

Community Mapping: *Exploring what it means to us*

*In their most literal sense, maps provide direction.
Map making by community groups can bring focus to
an issue and help to show the way toward the best
locally made answers.*
~ Katherine Dunster



*If maps do express our relation to place, then
community and ecological recovery depends on re-
mapping and re-presenting the worlds around us.*
~ Maeve Lydon

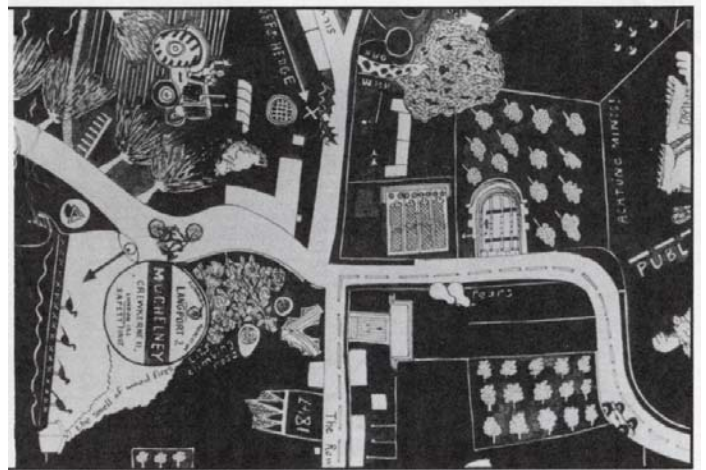
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A work in progress
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A 'zine produced for my Master's of Environmental Studies major research project Supervised by Chris Cavanagh at the Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University in Toronto.

Cover Image: Leanne Hodges: Quadra Island Shorelines, BC



Gordon Young: Muchelney Parish Map, 1888

From *Islands in the Salish Sea: A Community Atlas*

The map locates accurately on land those places we value, while providing some space on the paper to wax and paint poetically what those values are. In this age of increasing land-use conflicts, there is a renaissance of mapping to mark places of exquisite value in the hopes of saving them. We can make illustrated maps of special places—indeed, everyone can.

From Indonesia to Italy, there are groups of people who have used maps to set down the exact locations of special places whose values are not necessarily congruent with commercial importance. These maps might be the landing stages of the Brant geese along the Pacific flyway, ancient village sites or a favourite walk.... The urge to map comes from the same base as the urge to sing, dance or write. If you put things down on a map, it is an expression of both knowledge (microscope) and art (mandolin). If someone has taken the time and effort to record it, then it has value. People become aware of and sensitized to these values, and they can then become advocates for them. Look at the power of political boundaries that are visible only on a map; they can lead to wars. How much better to use a map for peace.

Community maps provide a geographical as well as historical record of what makes a place unique and livable. They record the special information that isn't included on the maps that tell us where to drive, locate mines or build shopping malls. Instead, they record the places where our children's imaginations learn to soar and where we feel at home. Community maps are a reflection of all the love and positive power in a community.

Mapping is a great excuse to talk to the neighbours, old-timers and local kids, and listen to tree frogs and barred owls, even in the city. You can map where rivers used to run and believe that they may run once again. Learn the names of your favourite trees and sniff the delicate aroma of skunk cabbages in March. Stick in all those important bits of information like the First Nations' place names, a heritage building, an outcrop of ancient granite, some secret trail or the hedge where a song sparrow is singing. You don't need to be an expert, and it doesn't have to be done with a computer. Maps can be made with red earth on a cave wall. In the future, who is to say which maps will survive the test of time and which spoke the greatest truth?

~ Briony Penn

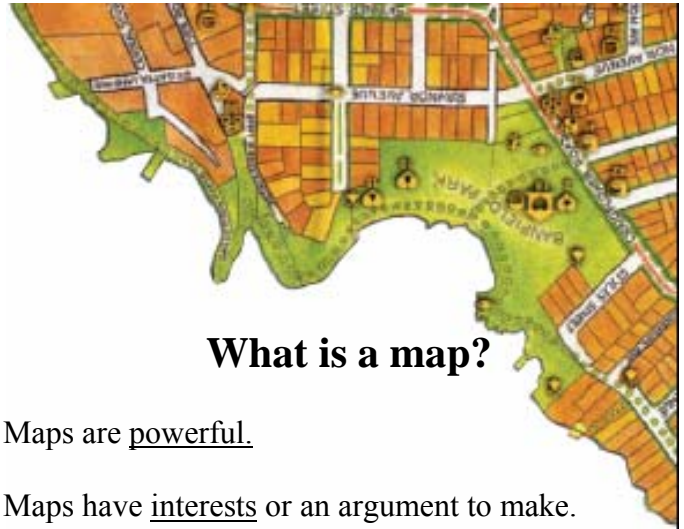


Gloria Massé: Gambier Island, B.C.



Judi Stevenson: Briony Penn and Jan Kirby, 2000

Maps are a basic form of communication – *laying down the law* (property maps, zoning maps), *analyzing* (weather patterns, import/export trends), or *persuading* (artistic maps, occupancy or development maps). Maps have tremendous power. ~ Sheila Harrington



What is a map?

Maps are powerful.

Maps have interests or an argument to make.

Maps are socially constructed.

Maps are often conventionalized (they become seen as true or real).

Maps are shaped by (and shape) political, economic, social, and cultural discourses of the time.

Maps are a means of communication that many people find appealing.

Hang a map up anywhere and people are drawn toward it to find out what it means and to see where they live.

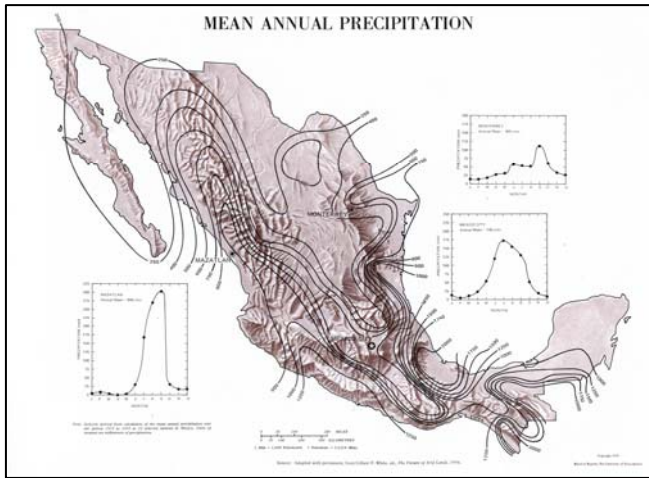
~ Katherine Dunster

Maps come in many forms, such as aboriginal maps of stories, songs, or dreams showing the convergence of boundaries between realms.

Maps have different ways of representing time. Some may represent one moment in time while others show changes. Some maps have multiple editions.

Maps are relational—they represent relationships between spatial or physical elements, cultural values and abstract ideas. For example: a road map shows the distance between physical places, but also shows cultural relationships in place names and abstract ideas, such as wilderness or adventure.

