

Dialect Geography, the Midlands, and the 'North-South Divide'
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Linguistically, certain variables, especially phonological ones, are well-known shibboleths of northern and southern identity, suggesting that 'North' and 'South' are English linguistic realities. But in the Midlands there exists a region, itself diverse, which many of its inhabitants regard as distinct from either extreme. Is this claim to a Midland identity supportable on linguistic grounds? This paper concentrates on available mapped evidence to probe the question and, to the extent that the answer is affirmative, to suggest Midland linguistic bounds.