

# Mapping the Process: A Framework for Non-Cartographers in Visual Storytelling

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## Abstract:

Over the past few decades, a paradigm shift can be observed within contemporary cartography. Griffin (2021) describes three major paradigms occurring. The representational and critical paradigms view maps as representations and mainly focus on cognitive processes behind map interpretation, differing in the way they derive meaning of the map symbols. On the other hand, the post-representational paradigm understands maps as existing in the wider context of the world, rather than being mere representations thereof. Under this paradigm, a process-based approach is applied when studying the creation of maps; Edney (2019) recommends focusing on the context in which a map is born and lives.

There are many models and schemes describing the map creation process; for instance, Slocum et al. (2005) present a diagram that depicts map making as a five-step process including the definition of the map's purpose, data collection, map design, and user testing of the map (Figure 1). This diagram is focused primarily on cartographers. However, as Roth (2020) implies, there is also a growing number of non-cartographers who partake in visual storytelling using maps, e.g., data journalists or social scientists.

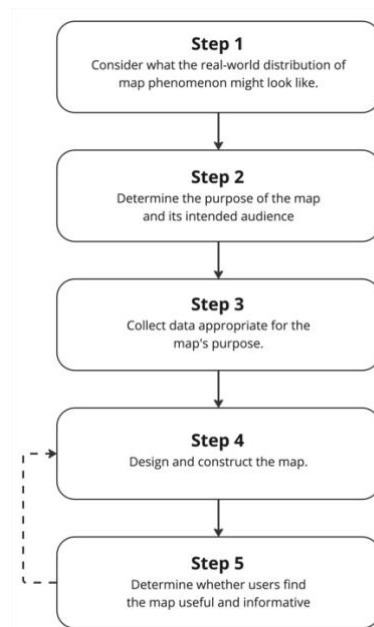


Figure 1. Map making process of cartographers as presented in Slocum et al. (2005)

Building upon the post-representational paradigm, our research aims to capture the map making processes undertaken by professionals in the fields of humanities and social sciences. We have already performed semi-structured interviews to explore their motivations and activities they performed in order to communicate their data through maps. During exploratory analysis of the interviews, a process diagram has been compiled for each participant, describing their map making process in detail.

Our presentation aggregates the process diagrams into a general one. We propose a framework that describes map practices within this specific community of non-cartographers, and we examine the differences between our proposal and existing frameworks covering map-making by expert cartographers.

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