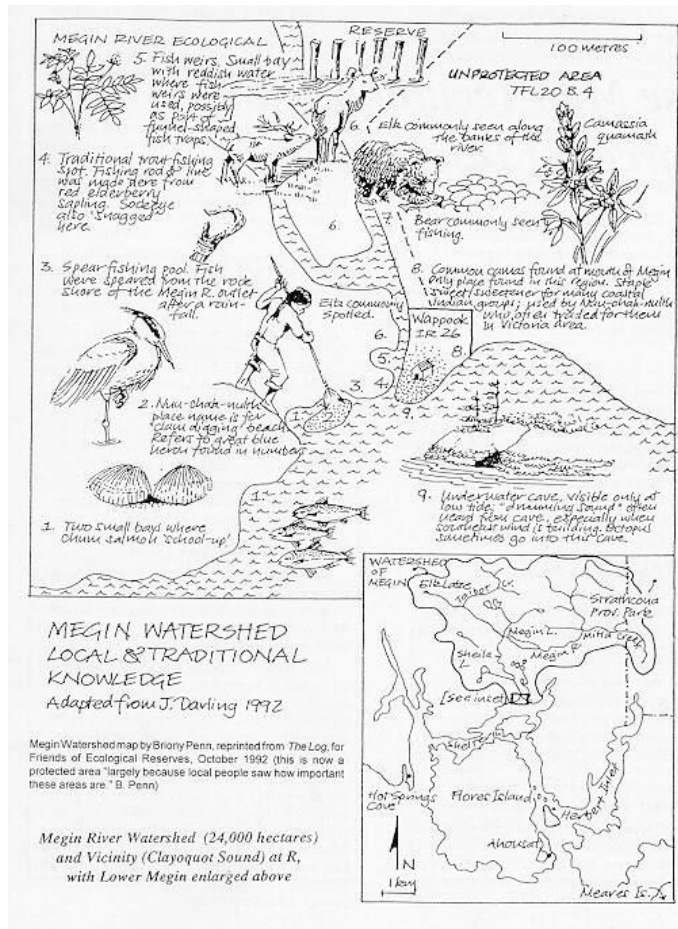
Maps reflect the map-maker's worldview: the relationship between the map's creator and the topic is important to consider.



University of Texas: Mean Annual Precipitation, 1975

Maps can show a clear vision for the future and can depict strategies of resistance.

~ Doug Aberly



MEGIN WATERSHED LOCAL & TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE Adapted from J. Davling 1992

Megin Watershed map by Briony Penn, reprinted from *The Log*, for Friends of Ecological Reserves, October 1992 (this is now a protected area "largely because local people saw how important these areas are" B. Penn)

Megin River Watershed (24,000 hectares) and Vicinity (Clayoquot Sound) at R, with Lower Megin enlarged above

Briony Penn: Megin Watershed, Clayoquot Sound B.C., 1992

What is Community Mapping?

Maps can show a vision for the future more clearly than thousands of words.

~ Doug Aberly



Derrick Lundy: Salt Spring Island, B.C.'s MapFest 2000

Community mapping strives for transparency

It sets clear goals and often makes these project goals public.

It makes the context and authorship of the maps as clear as possible.

It strives to be clear, accessible, accountable and open.

It pays attention to the process of mapping, not just the product: how participants work together and discuss issues of place and representation is as important as the map itself.

Community mapping fosters empowerment

It helps participants self-define and represent places that are important to them.

It works towards community control over natural or other resources.

It mobilizes communities for collective action.

Community mapping works towards inclusion

It is a collective endeavor to represent a range of interested community members.

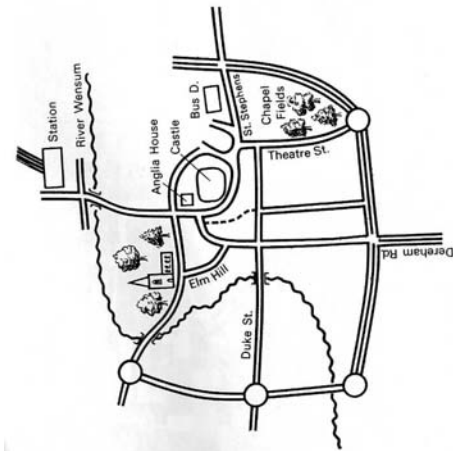
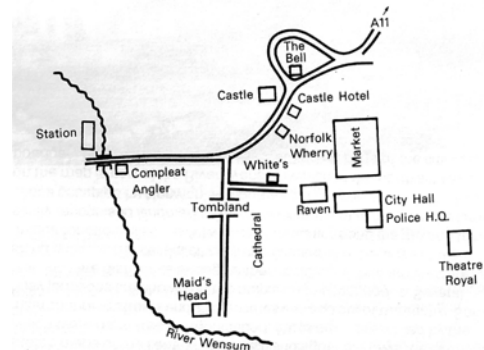
It involves populations formerly excluded from mapping and attempts to gain diverse involvement within local communities, through, for example, the participation of elders and children.

The community defines its own issues and goals.

The community directs the process.

The mapping process and the product are designed to benefit the community.

The community controls the use of the maps.



Two Sketch Maps of Central Norwich, England

These maps of the same area of town were drawn by two different community members. The first was drawn by a person who travels primarily by foot and the second by car; notice how different their understandings of their community are. Including all the different voices of the community is important in community mapping.



WaterAid: Community Mapping in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Community mapping is about community building and strengthening

It encourages collaboration and sharing among participants.

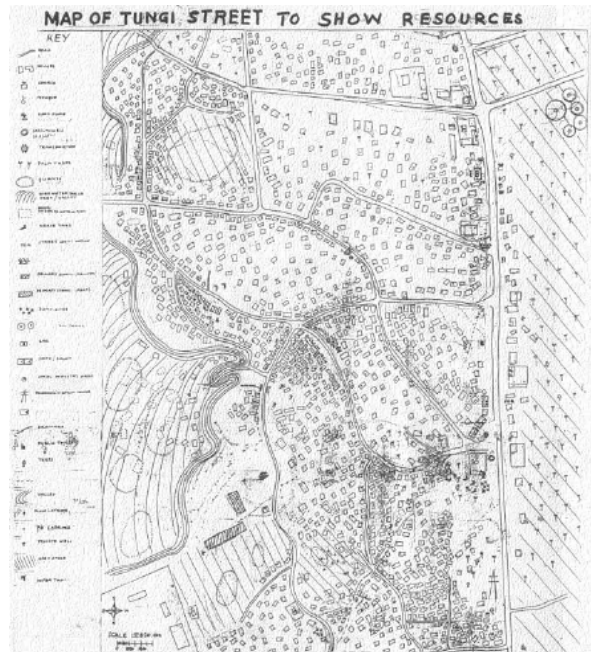
It supports participant dialogue and relationship-building.

Community mapping enables many forms of expression

It can capture emotional and other abstract connections experienced by the mapmaker(s).

Maps may vary from scientific to artistic in style, representing anything from ideas to values or objects.

Literacy and geography skills are not essential.



Map of Tungi Street, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

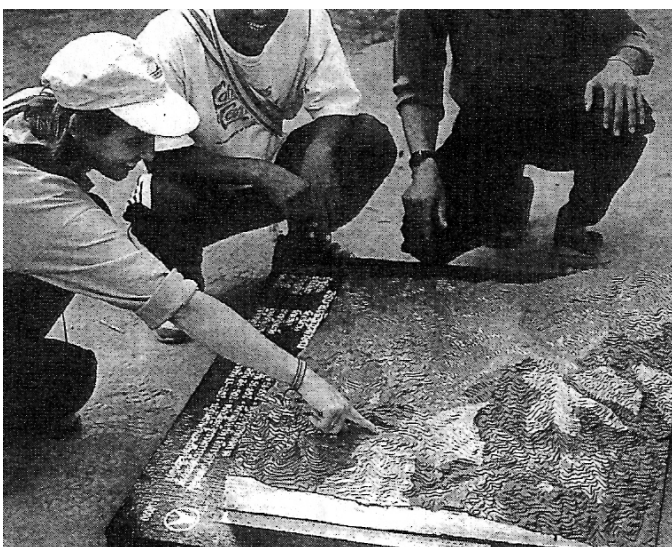


Pamela Williams: Buck Lake Run-Off Area, Pender Island, B.C.

