Well, congratulations; you've made it through the entire semester! We hope that what you've learned will be useful to you in your career going forward. We'd really like to know what parts of the course you ultimately find useful and what parts you find not so useful, so don't be shy about keeping in touch once you're out there working. Don't think that your input is less valuable when you aren't a student anymore, because we're most concerned with gearing our teaching to what will help you after you leave, and you simply can't know that until it happens.

This semester has probably challenged you to do a lot of learning to code, especially if you weren't familiar with JavaScript to begin with. Thank you for making that effort and supporting your collaborators in your final projects. Making good visualizations will always require learning about new tools and libraries, so a big part of what we hope you take away from this class is the ability to pick up new tools and work with them. We hope you've gained enough confidence in foundational tools and sufficient curiosity to readily play with new ones and determine what works for your future projects.

As you do more work with visualization over time, you'll see that the tools change quickly. Some tasks will get much easier, including things that may not be a good idea to do often. If you've been paying attention to the design parts of this class, you should be able to recognize what's a good idea to do and what even if someone has made it temptingly easy. We like to think we've inoculated you to hype to a certain extent. Always remember the value of understanding what actually works for real users with real data and real tasks.

Also, we hope you'll keep an eye on the field of visualization as it evolves. Conferences like IEEEvis and CHI can be a shot in the arm. Articles, blogs, books, and essays by prominent people in the field are always worth reading. Try new libraries and applications when you can, and look at what others are doing. Above all, keep playing with data and testing what works with real people. A visualization is ultimately to be judged not by its beauty or elegance or information density but by how successfully others can extract real insight from it.

Best of luck in all you do,

-The W209 Team