**Mapping Assignment: Social Dimensions of Urban Issues**

***\*This assignment is due in class, March 7th. No late papers will be accepted without prior consent. The assignment is graded out of 50 points.***

For this assignment, you are asked to map the social dimensions of an urban issue. In other words, you will need to *make a map* that shows the relationship between social and environmental (built or natural) processes within an urban context. To do this, you should select an urban issue (e.g., urban inequality, segregation, homelessness, urban renewal) and map the ways in which these issues are *caused by* social activity as well as how they *impact* the way cities function (think back to the question of “cities for whom?”). You may select any of the urban issues we have so far studied (or will study) in class, or any other urban issue that interests you. In addition to the map, you will also submit a *3-page, double spaced paper* explaining how and why you visualized your chosen urban issue. You will bring in your map in Midterm week for display in class.

Some other examples of urban issues you could map include:

* Pollution and garbage
* Gentrification
* Policing and prisons
* Human-animal interaction
* Sea level rise in coastal cities
* Construction of sports arenas
* Infrastructure and transportation
* War and militarism
* Urban sprawl
* Migration
* Food deserts
* Urban farming
* Access to health care and services
* Growth and spread of universities
* Environmental catastrophes
* Impacts of COVID-19 and other diseases
* Urban noise

All of these examples (and many more) are *spatial processes*. This is to say that they occur in place and across space and demonstrate a relation between one place and another. Spatial processes, by definition, can be represented visually—which is what you are being asked to do!

To complete this assignment, you will need to make a few decisions: (1) What ***issue*** are you going to map? (2) At what ***spatial scale*** do you want to map them (i.e., local, regional, global, etc.)? and (3) ***In what city*** will you map them? **\*An important point when completing your maps:** *your map* ***cannot*** *be a reproduction of a map you find online.* **Your maps should show a degree of originality**. You may, for example, incorporate two or more related maps that you find online but you must add your own layer of visualization.

For this assignment, we are defining “map” in the most fundamental way: as a *visual representation of data*. You do not need to use GIS or cartographic software to make your map. However, if you have experience using these technologies, you are welcome to do so. It is perfectly fine to draw your map by hand, using colored pencils and pens. You could also make a collage or use tracing paper to show multiple layers of data (e.g., if you are mapping urban poverty in New York City, you could include poverty rates, average housing prices, average household salaries, services and amenities, public transportation, local schools and education, or exposure to pollutants, etc.). The important thing is that your map should show spatial processes and relationships. It will be helpful to look at different kinds of maps to choose various symbols and ways of representing such things as landmarks or population density. Your map doesn’t need to be “professional” looking, but it should be careful, detailed and as accurate as possible.

***Your map must include:* (a) a title; (b) a north arrow; and (c) a legend that explains symbols, colors, etc. on your map**.

In planning your map, you may find the following websites helpful:

* <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/map/>
* <https://www.mapbox.com/gallery/>
* <https://www.thoughtco.com/types-of-maps-1435689>
* <https://www.icsm.gov.au/education/fundamentals-mapping>
* <https://mapmaker.nationalgeographic.org>

If you are looking for ideas for your paper, try looking at these websites for inspiration:

* <https://www.bloomberg.com/citylab/maplab>
* <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-04-03/share-your-hand-made-maps-of-life-under-quarantine>
* <https://www.segregationbydesign.com/>
* <https://www.esri.com/about/newsroom/blog/campus-urban-forest-vegetation-management/>
* <ss2.climatecentral.org>
* <chicagosmilliondollarblocks.com>
* <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/poverty-race-and-place-map-your-metro>

**Your Paper**

Your map should be accompanied by a 3-page (double spaced) paper that (a) provides background information on the process(es) and place(s) shown in your map; and (b) discusses the map itself, (e.g., what you included and what you left out; your choice of symbols, what your map shows). You will need to do some research into the processes you are mapping, to provide sufficient background information to your map (and to map them in the first place).

Your paper should include a bibliography of all references used. Follow the bibliographic format used in the syllabus (see the list of readings on the last page). Use footnotes to cite websites and include the date you accessed the website. For in-text citations, use the (author, year: page number) format [e.g. (Smith, 2008: 254)]. Number your pages and staple them together, along with your map. Your paper (and bibliography) must include at least three different references. Your paper must be written on a computer (no hand-written papers will be accepted).