Community mapping helps people understand their relationships to places

The people who live and work in a place have the most intimate knowledge of the place.

~ Alix Flavelle



3-D Contour Map of Sam-Mun Watershed, Thailand, 1992

Choosing How to Map

Mapping is a unique representational medium because there are so many ways to depict the world. Choosing which type of map to make involves considering:

- What do community members feel is an accurate way to represent what they want to show?
- What is the best medium to choose to achieve the goals of the mapping project?
- What form of representation best suits community time and resources?

Different maps can appeal to an audience (such as children, communities, government or industry) while highlighting different things.

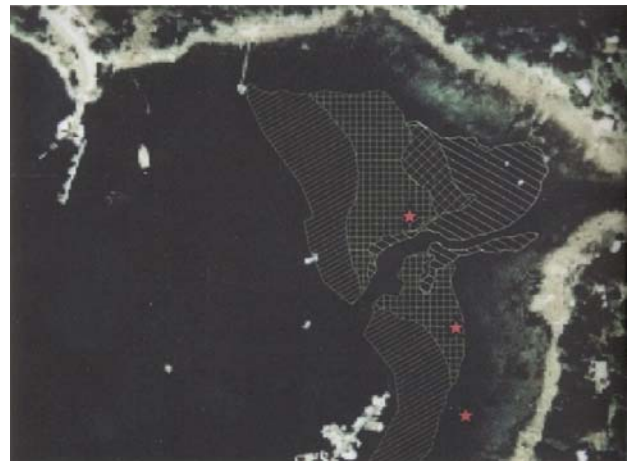
The map at the top right demonstrates the variety of forms a map can take. The four maps below represent the same section of Cortes Island, British Columbia.



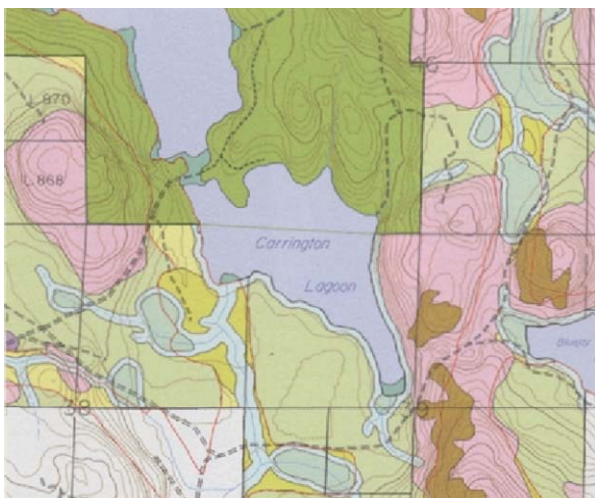
Caffyn Kelley: Salt Spring Island Watershed Cloak, B.C.



A community map of place.



A map, using satellite imagery, to show eelgrass habitat (an indicator of ecosystem health).



A forestry map including resource zoning and management.



A map of home created by local children

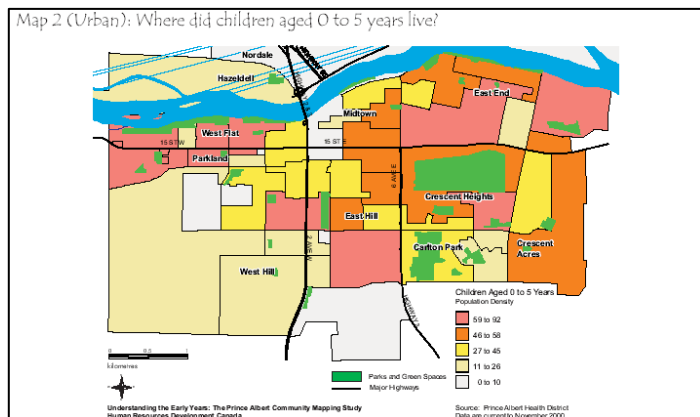
Maps and Power

One thing I have learned as a professional geographer is that whoever has the maps in their hands controls the fate of the land.

~ Briony Penn

As a form of representation, maps tend to be taken as truth, especially ones that appear to be scientific.

However, maps are created within cultural and historical contexts, which they reflect in what they choose to represent and how.



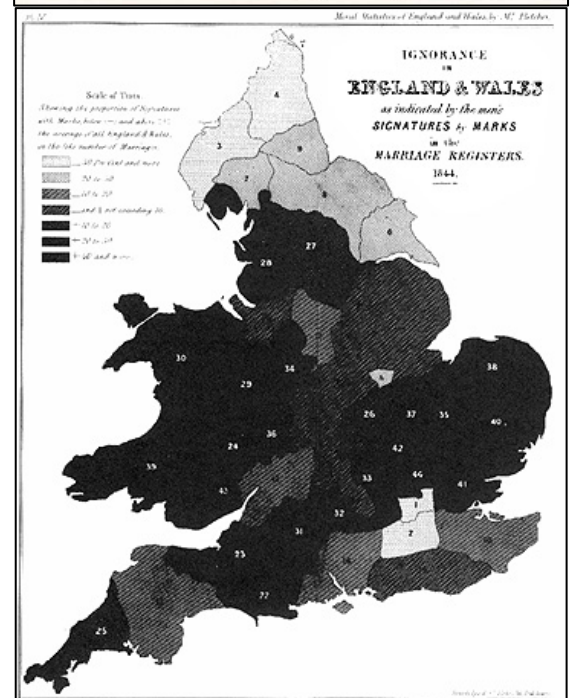
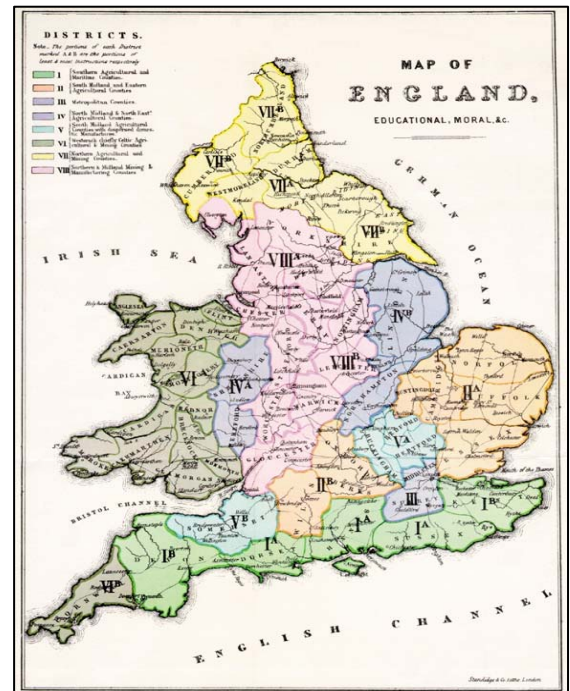
Human Resources Development Canada, 2000

This map depicts the distribution of living areas of young children across a neighbourhood in a city. Instead of seeing this map as simply a representation of “fact” or “reality,” consider who it was made by, why it was made, how it was compiled, and what it might be used for.

