolution of football at Auburn and its impacts on the local area, I reviewed existing literature on the subject and used records from the 2011 Auburn Football Media Guide to create maps showing the locations of games played. Maps were created using ArcMap. Bar graphs display various data obtained

from the U. S. Census Bureau, the City of Auburn, and Auburn University. Photographs are also included to offer visual examples of some of the points discussed. All photographs were taken by me or obtained from the Auburn University Special Collections and Archives Department. Information about Auburn football-related business names in the local area was acquired by performing keyword searches for words and phrases associated with Auburn football in the online Yellow Pages.

To answer the third question, regarding the spatial dimensions of Auburn's football fan region, I relied on records I obtained about Auburn's 2010 season ticket holders and Auburn's booster club membership profile. A list of zip codes representative of each 2010 Auburn football season ticket holder was provided by Auburn University's athletic ticket office. The zip codes were entered into Microsoft's Excel software program and grouped and counted by frequency. These numbers were entered into a national Zip Code Tabulation Area (ZCTA) shapefile obtained from the U. S. Census Bureau and represented spatially using ArcMap. Shapefiles for the state, county, and Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) levels were used to select and group the attributes of ticket holders according to the different spatial units.

A list of Auburn booster clubs with current membership figures was provided by the Auburn Alumni Association. I created multiple maps depicting this data through ArcMap, and, along with the radio coverage map supplied by Auburn Network, these maps indicate the general dimensions of Auburn's fan region. Additionally, information on Auburn University's student body demographics and Auburn University's alumni demographics was obtained from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, and the Auburn Alumni Association. These organizations have assisted in my finding

similarities and differences that exist between the Auburn University football fan region and the Auburn University student/alumni region.

On November 11-13, 2010, a non-random questionnaire survey was conducted on the Auburn University campus of fans who were in town for the game between Auburn and the University of Georgia. Findings from these surveys helped me address the fourth research question on the demographic characteristics of Auburn fans. The questionnaire survey form consisted of eighteen multiple choice questions and one open-ended question (Appendix A). Most of the multiple choice questions pertained to general demographics, such as gender, age, and race/ethnicity, and also inquired about the level of involvement in Auburn football by the fan. The open-ended question was phrased as a declarative sentence (“I like Auburn Tigers football because...”) where the fans filled in the blank with their reasons. Subjects were greeted and introduced to the study. They were then asked if they were Auburn fans and age 19 or over (the legal age of adulthood in Alabama). Subjects who met the criteria were asked if they were willing to spend about five minutes participating in the survey. Those who agreed were then read and/or given an information letter. This letter assured subjects that their participation was voluntary and that any information obtained from them would remain anonymous. Surveys were conducted with the surveyor present, during which time the surveyor showed the forms, read the questions aloud, and recorded responses as those who partook listened and answered. In some cases, fans requested and were permitted to fill out the forms and read the questions themselves. Surveys were conducted in the central campus area between Draughon Library, the Auburn Arena, and Dudley Hall. The majority of responses came from the Beard-Eaves Coliseum and Bibb Graves Amphitheatre areas. The survey data

were then entered into Microsoft's Excel software program and analyzed with basic descriptive statistics. Results are displayed through tables, a map, and a word cloud. The word cloud was created using Wordle, an applet that generates word clouds based on text entered by the user, giving prominence to the words most frequently used.

Chapter 4: Geography of Football in America and the South

Football, which began in the Northeastern United States during the years following the Civil War and spread to the South and West by the turn of the Twentieth century, is important primarily for the cultural role it plays in society and for its economic potential. Football teams, whether at the high school, collegiate, or professional level, can be a major source of pride for communities (Zelinsky 2001). Since it was introduced by college students returning from Northern schools in the late Nineteenth century, football in the South has grown dramatically. Southerners likely embraced football because it reflected regional pride and served as an antidote to negative publicity about the region (Weiss 1990). The South's desire to modernize while clinging to some violent and religious traditions was among contributing factors to the success of football in the region (Dunn and Preston 1991, Ayers 1992, Miller 1997, Doyle 1998). The importance of football is most obvious from its economic value and the role of football in creating place and community.

Origin and Evolution of Football in America and the South

Through the 2010 season, teams from the South have won 6 straight national championships, and 10 of 13 since the Bowl Championship Series (BCS) became the accepted and official method for deciding major college football national champions in 1998. The South has featured at least one team in each game except for 2004, though an undefeated Auburn University team was second in the final polls. For many people, sports come to mind when they hear the name of certain colleges. Former University of

Alabama President Andrew Sorensen discovered during his tenure that football is “the prism through which a remarkable number of intelligent people view the university. To deny that is to bury your head in the sand.” (Solomon 2010).

The South’s domination of the college game is a relatively new phenomenon. The first game was played in New Brunswick, New Jersey in 1869 between Princeton University and Rutgers University (Rooney 1969). Similar foot and ball games had existed hundreds of years before in Europe, but it was in America that the contemporary game took root. Early college football was confined to the North. It was brought South and West by homecoming students who had attended Northern schools and familiarized themselves with the game. Walter Camp, who played and coached for Yale, wrote early rules for the game. His style of play consisted of much pushing and shoving between the offensive and defensive lines and little else (Doyle 1998). His rules were viewed by much of the public as boring, and though they would soon be altered, allowing for plays like the lateral pass, he protested by saying such changes would “allow the players more expression and creativity, (and) football would lose its power to inculcate the work habits and mental discipline that America’s future leaders would need in their adult lives” (Doyle 1998).

By the early 1900s, the game had diffused across the country (Rooney 1969). Dramatic urban growth in Southern cities, especially in the Piedmont region, set the stage for the success of the game and its associated spectacle. City advantages, such as police presence, media hype, quality playing facilities, and improved accessibility and interconnectivity between and among other cities, would translate to high earnings that could not be reached at earlier isolated campus locations (Doyle 1998).

Early years of college football were plagued by cheating and violence, causing some schools to ban the sport, and nearly causing the sport to collapse (Doyle 1997, Doyle 1998, Meyers 2009). The sport experienced backlash and resistance across the country, especially in the South where many still harbored resentments toward the North. Many traditionalists in the South viewed football as a barbaric, juvenile game, and did not welcome the “carpetbagger” sport. At the same time, many in the younger generations of the South saw the Northern way of life as progressive and wanted to embrace football. There was strong backlash from evangelical Christians, especially in the South, who framed their arguments against the sport around these negative attributes before eventually becoming tolerant (Doyle 1997).

Elite teams in early years nearly always came from the Ivy League, a group of prestigious private schools in the North who were among the first founded college football teams. Prior to the University of Alabama’s 1926 Rose Bowl victory, only a handful of Southern teams enjoyed success. This success was minimal and the teams were championed only by the Southern media. The 1926 season forever changed football in the South. Southerners from Richmond to New Orleans supported the University of Alabama Crimson Tide and took pride in their victory. Alabama’s victory was celebrated—not only by the people of Tuscaloosa—but by all people of the South (including those at Auburn University, which was in the middle of the forty-year feud with the University of Alabama at the time) (Doyle 1998). The spatio-temporal patterns of college football national champions help illustrate the game’s outward movement from the North (Figures 7-13).

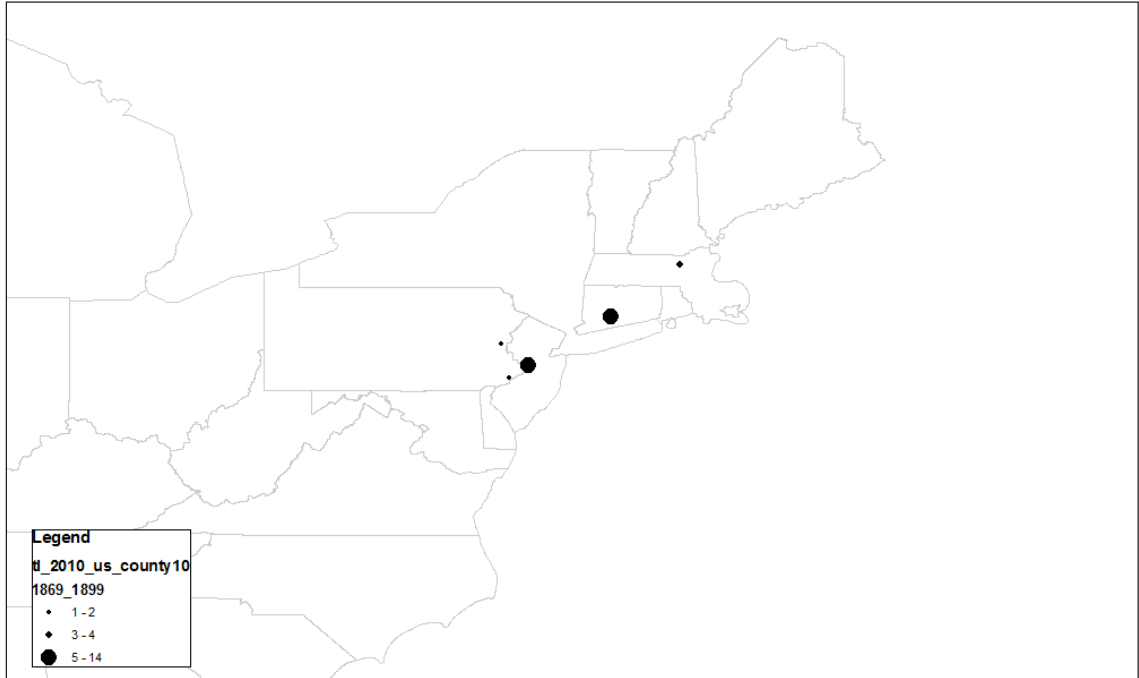


Figure 7: College Football National Champions 1869-1899

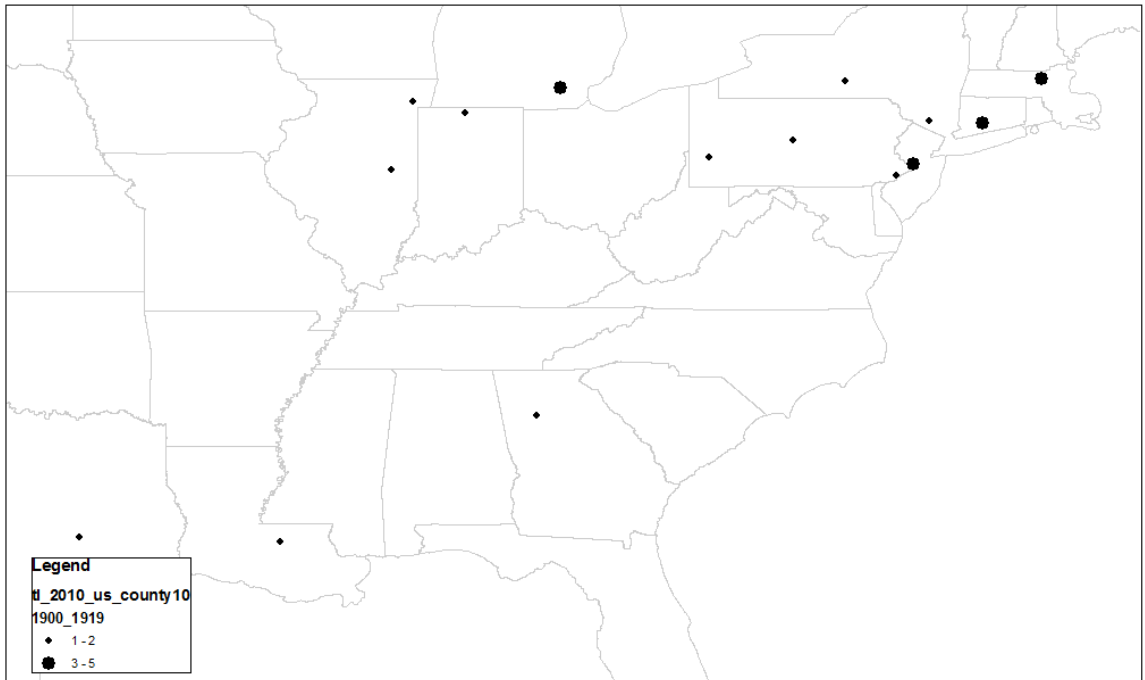


Figure 8: College Football National Champions 1900-1919

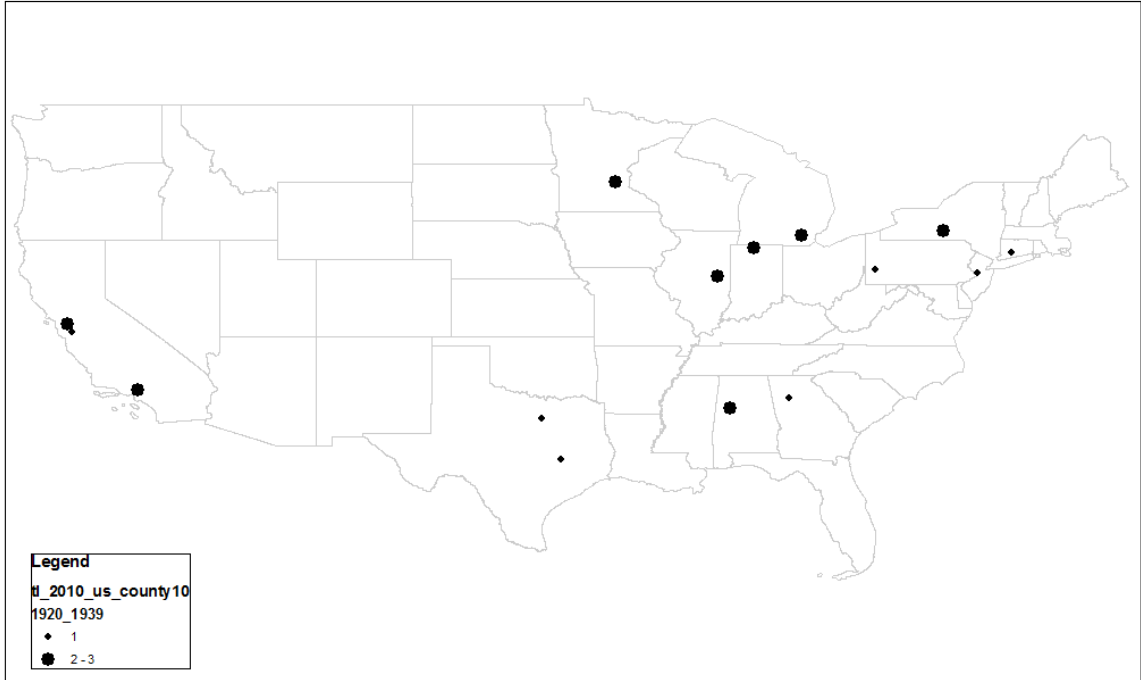


Figure 9: College Football National Champions 1920-1939

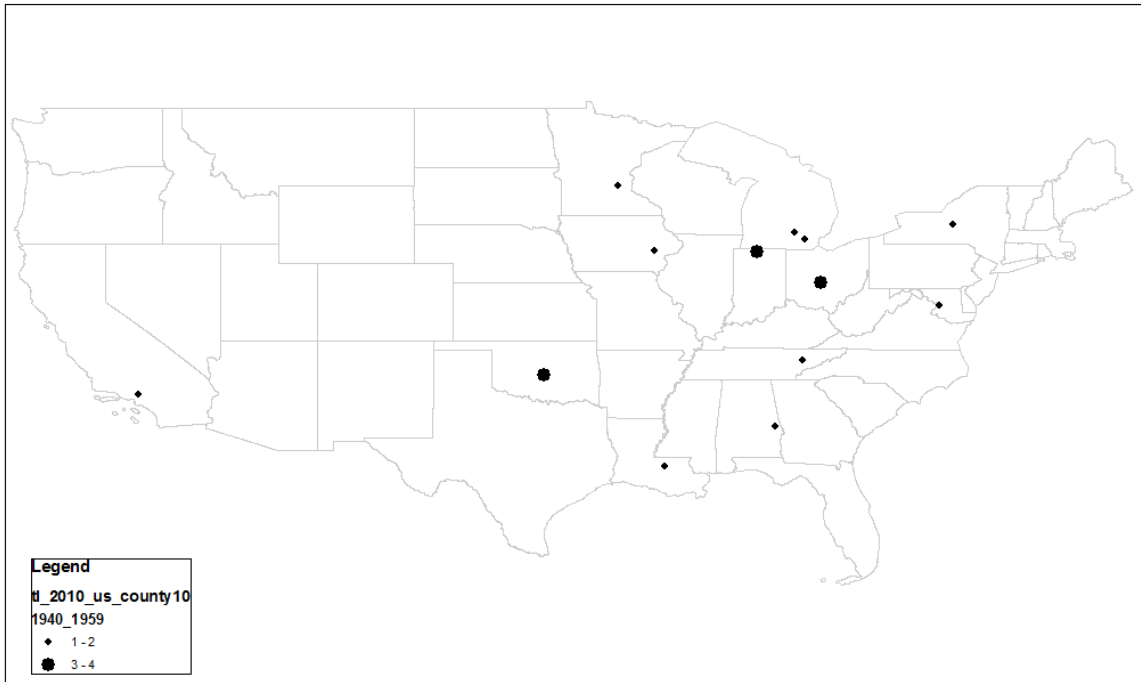


Figure 10: College Football National Champions 1940-1959

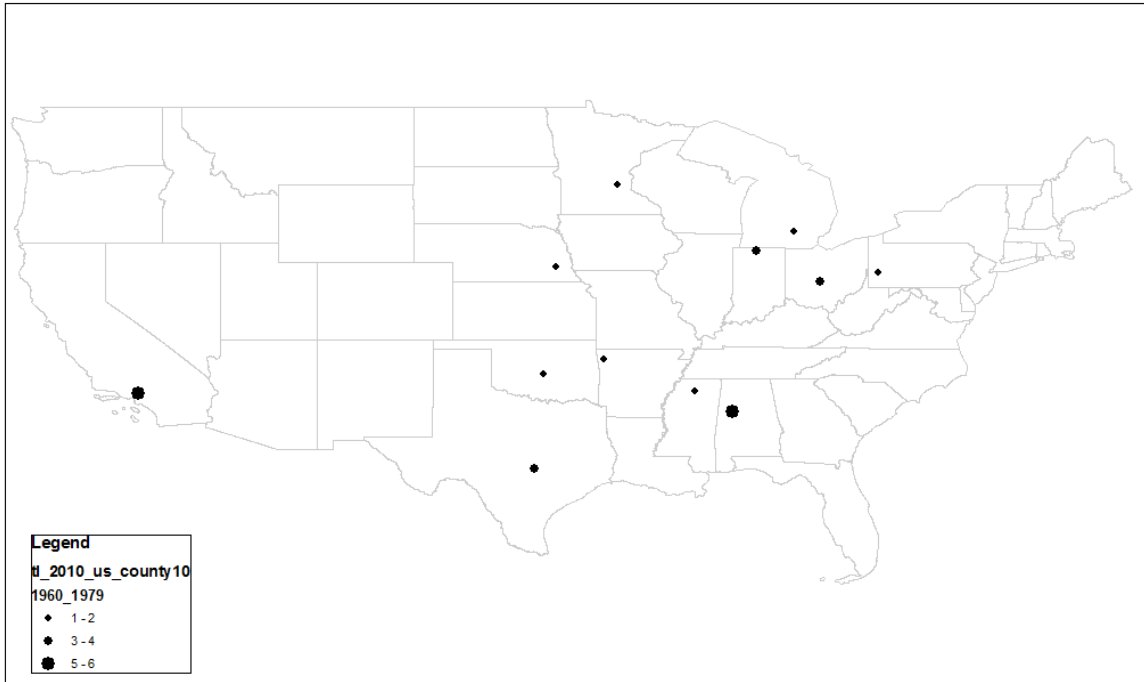


Figure 11: College Football National Champions 1960-1979



Figure 12: College Football National Champions 1980-1999

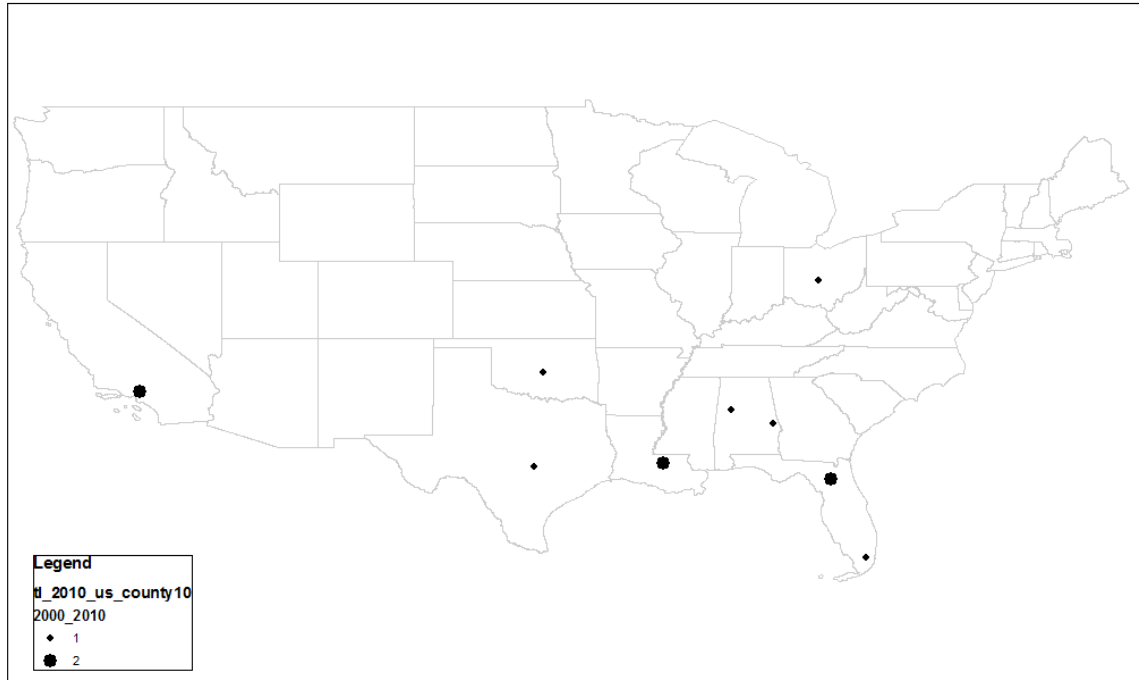


Figure 13: College Football National Champions 2000-2010

Divisions were created in 1973 as a way to structure NCAA college football teams according to their level of competition. In 1978, Division I was split into I-A and I-AA (today FBS and FCS). The primary differences between divisions in college football are the amount of money spent and earned, frequency of television appearances, and overall degree of emphasis, all of which decrease from Divisions I-III (Bernstein 2001). The Ivy League’s de-emphasis of football began in the 1950’s when the group formed an official athletic conference (they were previously independents with no official affiliation) in order to separate themselves from schools that were taking football too seriously (Pennington 2006). It was complete when they were expelled from Division I-A by a vote of other member colleges in 1981 and did not appeal the decision, which was triggered by disagreements about television revenues and the failure to reach minimum attendance and stadium capacity standards (White, Jr. 1982). Division I programs can

offer scholarships (85 for FBS and 63 for FCS), while the lower divisions generally consist of students who may have financial aid but no full athletic grant. Football Bowl Subdivision programs are held to higher standards regarding their schedules and attendance figures (NCAA 2011). The locations of these schools with respect to division show the North, which has a major concentration of Division III teams, as a region that emphasizes football less than the South (Figures 14-17).

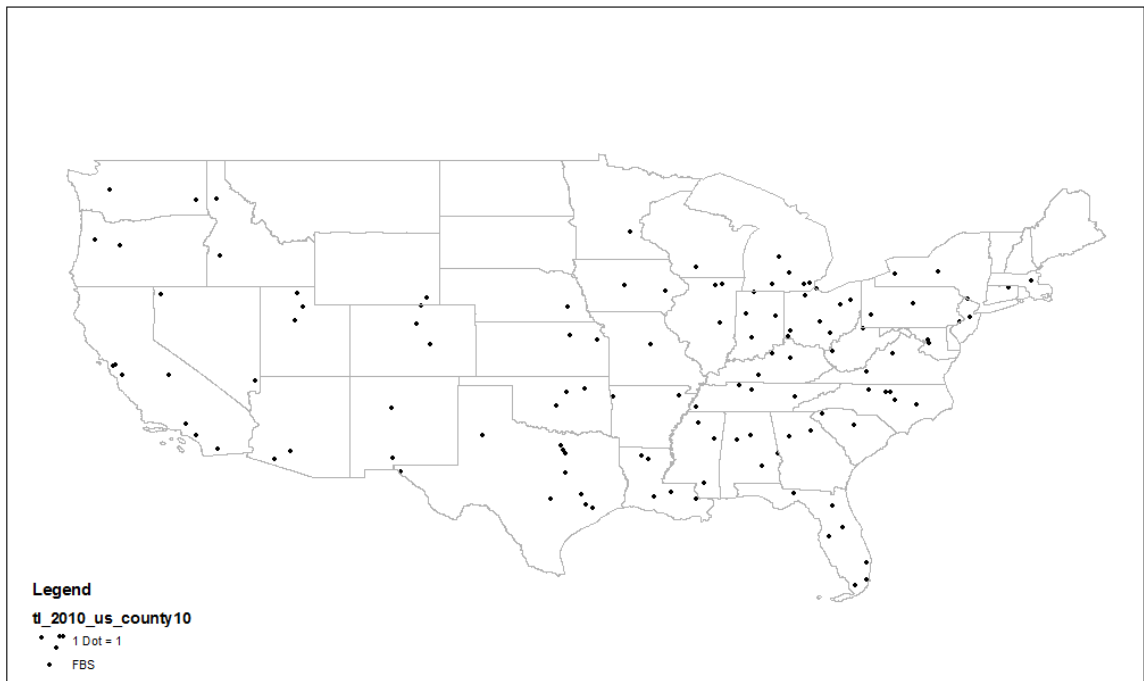


Figure 14: NCAA Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS, formerly Division I-A) members.

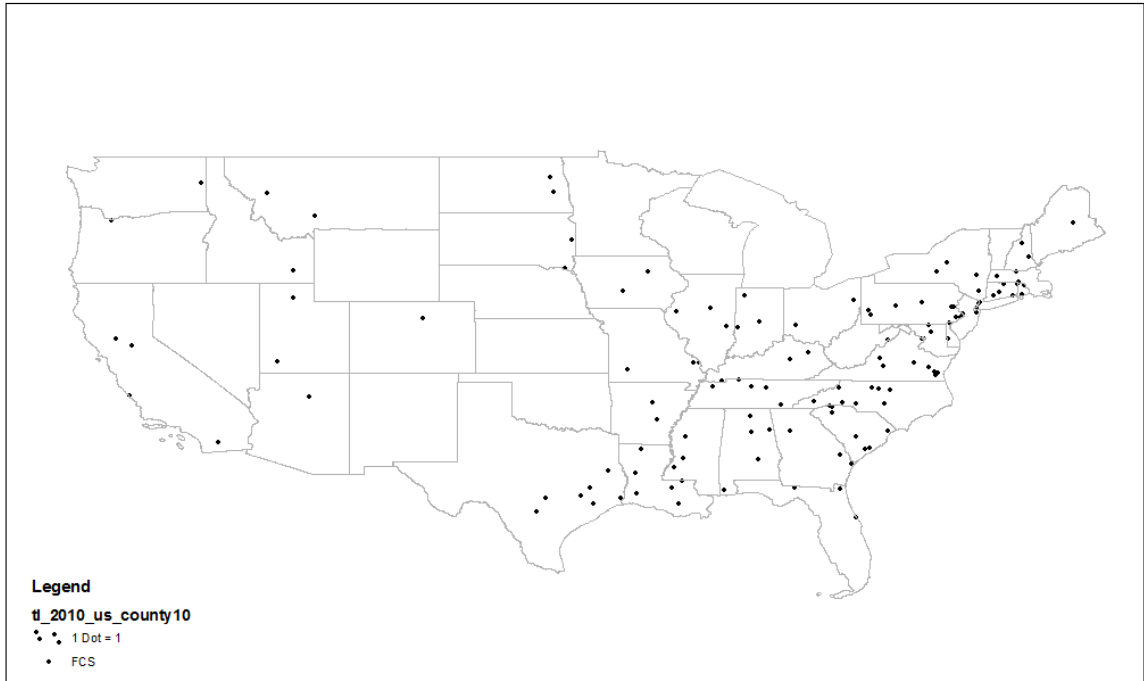


Figure 15: NCAA Football Championship Subdivision (FCS, formerly Division I-AA) members.

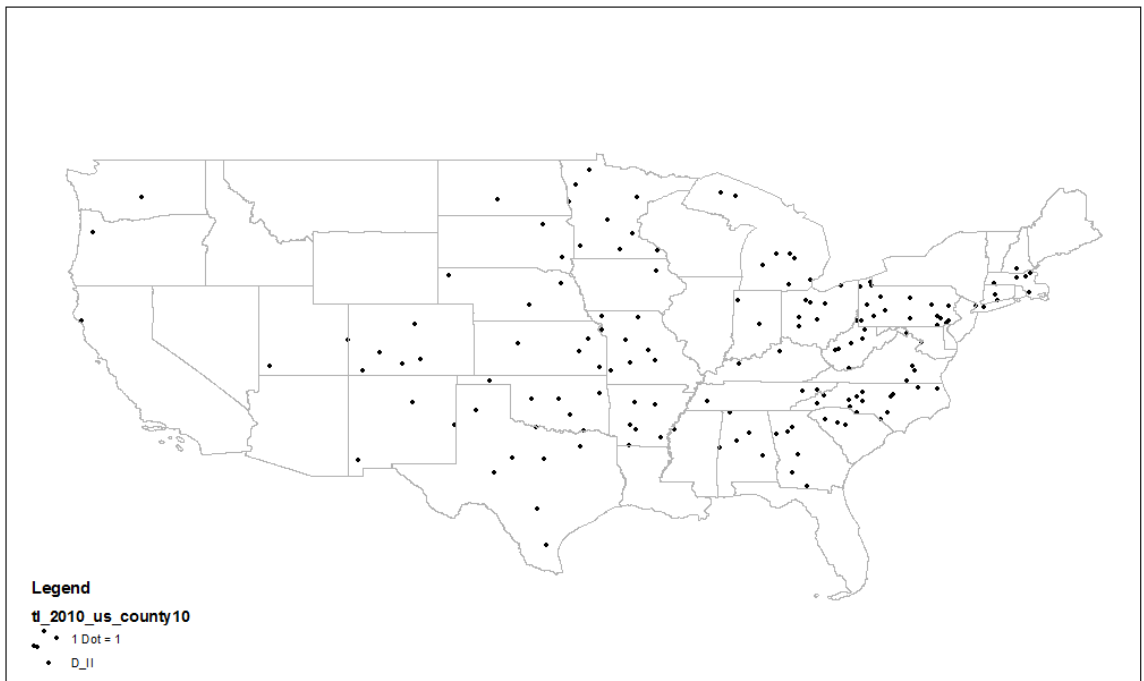


Figure 16: NCAA Division-II members.

