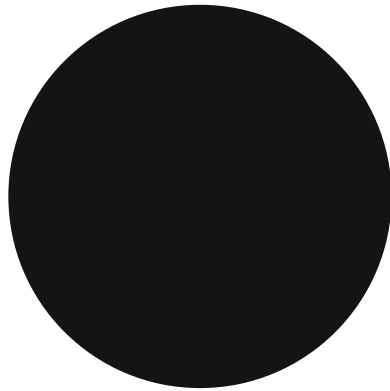


Counter-Mapping



Counter-mapping is a highly collaborate research method that can be used in participatory design processes. You might use counter-mapping processes if you were aiming to make a map that challenges dominant power structures.

Counter-Mapping

A counter-map is not necessarily the alternative, or the opposition to an existing map, but could be a counterpoint to an existing map or accepted set of relations within an existing map.

What is it?

Counter-mapping was developed in 1995 by Nancy Peluso (the Professor of Forest Policy) in her study on the politics of mapping forest resources in Kalimantan, Indonesia. Peluso coined the definition 'counter-mapping' to describe the process of appropriating mapping as a state technology of representation and using it to produce maps based on the forest users and communities' understandings and practices (1995, p. 384).

Also called alternative cartography, community mapping, mapping-back, counter-hegemonic mapping, and public participatory mapping. Also related to critical cartography, subversive cartography, bioregional mapping, and remapping.

What are you trying to find out?

Counter-mapping could be used by designers to:

- Help to advocate for people or non-human actors who are not well represented in existing maps.
- Critique to determine a failure of a system or service.
- Evaluate to work out a context for a design or proposed design.

Counter-mapping should be done carefully and sensitively. It requires you to:

- Choose a specific context.
- Understand the maps already existing for this context.

- Consult with the people these maps effect (the participants).
- Decide on the best tools for this context (paper and pen, voice recordings, GIS).
- Take the time required for the context.
- Accept that the results are not yours but belong to the participants.
- Accept that counter-maps are never finished.

Examples of Counter-Mapping:

- www.makingmaps.net/tag/counter-mapping
- www.ict4dc.org/blog/gwilym-eades/top-ten-counter-mapping-papers-all-time

References

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Peluso, N.L. 1995, "Whose Woods Are These? Counter-Mapping Forest Territories in Kalimantan, Indonesia." *Antipode*, Vol. 27, No. 4, pp.383-406. Available at: <http://doi.wiley.com/10.1111/j.1467-8330.1995.tb00286.x> [Accessed April 8, 2014].

Counter-Mapping