Alongside densities of young children, green spaces, waterways and roads are the only land features shown. The map seems to suggest that most young children live close to green spaces and waterways. However, a map of walking-distance grocery stores, low-income housing, affordable daycare, or transit routes might tell a different story. This means that if decision-makers want to plan for more child-friendly neighbourhoods, this map would only indicate a select few of the important factors.

Ultimately, the mapmakers (a division of the government) had their own assumptions about what was and was not relevant to include; but this does not necessarily hold true for all of the community members.

Map-making has been used as a tool of the powerful for centuries. The following maps of England produced in the 19th century were part of an attempt by the government to determine the distribution of citizens’ moral character using level of education and marriage as indicators.



Fletcher’s Moral Statistics Maps, 1849

Would such maps be seen as “truth” today? These representations did not necessarily represent “truth” for all citizens when they were produced, either.

**From *Rediscovering our Common Ground:*
*Mapping and Eco-Activism***

Who makes the map? The answer will determine who decides what is important, what routes lie open to the user, and, in effect, whose reality counts.

Maps provide unique modes of manipulation and control. They can decide whose worldview and reality count... Maps are subjective renderings of place and reflect the worldview of the mapmaker. Since the advent of perspective geometry in the 15th century, followed by the rise of colonialism and the Scientific Revolution, mapmaking in the West has followed a utilitarian, scientific and technical tradition.

Maps, rather than reflections of community—and traditional ecological and cultural knowledge—became possessions and instruments of power increasingly in the hands of those with colonial and commercial interests. Cartography soon became an indispensable tool of state and colonial power, while portraying the world with a European bias. In country after country, maps and the associated approach to territory served to overrun peasants and indigenous people and subjugate their cultures.

Ironically, it was the indigenous “mental maps,” based on their oral knowledge of territory, that aided and abetted the European expansion of North America [as they guided early explorers]....

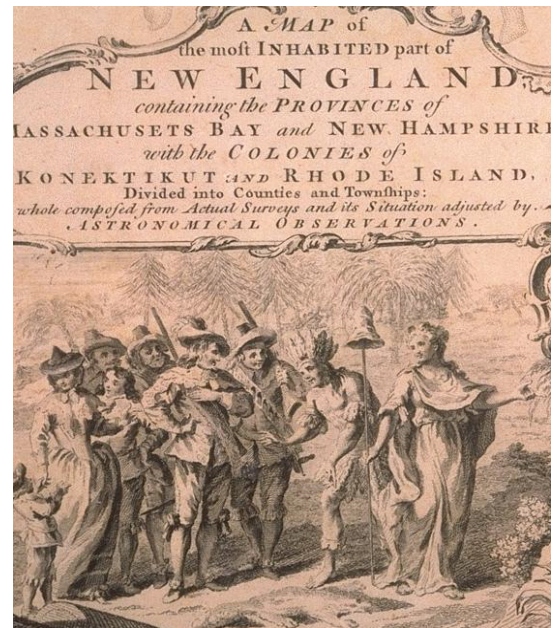
If map-making by developers and colonial explorers has been a vehicle for the domination of nature and vanquishing of cultures more sustainable than ours, then perhaps map-making by grassroots groups can help restore the foundations for a sustainable way of life. A starting point is acknowledging history and the central role of culture in influencing how we see the land and those around us. If maps do express our relation to place then community and ecological recovery depends on re-mapping and re-presenting the worlds around us.

Community mapping is a partial answer to the question “How can we make the reality of the whole community and ecosystem count?” In doing so community mappers are helping to recover indigenous, community-based mapping traditions.

~ Maeve Lydon

As much as guns and warships, maps have been the weapons of imperialism.

~ J.B. Harley



Thomas Jefferys: Excerpt from a Map of New England, 1755

The graphic nature of the map gave its imperial users an arbitrary power that was easily divorced from the social responsibilities and consequences of its exercise. The world could be carved up on paper.

~ J.B. Harley

For over six centuries, the exploration of the world by Europeans has gone hand-in-hand with exhaustive mapping. While this is intended to be an objective collection of scientific data to represent the earth's surface through maps, many cartographers and critical theorists today suggest the motivations and practices are highly contextual. The maps on this page demonstrate such relations of power as African and North American aboriginal peoples are represented through stereotypes of savagery and subservience.



Frederik de Wit: Africa, 1680

One of the ways in which maps have been used for territorial power is in the drawing of boundaries. A potent example of the power of mapping boundaries was the European mapping of Africa. Land surveyors and explorers mapped the land as they traveled it, resulting in very specific views and understandings of the landscape.

Ultimately, the leaders of the major European colonial powers drew territorial boundaries on Africa's landscape with little or no reference to aboriginal groups' territories or routes. The result lasts to this day, especially in the form of tribal conflicts over land.

Lines on the map exhibited... imperial power... because they had been imposed on the continent with little reference to indigenous peoples, and indeed in many places with little reference to the land itself. The invaders parceled the continent among themselves in designs reflective of their own complex rivalries and relative power.

~ Don Meinig



Colonial Africa after 1884

Mapping is a visual language that we gave away to so-called experts... [communities are] in the process of reclaiming this language.

~ Doug Aberly

Maps are simply patterns of lines and symbols that describe highly selective aspects of what is real, frozen in one moment of time. Thus, all maps are only icons, powerful visual propaganda which intrinsically accent or ignore issues important to the map maker.

~ Sheila Harrington



Google Maps: Point Roberts, Washington, 2007

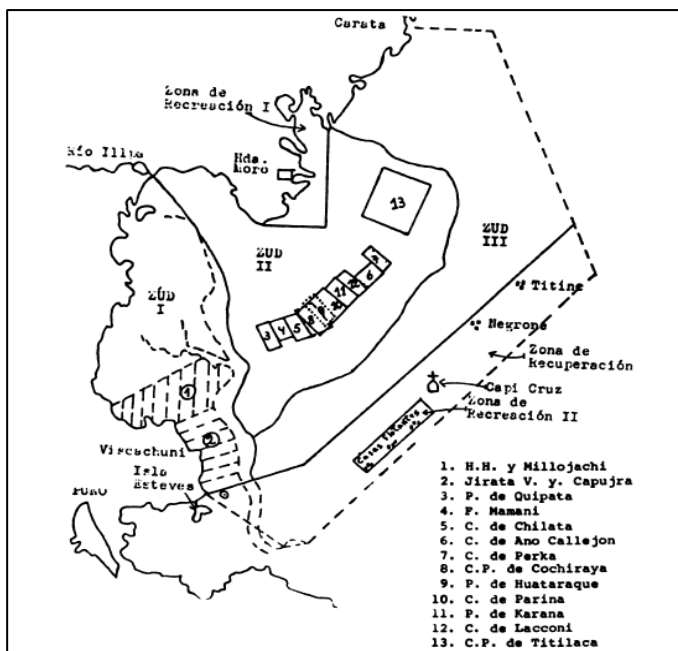
Boundaries on maps that make little sense on the ground can be found across the world. In the Northwestern United States, the small Washington community of Point Roberts is cut off from land access to the rest of the country by the border laid along the 49th parallel. Community members must drive into British Columbia and cross the border to attend school and work in their own country. This shows how people's sense of place and home does not necessarily follow abstract lines on grids or globes.

Home is more than contour lines and statistics; it is a highly personalized perception of the identity of place.

