

Project “What connects us to the world?” : Constructions of artistic cartographic representations

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Abstract:

The links between art and cartography are deep, and integrate the knowledge generated by the combination of elements that involve the concepts of territory, culture, history, geography and power. The approximation of art and cartography occurs in the aesthetic and visual sense and invites us to unravel and reflect on its role in the spectrum of spatial representations.

In schools, the artworks that involve cartographic representations offer us an opportunity to understand young people's relationships with local and global spaces, and the meaning of those relationship in their lives. The interpretation of these representations directs to the question: What does this image reveal in terms of the students identity construction related with the place of residence and the world?

Since 2017, the Project "WHAT CONNECTS US TO THE WORLD?" is part of the list of Pedagogical Projects developed at the Educational Center 310 of Santa Maria in the Federal District, Brasília, Brazil. This is an interdisciplinary project with activities developed in the classes of Geography and Art during the academic year with the participation of students between the ages of 15 and 19. The main objective of the project is to encourage students to design artistic cartographic representations that express their connection with local and global spaces.

The development of the project involves the cartographic and geography literacy activities in Geography classes and the development of artistic representations in art classes. There are six stages of development:

1. Presentation of the project and generating ideas.
2. Deepening spatial concepts of place and territory. Identification of the elements that connect young people to local and global space.
3. Study of the various spatial representations (for example the map of Santa Maria, DF, map of Brazil and map mundi).
4. Selection of topics by students. Choice of spatial representation and artistic expression.
5. Oral presentation of the final paper.

The results of the project were the various drawings that express topics of interest to the students such as: Corruption in Latin America, Internet, violence against women, destruction of nature, deforestation in Brazil and Latin America, social inequality, freedom and peace, social inequality in the world, patriotism.

The four best drawings in the year of 2017 were sent to the Children's Cartography Contest Professor Livia de Oliveira. One first year student made her drawing with the theme Corruption in Latin America that question the lateness of the arrest of corrupt politicians, the increase of gasoline and the homicide of young people in Brazil. This result was widely reported by local newspaper and television because it was selected nationally as one of the winners in her category. The impact of this selection on the contest is reflected in the appreciation of the visual language to express the perceptions of young people and reveal their critical view in the interpretation of everyday facts. In 2018, 16 drawings were sent to the Children's Cartography Contest again e we are still waiting for the final classification.

We considerably learned about our students when interpreting their drawings created for this project. Artistic cartographic representations shows the imagery of our students at that particular moment and help us to understand their social and spatial context.