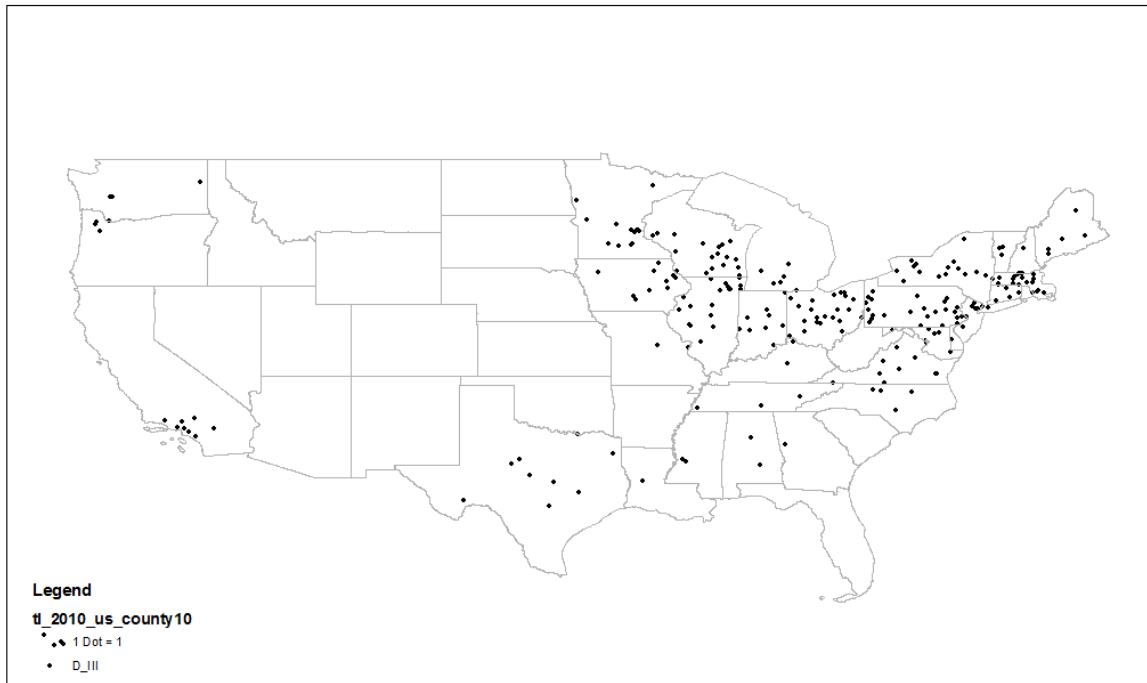


Figure 17: NCAA Division-III members.

In addition to the NCAA members, there are college football teams that belong to the low-emphasis National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), which generally come from smaller schools than their NCAA counterparts. Also, many junior colleges field football teams. These teams are located at two-year schools (largely found in California, Kansas, and Mississippi) that players often attend to reach eligibility or transfer standards for higher collegiate levels.

Three things happened in the post-World War II years that began to swing the pendulum of football supremacy in the direction of the South. First, the GI Bill resulted in sharp enrollment increases that translated to larger-than-ever crowds at games (Doyle 1998). Second, the Ivy League schools that had dominated the early years of football, put decreased emphasis on the sport and so they were relegated to a lesser division (Bernstein

2001). Third, racial integration gave a previously restricted population access to the classroom, grandstand, and gridiron (Doyle 1998).

Athletic conferences were initially formed based on ease of travel and regional cultural identity (Abbott 1990). While that generally remains the case today, television contracts and revenue sharing have recently become a strong influence on the formation of conferences (Rooney 1990, Katz 2011). Most college football rivalries are based in tradition and geography. Where interests clashed over time, rivalries were created. Teams within close proximity to one another that play regularly are the most likely to develop a rivalry. Two-thirds of rivalries involve teams from the same conference and two-thirds involve teams from the same state, with many falling in both categories (McGrail et al. 1994).

Though the game of football itself began in the Northeast, professional football began in the Rust Belt and Great Lakes region farther west before branching east, then west and south (Figures 18-22). The late arrival of NFL teams to the South, coupled with the historically rural character of its place and people, likely played a significant role in the growth of college football, which flourished in the NFL's early absence in the region. The most recent NFL expansion teams have located in the South, probably to take advantage of the regional football obsession.

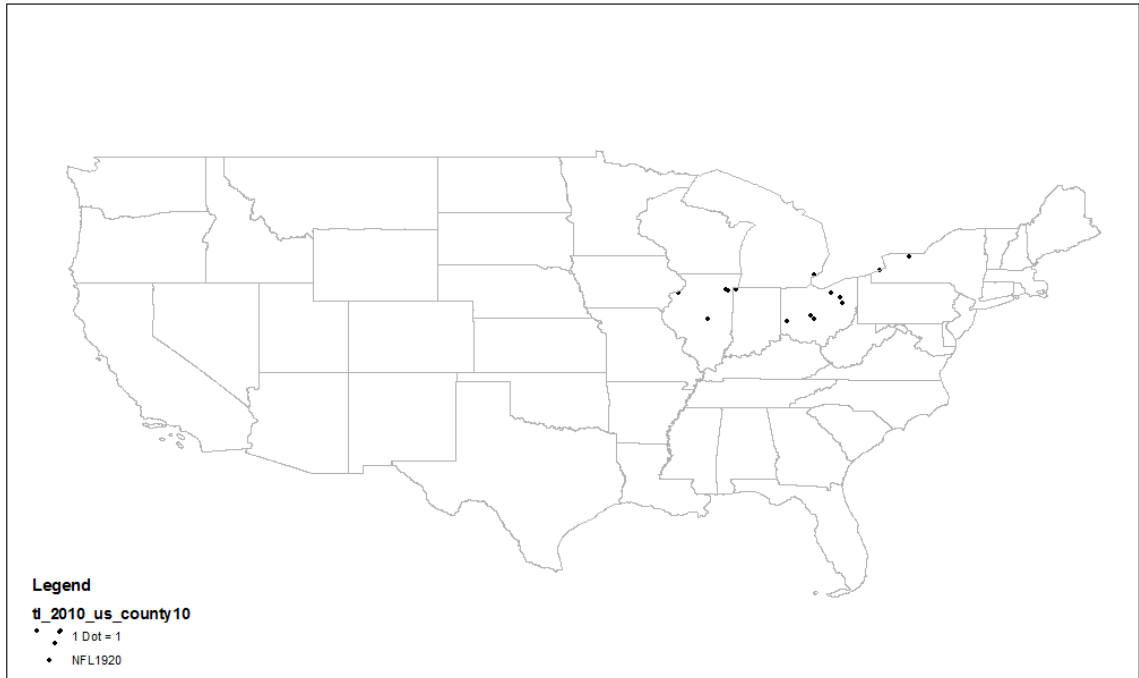


Figure 18: NFL teams in 1920.

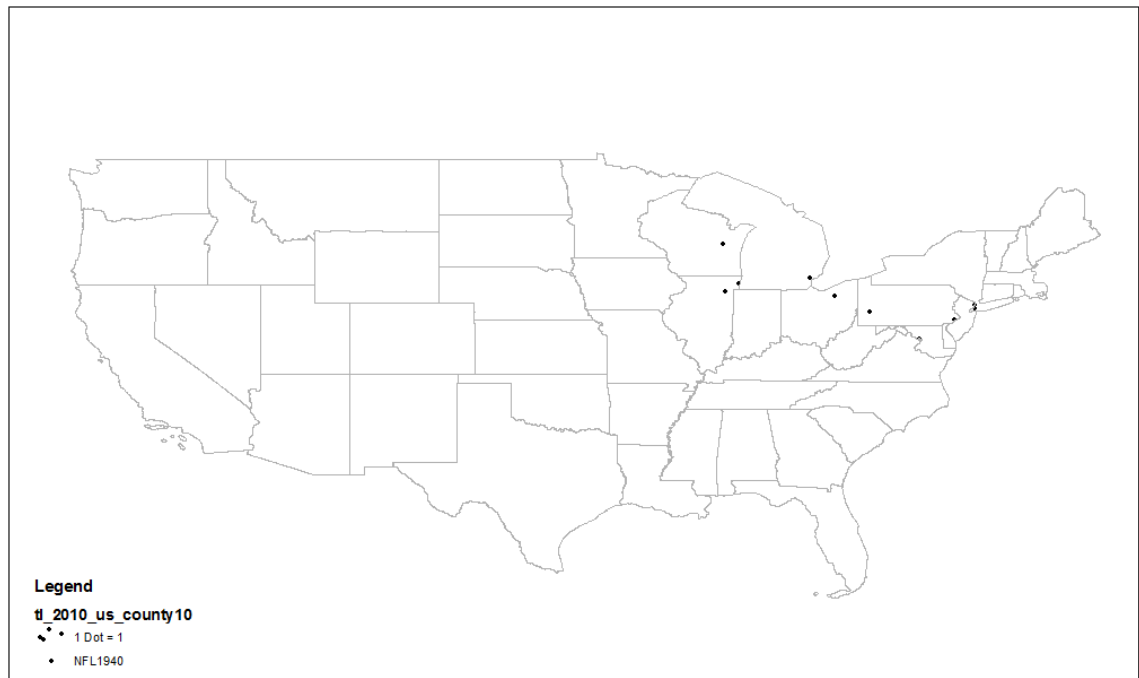


Figure 19: NFL teams in 1940.



Figure 20: NFL teams in 1960.

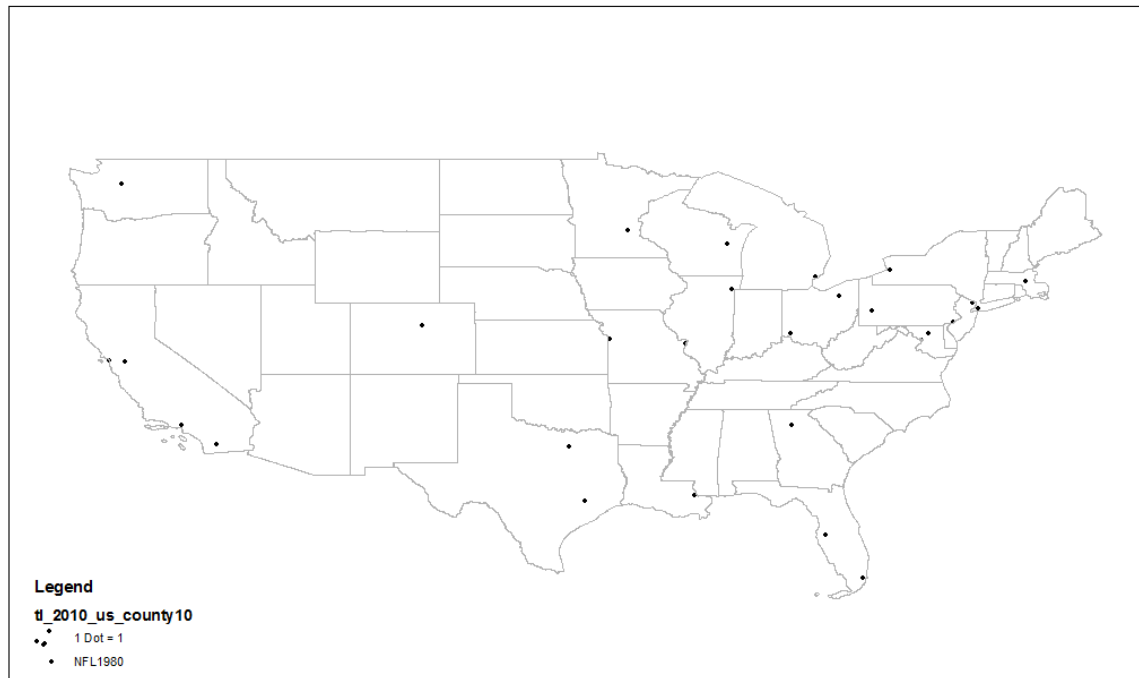


Figure 21: NFL teams in 1980.

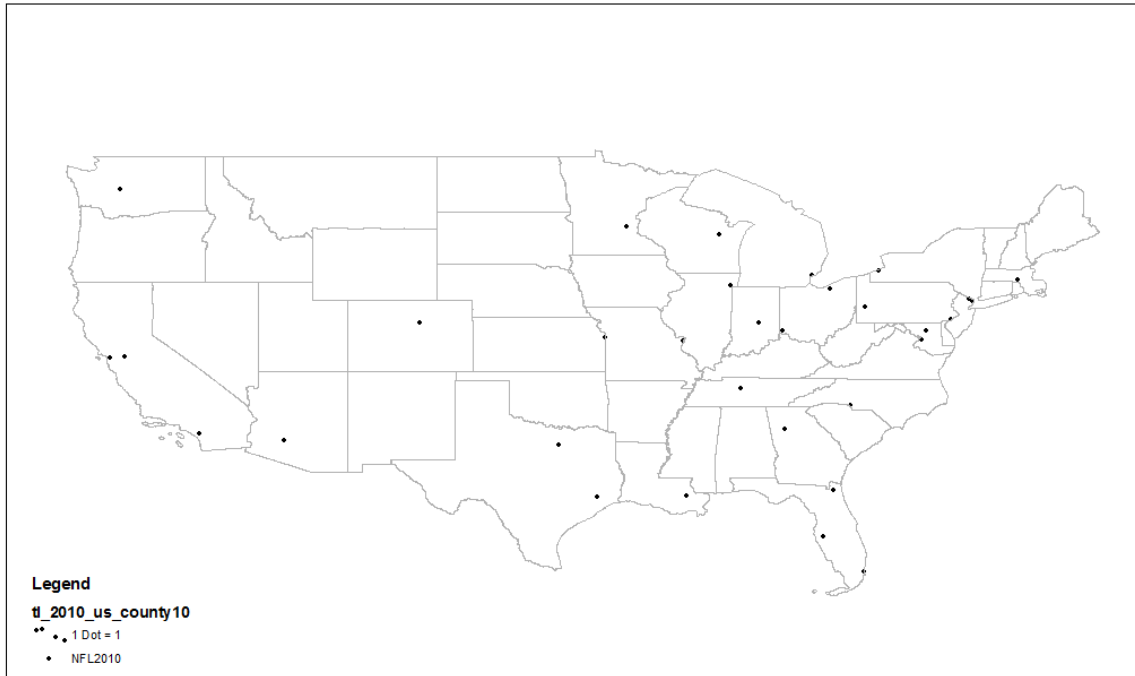


Figure 22: NFL teams in 2010.

In the mid-1970s, the South was home to less than one-fifth of NFL teams, but nearly half of the players came from Southern colleges (Reed 1982). The number of NFL teams has increased slightly as the South continues to be a hotbed of player production. Among states that have more than 10 native sons playing in the NFL, the top six producers by percentage of population are Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Alabama, Florida, and Georgia, respectively (Everson 2008).

Factors in Popularity: Modernity, Violence, and Religion

A strong sense of community and regional pride has been identified as being a part of the Southern psyche (Dunn and Preston 1991). Football, because of its status as a “scientific” (as it was often referred to in order to distinguish it from soccer) and contemporary game, became synonymous with progress in the South and a measure of regional success (Doyle 1998). “Ironically, it was the South’s adoption of a Northern

game that provided a vehicle for the reassertion of state and regional pride, as teams adopted the colors of the Confederacy and the imprimatur of legendary figures from the South's past. As in so much else, modern innovations did not so much dilute Southern identity as give it a new, sharper, focus" (Ayers 1992, 315). As Graves indicates,

"For all the last stands, all the lost causes and sacrificing in vain, the South had a heart. And a tradition. But the South had a new tradition for something else. It was for survival, and for victory. It had come from the football fields (Graves 1943, 90).

Football would soon come to be the main source of Southern pride. They were aware of their long-time national inferiority and needed something to ease the pain (Hart 1967). "As a fiercely proud people who perpetually found themselves at or near the bottom of many quality-of-life lists, Alabamians found one measure where they often ranked at or near the top: the final college football poll. This conservative population would begrudge every cent levied on their property for education but would spend lavishly to finish in the top 10. This Bible-believing citizenry would mobilize politically to pulverize advocates of a state lottery for education but would blithely ignore coaches and alumni who broke NCAA rules" (Flynt 2004, 408-409).

The Southern tradition of violence is one key to understanding the region's love for football. According to Dunn and Preston, "it is not clear to what extent southerners, in their passion for football, are acting out a need to express themselves in a violent manner. What is clear is that one of the most violent sports played in the United States enjoys its greatest success and has its greatest following in the one region that has historically embraced violence as an accepted means of self-expression" (Dunn and Preston 1991, 198-99). Reed (1982) noted that the difference between football and free-

for-all fighting is that the violence on the football field occurs within an accepted set of rules.

The violence can be largely attributed to the Celtic background of much of the South (McWhiney 1988, Fischer 1989). Before football was adopted by Southern culture, other violent sports existed as diversions that had been popular in Europe (Fischer 1989). These included wrestling, jumping, throwing tomahawks, shooting guns, and the often bloody game “rough and tumble”, which was centered on bragging and fighting (Fischer 1989). “The usual explanation that slavery made Southerners violent is far too simplistic... the South was and still is a violent society because violence is one of the cultural traditions that Southerners brought with them to America” (McWhiney 1988, 149).

Many sportswriters and politicians during the University of Alabama’s successful series of seasons in the 1920’s and 1930’s compared the Alabama football team to the Confederate army and suggested that they represented that lost Southern spirit (Borucki 2003). Writer John Steinbeck (1965) thought that “nearly all sports as we know them seem to be memories and in a way ceremonial reenactments of situations that were once of paramount importance to our survival”. Hackney (1969) wrote that the historical experience of southerners has resulted in feelings of persecution and insignificance, and that their world view denies personal responsibility and views outsiders as threats.

There are many similarities between religion and sports. As Bain-Selbo, Falk, and Miller relate, these include a set of beliefs, a variety of people involved, meaningful sites, and imagery. “Religion—not any particular religion or kind of religion, but religion as a dimension of human existence—is the way the particular individual is transformed

into the whole of the community or culture” (Bain-Selbo 2009, 27-28). Sports are often seen as valuable for instilling virtues in young men and women, and better preparing them to be leaders in their adult lives. Shrines honoring past teams and players may take the form of statues, trophy rooms, and halls of fame. Stadiums serve the role of a ceremonial gathering place and the bleachers are not all that different from church pews (Falk 2005). Miller (1997) describes some attributes of the Southern college football experience that do not sound very different from some characteristics associated with organized religion:

“Beyond the articles and orations speaking to notions of character and courage, myriad rituals and symbols reinforced, for many southerners, the intensity of the intercollegiate sporting experience. The anthems and totems of college athletic culture in the South took a variety of forms and projected a range of images, in some instances evoking a particular regional identity and in others reflecting students’ desire to associate their games with those of more established institutions in the Northeast. The iconography of college sport, manifest in the waving of flags, the orchestration of chants and cheers, and the singing of inspirational songs, formed circles of significance around the actual sites of races or games, actively involving fans, as well as participants, in the intercollegiate sporting spectacle. The sights and sounds of boisterous athletics went beyond competitive exchange on a diamond or gridiron; those who watched became immersed in something like a sacrament against which a book, a lecture, or a laboratory experiment—among other academic offerings—often seemed to pale in comparison” (Miller 1997, 298).

These shared communal aspects of church and college football can be felt in the South. Gibbs says, “Auburn sometimes does a better job of being the church than the church does. Walk around campus on a game day wearing orange and blue, and you will certainly feel loved and that you are part of something big. At tailgates we welcome and feed strangers, something that almost sounds biblical” (Gibbs 2010, 61-62). Football in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) links generations much in the same way that religion does (Travis 2007).

Importance in Contemporary Culture and Society

“On the outskirts of dozens of nondescript Texas towns, the resident boosters have erected billboards, usually artless but large, proudly announcing “The Home of the Hutto Hippos” or “Entering Panther Country.” Whenever possible these include a list of historical successes—“Class 2A Bidistrict Champions 1964, State Semifinals 1965”—painted in over the years like entries in an almanac, vintage seasons in the town’s career. Positioned strategically in the last open curve of a farm-to-market road, these handmade brags are as often as not the sole claim or welcome encountered on the threshold of a Texas town. Even approaching Gonzales, where the first battle of the Texas Revolution took place, the only notice posted anywhere by the townsfolk reads: “This is Apache Territory, District Champions 1958.” It is a truer measure of their values than art or war or politics: the way they choose to declare themselves” (Winningham 1979, 8).

The previous quote describes the obsession with football in small Texas towns where local communities are defined by teenagers on the field. Zelinsky (1988) discovered that the most common feature of town welcome signs was the glorification of local athletes and/or teams. He later described the role of sports in community-building: “An almost universal program for fabrication of group identity is based on spectator sports, arguably the last vestige of old-fashioned community. Beginning gradually in the late nineteenth century but reaching an almost hysterical climax lately is a deep emotional commitment to the local professional football, baseball, hockey, basketball, or soccer team or, in the case of the nominally amateur college football or basketball program, the enmeshment of entire states or regions” (Zelinsky 2001, 143).

As universities in the South became larger during the Twentieth century, football teams increasingly became representative of the school’s image. College presidents sought to capitalize on successful teams by using the positive publicity to improve the institution (Oriard 2001). George Denny at the University of Alabama regarded football as a public relations medium that could increase enrollment, gratify alumni, and create popular support for the university (Doyle 2004).

The business potential of sports has greatly increased over the years. Thirty-second slots of commercial airtime during the 2010 National Football League (NFL) Super Bowl cost \$2.6 million, nearly \$2 million more than it cost only twenty years ago (MSNBC 2010). The ESPN television network signed a 15-year contract that started in 2009 giving the National Collegiate Association of Athletics' (NCAA) Southeastern Conference (SEC) \$2.25 billion dollars for broadcast rights, primarily for football games (Smith and Ourand 2008).

At the end of the Twentieth century, the state of Alabama was having issues with its education budget. With the University of Alabama and Auburn University facing funding cuts, a joint press conference was held in Montgomery featuring the university presidents and head football coaches. The strategy was to appeal to and mobilize the state's rabid football fans. The main message to them was that college football could not exist without colleges (Flynt 2004).

At the K-12 level, the superintendent of Mobile public schools used a slightly different strategy to help raise funds. Two years prior to the superintendent's successful efforts, Mobile residents voted down in a landslide a property tax increase for funding schools (Flynt 2004). When the superintendent announced that high school football, cheerleading, and band, among other extra-curricular activities would be terminated, "the prospect of an autumn without high school football sobered Mobile County's legendary anti-tax population" (Flynt 2004, 409). The strategy of using football to justify education tax increases worked in May 2001 and high school football in Mobile survived.

The importance of college football can be understood when taking into account the money that is spent on it. The salaries of actual university educators often pale in

comparison to the salary of the head football coach or even those of his assistants. This suggests that many universities place a higher priority on sports than learning. At least one-fifth of FBS coaches earned a university-based salary of \$2 million or higher, with most found in the South (USA Today 2010, Figure 23). Four of the five highest paid coaches represented schools from the South, with the University of Alabama's Nick Saban and the University of Texas' Mack Brown leading the way with salaries in excess of \$5 million. The one coach among these top five who did not represent a Southern school was Bob Stoops of the University of Oklahoma Sooners, but some sources, including the United States Census Bureau, consider Oklahoma to be in the South.

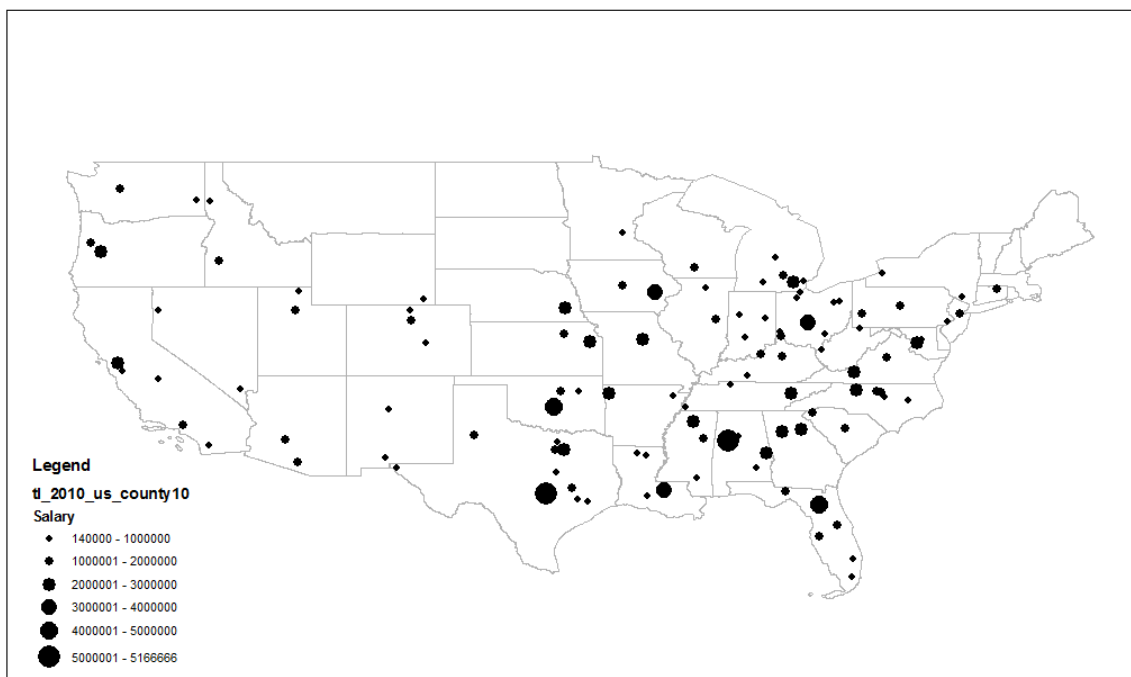


Figure 23: Head coaching salaries for FBS members in 2010.

Of the 907 listed assistant coaches, roughly one-seventh earned \$250,000 or greater in university-based annual income. Of these 131 coaches, 72 are employed at schools in the South. This figure does not immediately portray Southern dominance, but

the numbers show an increasing concentration of football money in the South. Schools with the highest number of assistants making over \$250,000 were overwhelmingly located in the South (Figure 24). The highest paid assistant was Will Muschamp of Texas, who will transition into one of college football's biggest jobs as head coach of Florida in the 2011 season. His \$900,000 paycheck was higher than that of many head coaches and even higher than the collective coaching staff salaries of some schools.

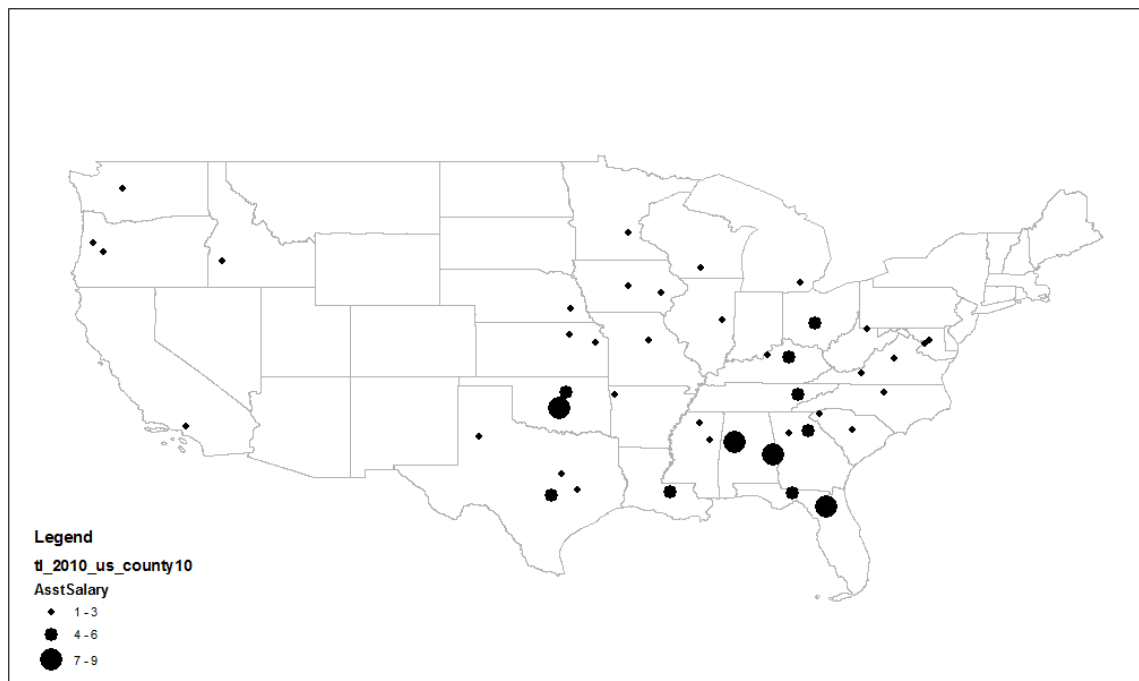


Figure 24: Number of assistant coaches making over \$250,000 per year in 2010.

Stadium capacities at schools in the South also tend to be higher than those found elsewhere (Figure 25). Eleven of the twenty college football stadiums with capacities over 80,000 are located in the South. The Southeastern Conference is the leader among conferences for average attendance rates. Many of the college towns have populations significantly lower than their stadium capacities and are transformed on football weekends by the presence of football fans.

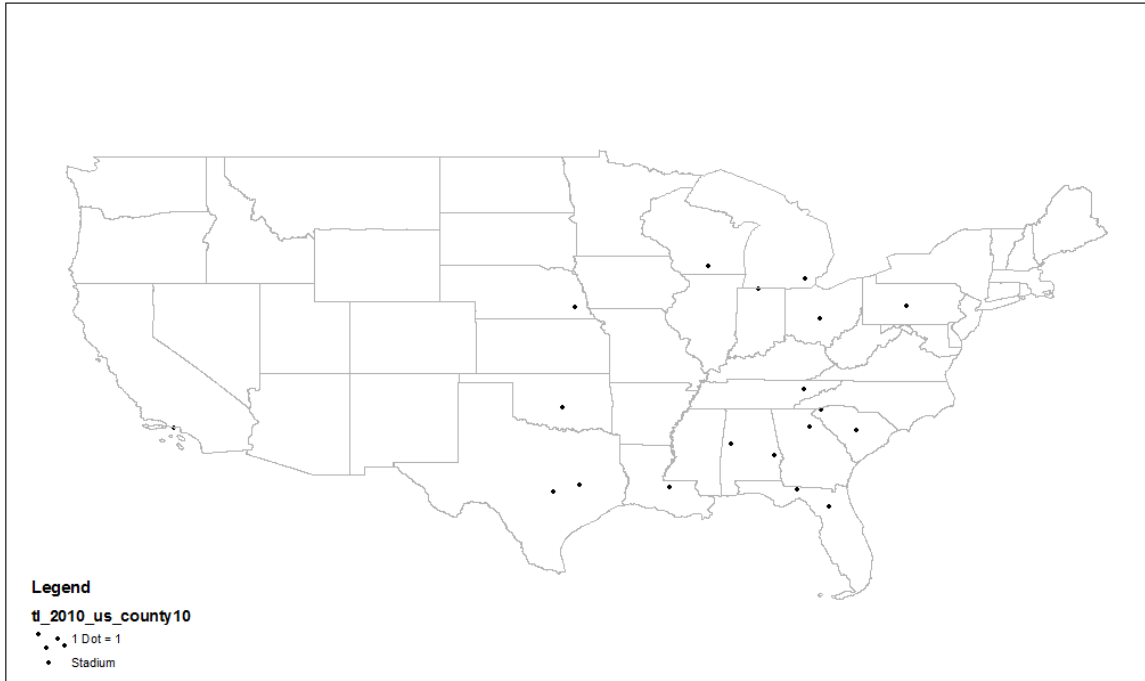


Figure 25: On-campus stadiums with capacities over 80,000 in 2010.

