Jahari Mercer Synthesis 1 Artist Statement

The content of this visualization is a map of the population densities of black and brown people across the lower 48 states. The darker the dots and the higher the concentration the greater the population of black and brown people in that area. This graph does not represent the most recent data of the United States because it is the results of a census survey in 1990 however in the future I do hope to use more recent data and compare it to this data to find trends in populations and locations. The concept of the map is to prove a few things. The first is to look at areas where it is assumed that there are large populations of black and brown people such as the east coast and parts of the south and see if those assumptions are true or false. The second thing the map shows to prove it that even in a post racial America segregation among races/colors is still a real and alive ideology in America. The dots help to serve as visual indicators for region where the population of black and brown people is largest. The dots overlap adds to the depth of that population. The shade of the dot is the amount of black and brown people (Hispanic and African American) divided by the total population of that designated area. Therefore, the darker the shade of the blue dot the greater the population of black and brown people exist at that point. Converting this raw data into something more visually pleasing created some challenges. The first was that the longitude points were non-negative and therefore when graphing these points on a scale against the known longitude points of the US states, the points were distorted. Initially each point was on the opposite side of the graph. So the map was displayed on the negative side of the x-axis(longitude) and the points were on the positive side. To rectify this problem, I went back into the csv file and created a separate column of negative longitudes. I then loaded in those points and the latitudes in as lists and stored them in the code. I also found code that can be used to generate a map of the United States. Once these two things had been established, I then looked at the data and noticed some points scattered off above and below the 48 states. I then went back into the csv file and deleted any points that lied further west of the nearest longitude point on the 48 states. Now the map was scaled perfectly so that the user could have the most personal and close up view of the map as possible. Originally I desired to focus on just the Washington, DC area and illustrate the segregation of that area because that is the area in which I can home. The issue is that most of the points are not specific enough to be plotted directly in DC as the data was set up to be displayed over the lower 48 states. Therefore I hope in my next project to exam the city of Washington, Dc or to make the current map I have more dynamic.