~ Sheila Harrington

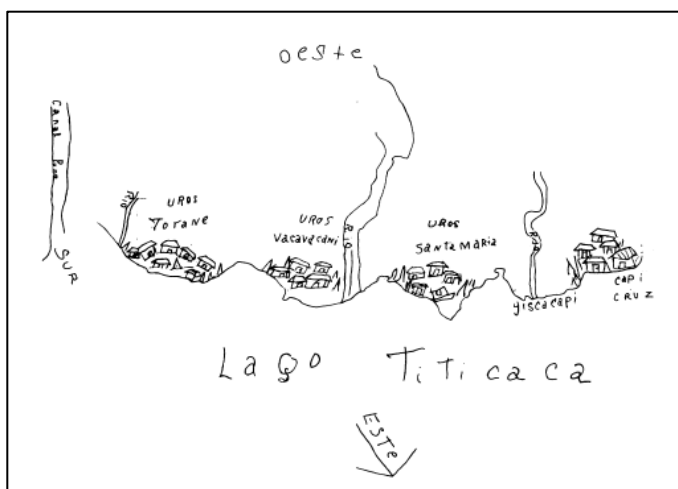
Imposed territories and boundaries have long been a struggle for aboriginal communities around the world. For this reason, many such communities have turned to map-making to assert their historical and present ownership and use of land.

In Lake Titicaca, in Bolivia, South America, aboriginal peoples living on the Titora reeds have used maps to demonstrate to the Bolivian government that they live on and use the land. For them, Scientific government maps have not properly represented their communities' homes on the lake's reed beds.



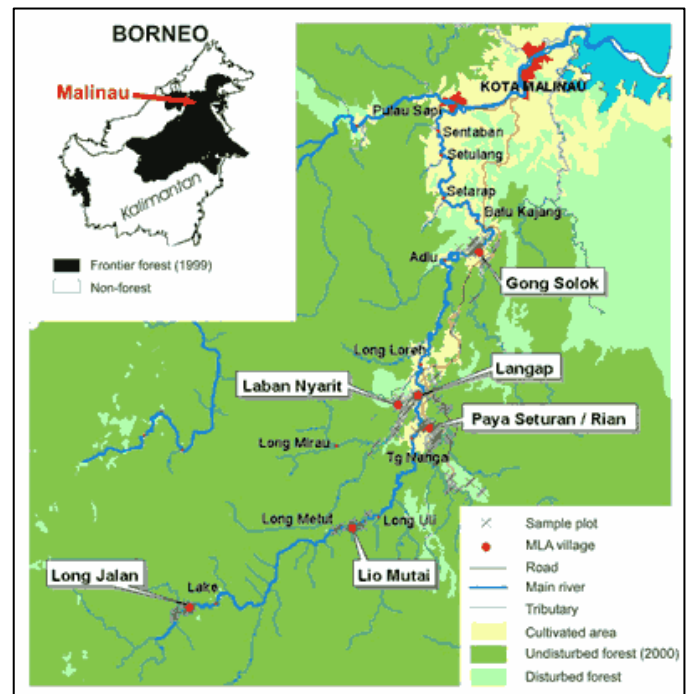
Government Map of Titora Reeds, Lake Titicaca, Bolivia

In the face of possible residential or industry development, the aboriginal peoples made their own community maps to show the government, working against the power of scientific representation.



Community Map of Titora Reeds, Lake Titicaca, Bolivia

Other aboriginal communities are using the scientific mapping tools of government and industry to achieve similar goals. In Kalimantan, Indonesia, aboriginal peoples came together with the help of a non-government organization to map their home places in the face of deforestation.



Community Map of Kalimantan, Indonesia

Using the tools of those in power in a subversive way can be especially effective and empowering because it places communities on “equal footing with anyone who uses maps as power tools.” (Katherine Dunster)

However, because maps have been used as instruments of domination and control for so long, it is important to retain inclusion, transparency and empowerment in community mapping. This allows communities to be cautious about the power relationships they reinforce with their own maps.

Anyone making maps must enter into the process honestly [because] maps can be deliberately made to mislead, suppress features or information, and emphasize facts out of proportion to reality.
~ Katherine Dunster

Youth and Mapmaking

From *The Cartography of Childhood*

It started with a series of reconnaissance missions, short forays into the wilderness.... On our initial foray, we made it to the edge of the first corn field and then retreated. Next time we made it down the dirt road into the woods to the old garage.

After each exploration we returned to Kevin's room to review our new discoveries: "The dirt road leaves the first corn field from this corner. There are really four corn fields, not three. Did you see the bats fly out the windows when we opened the garage door!? I wonder where the road goes after the garage?" When it became too much to keep in our heads, we drew a map, hid it under Kevin's bed, and revised it after each exploration.

Whenever I draw a new map, I feel echoes of those first attempts to make paper match place. That first map was our way of both stepping back from and getting deeper into our discoveries—it preserved what we knew and launched us into further adventures.

Mapmaking, in the broad sense of the word, is as important to making us human as language, music, art, and mathematics. Just as young children have an innate tendency to speak, sing, draw, and count, they also tend to make maps. When children share their homemade maps with me, I see their active yearning to make sense of the nearby world, their desire to record and share discoveries and their connections to place. "Here's the kick-the-can hiding place. There's the little path to Erin's house. The cross is where we buried our cat Noah." The stories of their lives are folded into the niches of their neighborhoods; their maps are the weaving together of inner emotion and external forays....

My eight year old, Eli, has picked up on my love of maps so we spend a lot of time poring over them. One day, during a four-month sojourn in Costa Rica, he drew two maps for me: one of the neighborhood we were living in and the other of the route from home to his school. The neighborhood map was a bit convoluted, but there were many recognizable elements and correct spatial relationships. His map of the route from home to school got the chickens in the road, the big hill, and the market in correct sequential order, but the school showed up right behind the gate to our neighborhood,



Katherine Dunster: Students Mapping Bowen Island, B.C.

despite the 15 kilometer distance between them. These maps were like the map Kevin and I drew of the old farm—partially complete and inaccurate, but good tries at making sense of his experience.

On the other hand, Eli came home from his first grade class during that same time proudly displaying his "book of continents"—a perfect example of the outside-in approach [to geographic education] that I am not enthusiastic about. He had dutifully traced around the prefabricated continent shapes and then colored them in messily. South America was all red, Antarctica had some blue splotches on it, Australia looked like a blue and brown zebra. He was very proud of it, mostly because he knows I like maps, but he had no idea what continents were or which continent we were on. Asking first graders to make maps of their neighborhoods makes sense; asking them to make maps of continents puts the cart before the horse....

The outside-in approaches to teaching do not tend to further the goals of geographic education. In actuality, they may do just the opposite. Instead of connecting children to place, this approach alienates them and cuts them off from their local environments. The inadvertent hidden message is: Important things are far away and disconnected from children. Close-by things, the local community and environment, are unimportant and negligible. Learning becomes copying someone else's shapes and consuming someone else's facts rather than drawing your own maps and finding out things for yourself.

~ David Sobel

Community mapping is important for youth in order to represent and build upon their own sense of place.

Community maps provide an opportunity to draw from and validate children's knowledge.

In many ways, mapping is an ideal medium for children to spatially express the relationships between organisms and their environments.

As young as four years old, children can depict their community using blocks, paper and sand.



Judi Stevenson: Salt Spring Island, B.C.'s MapFest 2000

Community mapping is accessible for all youth, including different ages and cognitive capacities.

As youth map the world and places that are important to them, the process initiates and sustains their involvement in issues surrounding that place—whether it be the loss of habitat or the lack of safe play areas.

Community mapping increases youths' self-esteem.