Nearly all aspects of life in the South, especially in college towns, are influenced by football in some way. Churches may experience higher donations on Sunday and workplaces higher employee morale on Monday in the event of a Saturday victory by the home team (Gumprecht 2003). It may be the opposite in the event of a loss. Weddings and other events must be planned around football games on the calendar or risk the disapproval and even absence of guests (Gumprecht 2003).

No figure embodies college football in the South—and arguably college football at large—more than Paul “Bear” Bryant, who is best known for his successful coaching career at the University of Alabama that lasted from 1958 to 1982. Bryant’s funeral, though less grandiose than those of fellow Southerners Jefferson Davis, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Elvis Presley, was said to rival them in terms of emotional outpouring and

numbers (Wilson 1987). In the early days of his career, Bryant was portrayed in the white southern mind and in the national media as a supremacist fighting for the same Old South values as Governor George Wallace, but by the end of his career was viewed as the model Southerner and a hero for all (Wilson 1987, Doyle 1996). “Bryant and his biracial teams quickly became a symbol of the new paradigm of racial harmony and cooperation. Southerners eager to construct a usable past compatible with their newly desegregated society embraced Bryant as a hero who embodied the proud traditions of the southern past without possessing the taint of racial bigotry” (Doyle 1996, 86). His legacy is still felt nearly 30 years later (especially in the state of Alabama), largely in the form of the houndstooth pattern that was featured on Bryant’s hats. Drive-by Truckers, a popular rock and roll band whose song subject matter leans heavily on themes of Southern life, such as growing up in northern Alabama in the 1970s, are among those who have described the role of Bryant and football in Southern culture:

“Bear Bryant wore a cool lookin’ red checkered hat and won football games and there’s few things more loved in Alabama than football and the men who know how to win at it. So when the Bear would come to town, there’d be a parade.” –Drive-by Truckers, from “The Three Great Alabama Icons”, *Southern Rock Opera* (2001).

Southern politicians often feel the effect of the local love for football. Former Louisiana Governor Huey Long was a famed supporter of Louisiana State University (LSU) football and used his political pull more than once to help the team, including invoking a rarely used law to prevent the Ringling Brothers Circus from performing in Baton Rouge on the day of a football game and also bullying the local railroad company into providing cheap fares and trains to Nashville for a game against Vanderbilt (White 2006). In some cases, media pays more attention to sports than to politics, the former being seen as more important to the American public (Baade and Tiehen 1990). “When

the 2000 Iron Bowl was held the same day that results of the presidential recount were announced, Birmingham's CBS affiliate obtained special permission not to pre-empt the game with election coverage" (Solomon 2010, 2). Former Alabama Governor Bob Riley, when asked about the lack of voter interest in the 2010 gubernatorial election (during which both Auburn and Alabama were ranked in the top 10), said that "there are things going on out there that are somewhat distracting. This time of year, with what's going on in football, and what's going on with the national economy, there are so many races out there, that all of a sudden it just becomes very, very blurred" (White 2010, 1). Within the nine Southeastern Conference (SEC) states, two-thirds of the governors and senators are SEC alumni. Only one-third of politicians in Big 10 states went to Big 10 schools. (Everson 2008).

Big-time college football hardly exists in the Northeast today, with schools such as Syracuse University, Boston College, and Pennsylvania State University (Penn State), among the last representatives in a once-dominant college football region. Penn State won their last official national championship in 1986, and, in the 24 seasons since, there have been no national champions from the Northeast, while the Southeast has produced more than half. College football is likely to remain extremely popular in the South, as elite coaches continue to be offered high salaries and 80,000+ seat stadiums are packed to capacity.

Chapter 5: Origin and Evolution of Football at Auburn University

During the past year, Auburn University has attracted national news media in a variety of football related topics. These include the winning of the national championship in football, the Cam Newton Heisman trophy campaign and his recruitment, and the poisoning of the Toomer's Corner oak trees. With football playing a central role in each story, it can be inferred that football is very important in Auburn. This local obsession with football can be further understood with reference to the historical spatial patterns of the sport, sport fan culture, and evidence of its effect on growth and community-building in Auburn.

The birth of Auburn University football began with faculty member George Petrie, who began organizing scrimmages on campus in 1891. Petrie had learned the game while pursuing his doctorate at Johns Hopkins University. Like many of his contemporaries in the progressive South, Petrie viewed the game as a modern innovation that taught life lessons and prepared players to be leaders in the rapidly urbanizing and industrial South (Doyle 1998). A team was formed at Auburn for the 1892 season. The "tigers" nickname came from the Oliver Goldsmith poem "The Deserted Village", which was also the inspiration for the name Auburn itself and the slogan "loveliest village on the plains". Petrie chose the colors orange and blue to honor his alma mater, the University of Virginia, whose Cavaliers athletic teams also wore orange and blue (Hemphill 2008). Despite the successes on the field of Petrie's team, his greatest sense of accomplishment came from garnering attention and recognition from the mainstream

northern media (Doyle 1998). In the many years since Petrie introduced football to Auburn University, it has become a defining geographical element of the city of Auburn.

Though college football games at Auburn are played on only seven or eight days of the year, the enthusiasm for football is always at the forefront. During the football season, there is rarely a moment that lacks preoccupation with football. Fans often arrive days early and party in anticipation of the game. After the game, the clean-up of trash and—in the event of a win—toilet paper in the oak trees at Toomer’s Corner, may take another several days. Gumprecht (2003) describes his experiences in Auburn during a home football weekend:

“On Friday morning, what began as a trickle of early-arriving fans turned into a steady stream as the day progressed. The Auburn Grille, its walls lined with framed photos of Auburn sports heroes, is busy. On the menu: Tiger (potato) skins, an Aubie chicken sandwich (named for the Auburn mascot), and War Eagle wings (for the Auburn battle cry). Next door at the University barbershop, the owner was selling the last four squares in his weekly football pool. In the window, below the words “Cracked Pecans for Sale,” were painted the scores of Auburn’s wins over archrival Alabama. Nearly every store on College Street was filled with sports memorabilia. There were framed jerseys in Cheeburger, clippings from Auburn’s undefeated 1993 season on the walls of the Traditions sandwich shop, a giant photo of legendary coach Ralph “Shug” Jordan at the Big Blue Deli. Everything in town, even the Compass Bank ATM, was done up in orange and blue. Friends and strangers passing on the street did not say “hello” or “good morning,” they exhorted “War Eagle!” the Auburn battle cry” (Gumprecht 2003, 31-32).

Prior to the 1950s, games were rarely played in Auburn. Out of the 676 total Auburn games played in the state of Alabama, 430 were played in Auburn with the remainder being played in Birmingham, Marion, Mobile, Montgomery, Selma, and Tuscaloosa. Many games during the first half of the Twentieth century and later were played in neutral or alternate locations, usually larger cities with better facilities and higher potential for earnings (Doyle 1998). It was not until Auburn constructed their own stadium that they began to play more often at home. The large stadium, coupled with the

increasing connectivity between Auburn and other cities in the automobile age, made hosting games financially attractive and influenced other schools to agree to come.

Auburn has played games across the country, but primarily has played in the southeastern states (Table 2, Figure 26). In 1937, Auburn became one of the few teams to play in the now defunct Bacardi Bowl in Havana, Cuba. After Auburn, the cities that have hosted the most Auburn games are Birmingham, Atlanta, Montgomery, and Columbus (Table 3, Figure 27). Among neutral sites, the leaders are Birmingham, Montgomery, and Columbus (Table 4, Figure 28). Auburn’s most played opponents are the University of Georgia, Georgia Technological Institute, Mississippi State University, University of Florida, and University of Alabama, respectively (Table 5). The most played host cities of opponents are Atlanta, Georgia; Gainesville, Florida; Athens, Georgia; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Knoxville, Tennessee (Table 6, Figure 29).

Table 2: States with most Auburn regular season games played.

		Games	Percent of total
1.	Alabama	676	60.9
2.	Georgia	168	15.1
3.	Florida	47	4.2
4.	Louisiana	46	4.1
5.	Mississippi	38	3.4
6.	Tennessee	35	3.2

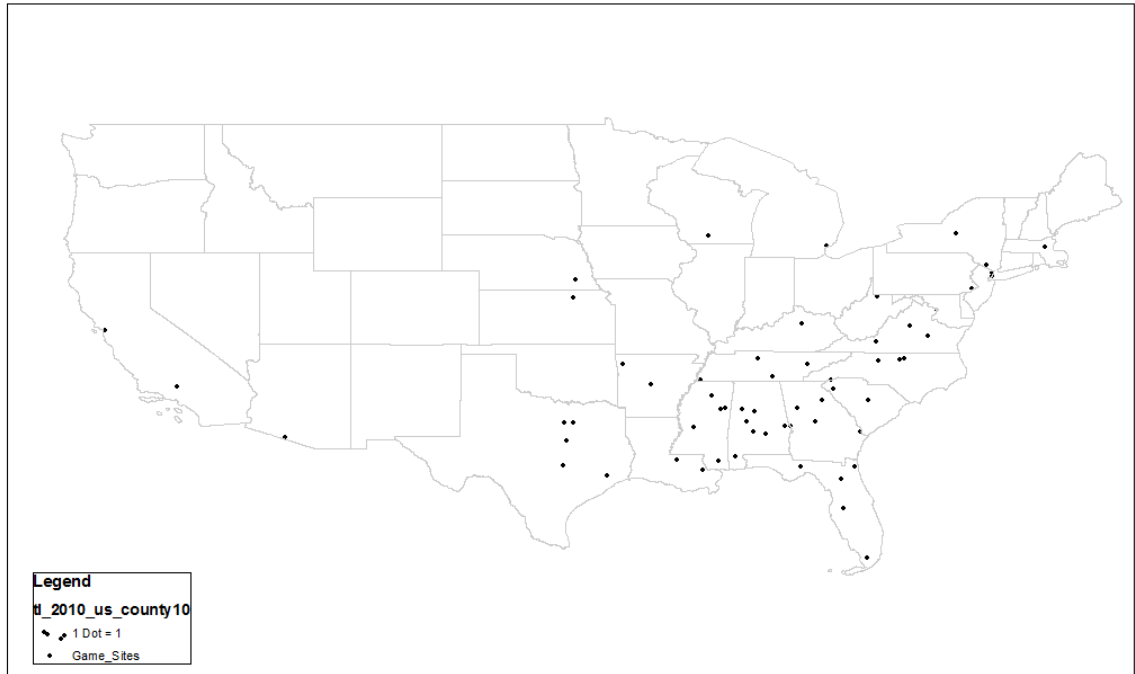


Figure 26: Locations of Auburn regular season game sites through 2010.

Table 3: Cities with most Auburn regular season games played.

		Games	Percent of total
1.	Auburn	430	38.7
2.	Birmingham	156	14.1
3.	Atlanta, GA	91	8.2
4.	Montgomery	68	6.1
5.	Columbus, GA	42	3.8

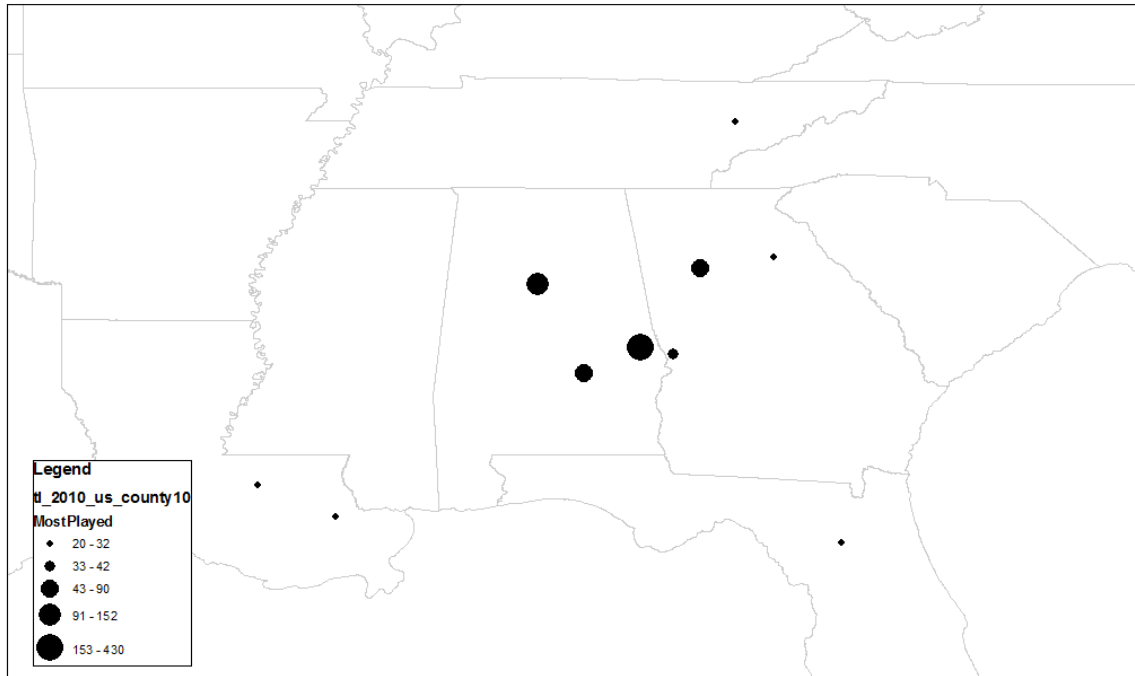


Figure 27: Locations with most Auburn games played.

Table 4: Alternate/neutral cities with most Auburn regular season games played.

		Games	Percent of total
1.	Birmingham	135	12.2
2.	Montgomery	68	6.1
3.	Columbus, GA	42	3.8
4.	Atlanta, GA	18	1.6
5.	Jackson, MS	11	1.0
6.	Mobile	10	0.9

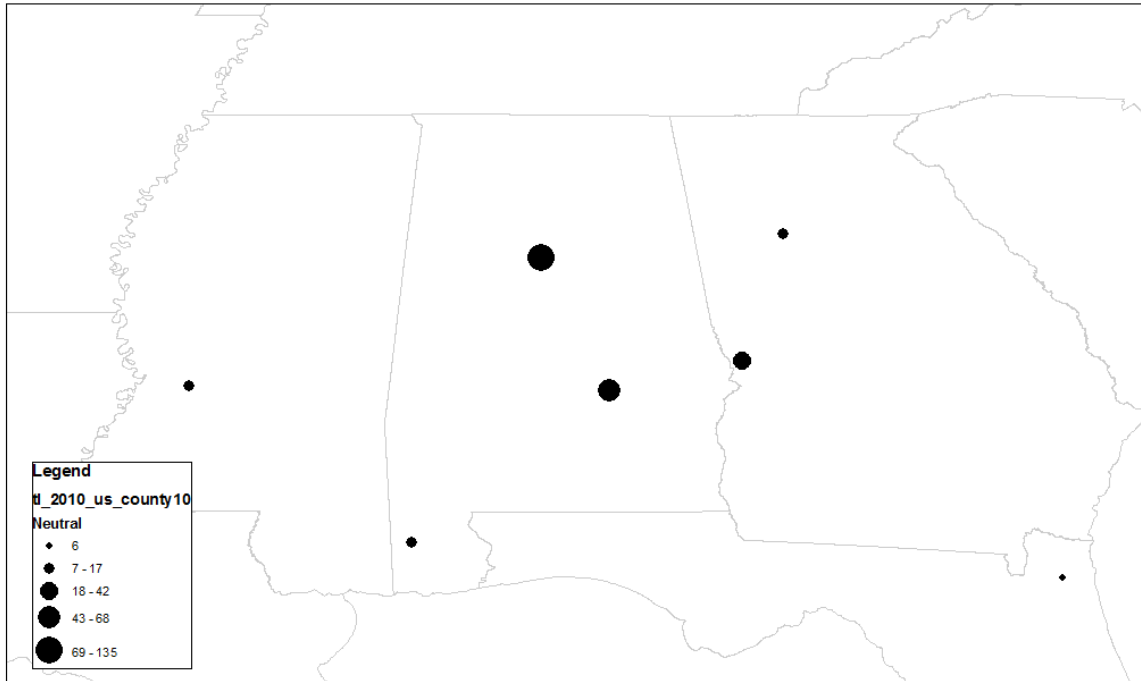


Figure 28: Alternate and/or neutral locations with most Auburn games played.

Table 5: Auburn’s most played regular season opponents.

		Games	Percent of total
1.	University of Georgia	114	10.3
2.	Georgia Technological Institute	92	8.3
3.	Mississippi State University	84	7.6
4.	University of Florida	81	7.3
5.	University of Alabama	75	6.8

Table 6: Host cities of opponents with most Auburn regular season games played.

		Games	Percent of total
1.	Atlanta, GA	73	6.6
2.	Gainesville, FL	32	2.9
3.	Athens, GA	28	2.5
4.	New Orleans, LA	26	2.3
5.	Knoxville, TN	25	2.3

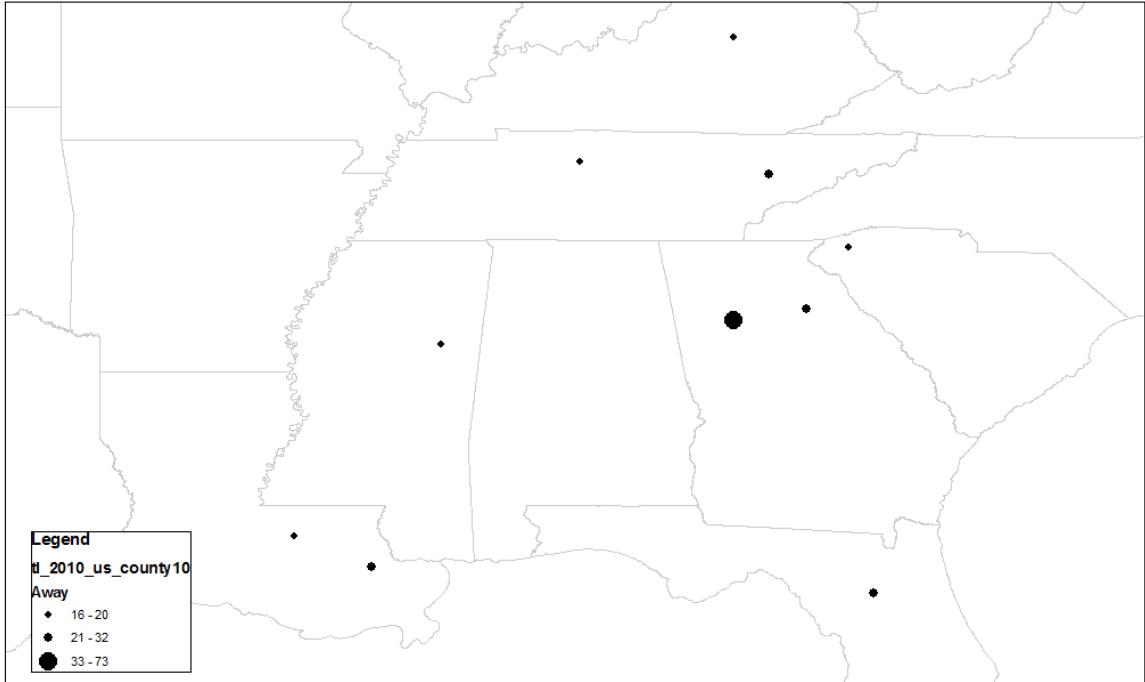


Figure 29: Most played away games at home of opponent.

Auburn's Transition from a Road Team to a Home Team

Auburn's first football game, a 10-0 victory over the University of Georgia, was played on February 20, 1892 in Atlanta's Piedmont Park (Auburn University Athletics 2011). Admission charges, which were fifty cents for adults and a quarter for children, netted \$800 for the game, far surpassing expectations for game attendance and earnings on a rainy day (Bolton 1973). The rest of the inaugural season, which consisted of three games in four days played that November against Duke, North Carolina, and Georgia Tech, would be played in Atlanta. It would be four years before Auburn played its first game at home and sixty before they were regularly playing over two home games per year (Figures 30-31). Games for many colleges were located primarily in larger cities during this era and beyond because greater gate receipts could be generated at city stadiums than at smaller and less accessible facilities in smaller college towns (Gumprecht 2003). The big city games, and the many potential opportunities that big

cities provided for Auburn students to engage in shocking and sinful behavior, were among the concerns of evangelical Christians, who were strongly opposed to football during its earliest years (Doyle 1998).

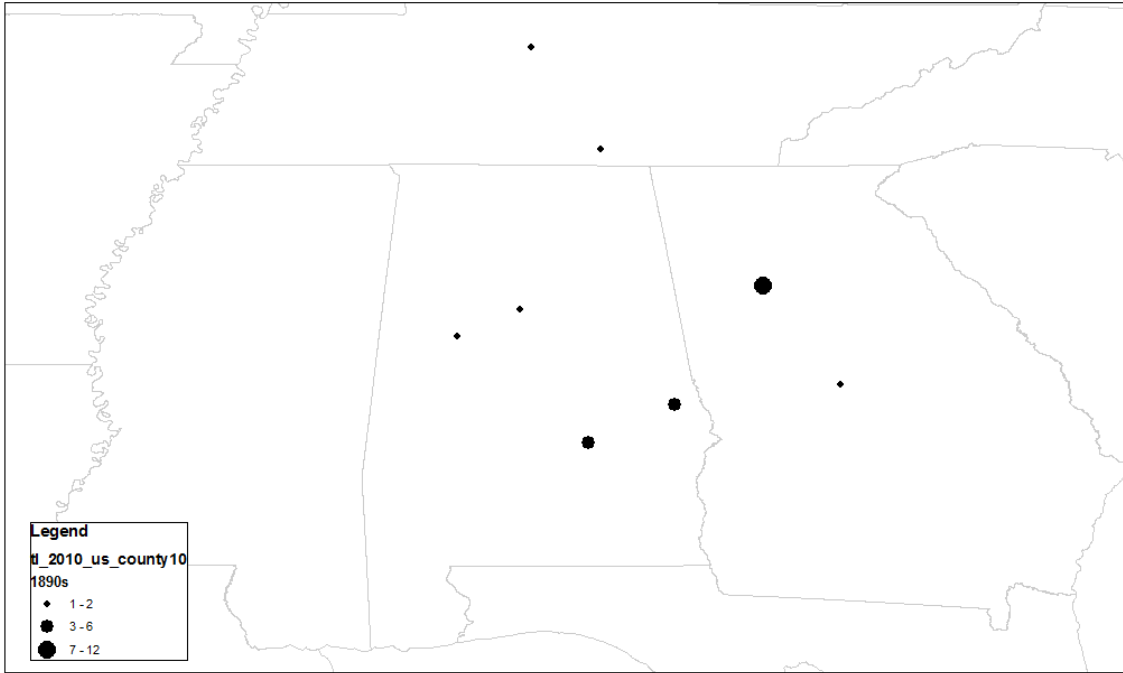


Figure 30: Frequency and location of Auburn game sites- 1890s.

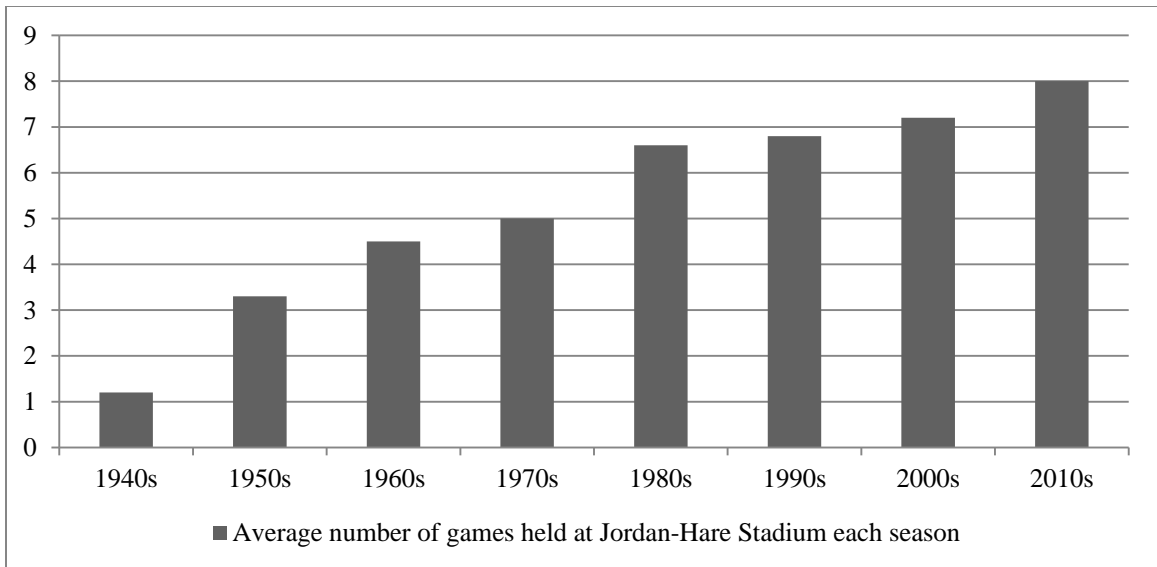


Figure 31: An increase in home games accompanies the stadium growth.

In 1895, Auburn became a founding member of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAA), a conference whose schools would represent states spanning east to west from South Carolina to Texas and north to south from Kentucky to Florida (Saylor 1993) (Figures 32-33).

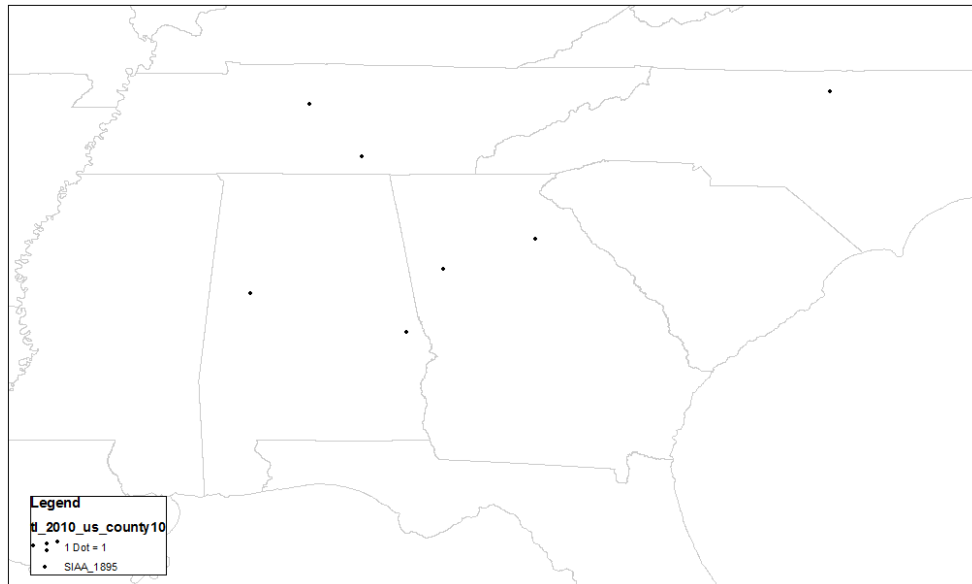


Figure 32: Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association members- 1895.

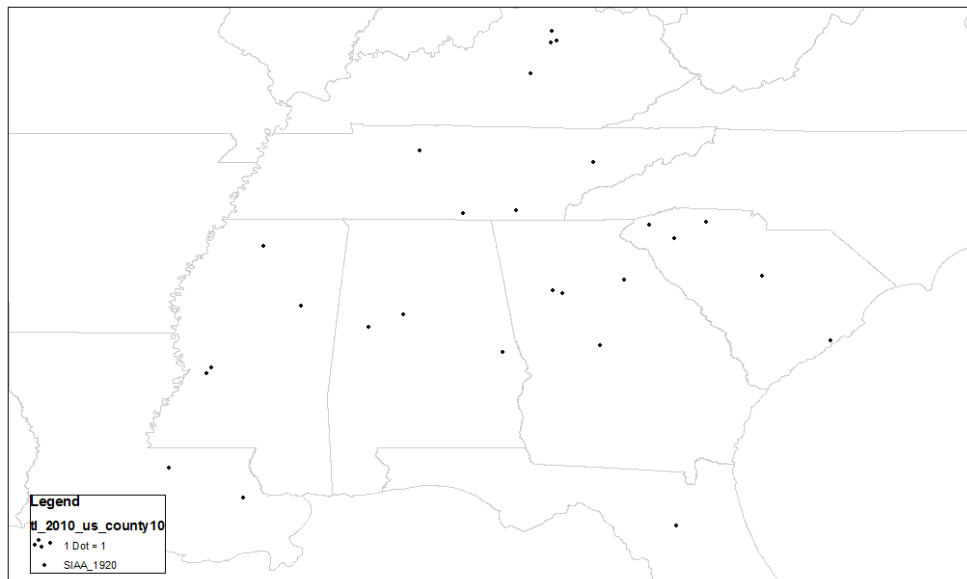


Figure 33: Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association members- 1920.

Auburn's first home field was located behind Samford Hall on the ground that is now home to Ross Hall and Ross Square (Hollis 1988). It was here, under the instruction of legendary coach John Heisman, that they played and won their first home game in 1896 against fellow SIAA member, Georgia Tech. The field would continue to serve as their home playing space until early in the Twentieth century. The team soon moved a short distance to Drake Field, modern site of Auburn's new Student Center (Schafer 2004, Figure 34).



Figure 34: Before Jordan-Hare Stadium: Auburn plays on their first field behind Samford Hall circa 1900 (top); Horses help grade the surface of the future Drake Field circa 1910 (middle); Auburn plays at Drake Field as fans look on circa 1920 (bottom).

Though Bob Frazier (a local African-American janitor and Auburn's first trainer/mascot) can be seen in the first Auburn team picture and served the team for roughly thirty years, it was the 1920's before African-Americans were officially permitted to attend the games (albeit in their own section) and nearly fifty more years before they were allowed to attend and play for Auburn. Southern teams, including Auburn, often refused to play teams with African-Americans on them, accentuating the already existing bitter rivalry between the North and South (Doyle 1998).

Drake Field was the home field until Auburn Stadium opened in 1939. Temporary bleachers with a capacity of 700 were erected each fall on one side of the field and the many fans that could not sit would stand along the sidelines (Beard 1989). During their time at Drake Field, Auburn and other large SIAA members left to form the Southern Conference after membership swelled and scheduling issues and rules disagreements became problematic (Saylor 1993). The spatial dimensions of Auburn's conference affiliation shifted eastward as schools from Maryland, North Carolina, and Virginia were brought into the picture (Figure 35). The Southern Conference was home to many future members of the modern Southeastern Conference (SEC) and Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) during its early years (Figure 35). Auburn would make the change to the SEC prior to the 1933 season, and they remain there today (Figures 36-37).

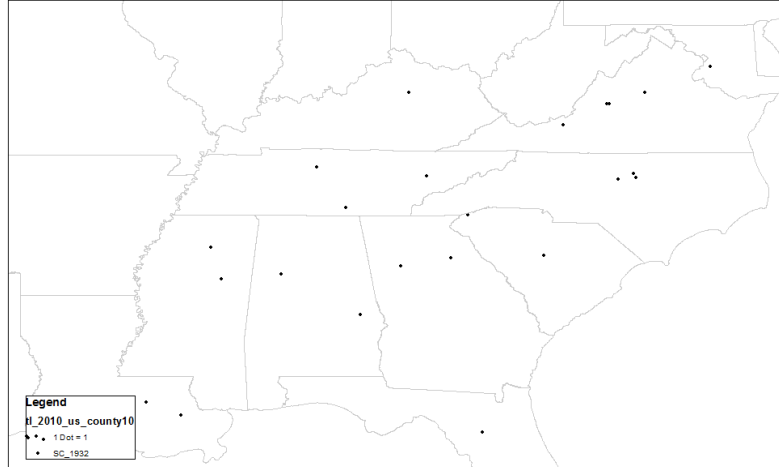


Figure 35: Southern Conference members- 1932.

