4.8: Combining Segment Data

As audience segmentation techniques become more sophisticated, we see new ways of organizing and clustering individuals according to a combination of characteristics. For instance, the Jefferson Institute has created a project called "Patchwork Nation."

According to their website, Patchwork Nation "aims to explore what is happening in the United States by examining different kinds of communities over time. The effort uses demographic, voting and cultural data to cluster and organize communities into ‘types of place.’ Patchwork divides America’s 3,141 counties into 12 community types based on characteristics such as income level, racial composition, employment and religion. It also breaks the nation's 435 congressional districts into nine categories, using the same data points and clustering techniques."

The characteristics of Patchwork Nation locations incorporate demographic, psychographic and political data to generate a map of the country that might be used to define an advertising audience, explain voter behavior for a news story, or target a community for a PR campaign. Examining the elements of regional characteristics can give you ideas about the diversity of audiences and an appreciation for the challenge of understanding how best to reach specific segments.

http://www.patchworknation.org/