



Countermanding Gerrymandering

The boundaries of a state's legislative and congressional districts are most often controlled by the party in power in that state at the time of redistricting. As you might expect, the party does its best to create districts that maximize its own power. Creating bizarrely shaped districts that give a party an unfair advantage, however, is called *partisan gerrymandering*. Mathematicians are working with political scientists to incorporate geometry and computing power to create millions of redistricting schemes for a state and assign measures of irregularity to each scheme. That way proposed redistricting plans can be compared with the computer-generated possibilities and the highly unfair plans will stand out and be rejected.

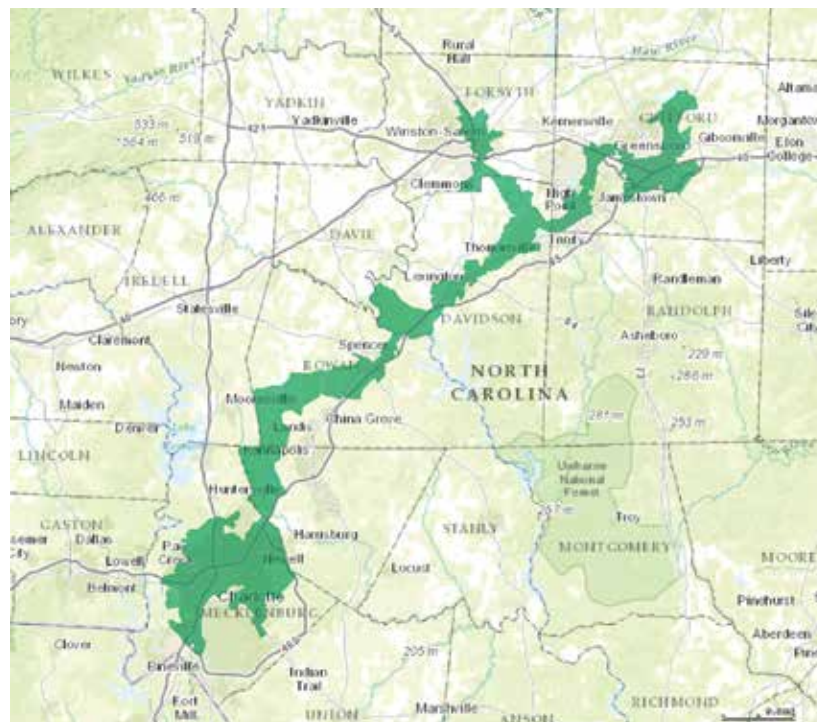
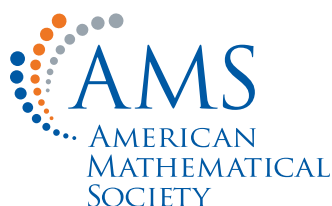


Image: North Carolina's 12th Congressional District.

Listen Up!



MM/132.s



The **Mathematical Moments** program promotes appreciation and understanding of the role mathematics plays in science, nature, technology, and human culture.

www.ams.org/mathmoments