Project 2: Mapping

Description

You will create three maps of your real-life social network, each one designed to highlight different aspects of its content. Each map should:

• engage viewers and encourage exploration of its complexity
• help you and others discover patterns among the relationships in your life
• present an aesthetically appealing composition

Your final maps should be effective representations of data that use a consistent visual language. But there is also room for creative embellishment, within the limits of your visual system. Your maps should not be dry and dreary, but exciting to the eyes. Use the content as inspiration, and take advantage of the complexity of the data to create something beautiful.

Purpose

To give you experience:

• creating and organizing a data set that is personally meaningful to you
• designing multivariate, visual systems
• representing the same data in multiple forms
• grappling with issues specific to visualizing network data
### Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thu Sep 6</td>
<td>Project introduced</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spreadsheet tutorial</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Generate data set concepts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue Sep 11</td>
<td><strong>Data proposal due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu Sep 13</td>
<td><strong>Data set due</strong></td>
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<td>Tue Sep 18</td>
<td><strong>Initial visual concepts due</strong></td>
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<td>Thu Sep 20</td>
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<td>Tue Sep 25</td>
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<td>Thu Sep 27</td>
<td><strong>Printed posters due</strong>, group critique</td>
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<td>Special guest: Wes Grubbs</td>
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<td>Tue Oct 2</td>
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<td>Thu Oct 4</td>
<td><strong>Final posters and PDF due</strong>, final presentations</td>
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<td>Tue Oct 9</td>
<td>Fall break</td>
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Assignments

Data Proposal

Your data will include basic information about you and the other people in your life. You get to choose who to include and who to exclude from your data set. For example, you might want to include only family members, or only friends, or both, plus casual acquaintances, classmates, coworkers, and so on.

You must have between 25 and 50 people in your final data set, including yourself.

For each person, you must include the following data:

• name
• relationship to you
• current geographic location
• when you first met the person (or how long ago)
• the names of all the other people in your data set that this person would consider to be part of his or her own social network

That is 5 pieces of data for each person. You must propose 3 additional pieces of data, so you will have a total of 8 data values for each person. We will brainstorm ideas together in class.

Your data proposal is a simple, one-page document with the following:

• your name
• the date
• a couple sentences explaining who you will include in your data set
• a list of the 5 additional pieces of data you will include in your data set

Data Set

Create a spreadsheet table for organizing your data. It should have one row for each person, and at least one column for each of the 8 pieces of information you’ll include. (We will go over how to set up a spreadsheet in class.)

Once your spreadsheet is set up, start filling it in! If you can’t recreate all the data from memory, then contact the individuals and ask them for help with the answers.

Your final data set will be a spreadsheet with 8 pieces of information on 25-50 people in your social network. This is the content that you will visualize in your three maps.
Three Maps

Finally, you will create three different, multivariate maps (or “views”) of the data set. Each map should be designed to emphasize one or two different aspects of the data. The first map must illustrate geographic relationships within your network. The second map needs to visualize the different kinds of relationships. For the third map, choose two other columns of data to emphasize.

Each map must use a visual system that accounts for at least 4 of your columns of data — meaning, each will be a multivariate visualization, showcasing at least 4 dimensions of your data set. Each of your 8 columns must be used at least once on one of your maps.

Your final maps must use color, and must be 17” by 22” each. You can choose whether each one has a horizontal or vertical orientation. This is a lot of room to work with, so take advantage of it, and include as much data as you can. (Consider your Tuftean data-ink ratio!)

Your final designs must be in scalable, vector form, so I strongly recommend you use Illustrator for this project. (If you want to use Photoshop or another tool, we should talk about how you will export and print the vector shapes.)
Final Deliverables

The final project must be submitted as:

- **3 high-quality color data maps, 17” by 22” each** (either landscape or portrait orientation, either printed on a single sheet of paper or well-tiled) and

- **a single PDF file** containing:
  - Your name
  - The title of this course
  - The title of this project
  - The date
  - 2–3 paragraphs describing your process
  - Your original data proposal
  - Your original data set, in spreadsheet form
  - Your 3 final map designs, in scalable, vector form, each on a single page

Grading Standards

A  Completed the required deliverables. Was engaged throughout the process, collected interesting data, created three maps that are visually consistent systems, successful representations of the data, and aesthetically superlative. Wrote thoughtful and clear documentation, and packaged the final product professionally.

B  Completed the required deliverables. Was engaged throughout the process, created three successful visualizations that are visually consistent systems and of reasonable aesthetic value. Wrote clear documentation, and packaged the final product well.

C  Completed the minimum required deliverables. Created adequate visualizations, but with some inconsistencies in their visual language and/or with little aesthetic value. Documentation was unclear, or not professionally packaged.

D  Did not complete the required deliverables, or did not complete them on time.