Through community mapping, youth build healthy relationships with others in their community.

Community mapping undertaken as research can be an effective tool for engaging youth, especially as their voices are not often heard in decision-making. This builds youth's capacity, respects their perspectives, mobilizes their assets, gives them decision-making roles, and leads towards community development.

Paul Petrie described a mapping project he was involved with on South Pender [Island, B.C.], making a record of a very special open headland with children from Grades 3 to 6. The children, he told us, have become self-appointed caretakers of this land as a result of their hands-on experience of mapping it.

~Judi Stevenson

It is also possible to make a community map only with youth. At Winnipeg, Manitoba's Windsor Elementary School, students created a community map to learn more about the place they live in.

From Asphalt Artisans: Creating a Community Eco-Map on the Playground

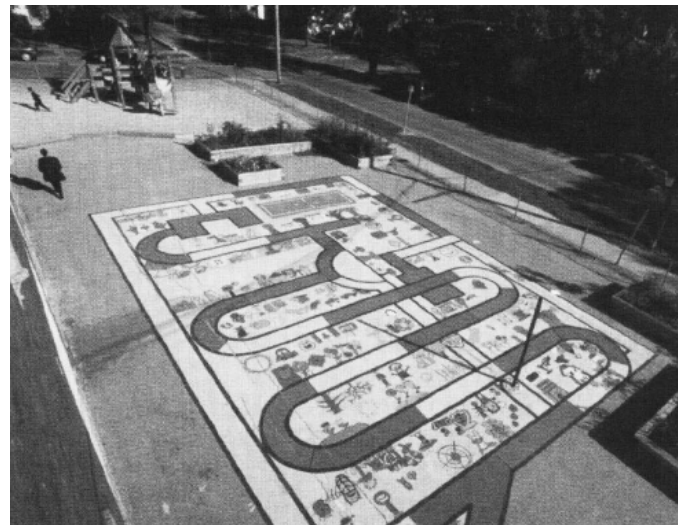
The eco-count was conceived of as a simple, innovative and enjoyable way for students to learn more about the place in which they live by looking closely at their local environment. We wanted to create a tangible connection to the urban ecology through a dynamic and participatory process. We did this by having students explore and create representations of their neighborhood in a two-phase process carried out over the course of a school year....

Students worked together to develop inventories and maps of environmental features in the local neighborhood. This data was subsequently used as a basis for the creation of a large community map and educational game painted directly onto the school playground. The project involved the entire student body, as well as teachers, parents and other volunteers, and engaged curriculum topics from math to language arts, social studies and art.

~ Paul Fieldhouse and Lisa Bunkowsky

The eco-count was important for youth because:

- It involved the entire school in a variety of activities, from surveys to painting.
- It fostered community-building as students engaged with community members.
- The students felt a pride of ownership, learning that they could make a difference in transforming their school environment.

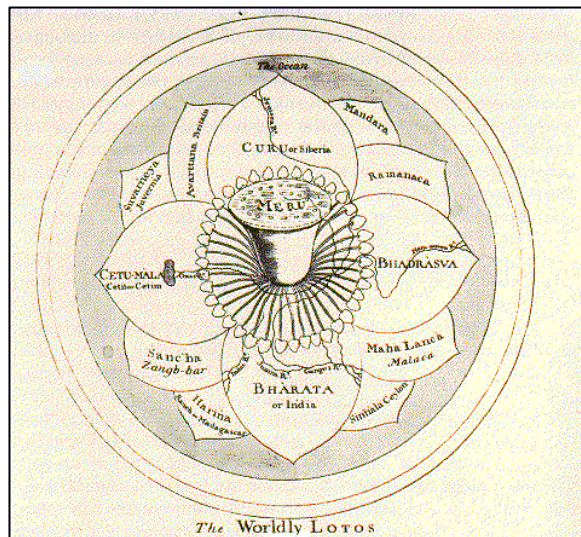


Brian Smith, Evergreen: Windsor School, Winnipeg

Cosmographical Maps

Community mapping involves not only questioning *who* can make maps, but also *what* can be mapped. Consider community cosmography when planning for community mapping.

“Cosmography” describes the relationship of the physical world to other worlds or universes. Cosmographical maps depict the world beyond physical terrain to include such things as dreams, stories and spirituality.



The World Arrayed Around Mt. Meru

This Buddhist map represents a different cosmography, with Mount Meru at its centre holding up the sky. The terrestrial continents are represented as lotus petals surrounded by the ocean, the human realm shown at the bottom. The outer margins are a more sublime realm as individuals migrate through death and rebirth towards Nirvana.



The Codex Mendoza, 1541

This Mesoamerican map depicts the symbol of the capital city of Tenochtitlan and its founder at the centre, surrounded by a conceptual map of the city including the criss-crossing canals. The border is a calendar of a fifty-one-year period of the city’s history. This map shows history and time embedded into the map and thus the landscape.

Maps unravel the mysteries of the present and future of place through the depiction of fixed and flowing energy layered in patterns of opportunity.

~ Doug Aberly



The Ebstorf Mappamundi, 1234

This Medieval European map relates the physical world to the cosmos, used not for navigation but to teach about the Christian world and its history. The head of Jesus appears at the top, his hands and feet at the sides and bottom, as he encompasses the world. Jerusalem is located at the centre—the navel of Christ—while monsters are found in the margins.



Jila Japingka Dreaming

This Australian aboriginal map depicts “The Dreaming,” a metaphor for a different state of mind and a period when the world was created. Through a fluid conception of time, it continues to exist today. It places emphasis on the importance of ancestors, who left the world and created it through moving within it. This representation includes rainfall patterns and ridges of sand in a landscape infused with knowledge, story and song.

In Northwestern British Columbia, an aboriginal community in the Quarry River region involved in a land-use mapping project explains the importance of the project and what maps mean to them:

From Maps and Dreams

If Indians are going to continue to be Indians in this place, in these places, in this whole region, then their presence must be made known to everyone, everywhere. This, as [elder Joseph Patsah] understood it, is the point of messing around with maps; this, he insisted, is the reason for speaking at length and with great truthfulness.

Some old-timers, men who became famous for their powers and skills, had been great dreamers. Hunters and dreamers. Today it is hard to find men who can dream this way. There are too many problems. Too much drinking. Too little respect.

People are not good enough now. Maybe there will again be strong dreamers when these problems are overcome. Then more maps will be made. New maps.

Oh yes, Indians make maps. You would not take any notice of them. You might say such maps are crazy. But maybe the Indians would say that is what your maps are: the same thing. Different maps from different people—different ways. Old-timers made maps of trails, commented them with lots of fancy. The good people. [Quoted from community member Brian Atsin]

~ Hugh Brody



Herb Rice: Kuper Island, B.C. Carved in Wood

This community map of Kuper Island in British Columbia demonstrates the ways in which cosmographical mapping and community mapping may draw from one another.

Map-making is a key vehicle and tool for transforming the way we see our world, our ecosystem, our neighborhoods. Undertaken as communities, mapmaking can help us find our way together.

~ Maeve Lydon

Bioregionalism and Mapping

Human cultures thrive best when rooted in relatively small bioregions which share continuities of cultural and biophysical identity.

