

Feminist Cartographies

Designing feminist map icons

Introduction

Feminist cartographies are a transdisciplinary field and social movement that combines feminist theory and mapping practice. A feminist map can be defined as the (often) visual expression of spatial information that addresses questions of power, inequality, representation, and ethics. A map may be feminist in content, form, and/or process. In this activity, you will create your own feminist maps beginning with icon design. Using feminist data visualization principles and Maki icons from Mapbox as inspiration, you will design new, alternative icons digitally or by hand!

Feminist Data Visualization Principles (D'Ignazio and Klein 2016)

- Rethinking binaries
- Embracing pluralism
- Examine power and aspire to empower
- Consider context and subjectivity
- Representing Uncertainty
- Legitimize embodiment and affect
- Make labor visible

Goal: Use feminist data visualization principles to design alternative map icons!

Directions

Day 1 (Tuesday)

Step 1: Pick an icon. In writing, reflect about its meaning. How might you critique its design through a feminist lens?

Additional Prompts: What does the icon mean to you and why? What might it mean to other people? What assumptions are baked into the design of the icon? What are the icon's strengths and limitations? Can you apply feminist data visualization principles to the icon? If so, how and if not, why?

Step 2: Select a note taker in your group. In your groups, share your icons as well as your critiques. Discuss, reflect, and collate or combine your notes as a group.

Step 3: Share your reflections with the broader group.