

# Geographic and Style Models for Historical Map Alignment and Toponym Recognition

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In collaboration with  
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U. Autònoma de Barcelona



## Main Theme



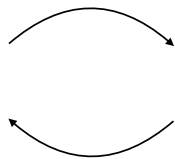
Minnesota (1866), U.S. General Land Office, davidrumsey.com, CC-BY-NC-SA

## Main Theme

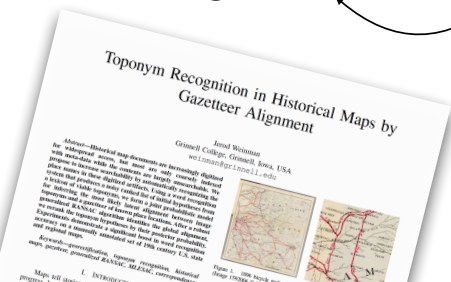
Region Meta-Data



Text  
Recognition



Map-Atlas  
Alignment



## Challenges

- Predict text label location for regions and rivers



# Overview

- Data
- Bayes net model
- Inference process
- Results
- Conclusions

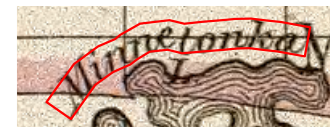
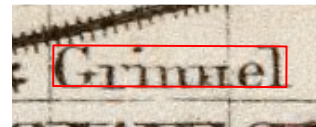
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# US Geographical Survey

- Geographic Names Information System (GNIS)
  - Official and historic names [geonames.usgs.gov](http://geonames.usgs.gov)
  - Geographical coordinate
  - 65 feature classes (*Arch, Bay, Cape, Dam, ..., Valley, Woods*)
- National Hydrography Dataset [nhd.usgs.gov](http://nhd.usgs.gov)
  - Polygons and polylines
  - Covers classes *Bay, Canal, Lake, Reservoir, Stream, and Swamp*

# Annotated Map Benchmarks



- 30 maps, 1866–1927 AD
- 12,500 word boxes
- Ground truth text
- Marker coordinate
- GNIS feature identifier

doi:11084/19349

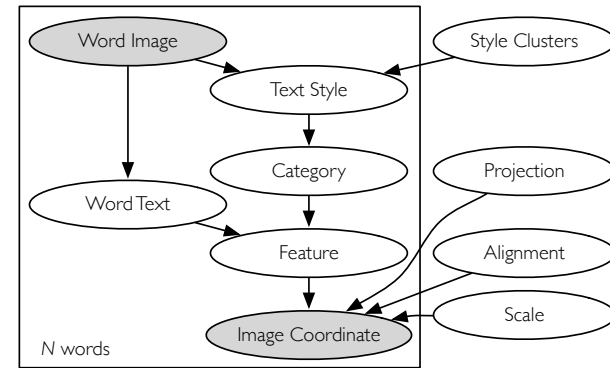
Image Source: davidrumsey.com, CC-BY-NC-SA

Iowa (1866), U.S. General Land Office  
Minnesota (1866), U.S. General Land Office

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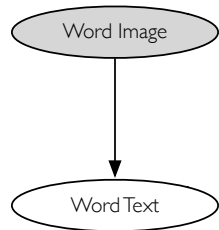
# Bayes Net Model



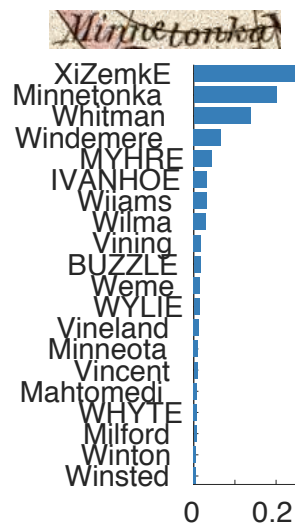
Properties of each identified word

Map properties

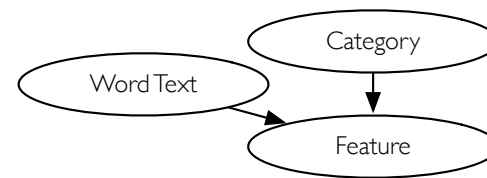
# Text Recognition



CNN + wFST → Beam Search  
(Weinman et al., TPAMI 2014)

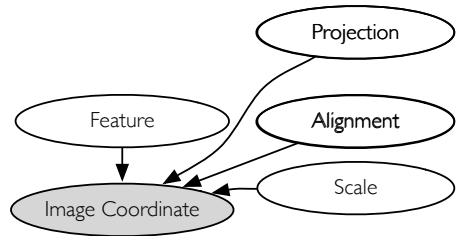


# Feature Prediction



$$\text{Prob}(\text{Feature} \mid \text{Category}, \text{Word Text}) \propto \begin{cases} \text{one, if word text matches feature from category} \\ \text{zero, otherwise} \end{cases}$$