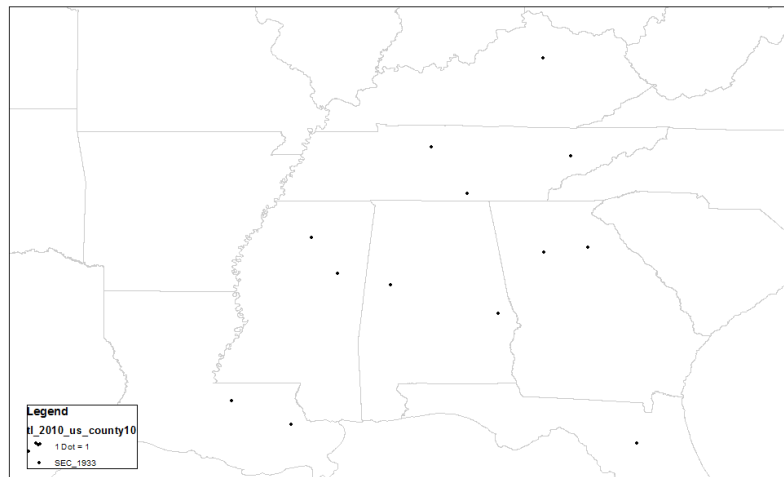


Figure 36: Southeastern Conference members- 1933.

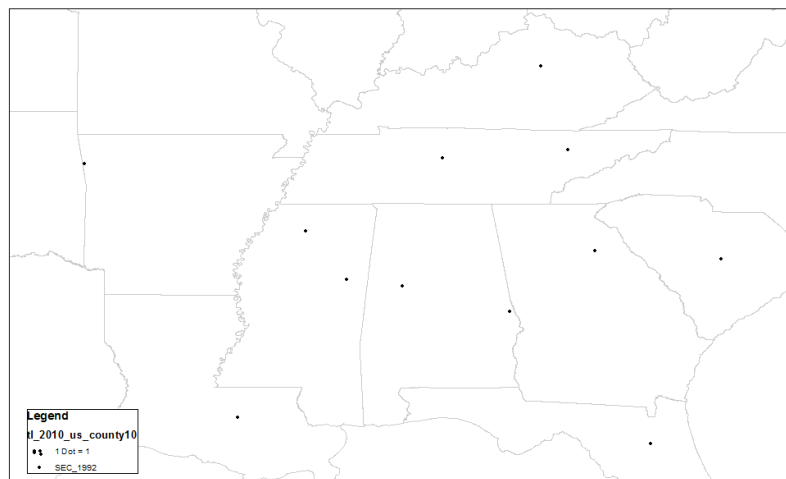


Figure 37: Southeastern Conference members- 1992.

Because of accessibility issues and inferior facilities, most Auburn games were still played on the road. Many fans traveled by train to watch the games and those who did not would still gather at the Auburn train depot to cheer the team as they departed to or arrived back from a game (Gumprecht 2003, Figure 38). Before radio broadcasts of college football games were common, one solution for the many fans that could not travel with the team to the game was to attend Langdon Hall on Saturdays, where twenty-five cent admission allowed one to sit in the theater and follow the game by telegraph (Schafer 2004).



Figure 38: Auburn's train depot was once a scene for frenzied football celebrations.

The few games played in Auburn during this time were against small schools such as Mercer and Stetson, neither of whom currently field a football team. Modern major football powers Clemson and Florida also played in Auburn during the early years, as they did not have the power and influence to refuse. This was not the case with established football powers such as Georgia Tech, Sewanee, and Tulane. After playing their fourth game in Auburn in 1904, Georgia Tech stopped coming to Auburn and would not return until 1970 (Doyle 1998, Gumprecht 2003). Each game during this period was played in Atlanta except for five games in the 1960s that were played in Birmingham, the agreed alternate home field of Auburn (Auburn University Athletics 2011).

Similar relationships existed with other major rivals, especially before Auburn had a large stadium. Games between Auburn University and the University of Georgia until 1958 were played primarily in Columbus, Georgia. Columbus was chosen as a site because it was viewed as neutral, was financially advantageous to playing in the smaller and more difficult to access towns of Auburn and Athens, and was the home of influential alumni from both schools who had an interest in having the game played there as it was one of the most important social events of the year (Scherer 1992). Games between Auburn and the University of Tennessee alternated between Knoxville and Birmingham until 1974 when they played at Auburn for the first time. The series between the University of Alabama and Auburn, which was suspended from 1908-1947 due to a bitter dispute involving the state government, school funding, class differences, cheating, dirty play, and mutual distaste for each other, was played annually at Birmingham's Legion Field after play resumed (Doyle 1998). The game was played in Auburn for the first time in 1989 despite the initial refusal by Alabama and heavy resistance by the City of

Birmingham, which would lose large revenue if the game were played elsewhere (Gumprecht 2003).

Efforts to build a stadium at Auburn started in the late 1920s. After President Spright Dowell's ouster at Auburn in 1927, which was largely a result of his perceived lack of support for football, newly appointed President Bradford Knapp began a drive to raise funds for the stadium (Doyle 1997, Doyle 1998, Cox 2001, Watterson 2002, Gumprecht 2003, Doyle 2004, Housel 2007). Delayed by the Depression, construction did not begin until 1937 (Gumprecht 2003). While waiting for the stadium to be completed, Auburn played many road games, including thirty straight from late 1936 until late 1939 when the new stadium hosted its first game. Games were played in such distant locations as San Francisco, Detroit, Philadelphia, Boston, and New York City, the two latter of which were played at famous sporting venues Fenway Park and the Polo Grounds, respectively. It was also during this time that Auburn became one of the few American teams to play in Cuba, tying Villanova in the Bacardi Bowl in Havana following the 1936 season. More games were played in Atlanta, Birmingham, Columbus, and Montgomery during the 1930s than in Auburn, and New Orleans equaled Auburn with ten total games for the decade (Figure 39). These years would be the height of Auburn's geographical mobility as home games have drastically increased in modern times and the few away games that are played each year are usually against conference opponents in much less distant locations (Figures 40-41).

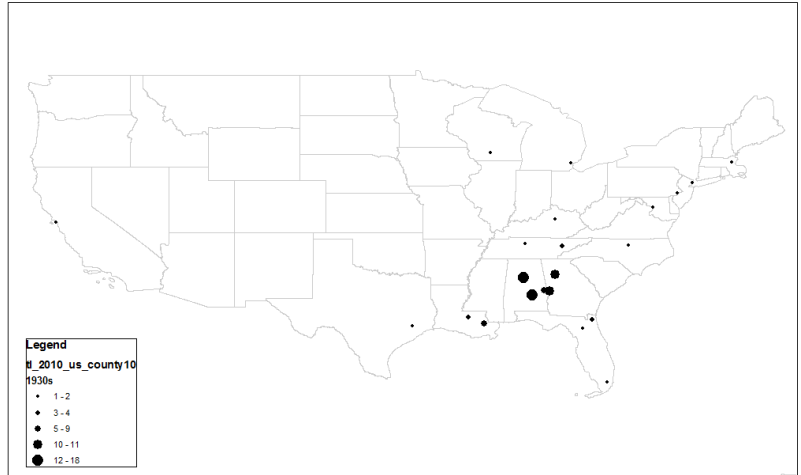


Figure 39: Frequency and location of Auburn game sites- 1930s.

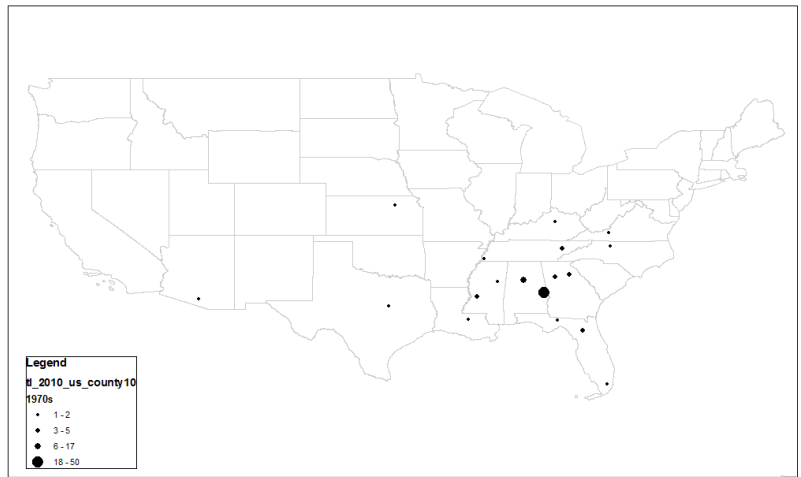


Figure 40: Frequency and location of Auburn game sites- 1970s.

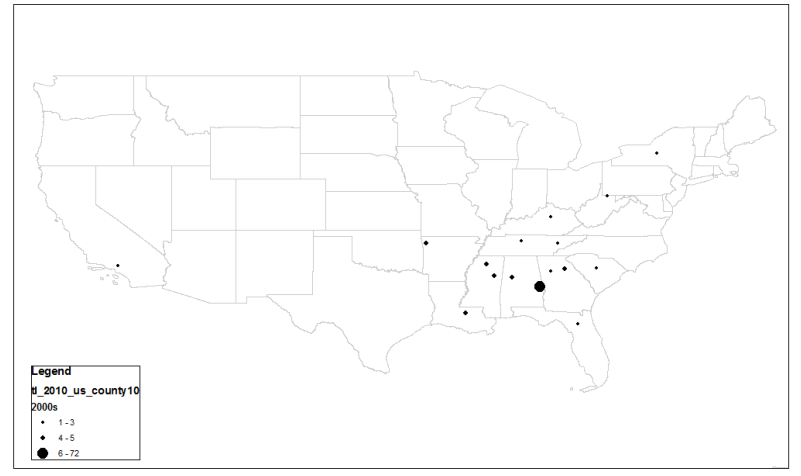


Figure 41: Frequency and location of Auburn game sites- 2000s.

The site chosen for the stadium was a former goat pasture that had been used by the veterinary school for hog cholera experiments. A creek, which ran between two hillsides, was diverted and covered with dirt, while concrete was poured onto the hills to build stands on (Schafer 2004, Figure 42). Funding troubles were solved by a loan from the Public Works Administration and the stadium was ready for the 1939 homecoming game against the University of Florida (Gumprecht 2003). The capacity of Auburn Stadium was initially 7,290 and grew to 11,790 with the addition of extra bleachers (Hemphill 2008). Temporary bleachers were installed for the first game to raise capacity to 15,000 and it was reported that 13,000 fans attended (Gumprecht 2003).



Figure 42: Land needed to be cleared and a stream filled in with dirt before construction could begin on Auburn Stadium. Circa 1937.

By the time Auburn Stadium was renamed Cliff Hare Stadium in 1949, its capacity had risen to 21,500. Still, home games were rare. It was during the tenure of Coach Ralph “Shug” Jordan (1951-1975) and athletic director Jeff Beard (1951-1972) that Auburn football would undergo the transformation from a road team to a home team. During Beard’s career at Auburn, he oversaw the expansion of the stadium which grew by 40,000 seats before he retired, and successfully negotiated with rivals Georgia,

Georgia Tech, and Tennessee, to begin playing in Auburn (Hollis 1988, Figures 43-44). Instrumental in the expansion of the stadium and the increase in home games were the major successes of Jordan and the post-war growth of the university. The GI Bill contributed to sharp increases in enrollment as soldiers returning from serving in World War II and the Korean War took advantage of free tuition (Gumprecht 2003, Hemphill 2008, Figure 45). Growing enrollment figures were mirrored by a rise in the city of Auburn's total population (Figure 45). To accommodate the growing desire for tickets, Cliff Hare Stadium continued to expand (Figure 44, 46).

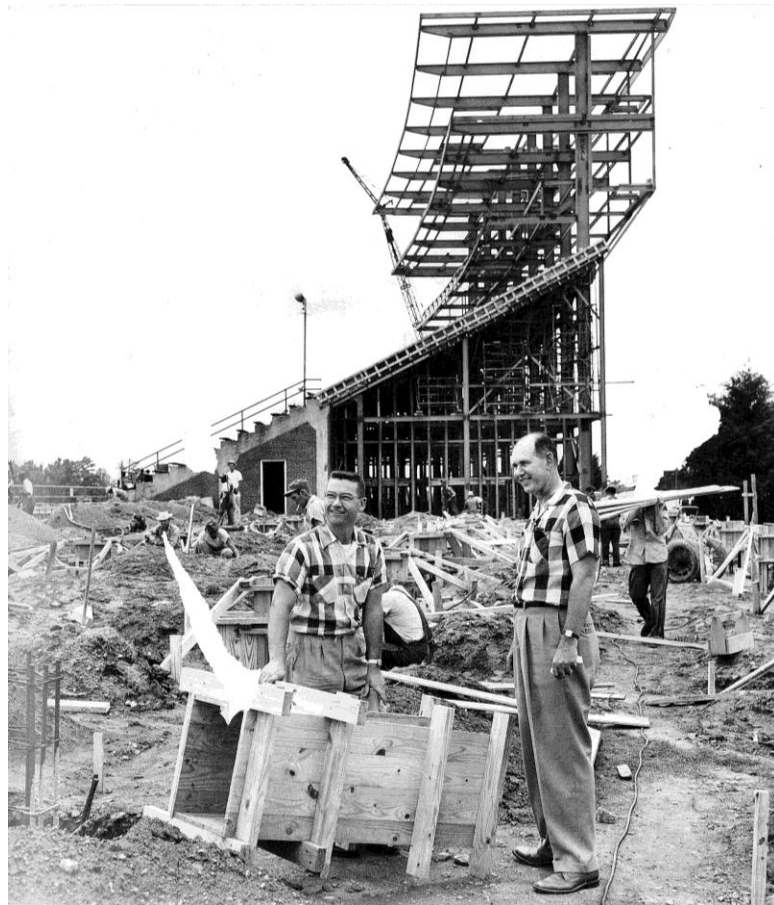


Figure 43: Auburn's stadium, along with the university and city, experienced dramatic growth over the mid-20th century. Former athletic director (1951-72) Jeff Beard, pictured at right, was largely responsible for overseeing the stadium growth and the transition of Auburn from a road to a home team.



Figure 44: Auburn Stadium becomes Jordan-Hare Stadium. Circa 1950 (top), 1970 (middle), 1987 (bottom).

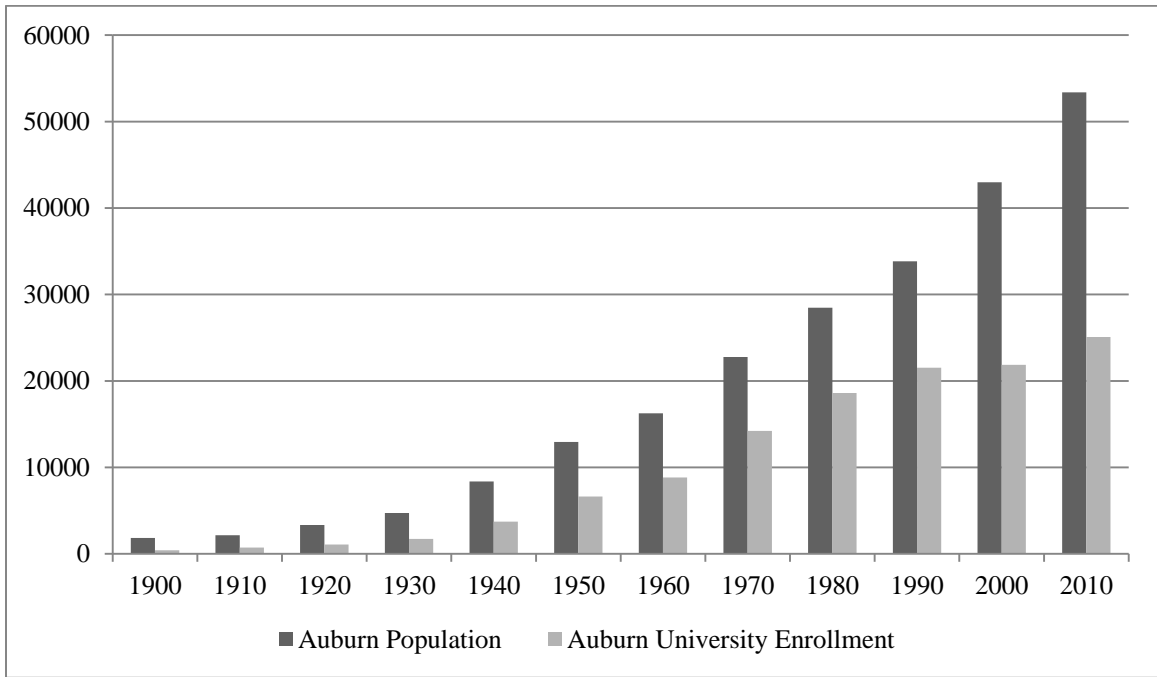


Figure 45: City of Auburn population and Auburn University enrollment historical growth.

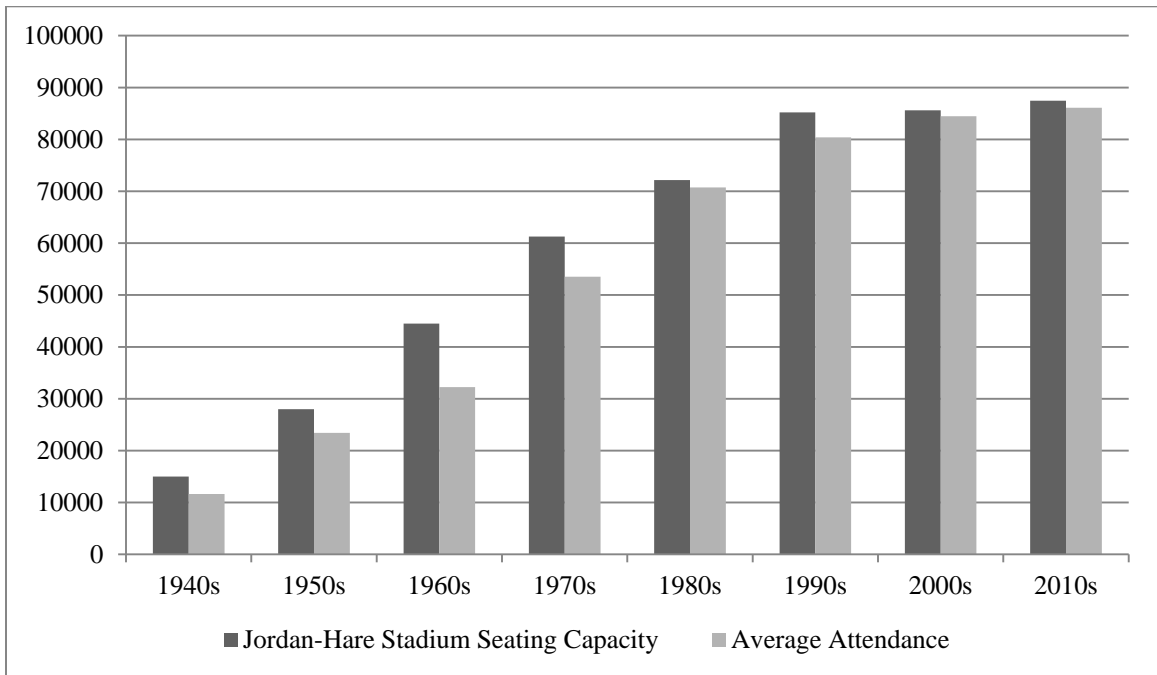


Figure 46: Auburn's historical stadium capacity and attendance rates.

In 1973, the stadium was renamed Jordan-Hare. During this decade, Auburn was hosting an average of five games per year, a significant increase from prior years (Figure 19). The modern Auburn era has witnessed continued but slower growth. By the time Alabama first visited Auburn in 1989, Jordan-Hare Stadium's capacity was over 85,000. Minor expansions have increased the capacity to its current figure of 87,451. The number of home games has likely grown to its limit, barring any future increases in the length of the NCAA regular season. During the last twenty-five years, there have been only four seasons that featured fewer than seven games at Auburn. Since the duration of Auburn's regular season was increased to twelve games in 2002, there have been four seasons with eight home games and none with fewer than seven (Auburn University Athletics 2011).

Economics of Auburn University Football and Impacts on Local Community

Football is the top financial earner among sports at Auburn University (Auburn University Athletics 2010) (see Figure 1 in Chapter 1). In 2009, Auburn football generated over three dollars for each dollar spent on it, joining men's basketball as the only sports that created a profit. Before Alabama finally came to play the Iron Bowl in Auburn for the first time in 1989, the city of Birmingham took legal action against both universities, attempting to permanently host the game that it claimed was responsible for an annual economic gain of \$17-\$20 million (Gumprecht 2003). A study on the economic impact of Auburn home football game weekends in Lee County was performed by Auburn University at Montgomery in 2009. This study found that average vending (including food, entertainment, retail, etc.) per visitor was \$150. Money spent on tickets

was not included. An additional \$150 per visitor per night was spent on lodging (Auburn/Opelika Tourism Bureau 2010).

Tigers Unlimited—the fund-raising arm of Auburn Athletics—is responsible for the distribution of season tickets. In order to secure season tickets, fans must make a contribution of \$600, \$400, or \$235, depending on the location of the seat. These contributions are separate from the actual cost of the ticket and only represent the opportunity to purchase tickets. Once the contribution has been made, the fan must still pay \$445 for regular season tickets. Club level seats require a \$2,600 contribution including the price of the ticket. Executive suites are acquired through a waiting list and pricing information was not available. Individual home game tickets in 2010 cost \$40 for non-conference games against Arkansas State University, the University of Louisiana at Monroe, and the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, and \$65 for all conference games and the game against Clemson University, who was considered to be Auburn’s major non-conference opponent that season (Tigers Unlimited 2010).

The previous figures do not account for the money that is spent outside of the stadium at the restaurants, shops, and hotels in the Auburn area. Some businesses would not survive if it were not for the eight home football weekends each year. Gumprecht (2003) discovered that J&M Bookstore did 50 percent of its annual sales on game days. A traveler describing his experiences passing through Auburn on a road trip expressed dismay at what he considered to be a lack of good bookstores for a college town, writing that the one bookstore he saw only sold textbooks and a “decidedly unlitrary assortment of sweatshirts, stuffed animals and other paraphernalia bearing the Auburn University seal” (Bryson 1989, 72).

The large crowds that come for games have influenced the planning and management of traffic by the city. During the early days when Auburn was less accessible by road, fans needed to arrive early and leave late to avoid the worst traffic. As roads became more congested with vehicles, traffic management plans were put in place. The portion of College Street extending south from downtown to Interstate-85 was widened after post-game traffic highlighted the insufficiencies of the existing infrastructure (Gumprecht 2003). Additionally, many main roads leading away from the stadium have been converted to one-ways immediately following the game to more quickly usher fans out to I-85 and Highway 280.

Television led to the increase of night games, which turned a day affair into a weekend affair as many fans had trouble making the late trip home on Saturday night (Gumprecht 2003). During the 1950's, four games were played on television (Hollis 1988). Television frequency has grown greatly since then. During the 1980's, Auburn averaged over four televised games each season (Hollis 1988). Today nearly every Auburn game is televised, at least regionally.

Tailgating—a “school-oriented culture fest” (Rooney and Pillsbury 1992, 62)—likely began in Auburn as a response to the lack of lodging and restaurants in the area (Gumprecht 2003). Fans set up tents, tables, chairs, grills, and television sets to picnic and socialize on campus before and after the games (Figure 47). Auburn has placed restrictions on tailgating in recent years by not allowing it until 4 p.m. on the evening before the game, when fans begin staking out their space. Parking was once a free-for-all, but regulations and barricades have attempted to confine it to certain areas. These measures have been taken due to a number of concerns that were heightened after the

Auburn-LSU game in 1996 that has come to be known as “The Barnburner”. During that game, the Auburn Sports Arena burned to the ground due to a tailgater’s grill being located too close to the building. Additionally, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 contributed to increased security and further restriction at many sporting events across the country. New game day plans have been instituted as a result.



Figure 47: Tailgaters enjoy friends and food circa 1980s.

In the open space between Parker Hall, the Student Center, Jordan-Hare Stadium, and the baseball parking garage—an area coined “Campus Green”—fans are now given the opportunity to purchase tailgating spots that come equipped with tents, tables, and chairs to provide a hassle-free experience. This began in 2009 and, while tailgating is still free in most areas, Auburn University and Tailgate Guys have teamed up to offer these 70 spots as an easier, yet more expensive, alternative to traditional tailgating. For the Varsity package, customers get a reserved location, one tent, five chairs, one table

with a table cloth, and full set up and tear down of their tailgate for \$300-\$500 per game, depending on the opponent, or, for a discount, they can purchase a season pass for \$1,775. For the All Auburn package, customers get a bigger tent, more chairs, more tables and table cloths, plus two coolers filled with ice. The All Auburn package costs \$750-\$1,250 per game, or a reduced rate of \$4,275 for the entire season. Parking and catering are also available at an additional cost (Goldberg 2009, Tailgate Guys 2010, Figure 48).



Figure 48: “Stress-free” tailgating setups offered by Tailgate Guys.

The success of Auburn football has contributed to the growth of the university. Most sharp enrollment increases at Auburn have followed seasons in which Auburn was highly ranked (Gumprecht 2003). Research by Murphy and Trandel (1994) shows that colleges with more successful athletic programs are likely to have a higher number of

applicants than other schools and are, therefore, able to be more selective in which students they accept.

A keyword search on the Yellow Pages website found that several businesses in the Auburn area used words and slogans associated with Auburn athletics (Yellow Pages 2011). Over fifty businesses in the Auburn area used the word “tiger” in their names. Three business names contained the phrase “war eagle” and over twenty-five more included the word “eagle”. Three business names contained the phrase “big blue”. One business—17-16—refers to the score of a famous victory against Alabama in 1972.

Summary

In the 119 years since George Petrie first introduced football to the Auburn University campus, football has come to be one of the most defining features of Auburn University’s campus and the city of Auburn. Football games at Jordan-Hare Stadium bring with them increased tourism and spending in the area. Improvements to Auburn’s infrastructure and increasing connectivity to other communities in the region have allowed the Auburn Tigers to transition from a team that played most games on the road to a team that plays most of their games at home. The positive impact of Auburn University football is felt, not only by the team and fans, but by Auburn University as a whole, the city of Auburn, and surrounding communities in the region.

Chapter 6: Spatial Characteristics of Auburn’s Football Fan Region

Spatial data about Auburn’s season ticket holders, booster clubs, radio network coverage, alumni and student residences, and Google internet searches for “Auburn football” were used to map these aspects of Auburn’s football fan region. Previous research in sports region mapping by Lehman (1940), Rooney (1969, 1986, 1992), Shelley and Cartin (1984), Rosemann and Shelley (1988), and Silver (2011) provided the methodological framework that I utilized to map the distribution of Auburn football fans.

Season Ticket Holders

Of Auburn’s 10,427 season ticket holders in 2010, over 75 percent reside in Alabama, and another 14 percent live in Georgia (Table 7, Figure 49-50). Forty-four states are represented, as are the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Though the fan region is most dense in Alabama, Georgia, and other Southern states, such as Florida, Tennessee, and Texas (the five of which account for 95 percent of season ticket holders), fans are scattered across most of the United States.

Table 7: Top 10 States with most Auburn football season ticket holders.

	State	Tickets	Percent of total
1.	Alabama	7,865	75.4
2.	Georgia	1,462	14.0
3.	Florida	314	3.0
4.	Tennessee	195	1.9
5.	Texas	84	0.8
6.	North Carolina	62	0.6
7.	Mississippi	53	0.5
7.	South Carolina	53	0.5
9.	California	46	0.4
10.	Virginia	33	0.3

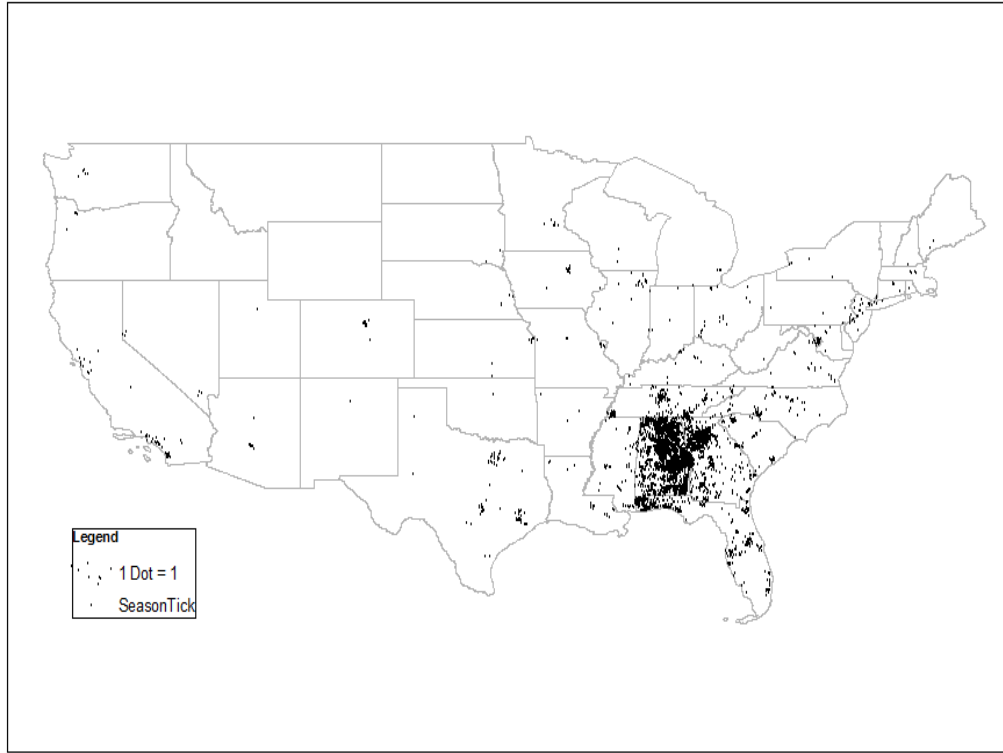


Figure 49: Residential locations of 2010 Auburn football season ticket holders by zip code.

