

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to get you to start thinking (in general terms) about what makes a map good or bad. As we go through the semester we will discuss this in much more detail. This assignment aimed at getting you to be on the lookout for maps and begin development of your map critiquing skills (which I am sure will have honed by the end of the semester). I hope you have some fun with this one, as I am sure you will find there are many more maps out there than you might have thought at first, and many of them bad, really bad, really really bad. So, I hope you find this project fun, and by the way I am always on the lookout for unique maps to use in class so if you come across any send them my way!

Assignment

Your assignment, should you choose to undertake it, is to find four maps. Two of these should be what you think are examples of good maps, and two of these should be examples of bad maps. They can come from anywhere, books, magazines, travel brochures. FYI, there is a map library in Evans Library. It has recently moved to the 2nd floor and has lots of maps.

There are no hard and fast rules about what makes a map good or bad. The primary criterion, however, should always be whether or not a map is intelligible. That is to say does the map make its point in a clear and unambiguous manner to its intended audience. In order to accomplish this, often it is necessary to make sure there is a proper use of color, text, symbols, patterns etc. If these elements are used well then the map will clearly convey its point to the map percipient, otherwise, it may send a muddle message. Remember that each map must be evaluated within the context for which it was designed. What might make a map in a travel guide to the Bahamas good or bad are probably not the same things that would make a map in a geography journal good or bad. There is a discussion of map aesthetics on page 239 of your textbook may help

For you assignment, analyze each map with regard to good cartographic design and be specific in your analysis. Create a list (1, 2, 3...) of good design characteristics and poor design characteristics for each of the four maps. For example, if there is good use of color in separating out information say something this.

- Good use of color - the colors were effective in separating out different layers of information

or if there were good use of color in an aesthetic use

- Good use of color - aesthetically pleasing

Finally, write a brief discussion (one to two paragraphs) of why you found the map to be good or bad and please turn in photocopies of the maps in addition to your typed evaluations.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to talk to me