~ Sheila Harrington

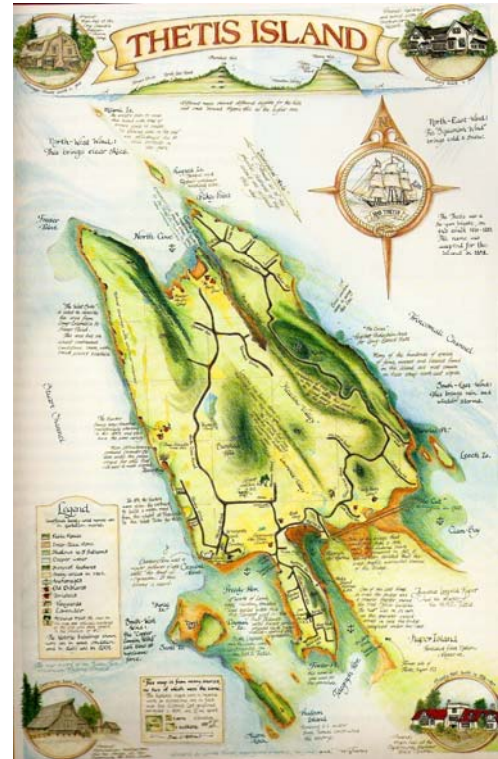
Bioregional mapping is a field of mapping many communities draw upon to make their own maps. It brings together local knowledge of:

- community history,
- human and habitat conditions, and
- options for future sustainability.

Bioregionalism is about bringing that which has been separated back together. We do not surrender affiliations to other causes, we simply share an understanding that our actions bear most fruit when interrelated in an ecologically—and culturally—defined place.

~ Doug Aberly

The Salish Sea Community Mapping Project in British Columbia's Gulf Islands built upon the founding principles of bioregionalism to create a traveling show and published atlas of community maps. For coordinators Sheila Harrington, Judi Stevenson and Briony Penn, mapping is a central process for exploring place and centering ourselves in the world physically, mentally, and spiritually.



Mary Forbes and Bill Dickie: Thetis Island, B.C.

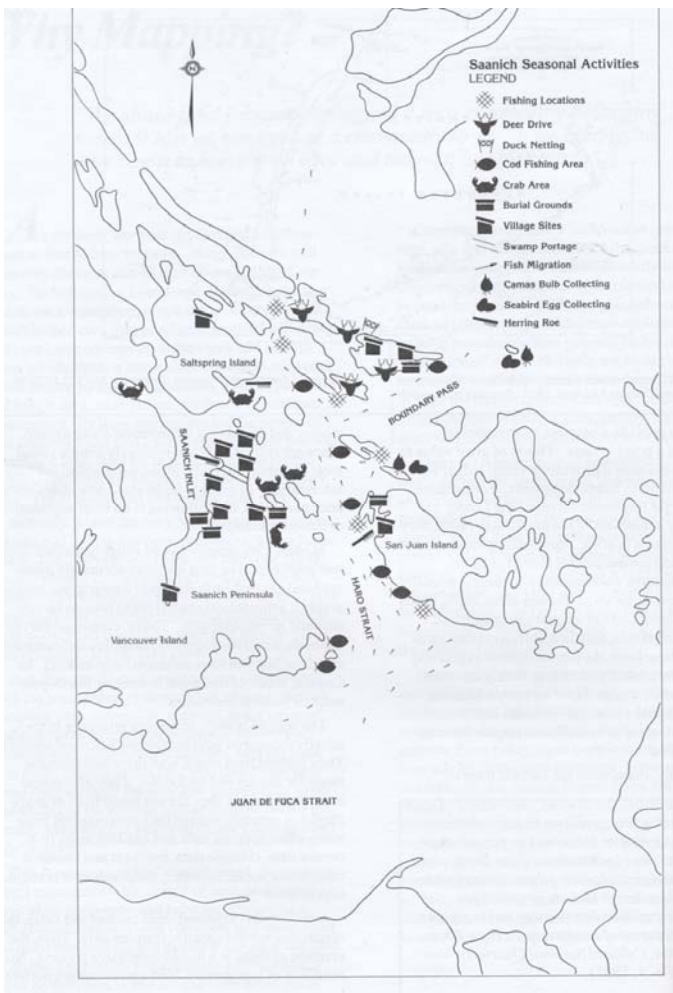
From Islands in the Salish Sea: A Community Atlas

These beautiful and innovative maps encompass many fields: cartography, science, history, art and community planning.

The project began in 1999 on the eve of the millennium. Judi Stevenson and Briony Penn, of Salt Spring Island, were discussing the pace of development and loss of natural areas they cherished. They thought it would be valuable for local people to inventory and map their land as a way to celebrate and mark the millennium and to come to a deeper knowledge and understanding of this home place.

Judy, Briony and I, the overall coordinators, believed that it was important to take stock of what is here and who we are and, most significantly, what is of essential value. Once these features were identified and mapped, we hoped people would be better able to care for their home places.

~ Sheila Harrington



John Elliot: Saanich Seasonal Activities, B.C., 1990

From “Memories of Galiano” in *Islands in the Salish Sea: A Community Atlas*

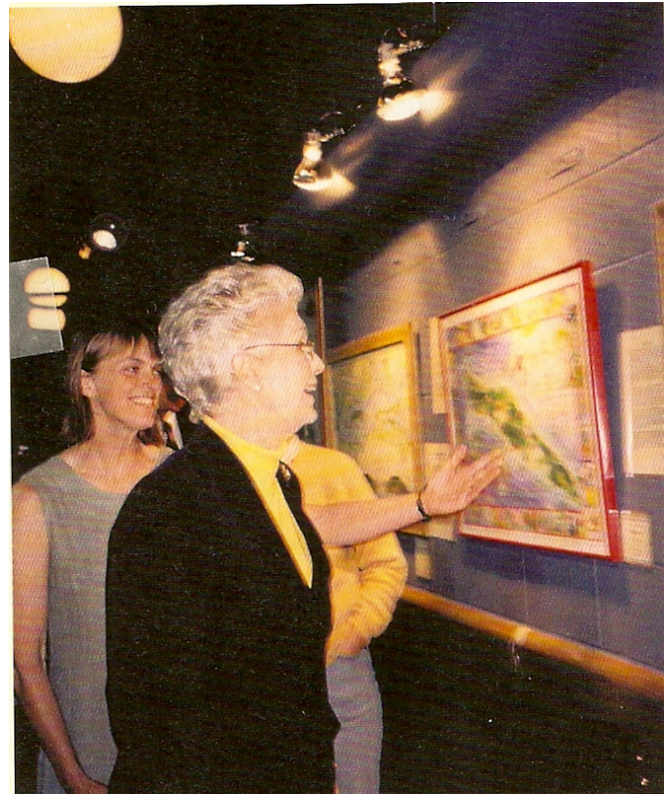
I was eight years old when I arrived on Galiano from St. John’s, Newfoundland. I remember being shocked at how sweet the air smelled. For the next five years, my childhood was spent outdoors. Play was filled with magical forest creatures that left evidence of their existence everywhere. Drops of dew collecting in the vanilla leaves were fairy water receptacles. Deer paths were well-traveled fairy highways. And mushrooms were totally sacred. So when I decided to create a map of Galiano, what I most wanted to capture were all the magical outdoor places of my childhood.

The map-making process for me was a trip down memory lane, which I was delighted to share with my daughter, then three years old. She too knows the “Fairy Trail” that leads down to Bambricks Lighthouse, nestled in the woods. We are sure it is a secret doorway to a magical underworld. When I got started on the map, one place I remembered fondly was the old dump that was one of my family’s favourite adventure spots. Going there was like being let loose on a giant mountain of hidden treasure. We all remember it that way. How we treat garbage on Galiano has really changed since then. On the map, it was great to acknowledge the hard work and commitment that have been invested in creating Galiano’s own recycling centre, which now, at long last, owns its own site. Congratulations!