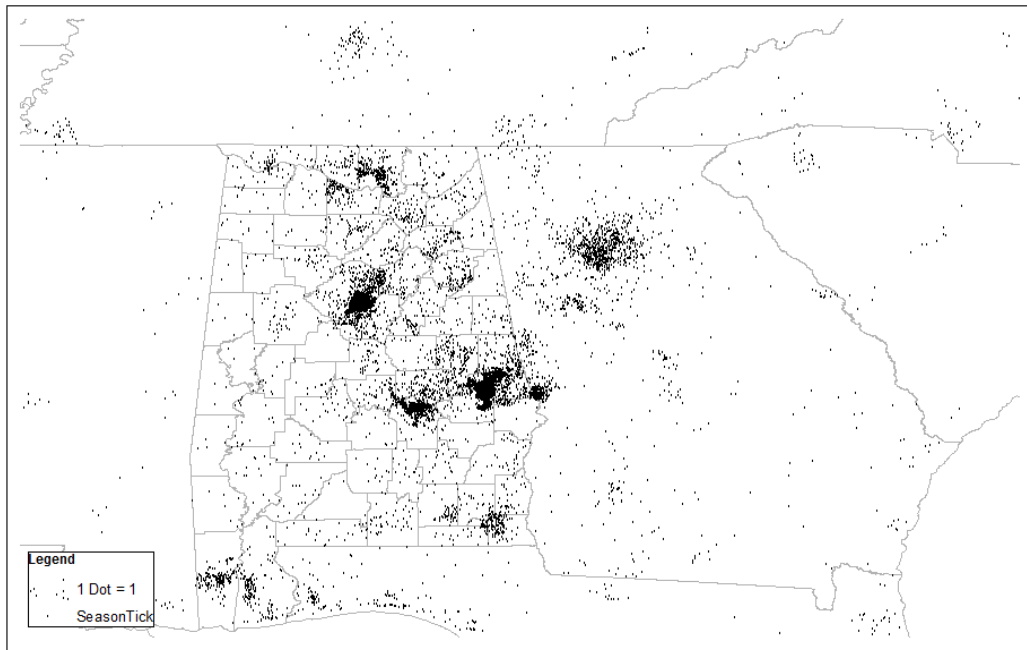


Figure 50: Residential locations of 2010 Auburn football season ticket holders by zip code.

Similar findings were earlier reported by Sneed (2006) in a study of 2005 Auburn season ticket holders, with the top four states unchanged but with Mississippi holding the fifth spot that has since been occupied by Texas. Alabama has slightly increased its share of ticket holders from 71 percent in 2005 to 75 percent in 2010, while Georgia and Florida have decreased from 18 percent and 4 percent in 2005, respectively, to 14 percent and 3 percent in 2010 (Sneed 2006). Only six states—Alaska, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming—did not have season ticket holders, though distant Hawaii and even the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico did. The non-southern states with the highest number of ticket holders were California and Illinois, respectively, with most clustered around cities such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Chicago (Table 8, Figure 49).

Table 8: Top 10 States outside of the South with most Auburn season ticket holders.

	State	Tickets	Percent of total
1.	California	46	0.44
2.	Illinois	22	0.21
3.	Ohio	19	0.18
4.	Colorado	17	0.16
5.	New Jersey	16	0.15
6.	Iowa	14	0.13
7.	New York	13	0.12
8.	Missouri	12	0.12
9.	Maryland	9	0.09
10.	Arizona	8	0.08

At the county level, heavily populated areas in Alabama and Georgia were well represented, as well as counties with close proximity to Auburn (Table 9, Figure 50). Over fifty percent of ticket holders came from the counties containing the cities of Auburn, Birmingham, Montgomery, and Huntsville, AL and Atlanta, GA.

Table 9: Top 15 Counties with most Auburn season ticket holders.

	County	Tickets	Percent of total
1.	Lee, AL	2,583	24.8
2.	Jefferson, AL	984	9.4
3.	Shelby, AL	642	6.2
4.	Montgomery, AL	619	5.9
5.	Madison, AL	305	2.9
6.	Fulton, GA	221	2.1
7.	Elmore, AL	183	1.8
8.	Cobb, GA	176	1.7
9.	Mobile, AL	171	1.6
10.	Tallapoosa, AL	168	1.6
11.	Houston, AL	161	1.5
12.	Baldwin, AL	151	1.4
13.	Muscogee, GA	150	1.4
14.	Chambers, AL	145	1.4
15.	Gwinnett, GA	113	1.1

Among counties with the highest number of tickets sold per 10,000 residents, a distance-decay pattern appears to emerge at the local scale with bordering Chambers, Macon, and Tallapoosa Counties to the north and west of Lee County and Auburn providing the highest numbers aside from Lee (Table 10, Figure 51). Harris County, Georgia borders Lee County to the east and also placed among the leaders, the only non-Alabama county to do so. Outside of the area immediately surrounding Lee County, the pattern of distance-decay ceases to exist, and, rather becomes one where large clusters of fans are found in the urban centers located in close proximity to Auburn on Interstate-85 and US Highway 280. The decrease in fan support across the Georgia line may be influenced by the increased difficulty of attending out-of-state schools. Rosemann and Shelley (1988) found that state borders influenced the shape and extent of fan regions by acting as barriers due to this difficulty. The presence of other teams in the area and their proximity to each other can influence the extent of a fan region (Rooney 1974). Although Auburn University is closer to the Georgia counties bordering Lee County than

the University of Georgia and Georgia Tech, the latter schools may still hold a strong influence on fans because of their greater institutional accessibility to Georgia residents.

Table 10: Top 15 Counties with most Auburn season ticket holders per 10,000 residents.

		Total Population	Tickets	Tickets per 10,000 residents
1.	Lee, AL	140,247	2,583	184
2.	Chambers, AL	34,215	145	42
3.	Tallapoosa, AL	41,616	168	40
4.	Macon, AL	21,452	73	34
5.	Shelby, AL	195,085	642	33
6.	Montgomery, AL	229,363	619	27
7.	Henry, AL	17,302	43	25
8.	Elmore, AL	79,303	183	23
9.	Coosa, AL	11,539	22	19
10.	Randolph, AL	22,913	37	16
11.	Houston, AL	101,547	161	16
12.	Jefferson, AL	658,466	984	15
13.	Harris, GA	32,024	47	15
14.	Covington, AL	37,365	51	14
15.	Barbour, AL	27,457	36	13

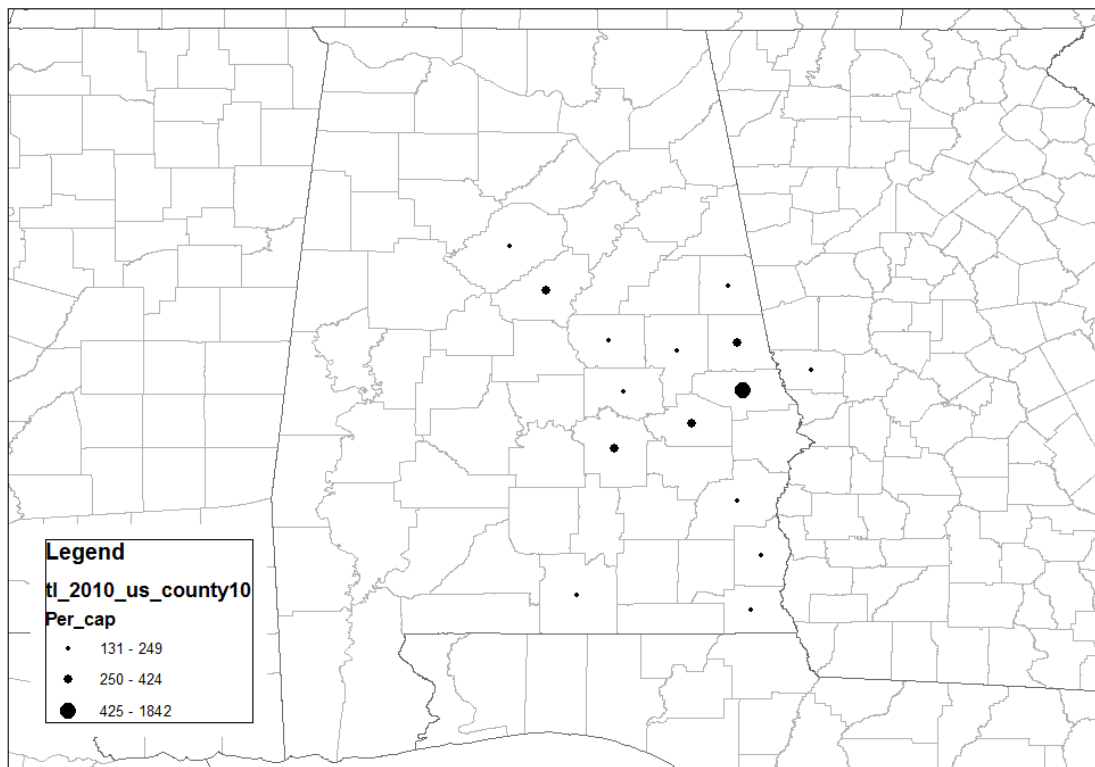


Figure 51: County leaders for season ticket holders per 10,000 residents.

Data for season ticket holders in different Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) show Auburn-Opelika, Birmingham, and Atlanta as leaders, respectively (Table 11). This differs from Sneed's (2006) findings that residents of Birmingham bought a greater number of 2005 season tickets than Auburn-Opelika. Half of the top twenty ticket-holding MSAs are located in Alabama, with the remainder located in other Southern states. Outside of the South, the leading MSAs—led by Washington, D. C., Chicago, and Los Angeles, respectively—are home to very large population centers (Table 12). All leading MSAs outside of the South have populations of over 2,000,000 except for Waterloo-Cedar Falls, IA, which has slightly over 100,000 residents, perhaps an indication that a high number of Auburn alumni live in that area. Overall leaders of tickets purchased per 10,000 residents were level were led by Auburn-Opelika, with nine of the top ten coming from Alabama and the other coming from the state border area at Columbus, GA, whose MSA contains Russell County, AL and the majority of Phenix City, AL (Table 13).

Table 11: Top 20 MSAs with most Auburn season ticket holders.

	MSA	Tickets	Percent of total
1.	Auburn-Opelika, AL	2,583	24.8
2.	Birmingham-Hoover, AL	1,798	17.2
3.	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, GA	914	8.8
4.	Montgomery, AL	881	8.4
5.	Huntsville, AL	355	3.4
6.	Columbus, GA-AL	263	2.5
7.	Dothan, AL	223	2.1
8.	Mobile, AL	171	1.6
9.	Decatur, AL	113	1.1
10.	Anniston-Oxford, AL	75	0.7
11.	Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro-Franklin, TN	74	0.7
12.	Florence-Muscle Shoals, AL	71	0.7
13.	Pensacola-Ferry Pass-Brent, FL	68	0.7
14.	Tuscaloosa, AL	61	0.6
15.	Chattanooga, TN-GA	49	0.5
16.	Crestview-Fort Walton Beach-Destin, FL	32	0.3
17.	Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	31	0.3
18.	Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown, TX	30	0.3
18.	Memphis, TN-MS-AR	30	0.3
18.	Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL	30	0.3

Table 12: Top 10 MSAs outside of the South with most Auburn season ticket holders.

	MSA	Tickets	Percent of total
1.	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	26	0.25
2.	Chicago-Joliet-Naperville, IL-IN-WI	18	0.17
2.	Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Anna, CA	18	0.17
4.	Denver-Aurora-Broomfield, CO	16	0.15
4.	New York City-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-PA	16	0.15
6.	Waterloo-Cedar Falls, IA	13	0.12
7.	San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos, CA	12	0.12
8.	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	10	0.10
9.	St. Louis, MO-IL	8	0.08
10.	Kansas City, MO-KS	7	0.07
10.	Phoenix-Mesa-Glendale, AZ	7	0.07

Table 13: Top 10 MSAs with most Auburn season ticket holders per 10,000 residents.

	MSA	Total Population	Tickets	Tickets per 10,000 residents
1.	Auburn-Opelika, AL	140,247	2,583	184
2.	Montgomery, AL	374,536	881	24
3.	Birmingham-Hoover, AL	1,128,047	1,798	16
4.	Dothan, AL	145,639	223	15
5.	Columbus, GA-AL	294,865	263	9
6.	Huntsville, AL	417,593	355	9
7.	Decatur, AL	153,829	113	7
8.	Anniston-Oxford, AL	118,572	75	6
9.	Florence-Muscle Shoals, AL	147,137	71	5
10.	Mobile, AL	412,992	171	4

Booster Clubs

Auburn University booster clubs are located in 23 states across the country plus the District of Columbia, with their highest density and group membership totals located in Alabama and the South (Table 14, Figure 52). There are 98 active clubs with a total membership of 36,122 (Auburn Alumni Association 2011). Alabama is home to 37 clubs with 21,893 members. Georgia has 15 clubs with 6,513 members. Florida has 9 clubs with 2,942 members. The rest of the club members (4,774) are spread among the remaining 37 clubs. The purpose of these clubs is to promote or “boost” their school and team. Club activities may include fundraising and event planning. Most Auburn booster club members are alumni (Auburn Alumni Association 2011). Attendance at an institution is a strong indicator of whether one will become a fan or not (Edwards 1973). The largest Auburn booster clubs are located in Birmingham, Atlanta, and Lee County, respectively. Washington, D. C.’s metro area contributed the largest number of boosters among areas outside the South, followed by the metro areas of New York City and San Francisco, respectively (Table 15). The locations and representative sizes of Auburn’s booster clubs closely resemble the extent of Auburn’s season ticket holders and their areas of density (Figures 49-50, 52).

Table 14: Top 20 Auburn University booster clubs with highest membership.

	Booster Club	Members	Percent of total
1.	Greater Birmingham	5,726	15.9
2.	Atlanta, GA	3,978	11.0
3.	Lee County	3,437	9.5
4.	Huntsville-Madison County	1,990	5.5
5.	Montgomery County	1,514	4.2
6.	Baldwin County	950	2.6
7.	North Alabama (Lawrence/Limestone/Morgan Cos.)	897	2.5
8.	Mobile County	881	2.4
9.	Metro Washington, D. C.	752	2.1
10.	Columbus, GA-Phenix City, AL	713	2.0
11.	Greater Nashville, TN	701	1.9
12.	Wiregrass (Geneva/Houston Cos.)	677	1.9
13.	Emerald Coast (Okaloosa Co., FL)	651	1.8
14.	West Florida (Pensacola area)	504	1.4
15.	TCC (Tallapoosa/Clay/Coosa Cos.) Lake Martin	483	1.3
16.	Dallas-Fort Worth, TX	442	1.2
17.	Greater Houston, TX	441	1.2
18.	Elmore County	420	1.2
19.	Coweta/Fayette Cos., GA	398	1.1
20.	Jacksonville, FL	387	1.1

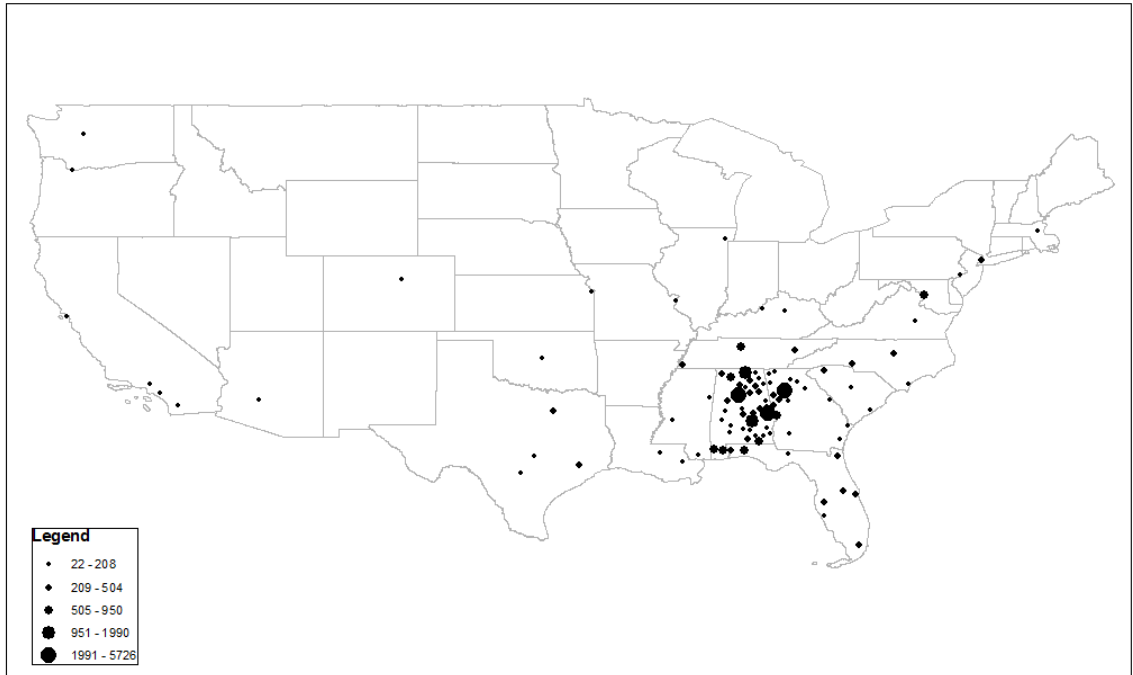


Figure 52: Auburn booster clubs by location and membership size.

Table 15: Top 10 Auburn booster clubs outside of the South with highest membership.

	Booster Club	Members	Percent of total
1.	Metro Washington, D. C.	752	2.08
2.	Metro New York	230	0.64
3.	Northern California (San Francisco Bay area)	163	0.45
4.	Rocky Mountains (Denver, CO area)	140	0.39
5.	Los Angeles, CA	137	0.38
6.	St. Louis, MO	106	0.29
7.	Chicago, IL area	100	0.28
8.	Seattle, WA area	93	0.26
9.	Philadelphia, PA	88	0.24
10.	Phoenix, AZ metro	81	0.22

Auburn Radio Network

Auburn’s radio network coverage map shows characteristics of a state saturation network (Rosemann and Shelley 1988, Figure 43). All of Alabama is covered, as are all of Alabama’s bordering counties in other states except for four counties in eastern Mississippi. Not surprisingly, these four counties are very close to Tuscaloosa, which likely holds a stronger football influence over those counties than Auburn. Aside from the closely bordering counties in Alabama’s bordering states, there is also coverage for most of Florida’s panhandle, and for the western portion of Georgia, excluding Atlanta. Atlanta is a notable absence from the map because of the high number of Auburn fans and students that live there. However, Atlanta’s population is so large that this seemingly large group of Auburn fans is actually very small compared with the entire population of metropolitan Atlanta (Cole 2011). Therefore, Auburn football coverage is absent from Atlanta radio, which instead features whatever programming can attract the most listeners and generate the highest advertising revenue (Cole 2011). The Golden Isles area of southeast Georgia around Brunswick is part of a radio coverage area that is detached from the main coverage space. Though the area is home to an Auburn booster club of 70 members, there are less than 10 season ticket holders, and it is surprising that the amount

of Auburn support is high enough here to warrant local radio coverage of Auburn games. The rest of Auburn’s radio coverage consists of areas in upstate South Carolina and southwest Mississippi that feature a regional “game of the week”. When Auburn is playing in a featured game, the host stations may broadcast a radio feed from the Auburn Network.

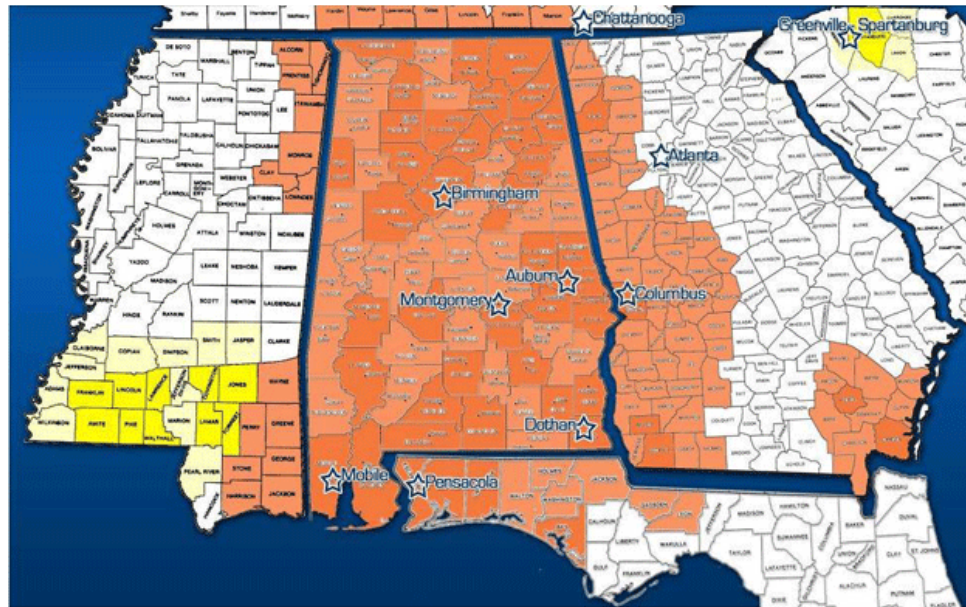


Figure 53: Auburn football radio coverage map. Orange indicates weekly Auburn Network coverage. Stations are located in the counties with darker orange. The yellow areas occasionally get Auburn Network coverage, rotating a weekly regional game of the week.

Alumni and Current Students

Because of the relationship between institution attendance and fandom (Edwards 1973), spatial data on the current residences of alumni and the former residences of current undergraduates were gathered to see if there were any significant differences between Auburn’s fan region and Auburn’s student region. Undergraduates were examined instead of other students because graduate students and professionals are likely to have attended another school that they feel a closer association. For the sake of the

mapping comparisons with season tickets, booster clubs, radio coverage, and Google searches, I treated all undergraduates as if they were Auburn fans. There were strong spatial similarities between the alumni and undergraduates (Tables 16-17). Auburn’s current living and addressable alumni are concentrated in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida, with other Southern states rounding out the leaders (Auburn Alumni Association 2011, Table 16). Outside of the South, California is home to the most Auburn alumni (Table 16). The top home states of current Auburn undergraduates are similar to those of alumni at the state level (Tables 16-17). The top five states for undergraduates remain unchanged from the alumni rankings, though a higher percentage of undergraduates came from Alabama than alumni who currently reside in Alabama (Auburn University Institutional Research and Assessment 2010, Tables 16-17). Among undergraduates from Alabama, the counties producing the highest number are the highly populated counties Jefferson, Lee, Madison, Shelby, and Montgomery, respectively (Table 18). Lee and Shelby are again featured among the leaders for Auburn undergraduates as a percentage of their age 20-24 population, joined by Tallapoosa, Randolph, and Chambers, counties with close proximity to Auburn (Table 18).

Table 16: States with most living addressable Auburn alumni.

State	Number of alumni	Percent of total
1. Alabama	79,905	47.1
2. Georgia	27,772	16.4
3. Florida	13,781	8.1
4. Tennessee	7,438	4.4
5. Texas	5,374	3.2
6. North Carolina	4,438	2.6
7. Virginia	3,526	2.1
8. South Carolina	2,925	1.7
9. California	2,773	1.6
10. Mississippi	1,934	1.1

Table 17: Home states with most Auburn undergraduates for Fall 2011 semester.

State	Undergraduates	Percent of total undergraduates
1. Alabama	12,819	63.8
2. Georgia	2,835	14.1
3. Florida	1,148	5.7
4. Tennessee	639	3.2
5. Texas	512	2.5
6. Virginia	252	1.3
7. North Carolina	245	1.2
8. South Carolina	158	0.8
9. Illinois	141	0.7
10. Maryland	122	0.6

Table 18: Home Alabama counties with most Auburn undergraduates for Fall 2011 semester, and counties with highest number of Auburn undergraduates as a percentage of 20-24 age group population.

County	Undergraduates	County	Percent of age 20-24 population
1. Jefferson	1,967	1. Shelby	9.9
2. Lee	1,510	2. Tallapoosa	9.4
3. Madison	1,356	3. Randolph	9.2
4. Shelby	1,061	4. Chambers	7.3
5. Montgomery	760	5. Lee	7.2
6. Mobile	648	6. Autauga	6.8
7. Baldwin	541	7. Henry	6.7
8. Houston	362	8. Coosa	6.1
9. Morgan	286	9. Houston	6.0
10. Elmore	230	10. Baldwin	5.7

Google Search Frequencies

Leading locations for Google keyword search frequencies of “Auburn football” were greatest in the Southern states, with Alabama and Georgia in the lead (Table 19). Locations were assigned a “search volume index” value on a scale of 1-100 relative to the number of specific keyword searches within the overall number of searches. The time range for searches was 2004-November 2011. Among metro areas (which in this case are television market areas, rather than MSAs), Columbus, GA (includes Auburn) leads, followed by several Alabama markets (Table 19, Figure 54). At the city level, Auburn and other Alabama cities lead a list that also includes Pensacola, FL; Atlanta, GA; and Nashville, TN (Table 19, Figure 55). Within Alabama, leading cities for Google search

frequencies exhibit patterns very similar to those of the ticket and booster club maps (Figure 56). Silver (2011) used Google search frequencies to show the spatial popularity of college football in the United States, finding that Alabama and Birmingham led state and metro regions, respectively. Team specific keyword searches provide insight into individual fan bases, rather than general college football fans.

Table 19: Google search leaders for “Auburn football”.

State	Volume	Metro	Volume	City	Volume
1. Alabama	100	1. Columbus, GA	100	1. Auburn	100
2. Georgia	14	2. Montgomery	74	2. Montgomery	36
3. Mississippi	8	3. Dothan	69	3. Leeds	34
4. Tennessee	7	4. Birmingham	67	4. Dothan	33
5. South Carolina	6	5. Huntsville	60	5. Birmingham	26
6. Louisiana	5	6. Mobile	28	6. Mobile	18
7. Arkansas	5	7. Panama City, FL	15	7. Huntsville	18
8. Florida	4	8. Atlanta, GA	11	8. Pensacola, FL	5
9. Missouri	3	9. Chattanooga, TN	9	9. Atlanta, GA	5
10. West Virginia	3	10. Macon, GA	7	10. Nashville, TN	3

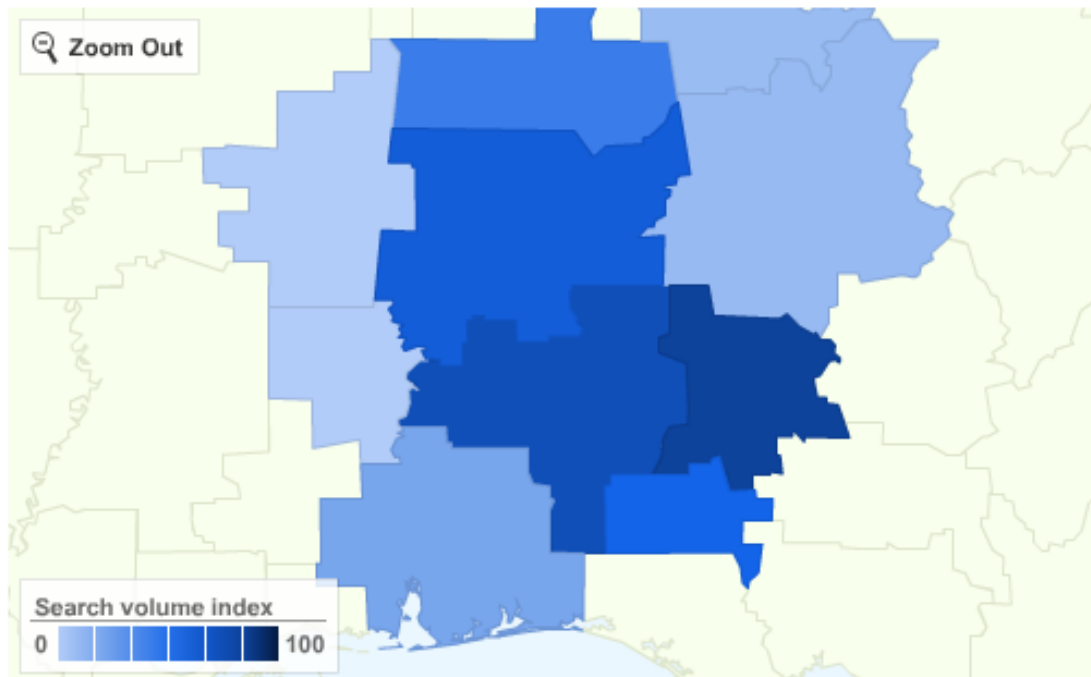


Figure 54: Google search frequency leaders for “Auburn football” by metro area.

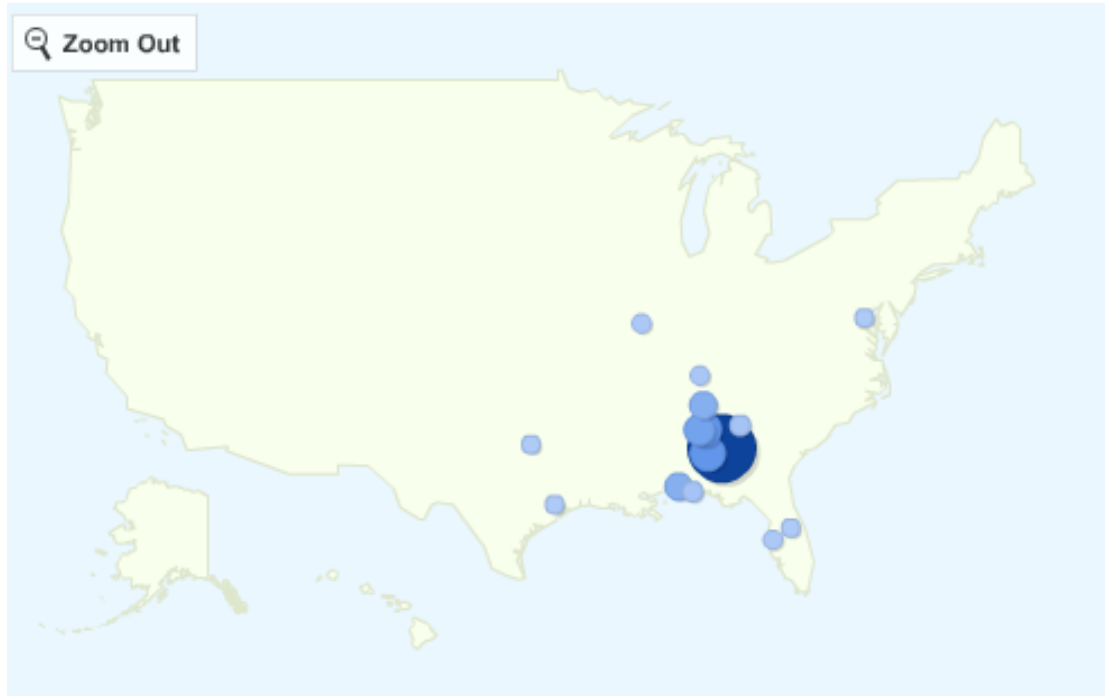


Figure 55: Google search frequency leaders for “Auburn football” by city.

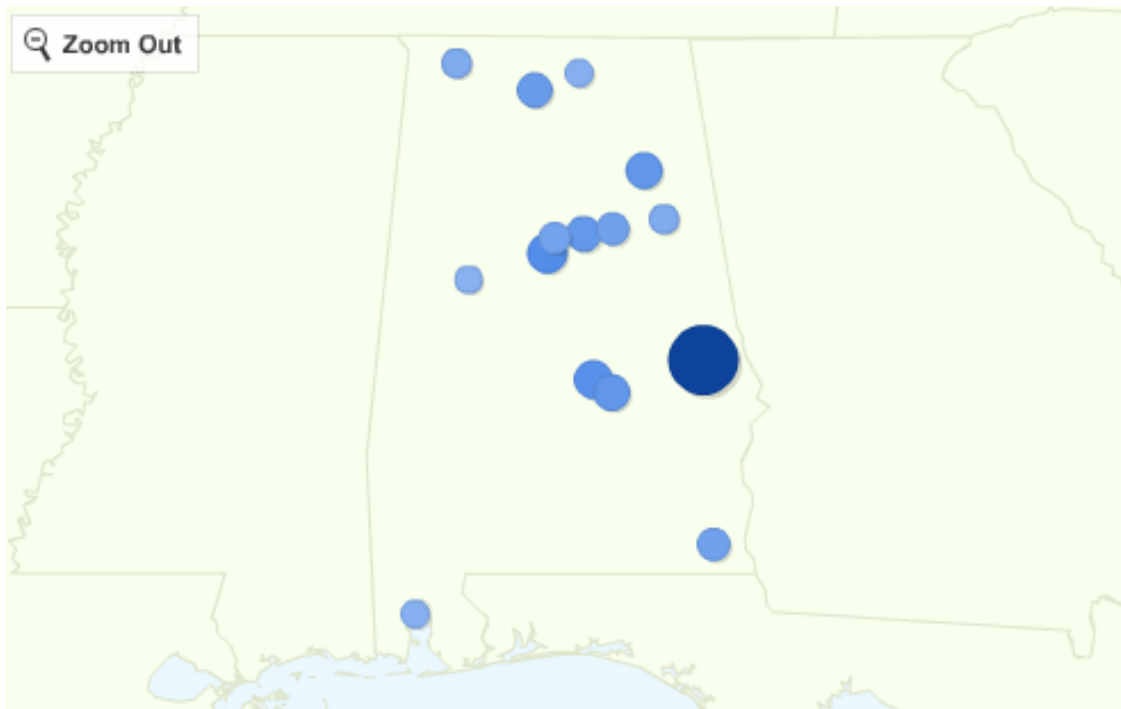


Figure 56: Google search frequency leaders for “Auburn football” by Alabama city.