# Projection and Alignment



# Projection and Alignment

Coordinate Space

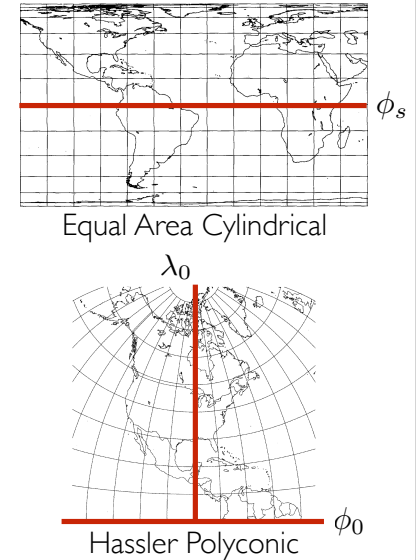
Spherical  $[\lambda, \phi]^T$

Projection

Cartesian  $[u, v]^T$

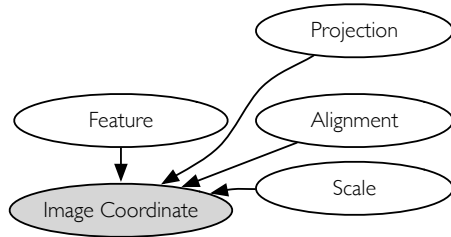
Alignment

Image  $[x, y]^T$



Figures: Snyder 1989, USGS PP 1453

# Coordinate Prediction



Likelihood

**Outlier**

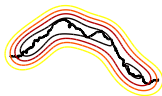


Constant

**Point**



**Polyline**



**Polygon**



Distance ~ Gaussian

# Style Prediction



Unsupervised clustering of word image features



Note: Size-normalized words for display  
Image Opacity = Style Probability

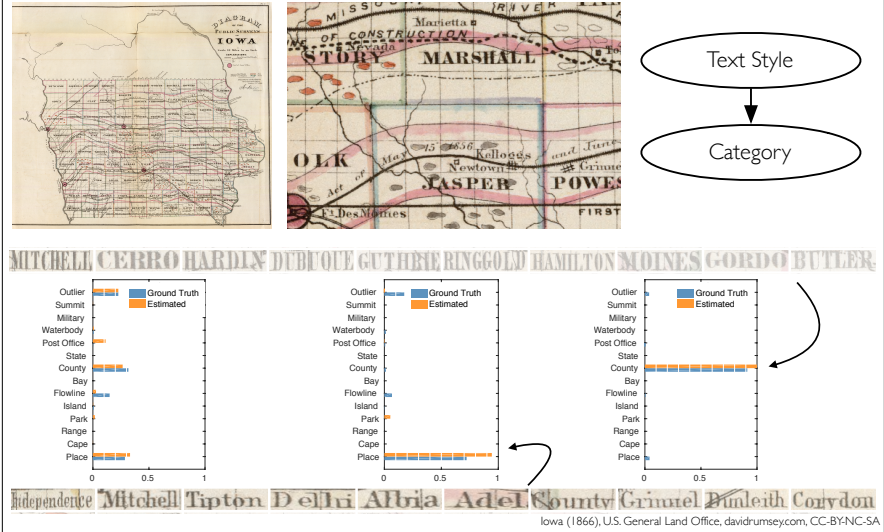
Style



Higher ← Style Prob → Lower

Wyoming (1927), Rand McNally, davidrumsey.com, CC-BY-NC-SA