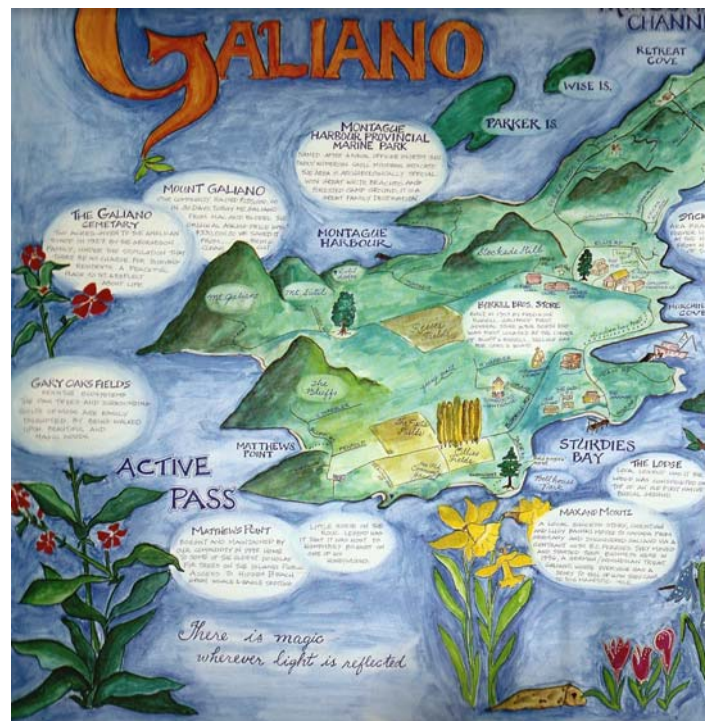
Creating this map helped me see just how much impact this little island has had on me. When you connect with a place and spend time there, you grow and change just as the land and the community grow and change around you. Living on Galiano, I feel a part of something great. It was an honour to landmark some of my favourite places that no longer exist. I feel I’ve played a part in preserving their memory.

Galiano, after all these years, has maintained its beauty and magic for me. I am still captivated by the natural perfume that fills the air, the deer that graze in my garden, the people who with their stories add to the island’s character and charm, and the way I feel having a share in it all. If my map can accomplish just one thing, I hope it encourages us to stand still for a moment—to breathe in the air, and feel the magic that is Galiano.

~ Krista Casey, Galiano Island, B.C.



Marion Markus: Stewardship & Conservation Conference, 2003



Krista Casey: Galiano Island, B.C.

Making Mapping Happen

Planning for successful community mapping can involve a range of choices and options, which should reflect the needs and interests of the community.

Adapted From Katherine Dunster, “How to Make a Map” in *Acting Locally: Mapping and Countermapping toward a Grassroots Feminist Cartography*:

1. Know what is happening in your community and what local government is doing in response.

- forgotten issues may be important to address
- you might choose to work in secrecy or with a public announcement (which might motivate the other side into action)

2. Identify an issue that resonates within you

- recruit others (especially those with skills such as fundraising, public speaking, media relations, writing, cartography and graphics)
- list the group’s skill set and look for gaps
- seek local experts (which will add weight and authority to your project), but do not let the expert voices take over the entire project

3. Educate yourself about the issue

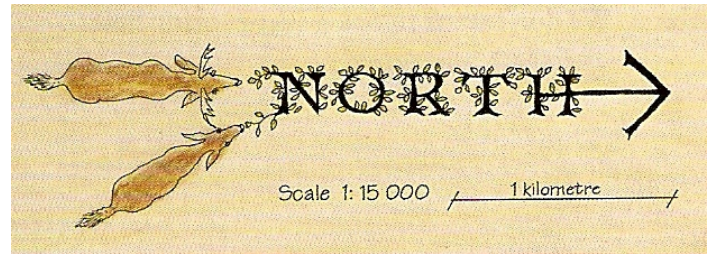
- seek out experts to point you towards information and other contacts
- look for solutions that are:
 - o creative, sustainable, and realistically accomplishable considering the decision maker’s budget and staff (although do not be afraid to lobby for reallocation of funds)

4. Create maps, graphics and text that document the issue clearly

- your map should seduce the viewer
- document your methods
- use plain language so everyone can understand
- develop a policy for local government to adopt (you can draw upon case studies)
 - o develop best-management practices that take the policy into action

5. Inform your community

- present your findings in a meeting of decision-makers (such as a council meeting)
- copy the map and post it everywhere (including the public library)
- write articles, press releases and e-mails
- hold a press conference (especially at the site if the issue is site-specific)



Katherine Dunster: Bowen Island Map, B.C.

- use art forms (such as street theatre)
 - send out e-mails
- ## 6. Persevere
- remember that we are protecting our basic human rights: our rights to clean air and water, the health of our children, and so on
- ## 7. Get other community groups involved.
- help everyone understand their importance
 - form coalitions of groups and individuals
 - this is a very important step because:
 - o you need to focus on the *positive* reasons why change must happen
 - o keeping the pressure on requires *sustained* effort
- ## 8. Even in the darkest moments, enjoy yourself
- remember that the best tactics are the ones that your people enjoy
 - it is possible to have fun when coming together over an issue of concern (and this fun itself becomes an empowering tactic!)
- ## 9. Decide when to end the project
- this is a difficult decision to make, especially when there is always more interesting information to collect and map
 - did you learn something new? did the project increase the community’s collective knowledge? if yes, then maybe this new knowledge can be used to spawn more projects (with maps or not)
 - o this allows people to begin anew, using the old map as a baseline
 - o you may want to make more maps to show changes over time (which can be even more powerful tools when taken together to government or industry!)
- ## 10. Do not expect government to be in much of a hurry to acknowledge or give credibility to your group
- local government might claim to have no space, money or time in their agenda to address your issue; they might offer grants; or they might reallocate budgetary funds to your group and its work—whatever the outcome, don’t give up!



Resources

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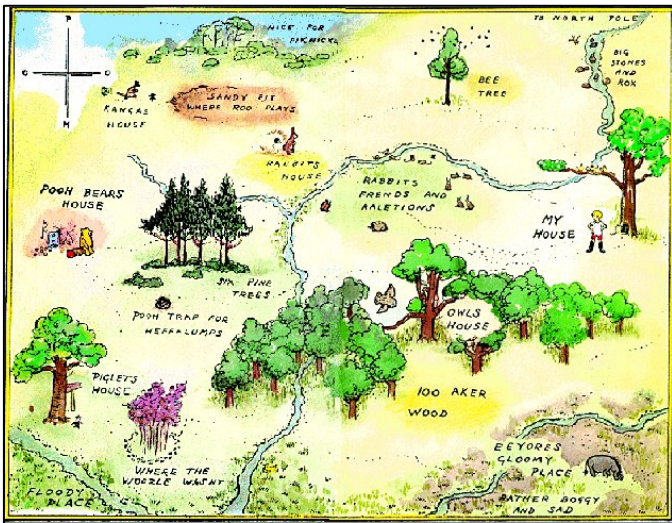
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Whether in our minds, or printed on paper, maps are powerful talismans that add form to our individual and social reality. They are models of the world – icons if you wish – for what our senses "see" through the filters of environment, culture, and experience.
~ Doug Aberly





A.A. Milne: Hundred Acre Wood