Summary of Auburn Fan Region

The top five states for 2010 season ticket holders—Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, and Texas, respectively—are also the top five states for total booster club membership, Auburn alumni, and 2011 undergraduates. Of the 10,427 ticket holders, 7,865 come from Alabama, 1,462 come from Georgia, 314 come from Florida, 195 come from Tennessee, and 84 come from Texas. The remainder came from 39 other states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Of the 98 booster clubs, which are located in 23 states plus the District of Columbia, 37 are located in Alabama. The total booster club membership of 36,122 is mostly made up of Alabama members who number 21,893. At the county level, the same five that lead for season ticket holders—Lee, Jefferson, Shelby, Montgomery, and Madison—also comprise the top five for Auburn undergraduates by Alabama county.

Auburn's fan base is far-reaching, but its core area is located in Alabama and west Georgia, primarily between the cities of Atlanta, Columbus, Dothan, Montgomery, Birmingham, and Huntsville. The MSAs of these cities and Auburn comprise the leading MSAs in season ticket holders. Over two-thirds of Auburn season ticket holders come from these areas. All except Atlanta appear again as leaders for tickets per 10,000 residents. Shelley and Cartin (1984) would likely categorize Auburn as a team with strong local support and consistent minor support throughout the region. Outside of the strong support in the core area, minor support spreads throughout the Eastern United States for both the ticket holders and booster clubs.

Chapter 7: Spatial and Demographic Characteristics of Auburn Football Fans

Fans surveyed (see Appendix A for a copy of the survey form) came from fifteen states—mostly located in the South—with the vast majority coming from Alabama (61%) and Georgia (24%), followed by Florida (5%) (Figure 57, Appendix B). There were 227 participants. The most distant states represented were Colorado, New Jersey, and New York. Lee County residents accounted for 23.5 percent of those surveyed, more than all counties with Jefferson (8.5%), Fulton, GA (4.7%), Madison (4.2%), Shelby (4.2%), Montgomery (3.8%), and Cobb, GA (3.8%) rounding out the leaders. Questions focused on spatial measures such as home state and county, distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium, and residential land type, as well as demographic measures such as gender, age, race/ethnicity, and marital status. Additional questions sought to gain a deeper understanding of fans' relationship with Auburn University and its football team and factors that influenced them to be fans. The vast majority of fans surveyed were white (88%) with African-Americans accounting for 7 percent, Hispanics for 2 percent, and Asians for 1 percent. One fan was a Native American, one was Hawaiian, one was Irish, and one described himself as a mix of Asian, Hispanic, and White. Because of the general lack of racial and ethnic variation in the participant group as a whole, this survey question was not given further analysis.

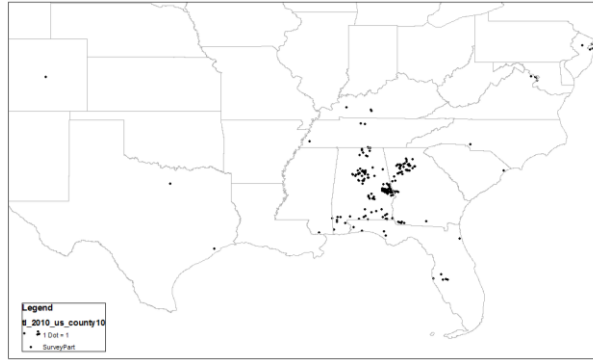


Figure 57: Residential locations of all Auburn fans surveyed.

Table 20: Spatial and demographic characteristics of fans surveyed.

	%
Living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium	
<5 miles	23
6-100 miles	26
100+ miles	51
Residential land type	
Rural	29
Urban	71
Gender	
Male	56
Female	44
Age	
19-24	29
25-44	52
45-64	16
65+	4
Marital status	
Single	57
Married	41
Separated/Divorced	2
Widowed	<1

Distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium

About half of the fans surveyed lived within 100 miles of Jordan-Hare Stadium (Table 20, Figure 58). Fans living within 5 miles of the stadium were generally younger, single, and were the most likely to have personally attended Auburn (Table 21). The likelihood of fans to attend all home games decreased with distance from Auburn (Table 21). More distant fans were less likely to have a personal or family connection to Auburn University (Table 21). The likelihood of fans to own an Auburn University license plate

increased with distance from Auburn (Table 21). The importance of social interaction as a reason for game attendance decreased with distance (Table 21).

Table 21: Selected responses for living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium

	<5 mi.	6-100 mi.	100+ mi.
Home games regularly attended	%	%	%
None	9	7	11
Some	42	49	63
All	49	44	26
Away games regularly attended			
None	55	39	54
Some	36	59	45
All	9	2	1
Residential land type			
Rural	28	39	23
Urban	72	61	77
Gender			
Male	72	54	50
Female	28	46	50
Age			
19-24	47	25	22
25-44	38	54	57
45-64	13	17	17
65+	2	3	4
Marital status			
Single	75	49	52
Married	24	47	45
Separated/Divorced	0	4	3
Widowed	2	0	0
Relationship with Auburn University			
Fan attended	88	65	66
Fan did not attend	12	35	34
Family member attended	75	76	63
Family did not attend	25	24	37
Both fan and family attended	65	51	44
Fan attended/family did not	24	15	22
Fan did not attend/family did	10	25	19
Neither fan nor family attended	2	9	15
Importance of being an Auburn Tiger scale of 1-10			
Average response	8.7	8.9	8.9
Owns Auburn University vanity license plate			
Yes	24	33	37
No	76	67	63
Years spent tailgating at Auburn games			
0-10	55	69	54
10+	45	32	46
Single most important reason for attending game			
See the game	39	37	44
Social interaction with family/friends	43	41	36
Tailgating atmosphere	11	19	18
Other	7	4	3

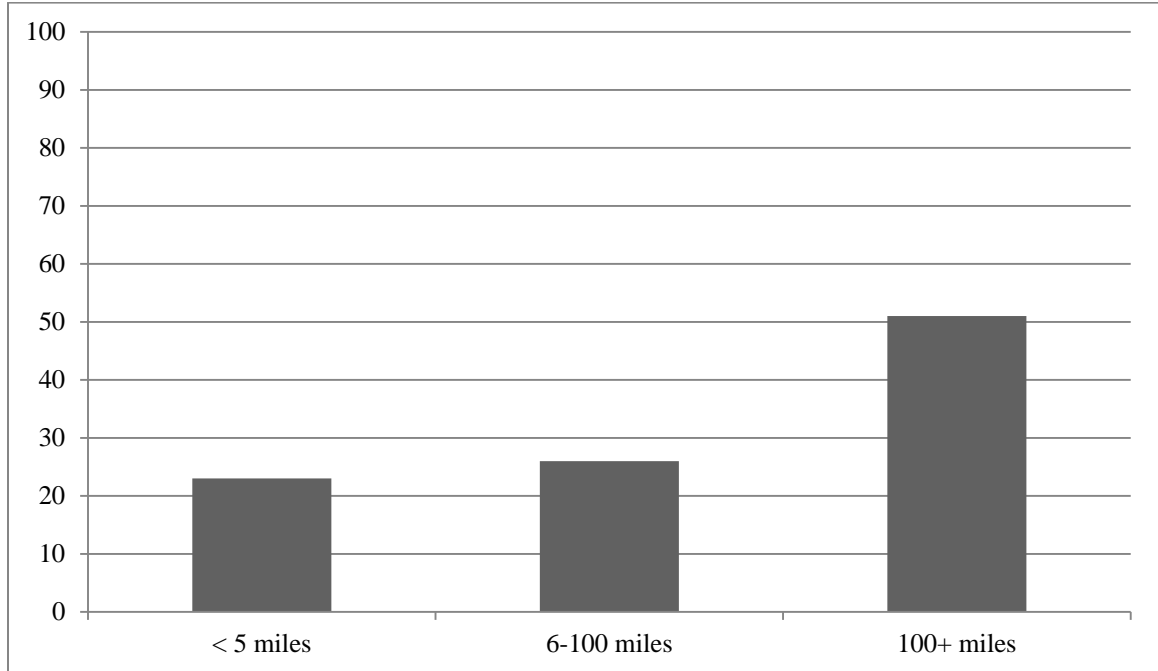


Figure 58: Living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium

Rural / Urban

More fans lived in urban areas than rural (71% vs. 29%) (Table 20, Figure 59). Fans from rural areas were generally younger than those from urban areas and were slightly more likely to be single (59% vs. 55%) (Table 22). The likelihood of having a personal or family connection to Auburn University was roughly equal. Fans from rural areas were more likely than urban fans to attend all home games (43% vs. 33%) while away game attendance was similar (Table 22). Fans from rural areas considered seeing the game to be more important than social interaction (49% vs. 30%), while the opposite was true for urban fans (37% vs. 42%) (Table 22).

Table 22: Selected responses for rural and urban residents

	Rural	Urban
Home games regularly attended	%	%
None	8	10
Some	49	57
All	43	33
Away games regularly attended		
None	48	51
Some	49	46
All	3	3
Living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium		
< 5 miles	23	23
6-100 miles	35	22
100+ miles	42	54
Gender		
Male	58	55
Female	42	45
Age		
19-24	42	22
25-44	37	58
45-64	18	16
65 and over	3	4
Marital status		
Single	59	55
Married	40	42
Separated/Divorced	2	3
Widow(er)	0	1
Relationship with Auburn University		
Fan attended	68	73
Fan did not attend	32	27
Family member attended	73	68
Family did not attend	27	32
Both fan and family attended Auburn University	51	50
Fan attended/family did not	17	22
Fan did not attend/family did	22	17
Neither fan nor family attended	10	11
Importance of being an Auburn Tiger scale of 1-10		
Average response	8.7	8.8
Owns Auburn University vanity license plate		
Yes	35	33
No	65	67
Years spent tailgating at Auburn games		
0-5	57	58
30+	43	42
Single most important reason for attending game		
See the game	49	37
Social interaction with family/friends	30	42
Tailgating atmosphere	16	17
Other	5	4

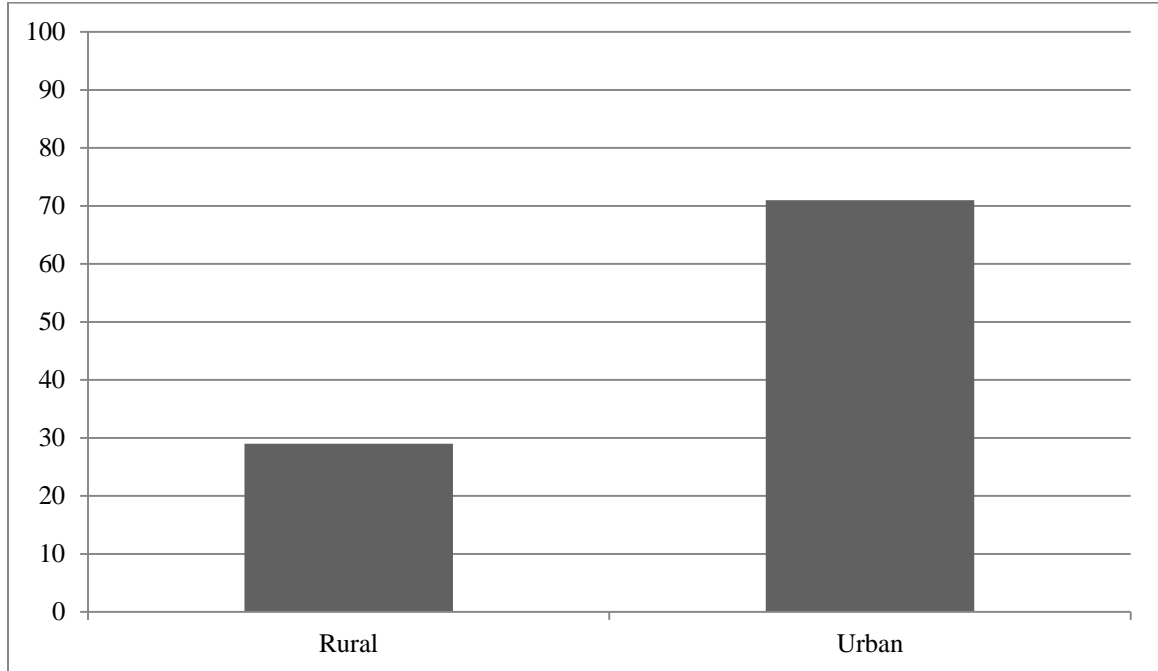


Figure 59: Residential land type.

Gender

More males were surveyed than females (56% vs. 44%) (Figure 60). Males were more likely to attend all home games (42% vs. 29%), and were more likely to have personally attended Auburn (75% vs. 66%) (Table 23). Males placed watching the game as the single most important reason for attending the game at a higher rate than females (43% vs. 38%), while females showed more interest in social interaction and tailgating (61% vs. 51%) (Table 23). Social interaction between fans of the same team is promoted by the common bond they share and the supposed qualities that are expected of other like-minded fans (McDougall 1920, Cialdini 1976, Coakley 1982, Melnick 1993). The idea of an Auburn “family” suggests a likely loyalty and trustworthiness between fans that may seem very real to highly identified fans (Wann and Polk 2007, Wann et al.

2008). Though males were more likely to attend games, females ranked the importance of being an Auburn Tiger at 9.2 while males averaged 8.5 (Table 23).

Table 23: Selected responses for males and females

	Males	Females
Home games regularly attended	%	%
None	5	16
Some	53	55
All	42	29
Away games regularly attended		
None	47	54
Some	50	43
All	3	3
Living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium		
< 5 miles	30	15
6-100 miles	25	27
100+ miles	45	58
Residential land type		
Rural	30	27
Urban	70	73
Age		
19-24	29	28
25-44	49	55
45-64	17	16
65 and over	5	1
Marital status		
Single	55	58
Married	42	40
Separated/Divorced	2	2
Widow(er)	1	0
Relationship with Auburn University		
Fan attended	75	66
Fan did not attend	25	34
Family member attended	70	68
Family did not attend	30	32
Both fan and family attended Auburn University	54	47
Fan attended/family did not	21	19
Fan did not attend/family did	16	22
Neither fan nor family attended	9	12
Importance of being an Auburn Tiger scale of 1-10		
Average response	8.5	9.2
Owens Auburn University vanity license plate		
Yes	30	36
No	70	64
Years spent tailgating at Auburn games		
0-10	54	63
10+	46	37
Single most important reason for attending game		
See the game	43	38
Social interaction with family/friends	36	42
Tailgating atmosphere	15	19
Other	6	1

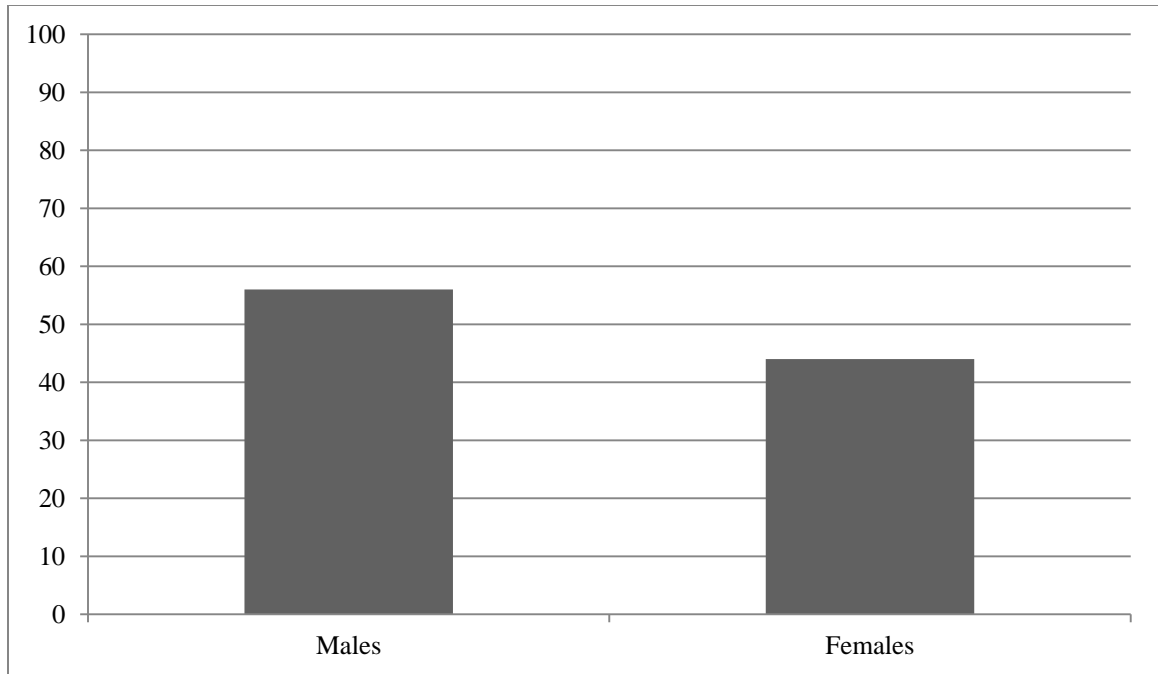


Figure 60: Gender of participants.

Age

Over half of fans surveyed were between ages 25-44 (Table 20, Figure 61).

Marital status was found to be linked to age, as 98% of fans age 19-24 were single while the number of married fans increased for each age bracket (Table 24). Fans ages 25-44 were more likely to live in an urban area than younger fans ages 19-24 (79% vs. 58%) (Table 24). The likelihood of owning an Auburn license plate increased with age but decreased for the oldest age group (Table 24). Not too surprisingly, younger fans have spent less time tailgating than older fans as no fans over age 65 have spent less than 10 years tailgating and only a quarter of fans age 19-24 have spent more than 10 years tailgating (Table 24).

Table 24: Selected responses for age

	19-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Home games regularly attended	%	%	%	%
None	8	10	14	0
Some	45	65	46	13
All	48	25	41	88
Away games regularly attended				
None	40	59	40	63
Some	55	38	60	38
All	5	3	0	0
Living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium				
< 5 miles	38	17	19	13
6-100 miles	24	28	27	25
100+ miles	38	56	54	63
Residential land type				
Rural	42	21	32	25
Urban	58	79	68	75
Gender				
Male	57	53	57	88
Female	43	47	43	13
Marital status				
Single	98	51	11	0
Married	2	43	89	100
Separated/Divorced	0	4	0	0
Widowed	0	1	0	0
Relationship with Auburn University				
Fan attended	79	74	47	71
Fan did not attend	21	26	53	29
Family member attended	60	66	86	100
Family did not attend	40	34	14	0
Both fan and family attended	46	54	44	71
Fan attended/family did not	33	20	3	0
Fan did not attend/family did	14	12	42	29
Neither fan nor family attended	6	13	11	0
Importance of being an Auburn Tiger scale of 1-10				
Average response	8.6	8.8	9.3	8.4
Owens Auburn University vanity license plate				
Yes	24	34	39	29
No	76	66	61	71
Years spent tailgating at Auburn games				
0-10	78	60	28	0
10+	24	40	72	100
Single most important reason for attending game				
See the game	43	37	53	33
Social interaction with family/friends	43	40	28	33
Tailgating atmosphere	15	18	16	17
Other	0	1	3	17

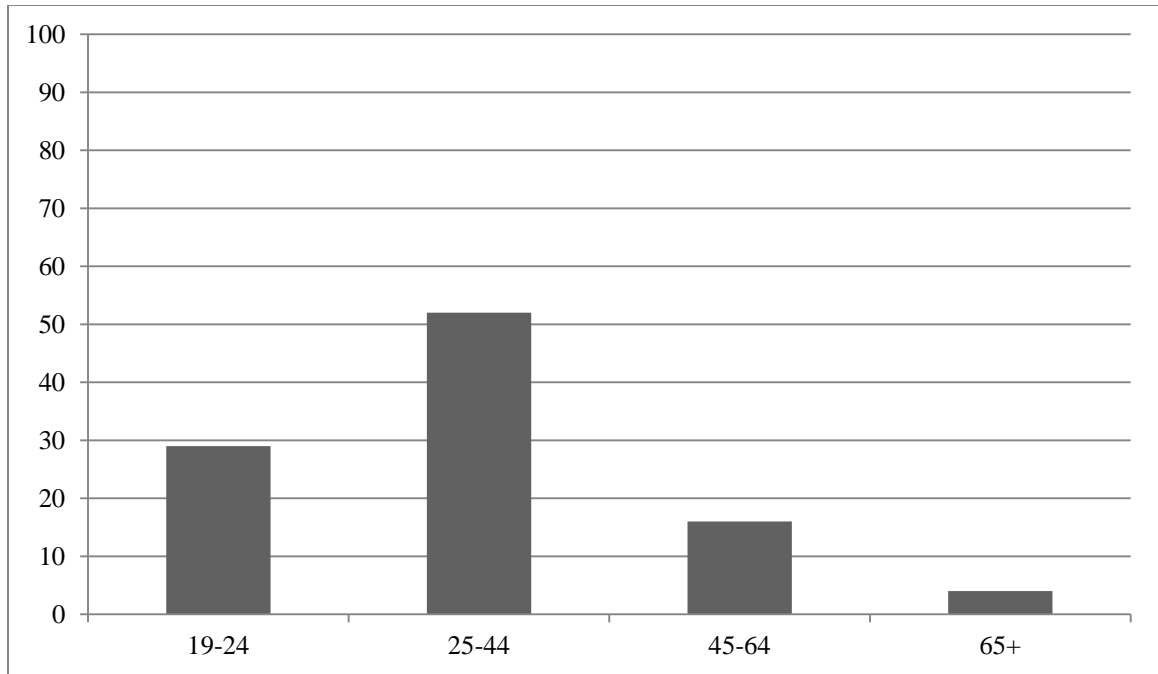


Figure 61: Age of participants

Marital Status

Though there were more single fans surveyed and they were more likely to live in close proximity to the stadium, it is married fans that were more likely to attend all home games (Table 25, Figure 62). Married fans were also more likely to own an Auburn license plate and have a higher scale rating than single fans, though less likely than the divorced and widowed fans surveyed (Table 25). Single fans were more concerned about social interaction than married and divorced fans, who were more concerned with watching the game (Table 25).

Table 25: Selected responses for marital status

	Single	Married	Divorced	Widow(er)
Home games regularly attended	%	%	%	%
None	13	7	0	0
Some	59	48	60	0
All	28	45	40	100
Away games regularly attended				
None	51	53	40	0
Some	47	43	60	100
All	2	4	0	0
Living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium				
< 5 miles	31	13	0	100
6-100 miles	22	30	40	0
100+ miles	48	57	60	0
Residential land type				
Rural	30	28	20	0
Urban	70	72	80	100
Gender				
Male	54	57	60	100
Female	46	43	40	0
Age				
19-24	50	1	0	0
25-44	47	55	100	100
45-64	3	36	0	0
65 and over	0	8	0	0
Relationship with Auburn University				
Fan attended	78	61	80	100
Fan did not attend	22	39	20	0
Family member attended	60	80	80	100
Family did not attend	40	20	20	0
Both fan and family attended	49	52	60	100
Fan attended/family did not	29	9	20	0
Fan did not attend/family did	11	28	20	0
Neither fan nor family attended	10	11	0	0
Importance of being an Auburn Tiger scale of 1-10				
Average response	8.6	9.1	9.4	10
Owns Auburn University vanity license plate				
Yes	24	42	80	100
No	76	58	20	0
Years spent tailgating at Auburn games				
0-10	71	40	40	0
10+	29	60	60	100
Single most important reason for attending game				
See the game	38	45	60	0
Social interaction with family/friends	41	38	20	0
Tailgating atmosphere	19	12	20	0
Other	3	5	0	100

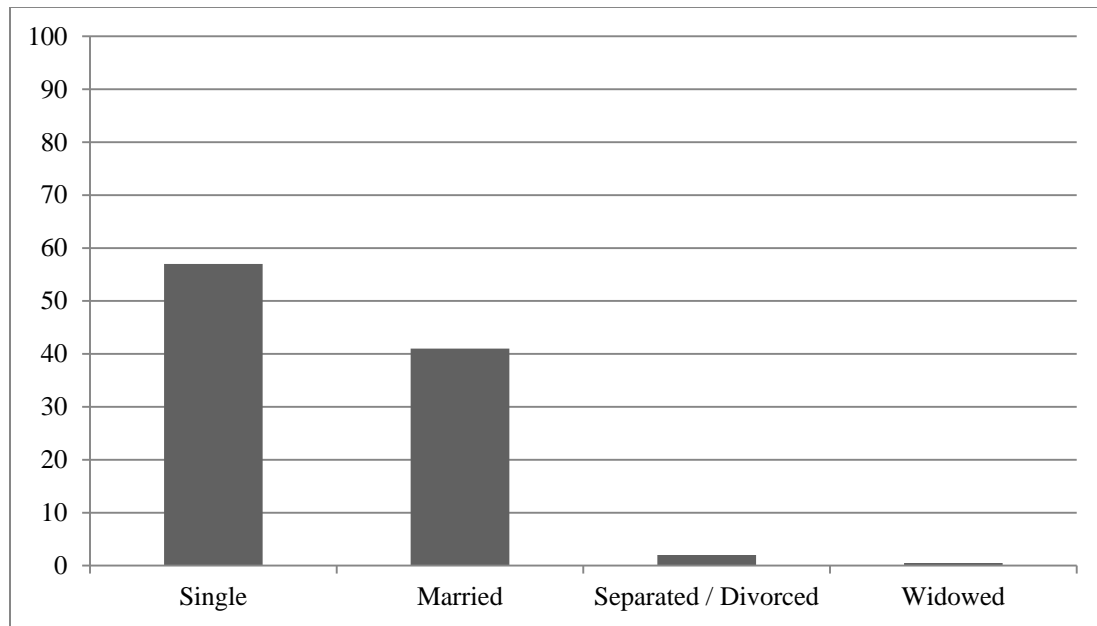


Figure 62: Marital status of participants

Games Attended

Ninety percent of fans reported regularly attending at least one home game each year with 36% attending all home games (Figure 63, Appendix B). Away games were less regularly attended with 54% reporting that they regularly attended at least one away game and only 7% reporting that they regularly attended all away games (Figure 63, Appendix B). The same respondents that reported going to every away game also went to every home game. Those who attended all home games were more likely to have a personal or family connection to Auburn University and considered seeing the game more important than socializing and tailgating (Table 26). They also were more likely to own an Auburn license plate and ranked higher on the importance scale than those who saw no or some home games. Highly identified sports fans often see themselves as part of the institution and are loyal to it (Wann and Robinson 2002). Fans who attended some or all away games also had higher scale scores and considered seeing the game to be the

most important reason for attending (Table 27). Game attendance was found to be more likely for males than females (Figure 64)

Table 26: Selected responses for home game attendance

	No Home	Some Home	All Home
Away games regularly attended	%	%	%
None	100	55	29
Some	0	45	62
All	0	0	9
Living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium			
< 5 miles	23	18	32
6-100 miles	18	24	32
100+ miles	59	59	37
Residential land type			
Rural	23	26	34
Urban	73	74	65
Gender			
Male	27	55	65
Female	73	45	35
Age			
19-24	23	24	38
25-44	55	62	35
45-64	23	14	18
65+	0	1	9
Marital status			
Single	73	61	45
Married	27	36	51
Separated/Divorced	0	3	3
Widowed	0	0	1
Relationship with Auburn University			
Fan attended	50	69	81
Fan did not attend	50	31	19
Family member attended	50	65	81
Family did not attend	50	35	19
Both fan and family attended	36	44	65
Fan attended/family did not	14	25	15
Fan did not attend/family did	14	21	15
Neither fan nor family attended	36	10	4
Importance of being an Auburn Tiger scale of 1-10			
Average response	7.8	8.5	9.4
Owens Auburn University vanity license plate			
Yes	5	25	53
No	95	75	47
Years spent tailgating at Auburn games			
0-10	77	61	49
10+	23	39	51
Single most important reason for attending game			
See the game	33	34	54
Social interaction with family/friends	53	42	30
Tailgating atmosphere	7	21	12
Other	7	3	4

Table 27: Selected responses for away game attendance

	No Away	Some Away	All Away
Home games regularly attended	%	%	%
None	19	0	0
Some	60	52	0
All	21	48	100
Living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium			
< 5 miles	25	18	71
6-100 miles	20	33	14
100+ miles	54	49	14
Residential land type			
Rural	27	30	29
Urban	73	70	71
Gender			
Male	53	59	57
Female	47	41	43
Age			
19-24	23	34	43
25-44	61	42	43
45-64	12	21	14
65+	4	3	0
Marital status			
Single	56	58	43
Married	42	38	57
Separated/Divorced	2	3	0
Widowed	0	1	0
Relationship with Auburn University			
Fan attended	69	74	71
Fan did not attend	31	26	29
Family member attended	66	71	86
Family did not attend	34	29	14
Both fan and family attended	49	51	71
Fan attended/family did not	20	23	0
Fan did not attend/family did	17	20	14
Neither fan nor family attended	14	6	14
Importance of being an Auburn Tiger scale of 1-10			
Average response	8.6	8.9	9.6
Owens Auburn University vanity license plate			
Yes	24	44	14
No	76	56	86
Years spent tailgating at Auburn games			
0-10	63	55	14
10+	37	45	86
Single most important reason for attending game			
See the game	38	44	40
Social interaction with family/friends	45	33	20
Tailgating atmosphere	13	20	20
Other	4	3	20

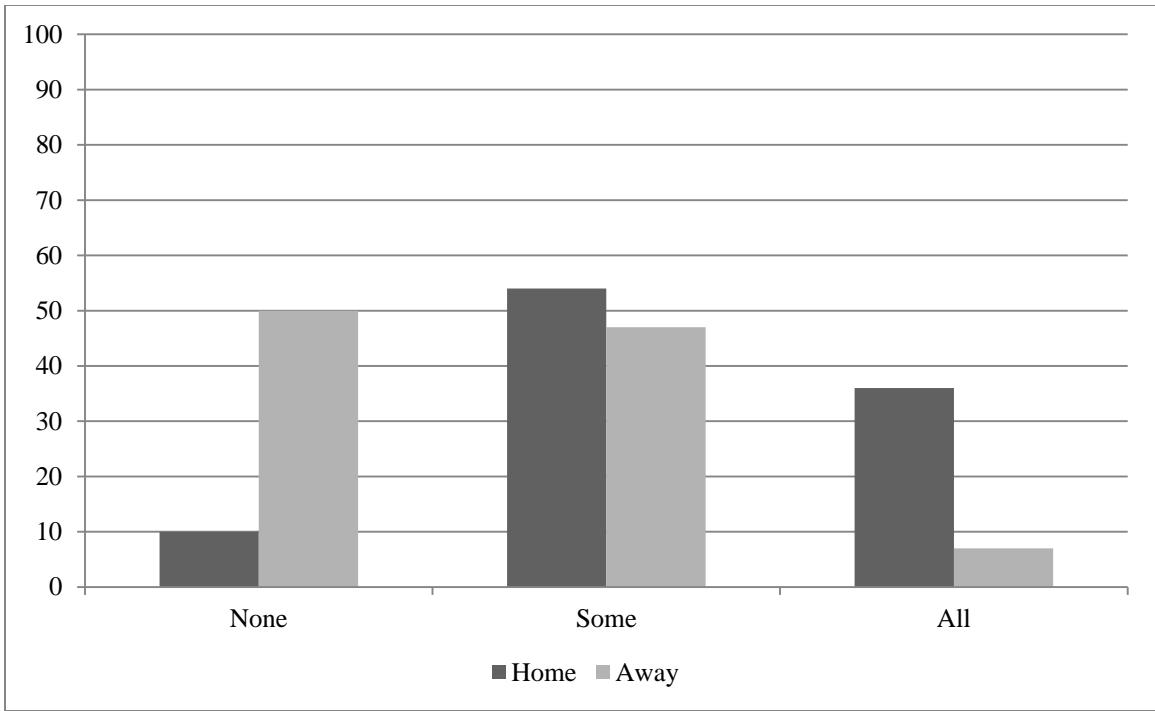


Figure 63: Frequency of fan attendance.

