

Monmonier's "How to Lie with Maps"

"Not only is it easy to lie with maps, it's essential. To portray meaningful relationships for a complex, three-dimensional world on a flat sheet of paper or a video screen, a map must distort reality. As a scale model, the map must use symbols that almost always are proportionally much bigger or thicker than the features they represent. To avoid hiding critical information in a fog of detail, the map must offer a selective, incomplete view of reality. There's no escape from the cartographic paradox: to present a useful and truthful picture, an accurate map must tell white lies" (1).

NPR: "'Maps are still something that are best understood with images' ...but this radio..."

"These documents that show how people related to the world ...revealing so much that is not just functional..."

Authorial Production and Affordances by Map Makers/Artists/Cartographers

"What they decide to leave out is just as important as what they include"

1. How so, why? Provide an example:

What does it tell you about the view of the world?

2. Both the NPR interview and Monmonier's piece suggest that maps are created with biases, value systems, and particular perspectives of space. In what ways do they make implicit arguments/show the creator's perspective? (again, examples?)

WAM [2/4/25]

VISUALLY MAPPING RELATIONS TO THE SPACE AROUND US & CHARTING VALUES

Specific Editorial Decisions of Inclusion & Exclusion

Maps: How we exist in space...[not just to get from point 'A' to point 'B']

"What is relevant to what I want to say and how we exist in space?"

*"Most maps are about how we as a civilization, as different cultures, perceive our lives in this box we live in, all human activity takes place in space and cartography is the thing that **lets us keep track of that space**"*

3. If maps are trusted as Monmonier claims, what types of elements/variables/choices might be analyzed to reveal the (seemingly less persuasive process of) "keeping track of that space" as a rhetorical argument?