# Category Prediction

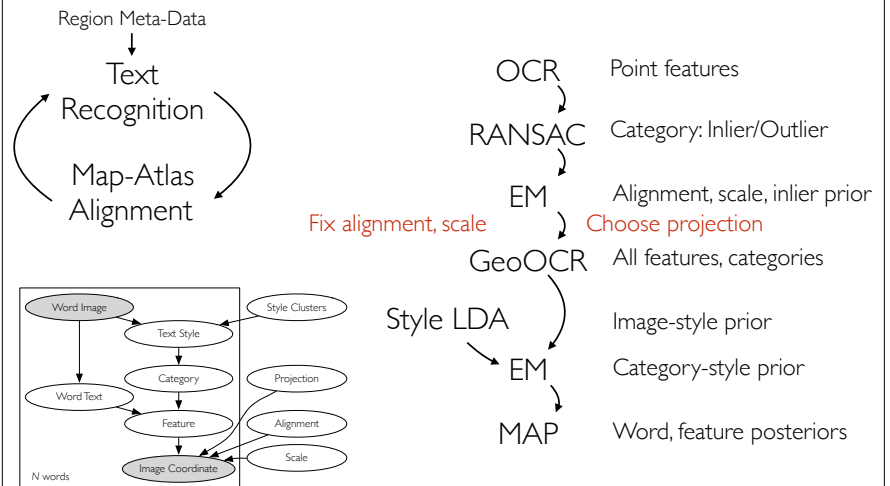


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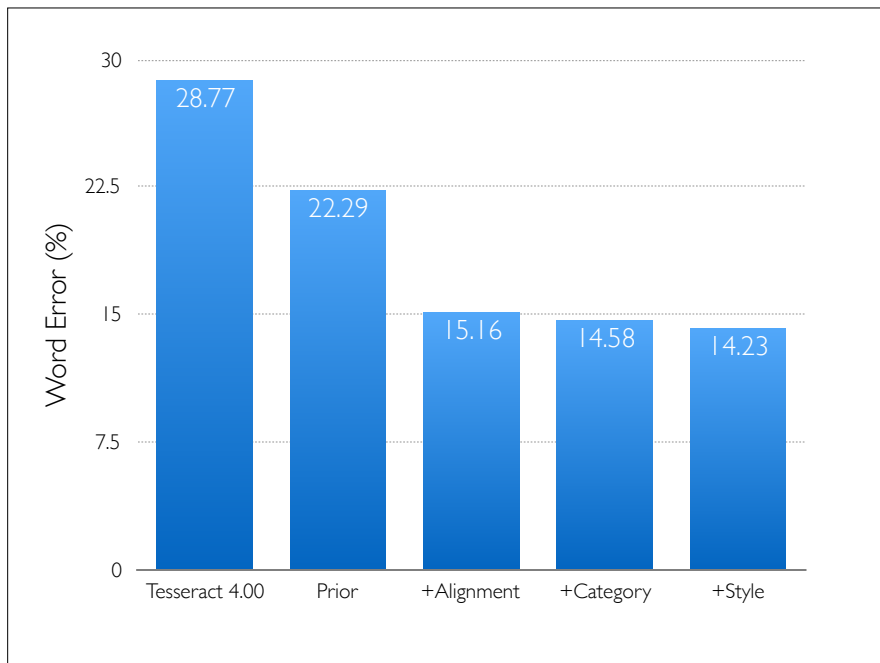
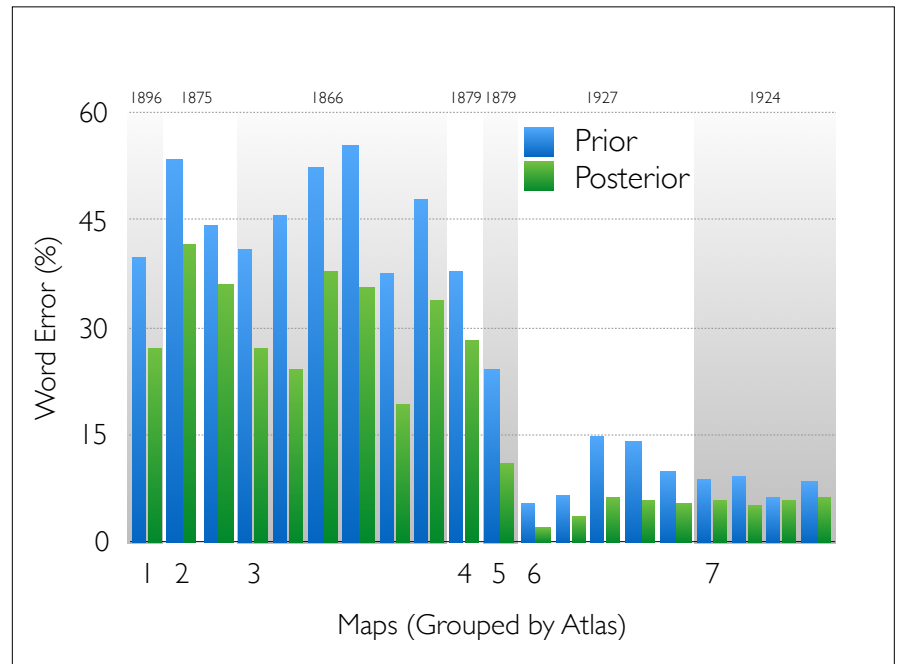
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# Inference Process



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# Conclusions

- Fine-tuning geographic/cartographic correction improves word, feature, and category recognition ...
- but still strongly limited by original OCR quality
- Style model greatly improves feature/category recognition

# Thank You!

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<http://www.cs.grinnell.edu/~weinman/research/maps.shtml>

- Collaborators  
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Barcelona