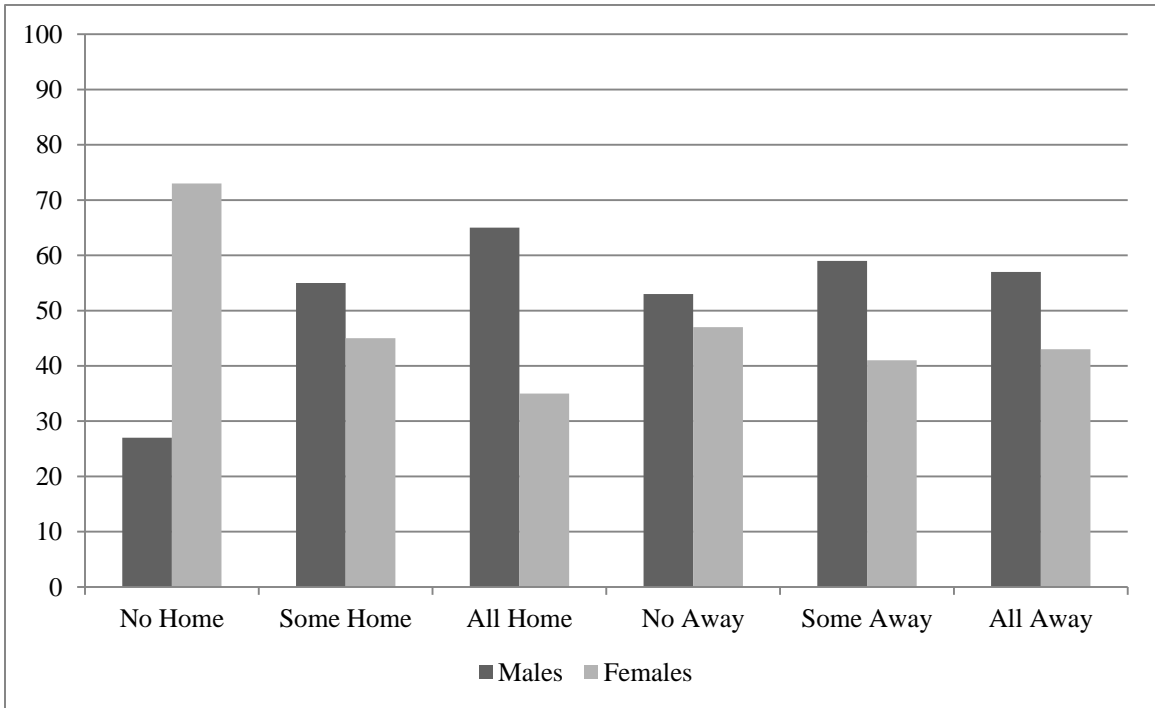


Figure 64: Frequency of fan attendance by gender.

Relationship with Auburn University

Personal and/or family attendance at Auburn seems to be a major indicator of whether someone will become an Auburn football fan, though it is certainly not a requirement (Edwards 1973, Flynt 2004, Tables 28-29). Over 70 percent of fans surveyed attended Auburn University (Figure 65). Nearly the same number had family who attended Auburn, though they were not necessarily the same people (Figure 65). Ninety percent of fans surveyed had personally attended and/or had family that did with 51 percent having both (Figure 66). A slightly larger number of fans had only the personal connection (21%) than those who had only a family connection (18%) (Figure 66). Wann and Robinson (2002) found that highly identified fans were likely to feel a part of the institution and have a desire to attend and graduate.

Males were slightly more likely to have attended Auburn or have a family member that did than females, while rural and urban fans had about the same likelihood of a personal or family connection to Auburn (Tables 28-29). Two females who did not attend Auburn made additional comments regarding the question. The first replied that, while she did not personally attend, her mother attended Auburn. The second replied that she would have gone to Auburn, but it did not have a nursing program at the time, forcing her to attend the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Another female, who did not personally attend or have family that attended, noted that her boyfriend attended Auburn.

Table 28: Selected responses for fan relationship with Auburn University.

	Attended AU	Did not	Family did	Fam. did not
Home games regularly attended	%	%	%	%
None	7	17	7	16
Some	53	59	51	62
All	40	24	42	22
Away games regularly attended				
None	49	56	49	56
Some	47	41	47	43
All	3	3	4	1
Living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium				
< 5 miles	29	10	25	19
6-100 miles	23	31	28	19
100+ miles	48	62	47	62
Residential land type				
Rural	28	32	30	25
Urban	72	68	70	75
Gender				
Male	59	48	56	54
Female	41	52	44	46
Age				
19-24	32	21	25	37
25-44	54	46	50	56
45-64	11	30	21	7
65+	3	3	5	0
Marital status				
Single	62	43	50	72
Married	35	56	47	26
Separated/Divorced	3	2	3	1
Widowed	1	0	1	0
Importance of being an Auburn Tiger scale of 1-10				
Average response	9.2	7.9	9.0	8.2
Owns Auburn University vanity license plate				
Yes	34	30	39	19
No	66	70	61	81
Years spent tailgating at Auburn games				
0-10	56	61	45	86
10+	43	38	55	13
Single most important reason for attending game				
See the game	42	39	43	37
Social interaction with family/friends	39	38	40	36
Tailgating atmosphere	17	14	14	20
Other	2	9	3	7

Table 29: Selected responses for fan relationship with Auburn

	Fan and family attended	Fan attended, family did not	Fan did not attend, family did	Neither fan nor family attended
Home games regularly attended	%	%	%	%
None	7	7	8	35
Some	47	67	63	52
All	46	26	30	12
Away games regularly attended				
None	50	49	48	70
Some	46	51	50	26
All	5	0	3	4
Living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium				
< 5 miles	30	27	13	4
6-100 miles	25	17	36	22
100+ miles	45	56	53	74
Residential land type				
Rural	29	24	35	26
Urban	71	74	65	70
Gender				
Male	60	57	48	48
Female	40	43	53	52
Age				
19-24	26	47	23	17
25-44	55	51	35	65
45-64	14	2	38	17
65+	5	0	5	0
Marital status				
Single	55	80	35	57
Married	41	18	63	43
Separated/Divorced	3	2	3	0
Widowed	1	0	0	0
Importance of being an Auburn Tiger scale of 1-10				
Average response	9.2	9.0	8.5	6.7
Owns Auburn University vanity license plate				
Yes	39	22	40	13
No	61	78	60	87
Years spent tailgating at Auburn games				
0-10	43	89	51	83
10+	57	11	50	17
Single most important reason for attending game				
See the game	44	38	43	35
Social interaction with family/friends	41	33	34	40
Tailgating atmosphere	14	26	17	10
Other	2	3	6	15

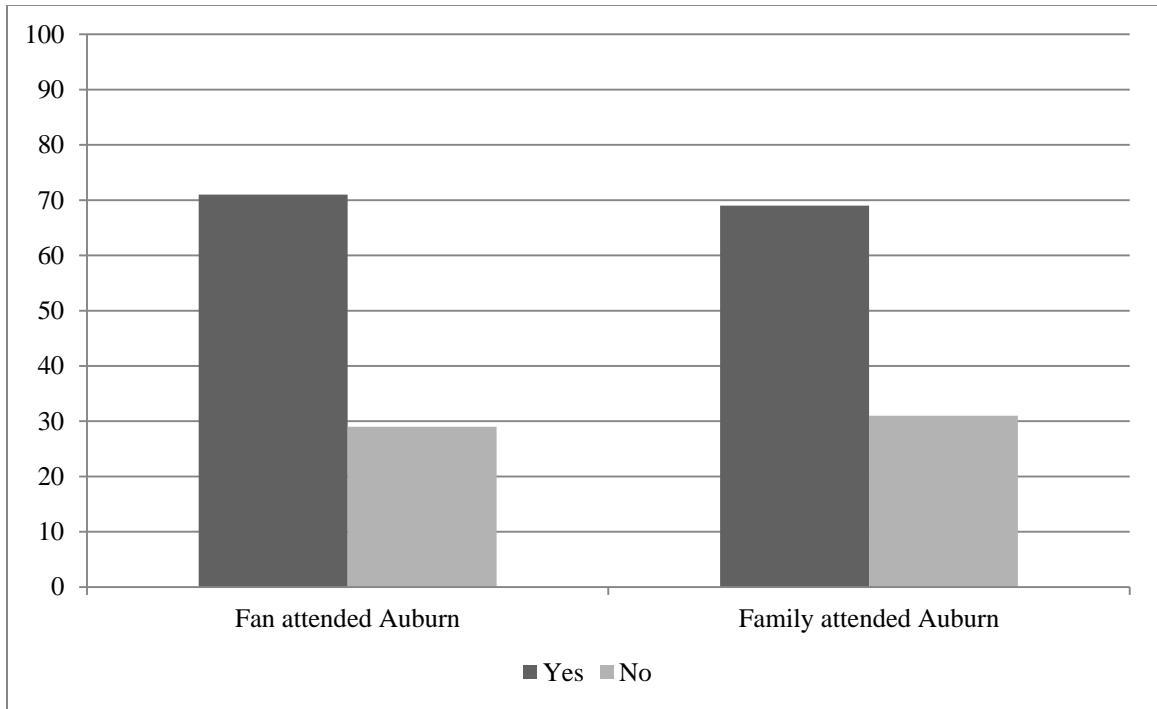


Figure 65: Relationship with Auburn University.

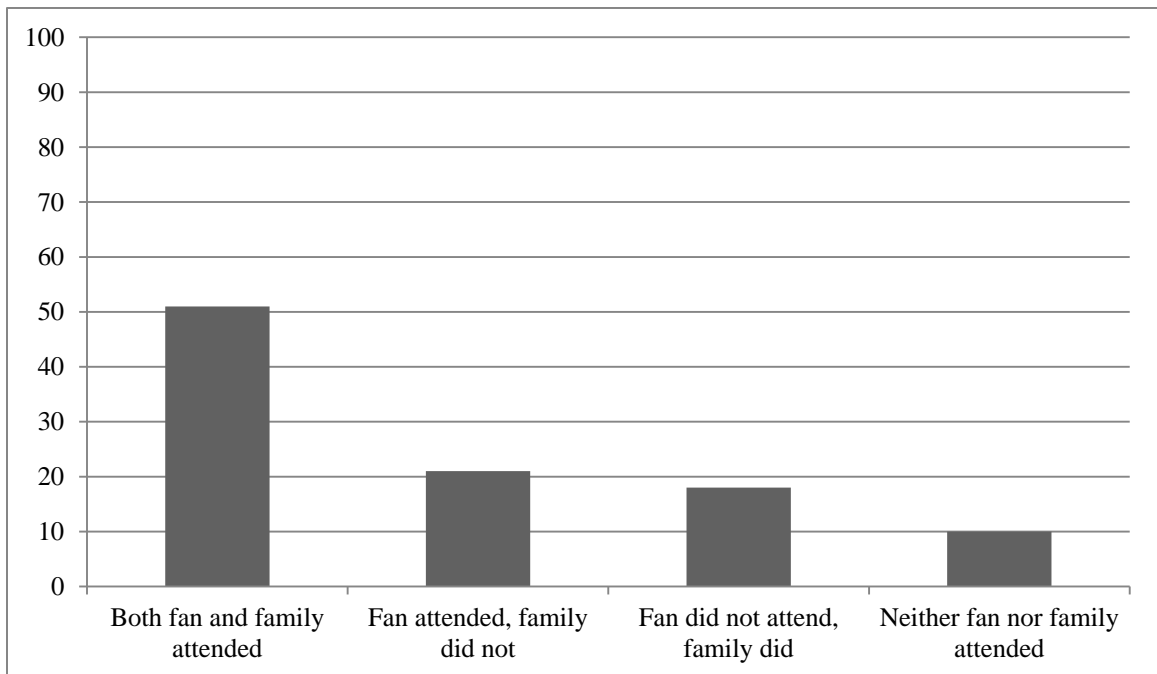


Figure 66: Relationship with Auburn University.

Importance of being an Auburn Tiger

The importance of being an Auburn Tiger on a scale of 1-10, was rated at an average of 8.8 by survey participants. Many Auburn fans wear team colors, construct signs, wave team flags, and speak of the team as if they are on the roster, signs of declaration and identification similar to those researched by Cialdini (1976), Wann (2001), Winningham (1979), and Zelinsky (1988). Higher responses on the scale suggest higher identification with Auburn. Fans who regularly attended all games had a significantly higher scale average than those attended no games (9.5 vs. 7.8). Fans that had personally attended Auburn University and had family who attended ranked higher on the scale than those who had neither connection to Auburn (9.2 vs. 6.7). There is no obvious spatial variation between fans who reported low scores and those who reported high ones, though Branscombe and Wann (1991) have discovered a general decrease in attachment levels of sports fans with increased distance from the team.

Auburn University license plate ownership

About one-third of fans owned Auburn University vanity license plates, 96 percent of owners having personally attended Auburn or had a family member that did (Table 30, Figure 67). Plate owners ranked the importance of being an Auburn Tiger at 9.5, while those without ranked 8.4 (Table 30). Among those who reported that they did not own an Auburn license plate was one female from Lee County who noted that she would like to have one but was “too cheap”, as well as a male and female from Florida, each of whom replied that the plates were not yet available in their state (though according to other fans they are available in Florida).

Table 30: Selected responses for Auburn University license plate ownership

	Owns AU Tag	Does Not
Home games regularly attended	%	%
None	1	14
Some	42	61
All	57	25
Away games regularly attended		
None	38	58
Some	61	38
All	1	4
Living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium		
< 5 miles	17	27
6-100 miles	26	26
100+ miles	58	48
Residential land type		
Rural area	31	28
Urban area	69	72
Gender		
Male	51	58
Female	49	42
Age		
19-24	21	33
25-44	53	51
45-64	19	15
65 and over	7	1
Marital status		
Single	42	64
Married	51	35
Separated/Divorced	6	1
Widow(er)	1	0
Relationship with Auburn University		
Fan attended	74	68
Fan did not attend	26	32
Family member attended	82	63
Family did not attend	18	37
Both fan and family attended Auburn University	60	46
Fan attended/family did not	14	24
Fan did not attend/family did	22	16
Neither fan nor family attended	4	14
Importance of being an Auburn Tiger scale of 1-10		
Average response	9.5	8.4
Years spent tailgating at Auburn games		
0-10	43	66
10+	58	35
Single most important reason for attending game		
See the game	59	33
Social interaction with family/friends	23	46
Tailgating atmosphere	14	17
Other	5	4

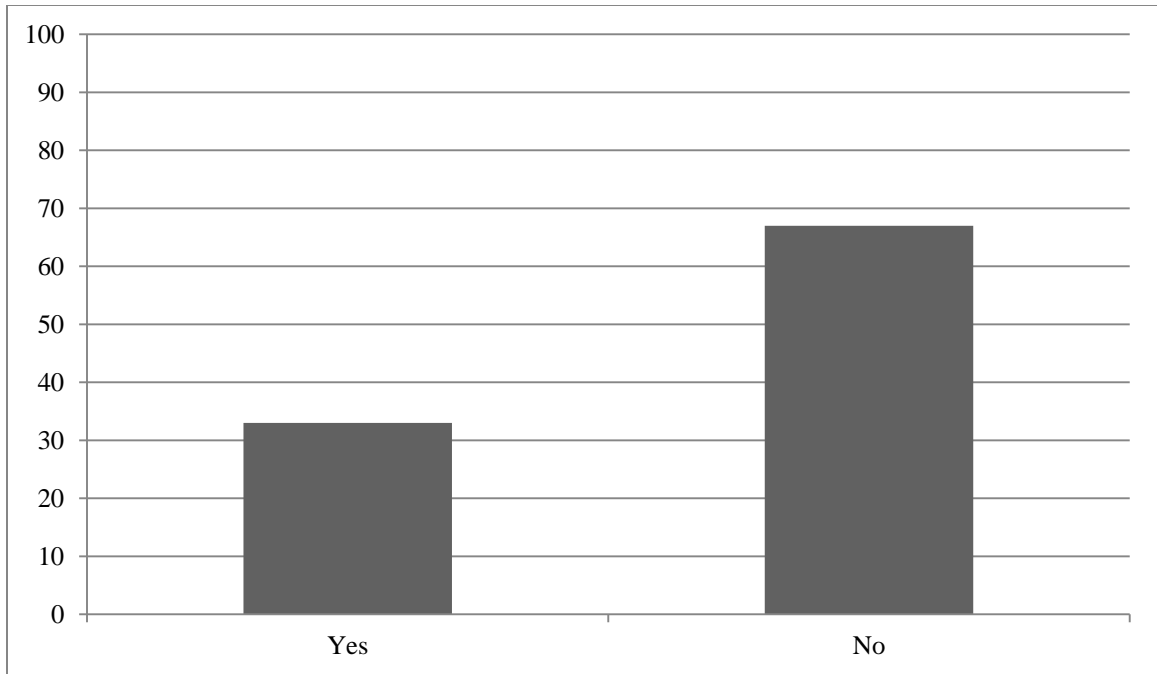


Figure 67: Fan ownership of Auburn University license plates

Time spent tailgating

The longer a fan has been tailgating at Auburn, the more likely they are to care about watching the game over socializing (Table 31). Those who have spent the least time tailgating seem to be the least identified as they are less likely to have a personal or family connection to Auburn and are more ambivalent in their scale ranking (Table 31). Over 50 percent of fans surveyed have been tailgating for under 10 years, while 21 percent have been tailgating for over 20 (Figure 68). Wann (1995) has classified various fan motivators and Auburn fans seem to exhibit all of them, especially entertainment and group affiliation.

Table 31: Selected responses for time spent tailgating

	0-10	10+
Home games regularly attended	%	%
None	13	5
Some	57	51
All	30	43
Away games regularly attended		
None	56	45
Some	43	49
All	1	7
Living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium		
< 5 miles	22	25
6-100 miles	30	18
100+ miles	48	57
Residential land type		
Rural	28	29
Urban	72	71
Gender		
Male	52	61
Female	48	39
Age		
19-24	39	15
25-44	54	49
45-64	8	28
65+	0	8
Marital status		
Single	69	39
Married	29	57
Separated/Divorced	2	3
Widowed	0	1
Relationship with Auburn University		
Fan attended	69	74
Fan did not attend	31	26
Family member attended	62	90
Family did not attend	38	10
Both fan and family attended	38	68
Fan attended/family did not	31	5
Fan did not attend/family did	16	22
Neither fan nor family attended	15	4
Importance of being an Auburn Tiger scale of 1-10		
Average response	8.5	9.2
Owns Auburn University vanity license plate		
Yes	24	45
No	76	55
Single most important reason for attending game		
See the game	31	52
Social interaction with family/friends	39	32
Tailgating atmosphere	20	9
Other	2	7

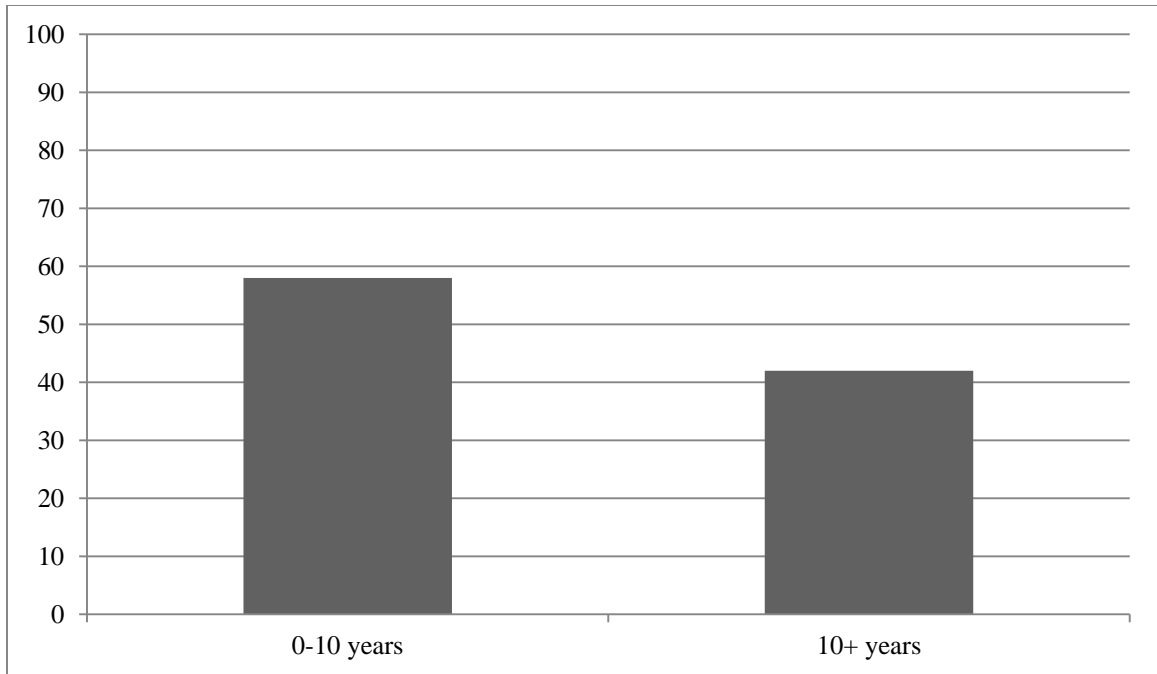


Figure 68: Time spent tailgating at Auburn games

Most important reason for attending

Fans that consider it important to see the game rank higher on the scale than those concerned with socializing (9.3 vs. 8.0) and were also more likely to own an Auburn license plate (48% vs. 20%) (Table 32). Eighty percent of fans were most concerned about watching the game or socializing (Figure 69). Those who considered tailgating to be the most important reason ranked between the two with an 8.7 scale score and 28% license plate ownership (Table 32). Alternate answers to the question of the most important reason for attending included “alcohol” and to “see grandchildren”.

Table 32: Selected responses for most important reason for attending games.

	See game	Social	Tailgating	Other
Home games regularly attended	%	%	%	%
None	6	10	3	13
Some	46	62	71	50
All	48	28	26	38
Away games regularly attended				
None	46	58	38	50
Some	51	41	59	25
All	2	1	3	25
Living distance from Jordan-Hare Stadium				
< 5 miles	20	24	15	38
6-100 miles	24	28	30	26
100+ miles	56	48	56	38
Residential land type				
Rural	37	24	29	38
Urban	63	76	71	63
Gender				
Male	60	53	50	88
Female	40	47	50	13
Age				
19-24	31	33	26	0
25-44	46	53	56	75
45-64	20	11	15	13
65+	2	3	3	13
Marital status				
Single	54	62	69	38
Married	43	37	28	50
Separated/Divorced	4	1	3	0
Widowed	0	0	0	13
Relationship with Auburn University				
Fan attended	73	72	75	38
Fan did not attend	27	28	25	63
Family member attended	73	72	63	50
Family did not attend	27	28	38	50
Both fan and family attended	55	55	44	25
Fan attended/family did not	18	17	31	13
Fan did not attend/family did	18	17	19	25
Neither fan nor family attended	9	11	6	38
Importance of being an Auburn Tiger scale of 1-10				
Average response	9.3	8.0	8.7	8.5
Owns Auburn University vanity license plate				
Yes	48	20	28	38
No	52	80	72	63
Years spent tailgating at Auburn games				
0-10	49	66	78	25
10+	52	34	22	75

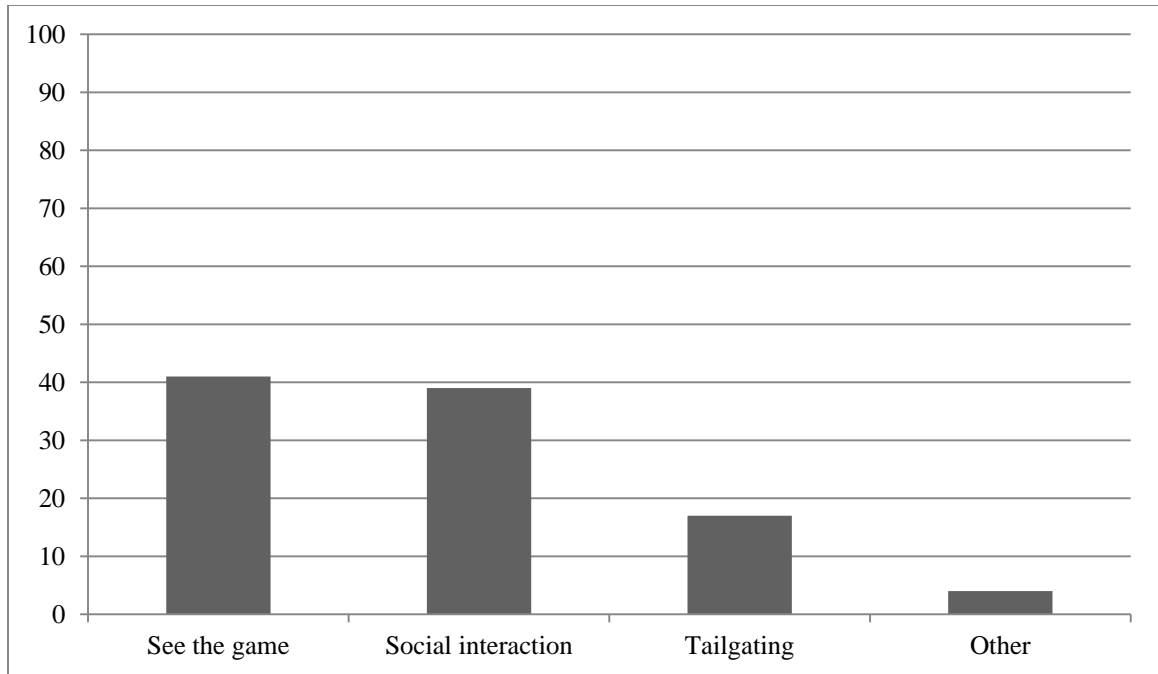


Figure 69: Single most important reason for attending games

“I like Auburn Tigers football because...” responses

The open-ended survey question asking fans to describe why they liked Auburn Tigers football yielded a variety of responses, with the most commonly used word aside from “Auburn” being “family” (Figure 70). Other commonly used words included “love”, “believe”, “tradition”, and “atmosphere”. Many fans quoted parts of the Auburn Creed and various slogans related to Auburn football. The way that many fans spoke of their relationship with Auburn football and their emotional connections to campus might be described by Tuan (1977) as topophilia, or “love of place”. Most responses conveyed the general idea that fans were loyal to Auburn because of their family, their attendance at Auburn, and their enjoyment in watching football and tailgating.



Figure 70: “I like Auburn Tigers football because...” fan response word cloud.

Some fans made noteworthy responses that differed from the norm. One fan, who did not express any sort of connection to Auburn from family or academics, said he enjoyed Auburn football because watching players at the collegiate level is more exciting and players are more motivated to prove themselves than in the NFL, resulting in a high level of competition. One fan’s participation in Auburn’s marching band contributed to the passion he developed for Auburn football after he began attending. One fan

described Auburn football as “a way of life”. Some fans described the Auburn football experience in ways that were similar to the ways that some would describe a religious experience, supporting research conducted by Bain-Selbo (2008) about Southern college football fans and their associations with the game and team culture.

Summary

Auburn fans exhibit characteristics typical of many sports fans. They befriend strangers on game days often for no other reason that they are sharing a treasured experience. They wear team colors and act in ways on game days inside and outside the stadium that might not be considered acceptable at other times (Beisser 1977). Robinson et al. (2005) found that teams in the higher divisional classifications have stronger fan attachments than those in lower divisions. Other local schools such as Tuskegee Institute and LaGrange College do not draw the fans and media coverage that Auburn does and they do not sell merchandise to the extent that Auburn does.

It appears that the main criteria for becoming an Auburn fan are proximity and personal or family connections. Because the 2010 season ended with a national championship and non-stop media coverage for Auburn, it is possible that bandwagon fans have appeared without having the traditional fan connections and may have temporarily expanded the extent of Auburn’s fan region.

Chapter 8: Summary and Conclusions

Modern American football developed in the Northeast as a college game, and has since spread across the country. Studies of sports region mapping by Rooney (1969, 1986, 1992), International Mapping (2004), and Silver (2011) have illustrated the dominance of college football in the South. Studies of sports fans by Cialdini (1976), Coakley (1982), Wann et al. (2001), and Bain-Selbo (2008) have provided insight into the role of sport in society and the relationships between sports and their fans. Over time, the game's popularity and emphasis decreased in the North and a region of college football strength developed in the South (Doyle 1998, Bernstein 2001). Along with Northern decline, the G. I. Bill and racial integration led to greater numbers of people becoming involved with the game. The ideal of football as a modern game, coupled with its violent and religious associations, contributed to its success in the South. The importance of football in the South is exemplified by rabid fans, high coaching salaries, and the celebrity treatment given to high school recruits that are sought after and fought over by regional schools. Star athletes are over-glorified, often considered to be role models and have their conduct held to a higher standard by the public than many in other occupations. Southern football stars have been likened to symbolic figures ranging from Confederate generals and soldiers to fictional comic book heroes (Borucki 2003).

A look at the maps corresponding to historic college football national championships, current college football divisions, and historic NFL expansion tell much about the temporal decrease in emphasis on football in the North and the increase in

Southern emphasis. College football's national champions before 1900 came solely from the Northeastern United States. Much changed in the following century. Since 2000, nearly all Bowl Championship Subdivision national champions have been from the Southeast. While the locations of Football Bowl Subdivision teams are somewhat equally distributed nationwide, a noticeable spatial change can be seen between the Football Championship Subdivision, where many teams are located in the Southeast, and Division III, where nearly all teams are concentrated in the Northeast. The National Football League's most recent additions have all gone to the South, indicating that the league wants to take advantage of the region's love for football.

Football has had a strong influence on the development of Auburn University and the city of Auburn. Once a rural farming town and campus, the area has been transformed. Where there were once veterinary and agricultural research fields on Auburn's central campus, there is now a built sports landscape that could not exist in the same way without football. Visitors, who may have never come otherwise, arrive in droves every home football weekend. They spend a great deal of money and city operations are often planned around their presence. Football generates greater earnings than all other sports played at Auburn. Auburn's campus and city infrastructure has been designed to accommodate these large numbers of guests that swell the city's population each fall. In the early days of Auburn football, most games were played away from Auburn, either at the host site of the opponent, or, more often, in a large city with higher earning potential. The construction of Jordan-Hare Stadium, which opened as Auburn Stadium in 1939, marked the beginning of the switch from Auburn as a road team to Auburn as a home team.

Auburn's football fan region primarily exists in eastern Alabama with an extension into western Georgia. Auburn's fan "territory" generally seems to extend northwest to Birmingham, southwest to Montgomery, and north and south along Alabama's border. A distance-decay pattern, where the number of fans decrease with distance away from Auburn, takes shape to the west, but is limited on the east by Georgia's border. Auburn fans are generally produced as a result of residential proximity and/or family and personal connections. Auburn fans together make the Auburn family, a group that feels a part of the university and community and views other fans in a positive light due to their mutual love for Auburn football.

Future research could go in many directions. One useful way for sports geographers to further understand the Auburn football fan region would be to construct fan maps for other regional teams, such as the Universities of Alabama and Georgia. This would allow some of the information from Auburn's fan map to be placed into better perspective and might result in a definable Auburn football fan territory within the overall extent of their fan region. For example, although Jefferson County exhibits strong support for Auburn football, I predict that these numbers would pale in comparison to the numbers that may be found to be associated with Alabama fan support.

To improve my study, I would include more detailed questions about fan motivation and identification, such as those found in Wann's scales. This would be beneficial for a deeper understanding of the psychological profile of Auburn fans, but would be better suited to a non-game day environment in order to keep longer attention spans and not impinge on fans' game day festivities. Although the vast majority of fans were receptive to the survey and very cooperative, there were many distractions, and a

more detailed survey would probably have a higher chance of gathering clearly considered answers if it were distributed to Auburn fans for them to complete when ready, instead of when they have other immediate concerns on their mind.

My research was limited in having access to only residential information of season ticket holders, rather than all ticket holders, or all who follow Auburn football. I predict that the dimensions of Auburn's fan region would be slightly altered in these cases. I would believe that most season ticket holders live in places where it is more convenient to attend all games than it would be for someone who can only attend one game or watch on television, have a greater opportunity to attend because they have less constraints with time and money, or both. If a fan map were to be produced for all Auburn football fans, I would expect its spatial dimensions to be larger. My research would be most useful to those that market Auburn football. By knowing where its fans are and what they are like, Auburn could concentrate its efforts where needed with respect to retaining old fans, gaining new fans, and efficiently distributing advertising expenses.

References

- Abbott, C. 1990. College Athletic Conferences and American Regions. *Journal of American Studies* 24 (2): 211-48.
- Auburn University Athletics, 2011. Auburn Football Media Guide. Last accessed December 9, 2011. http://grfx.cstv.com/photos/schools/aub/sports/mfootbl/auto_pdf/2011-12/misc_non_event/2011-fbguide.pdf
- Auburn University Athletics, 2011. Jordan-Hare Stadium profile. Last accessed December 9, 2011. <http://www.auburntigers.com/facilities/aub-10-football.html>
- Austrian, Z., & Rosentraub, M. S. 2002. Cities, Sports and Economic Change: A Retrospective Assessment. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 24(5), 549–563.
- Ayers, E. 1992. *The Promise of the New South*.
- Baade, R. A., and Tiehen, L. J. 1990. An Analysis of Major League Baseball Attendance, 1969-1987. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 14 (1): 14-32.
- Baade, Robert A. 1996. Professional Sports as a Catalyst for Metropolitan Economic Development. *Journal of Urban Affairs*. 18 (1): 1-17.
- Bain-Selbo, E. 2008. Ecstasy, Joy, and Sorrow: The Religious Experience of Southern College Football. *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 20.
- Bain-Selbo, E. 2009. From Lost Cause to Third-and-Long: College Football and the Civil Religion of the South. *Journal of Southern Religion* 11.
- Bain-Selbo, E. 2009. *Game Day and God: Football, Faith, and Politics in the American South*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press.
- Bale, J. 1994. *Landscapes of Modern Sport*. London: Leicester University Press.
- Bale, J. 1996. Space, Place and Body Culture: Yi-Fu Tuan and a Geography of Sport. *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography* 78 (3): 163-71.
- Bale, J. 2000. Human Geography and the Study of Sport. In J. Coakley and E. Dunning. *Handbook of Sport Studies*, London: Sage Publications.
- Bale, J. 2003. *Sports Geography*, 2nd ed. New York, NY: Routledge.

- Barnhart, T. 2000. *Southern Fried Football: The History, Passion, and Glory of the Great Southern Game*. Chicago, IL: Triumph Books.
- Beard, J. 1989. Jordan-Hare Stadium Down Through the Years *Auburn University Football Illustrated* 10, Buildings, Jordan-Hare Stadium Miscellaneous Folder, Series I, Auburn University Archives.
- Beisser, A. 1977. *The Madness in Sports*. Bowie, MD: Charles Press.
- Bernstein, M. F. 2001. *Football: The Ivy League Origins of an American Obsession*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Bolton, C. 1973. *War Eagle: A Story of Auburn Football*. Huntsville, AL: Strode.
- Borucki, W. 2003. "You're Dixie's Football Pride": American College Football and the Resurgence of Southern Identity. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 10: 477-94.
- Branscombe, N. R., and Wann, D. L. 1991. The Positive Social and Self Concept Consequences of Sports Team Identification. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 15 (2): 115-27.
- Bryson, B. 1989. *The Lost Continent: Travels in Small-Town America*. London: Secker.
- Butler, M. 1997. Confederate Flags, Class Conflict, a Golden Egg, and Castrated Bulls: A Historical Examination of the Ole Miss-Mississippi State Football Rivalry. *The Journal of Mississippi History* 59 (2): 123-39.
- Campbell, R. M., Jr., Aiken, D., and Kent, A. 2004. Beyond BIRGing and CORFing: Continuing the Exploration of Fan Behavior. *Sport Marketing Quarterly* 13 (2): 151-57.
- Cialdini, R. B., Borden, R. J., Thorne, A., Walker, M. R., Freeman, S., and Sloan, L. R. 1976. Basking in Reflected Glory: Three (Football) Field Studies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 34 (3): 366-75.
- City of Auburn, Alabama community profile for 2005-06 fiscal year. 2007. Last accessed December 9, 2011. <http://www.auburnalabama.org/budgetdir/FY%200506%20Budget/Sec.%201%20FINAL.pdf>
- Coakley, J. 1982. *Sport in Society*. St. Louis: Mosby Press.
- Comer, J. C. and Newsome, T. H. 1996. Recent Patterns of Professional Sports Facility Construction in North America. *Sport Place* 10 (1): 22-39.

- Doyle, A. 1996. Bear Bryant: Symbol for an Embattled South. *Colby Quarterly* 32 (1): 72-86.
- Doyle, A. 1997. Foolish and Useless Sport: The Southern Crusade Against Intercollegiate Football. *Journal of Sport History* 24 (3): 317-37.
- Doyle, A. 2002. Turning the Tide: College Football and Southern Progressivism. In ed. P. B. Miller. *The Sporting World of the Modern South*, Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Doyle, A. 2004. "Fighting Whiskey and Immorality" at Auburn: The Politics of Southern Football, 1919-1927. *Southern Cultures* 10 (3): 6-30.
- Doyle, A. 2005. On the Cusp of Modernity: The Southern Sporting World in the Twentieth Century. In ed. C. S. Pascoe, K. T. Leathem, and A. Ambrose, *The American South in the Twentieth Century*, Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press.
- Doyle, L. A. 1998. Causes Won, Not Lost: Football and Southern Culture, 1892-1983. PhD dissertation, Emory University, Atlanta, GA.
- Everson, D. 2008, December 5. What the Rise of Southern Football Says About America. *The Wall Street Journal* Retrieved from online.wsj.com
- Falk, G. 2005. *Football and American Identity*. New York, NY: The Haworth Press.
- Fischer, D. H. 1989. *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Flynt, W. 2004. *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*. Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press.
- Gibbs, C. 2010. *God and Football: Faith and Fanaticism in the SEC*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Graves, J. T. 1943. *The Fighting South*. New York: George Putnam's Sons.
- Gumprecht, B. 2003. Stadium Culture: College Athletics and the Making of Place in the American College Town. *Southeastern Geographer* 43 (1): 28-53.
- Hackney, S. 1969. Southern Violence. *The American Historical Review* 74 (3): 906-25.
- Hart, J. F. 1967. *The Southeastern United States*. Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc.
- Hemphill, P. 2008. *A Tiger Walk Through History*.

- Hollis, D. 1988. *Auburn Football: The Complete History 1892-1987*.
- Irvine, S. 2010, January 5. Alabama's 1926 win in Rose Bowl changed football landscape. *The Birmingham News* Retrieved from www.al.com.
- Jones, I. 1997. Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Sports Fan Research. *The Qualitative Report* 3 (4) retrieved March 21, 2011 from www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR3-4/jones.html.
- Kraszewski, J. 2008. Pittsburgh in Fort Worth Football Bars, Sports Television, Sports Fandom, and the Management of Home. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*. 32 (2): 139-157.
- McConnell, H. 1995. First the Frostbelt, then the Sunbelt, and now Big Florida: the all-time AP Football Poll, 1936-1995. *Sport Place* 9 (2): 5-32.
- McDougall, W. 1920. *The Group Mind*. New York: George Putnam's Sons.
- McGrail, T., West, J., and Goudge, T. 1994. College Football Rivalries: A Geographical Appraisal. *Sport Place* 8 (2) 27-35.
- McWhiney, G. 1988. *Cracker Culture*. Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press.
- Melnick, M. J. 1993. Searching for Sociability in the Stands: A Theory of Sports Spectating. *Journal of Sport Management* 7: 44-60.
- Meyers, C. C. 2009. "Unrelenting War on Football": The Death of Richard Von Gammon and the Attempt to Ban Football in Georgia. *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 93 (4): 388-407.
- Miller, P. B. 1997. The Manly, the Moral, and the Proficient: College Sport in the New South. *Journal of Sport History* 24 (3): 285-316.
- Muller, Tiffany 2007. 'Lesbian Community' in Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) Spaces. *Social & Cultural Geography* 8: 9-28.
- Murphy, R. G., and Trandel, G. A. 1994. The Relation Between a University's Football Record and the Size of Its Applicant Pool. *Economics of Education Review* 13 (3): 265-70.
- Murrell, A. J., and Dietz, B. 1992. Fan Support of Sport Teams: The Effect of a Common Group Identity. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology* 14: 28-39.

- Noll, R., & Zimbalist, A. 1997. The Economic Impact of Sports Teams and Facilities. In *Sports, Jobs and Taxes: The Economic Impact of Sports Teams and Facilities*, ed. R. Noll and A. Zimbalist. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.
- Noval, M. 1976. Regional Religions. In *Sport Inside Out*, ed. D. L. Vanderwerken, and S. K. Wertz. Fort Worth, TX: Texas Christian University Press.
- Oriard, M. 1976. Sports and Space. *Landscape* 23: 78-106.
- Oriard, M. 2001. *King Football: Sport and Spectacle in the Golden Age of Radio and Newsreels, Movies and Magazines, the Weekly and the Daily Press*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Pomerantz, G. 1988, November 25. Where Football Is King. *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution* p. 1C, 8C.
- Preston, H. L. 1991. Will Dixie Disappear? Cultural Contours of a Region in Transition. In ed. J. P. Dunn and H. L. Preston. *The Future South: A Historical Perspective for the Twenty-first Century*, Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Raitz, K. B. 1987. Perception of Sport Landscapes and Gratification in the Sport Experience. *Sport Place* 1 (1): 5-19.
- Raitz, K. B. 1995. *The Theater of Sport*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Reed, J. S. 1993. *My Tears Spoiled My Aim, and Other Reflections on Southern Culture*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press.
- Reed, J. S. 2003. *Minding the South*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press.
- Robinson, M. J., Trail, G. T., Dick, R. J., and Gillentine, A. J. 2005. Fans vs. Spectators: An Analysis of Those Who Attend Intercollegiate Football Games. *Sport Marketing Quarterly* 14 (1): 43-53.
- Rooney, J.F., Jr. 1969. Up from the Mines and Out from the Prairies: Some Geographical Implications of Football in the United States. *Geographical Review* 59 (4): 471-92.
- Rooney, J. F., Jr. 1970. A Geographical Analysis of Football Player Production in Oklahoma and Texas. *Proceedings, Oklahoma Academy of Science* 50.
- Rooney, J. F., Jr. 1974. *A Geography of American Sport: From Cabin Creek to Anaheim*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.
- Rooney, J.F., Jr., 1986. The Pigskin Cult and Other Sunbelt Sports. *American Demographics* 8 (9): 38-42.

- Rooney, J.F., Jr., 1990. Is TV Running Intercollegiate Football? *Sport Place* 4 (2): 15-17.
- Rooney, J.F., Jr., and Pillsbury, R. 1992. Sports Regions of America. *American Demographics* 14 (11):
- Rooney, Jr., J. F., and Pillsbury, R. 1992. *Atlas of American Sport*. New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company.
- Roseman, C. C., and Shelley, F. M. 1988. The Geography of Collegiate Football Radio Broadcasting. *Sport Place* 2 (2): 42-50.
- Rumney, T. Geography of women's soccer in South Australia: the changing spatial organisation of the sport in Adelaide, 1978-2006, by Edoardo Rosso pp. 319-320(2)
- Saylor, R. 1993. Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association. *College Football Historical Quarterly* 6 (2): 13-15.
- Scherer, G. 1992. *Auburn-Georgia Football: A Hundred Years of Rivalry*. McFarland
- Shafer, E. 2004. *Auburn Football*. Arcadia.
- Shelley, F. M., and Cartin, K. 1984. The Geography of Baseball Fan Support in the United States. *North American Culture* 1: 77-95.
- Silberman J. A. & Rees P. W. 2009. Reinventing Mountain Settlements: A GIS Model for Identifying Possible Ski Towns in the U.S. Rocky Mountains. *Applied Geography*. 30 (1): 36-49.
- Smith, R. A. 1988. *Sports and Freedom*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Smith, R. A. 2002. Intercollegiate Athletics / Football History at the Dawn of a New Century. *Journal of Sport History* 29 (2): 229-39.
- Solomon, J. 2010, November 21. Iron Bowl 75: Auburn vs. Alabama rivalry is an uncivil war. *The Birmingham News* retrieved on February 8, 2011 from www.al.com.
- Steinbeck, J. 1965, December 20. Then My Arm Glassed Up. *Sports Illustrated* Retrieved from www.cnn.com.
- Steinbrink, M., Haferburg, C., and Ley, A. 2011. Festivalisation and Urban Renewal in the Global South: Socio-spatial Consequences of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. *South African Geographical Journal* 93 (1): 15-28.
- Travis, C. 2007. *Dixieland Delight*. New York, NY: Harper-Collins Publishers.

- Tuan, Y. 1977. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- 2010 USA Today-NSLI Coaches Salary Database. 2010. Last accessed December 9, 2011. <http://www.usatoday.com/sports/college/football/2010-coaches-contracts-database.htm>
- U. S. Census Bureau 2010 Population Finder 2010 Demographic Profile for Auburn, AL. 2010. Last accessed December 9, 2011. <http://www.census.gov/popfinder/>
- Walsh, C. J. 2006. *Where Football Is King: A History of the SEC*. Lanham, MD: Taylor Trade Publishing.
- Wann, D. L. 1995. Preliminary Validation of the Sport Fan Motivation Scale. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 19 (4): 377-96.
- Wann, D. L., and Branscombe, N. R. 1990. Die-Hard and Fair-Weather Fans: Effects of Identification on BIRGing and CORFing Tendencies. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 14 (2): 103-17.
- Wann, D. L., and Branscombe, N. R. 1992. Emotional Responses to the Sports Page. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 16 (1): 49-64.
- Wann, D. L., and Branscombe, N. R. 1993. Sports Fans: Measuring Degree of Identification with Their Team. *Journal of Sport Psychology* 24: 1-17.
- Wann, D. L., and Polk, J. 2007. The Positive Relationship between Sport Team Identification and Belief in the Trustworthiness of Others. *North American Journal of Psychology* 9 (2): 251-56.
- Wann, D. L., and Robinson, III, T.N 2002. The Relationship Between Sport Team Identification and Integration into and Perceptions of a University. *International Sports Journal* 1: 36-44.
- Wann, D. L., Schrader, M. P., and Wilson, A. M. 1999. Sport Fan Motivation: Questionnaire Validation, Comparisons by Sport, and Relationship to Athletic Motivation. *Journal of Sport Behavior* 22 (1): 114-39.
- Wann, D. L., Melnick, M. J., Russell, G. W., and Pease, D. G. 2001. *Sport Fans: The Psychology and Social Impact of Spectators*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Wann, D. L., Martin, J., Grieve, F. G., and Gardner, L. 2008. Social Connections at Sporting Events: Attendance and its Positive Relationship with State Social Psychological Well-being. *North American Journal of Psychology* 10 (2): 229-38.

- Weiss, K. R. 1990, January 28. For Whatever Reason, Football Rules South. *Spartanburg Herald-Journal* p. A1, A12
- White, D. 2010, October 19. After football, Gov. Bob Riley says, 2010 governor's race is a blur. *The Birmingham News* retrieved from www.al.com.
- White, R. 2006. *Kingfish*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Wilson, C. R. 1987. The Death of Bear Bryant: Myth and Ritual in the Modern South. *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 86 (3): 282-95.
- Winningham, G. 1979. *Rites of Fall: High School Football in Texas*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Winter, M. W., and Sommers, P. M. The Changing Racial Composition of Baseball's All-Stars, 1950-2007.
- Yetman, N.R., and Eitzen, D.S. 1973. Some Social and Demographic Correlates of Football Productivity. *Geographical Review* 63 (4): 553-57.
- Zelinsky, W. 1994. *Exploring the Beloved Country: Geographic Forays into American Society and Culture*. Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press.
- Zelinsky, W. 1973. *The Cultural Geography of the United States*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Zelinsky, W. 1988. Where Every Town Is Above Average: Welcoming Signs along America's Highways. *Landscape* 30 (1): 1-10.
- Zelinsky, W. 2001. The World and its Identity Crisis. In *Textures of Place: Exploring Humanist Geographies*, ed. P. C. Adams, S. Hoelscher, and K. E. Till. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Appendix A: Survey Form
Auburn Football Fan Demographics
Auburn University

1. How many home Auburn football games do you regularly attend in a given season?

1. None 2. Some 3. All

2. How many away Auburn football games do you regularly attend in a given season?

1. None 2. Some 3. All

3. What state do you live in? _____

4. What county do you live in? _____

5. How far do you live from Jordan-Hare Stadium?

1. < 5 miles
2. < 25 miles
3. < 50 miles
4. < 100 miles
5. 100+ miles

6. Do you live in a rural or urban area?

1. Rural 2. Urban

7. What is your gender?

1. Male 2. Female

8. What is your age?

1. 19-24
2. 25-44
3. 45-64
4. 65 or above

9. What do you consider to be your race or ethnicity?

1. African-American
2. Asian
3. Hispanic
4. Native American
5. White
6. Other (please specify):

10. What is your marital status?

1. Single
2. Married
3. Separated/Divorced
4. Widow(er)

11. Did you attend Auburn University?

1. Yes 0. No

12. Did anyone in your family attend Auburn University?

1. Yes 0. No

13. How important is it to you, on a scale of 1-10, to be an Auburn Tiger? _____

14. Do you currently own an Auburn University vanity license plate?

1. Yes 0. No

15. How long have you been tailgating at Auburn football games?

1. 0-5 years
2. 5-10 years
3. 10-20 years
4. 20-30 years
5. over 30 years

16. How long have you been tailgating in this location?

1. 0-5 years
2. 5-10 years
3. 10-20 years
4. 20-30 years
5. over 30 years

17. For which of the following reasons do you attend games/gameday? (Select all that apply)

1. See the game
2. Social interaction with family/friends
3. Tailgating atmosphere (excitement and partying)
4. Nothing else to do today
5. Other (please specify):

18. Which of the previous reasons is the single most important for attending games/gameday?

1. See the game
2. Social interaction with family/friends
3. Tailgating atmosphere (excitement and partying)
4. Nothing else to do today
5. Other (please specify):

19. I like Auburn Tigers football because _____

End of survey. Thank you for participating.

Appendix B: Survey Responses

1. How many home Auburn football games do you regularly attend in a given season?

1. None	22 (10%)
2. Some	123 (54%)
3. All	82 (36%)

2. How many away Auburn football games do you regularly attend in a given season?

1. None	114 (50%)
2. Some	106 (47%)
3. All	7 (3%)

3. What state do you live in? _____

Alabama	139 (61%)
Georgia	54 (24%)
Florida	11 (5%)
Kentucky	3 (1.3%)
New Jersey	3 (1.3%)
Tennessee	3 (1.3%)
Texas	3 (1.3%)
Virginia	3 (1.3%)
New York	2 (0.9%)
Colorado	1 (0.4%)
Louisiana	1 (0.4%)
Maryland	1 (0.4%)
Mississippi	1 (0.4%)
North Carolina	1 (0.4%)
South Carolina	1 (0.4%)

4. What county do you live in? _____

Alabama	
Lee	50 (23.5%)
Jefferson	18 (8.5%)
Madison	9 (4.2%)
Shelby	9 (4.2%)
Montgomery	8 (3.8%)
Chambers	6 (2.8%)
Houston	6 (2.8%)
Mobile	6 (2.8%)
Covington	4 (1.9%)
Escambia	2 (0.9%)
Russell	2 (0.9%)

Baldwin	1 (0.5%)
Butler	1 (0.5%)
Chilton	1 (0.5%)
Cleburne	1 (0.5%)
Coffee	1 (0.5%)
Dale	1 (0.5%)
Geneva	1 (0.5%)
Morgan	1 (0.5%)
St. Clair	1 (0.5%)
Talladega	1 (0.5%)
Tuscaloosa	1 (0.5%)
Georgia	
Fulton	10 (4.7%)
Cobb	8 (3.8%)
Gwinnett	6 (2.8%)
Muscogee	6 (2.8%)
Decatur	5 (2.3%)
Dekalb	5 (2.3%)
Cherokee	2 (0.9%)
Coweta	2 (0.9%)
Paulding	2 (0.9%)
Troup	2 (0.9%)
Fayette	1 (0.5%)
Forsyth	1 (0.5%)
Lowndes	1 (0.5%)
Florida	
Hillsborough	3 (1.4%)
Bay	2 (0.9%)
Escambia	1 (0.5%)
Okaloosa	1 (0.5%)
Pinellas	1 (0.5%)
Polk	1 (0.5%)
St. Johns	1 (0.5%)
Kentucky	
Warren	2 (0.9%)
Hopkins	1 (0.5%)
New Jersey	
Monmouth	2 (0.9%)
Somerset	1 (0.5%)
Tennessee	
Davidson	1 (0.5%)

Shelby	1 (0.5%)
Sumner	1 (0.5%)
Texas	
Galveston	1 (0.5%)
Tarrant	1 (0.5%)
Virginia	
Arlington	2 (0.9%)
Fairfax	1 (0.5%)
New York	
Queens	1 (0.5%)
Colorado	
El Paso	1 (0.5%)
Louisiana	
St. Tammany	1 (0.5%)
Maryland	
Prince George	1 (0.5%)
Mississippi	
Harrison	1 (0.5%)
North Carolina	
Mecklenburg	1 (0.5%)
South Carolina	
Horry	1 (0.5%)

5. How far do you live from Jordan-Hare Stadium?

1. < 5 miles	53 (23%)
2. < 25 miles	15 (7%)
3. < 50 miles	21 (9%)
4. < 100 miles	23 (10%)
5. 100+ miles	115 (51%)

6. Do you live in a rural or urban area?

1. Rural	65	(29%)
2. Urban	162	(70%)

7. What is your gender?

1. Male	127	(56%)
2. Female	100	(44%)

8. What is your age?

1. 19-24	65	(29%)
2. 25-44	117	(52%)
3. 45-64	37	(16%)
4. 65 or above	8	(4%)

9. What do you consider to be your race or ethnicity?

1. African-American	15	(7%)
2. Asian	2	(1%)
3. Hispanic	4	(2%)
4. Native American	1	(0.5%)
5. White	193	(88%)
6. Other (please specify):	4	(2%)
-Other		
-Asian/Hispanic/White		
-Hawaiian		
-Irish		

10. What is your marital status?

1. Single	124	(57%)
2. Married	90	(41%)
3. Separated/Divorced	5	(2%)
4. Widow(er)	1	(0.5%)

11. Did you attend Auburn University?

1. Yes	156	(71%)
0. No	63	(29%)

12. Did anyone in your family attend Auburn University?

1. Yes	151	(69%)
0. No	68	(31%)
Both fan and family attended	111	(51%)
Fan attended, family did not	45	(21%)
Fan did not attend, family did	40	(18%)
Neither fan nor family attended	23	(10%)

1	(5%)
2	(9%)
3	(8%)
1, 2	(7%)
1, 2, 3	(48%)
1, 2, 3, 4	(3%)
1, 2, 3, 5	(3%)
1, 2, 3, 4, 5	(<1%)
1, 3	(4%)
1, 3, 5	(<1%)
2, 3	(9%)
2, 3, 5	(<1%)
2, 5	(<1%)
5	(2%)

18. Which of the previous reasons is the single most important for attending games/gameday?

1. See the game	84 (41%)
2. Social interaction with family/friends	79 (39%)
3. Tailgating atmosphere	34 (17%)
4. Nothing else to do today	(0%)
5. Other	(4%)

19. I like Auburn Tigers football because _____ (see Appendix C)

Appendix C

“I like Auburn Tigers football because...” responses

no comment

It is exciting to watch people compete at the top of their capability. More motivation for competition than in NFL.

I grew a passion for it after coming to Auburn. Did marching band freshman year.

mascot confusion

of the great atmosphere

they are my team

family connection

of fan camaraderie and entertainment of sport.

of the family tradition. AU stands for diversity and honorable things.

of the friendly atmosphere.

Cam

loyal fans, Cam Newton is #1, Cam Newton's ass is #2, beer is #3...loyalty.

of pride in my alma mater.

we are the best in the nation.

always exciting.

of the family atmosphere

tradition

family tradition.

I went to school here

it is excitng.

tradition and because we are better than you. We got Cam f'n Newton.

we are better than you and our people are better than you.

family tradition.

blue and orange

no comment

it reminds me of my childhood

born and raised a fan

great family feeling/connection

we represent what is good about college football.

it is in my blood, grew up going to games and rooting for Auburn. AU is home away from home.

it is a family tradition.

my wife does

of the Auburn family

family, part of my makeup

it is a family tradition.

I love auburn and like it here

I love auburn

I like talking to my students about Auburn football. Teach high school english

Ausome

it brings a joy to my life

I believe in auburn and love it

cam newton is innocent

it is fun

I love it
cam! Woo!
it's a family thing
we are fucking awesome this year
it is in my heritage
togetherness
I like to get drunk
I believe in it and LOVE it
they're good
I love football and auburn
I am an auburn tiger
it's family
I have pride in my school and like to support them
I believe in auburn and love it
war eagle!
we fuckin win, win, win, no matter what, what, what
almost nothing gets me more passionate and fired up
it's great to be an AU TIGER
AU is the shit
WAR EAGLE
cam newton
roll tide!
just come :)

it's great to be an AU TIGER

the surveys

everything it means to be an AU tiger!

I went to school here. Unlike the majority of Alabama fans, who did not go to Alabama
war damn eagle!

they win at a higher skill level because of cam newton

they are my home school

war eagle!

it is the shit

people, atmosphere, and town

entertainment

it rocks

alabama sucks

family

just do

they're the SHIT

I like their spirit

it's family and we're classy

our offense is great, and our defense sucks.

I believe

we are awesome

my heart belongs to Auburn! :)

it is family

it's a different experience than most others. Positive experience.

my friends do

tradition

I am an auburn tiger!

children attend AU

we are family!

we are family

I believe in auburn and love it

I'm an auburn graduate! Auburn family!

of tradition

of the "family" and daughter grad.

it is home

great atmosphere and awesome fan base.

I love tailgating

proud to be an Auburn tiger

exciting, friendly, comfortable atmosphere

my husband does.

I believe in auburn

I grew up with it

I was born that way!

my girlfriend loves it!

I bleed orange and blue

I'm a fan by default but NYC doesn't have a college fb team. If my boyfriend likes them then they have to be good :)

I believe in auburn and love it!

southern hospitality

period!

I am a true Auburn fan

history, family went to school

it's a family

we are the best team in the country

I was raised to be an Auburn Tiger!

it's family

the energy

fans are friendly

I am an Auburn graduate

I love Auburn

it's my school

I believe in Auburn and love it

it's a family thing

I believe in Auburn and love it

game day

everything!!

my friend showed me the Tiger way!

I love Auburn

"I believe in Auburn, and love it" -Petrie!

I grew up an AU fan and went here!

it is family

I believe in Auburn and LOVE it!! WAR EAGLE!

alum/parent

I'm an auburn fan and proud of it!!

family and friends

Chizik, Newton, Family

Cam Newton

Auburn is the best place in the world!! :)

pride and family

I believe in Auburn and love it.

I believe in AU and love it!

we are a family!

it is fun.

I'm an Auburn local.

we are awesome

I went to school here.

they ROCK!

it's in my blood!

HOT A\$\$ cheerleaders byotch!

it's AUsome!

it's a friendly family atmosphere

I'm here with my girlfriend

it represents a family, not just a university!

I'm an alum

I just love Auburn!

it's tradition, I believe in Auburn and love it!

I love to look at hot football players

it's great

there is nothing better. I believe in Auburn and love it.

to meet new people

it is amazing and gives me the chills!! I'm all IN!!

it's a way of life! War Damn Eagle! I bleed orange and blue!

?

class

of the women, and I like Auburn. WAR EAGLE

family/sense of family.

I believe in Auburn and love it.

undefeated

it's family.

it is family

I am a Tiger

we are the great Auburn Tigers

it is exciting

they kick ass

it's family and friends

I'm a tiger fan, entertainment.

it's a family and tight-knit community

it is exciting and it is in our blood!

game day atmosphere

tradition

I'm a loyal Auburn alum.

I believe in Auburn and love it!

family, tradition

I was born an Auburn Tiger; Tradition! & I hate Alabama (sports)!

it gives me a chance to see all my friends and visit Auburn's campus.

it's perfect

of the family atmosphere

I am an AU graduate!

it's great to be an Auburn Tiger

grew up as a fan and grad from Auburn

I grew up in an Auburn family and have "pulled" for the Auburn Tigers for as long as I can remember.

I was raised by an avid Auburn fan, graduate x2 who loved Auburn with his heart and soul and instilled the same love for Auburn in my own heart and soul.

it's a great team and atmosphere

Auburn is awesome!

we are family.

it brings my family together

it's Auburn

my son's a prospect

always a great atmosphere regardless of record!! :)

they are my team!

family atmosphere

I attended this school and keep wanting to come back.

family, football, friends, food

I believe in Auburn and love it!

I believe in Auburn and love it!

I believe in AU and love it!

just always have

War Eagle

I love Auburn and believe in Auburn

I believe in Auburn and love it!