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GEO 478/678 Spatial Storytelling
Dr. Meghan Kelly

Map Four Reflection

The goal of this map, my fourth submission to GEO 478/678 Spatial Storytelling, is designed to explore topologies and relationships related to Ona Judge's quest for freedom; George Washington's diminishing power over her; and their positions at Mount Vernon, Philadelphia, New York, and Portsmouth. My final product was a relational map relying on circular symbology with a spectrum of colors representing Judge and Washington within multiple locations.

Documentation of the Mapping Process

Of the week's readings, Westerveld and Knowles' *I Was There* was the most influential, and their statement, "[h]ow can one situate in space and visualize the personal experiences Holocaust's victims? By apprehending the topological relations of places and displacements, and by graphically materializing the subjective and emotional dimension of lived experience, it is possible to draw the geography of these memories.", was an inspirational challenge for me.¹ In addition to *I Was There*, the following articles were additive:

- Armstrong Dunbar. *Never Caught: The Washington's Relentless Pursuit of their Runaway Slave, One Judge*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2017.,
- Lally, Nick. "Sculpting, Cutting, Expanding, and Contracting the Map," *Cartographica: The International Journal for Geographic Information and Geovisualization*, 57:1, Spring 2022, pp. 1-10, 2022, and

¹ Westerveld, Levi and Anne K. Knowles. "I Was There," *visionscarto*, December 13, 2018.

- Westerveld, Levi and Anne K. Knowles. “Loosening the Grid: Topology as the Basis for a More Inclusive GIS,” *International Journal of Geographical Information Science*, 35:10, pp. 2108-2127, 2021.

Leading up to the final map, I created two draft maps to better understand the symbology, color, relationships, and complexities of the project. The evolution of the maps marked a reduction in their complexity, I originally wanted to include four figures, and a more comprehensive set of quotes and background information. After consulting with Dr. Kelly and my colleagues, I realized that focusing on Judge and Washington would be more efficient, effective, and clearer for my viewers. I also used the R. Color Brewer Color Tool to assist with enhancing the map’s color contrast.

Engagement with Core Storytelling Concepts

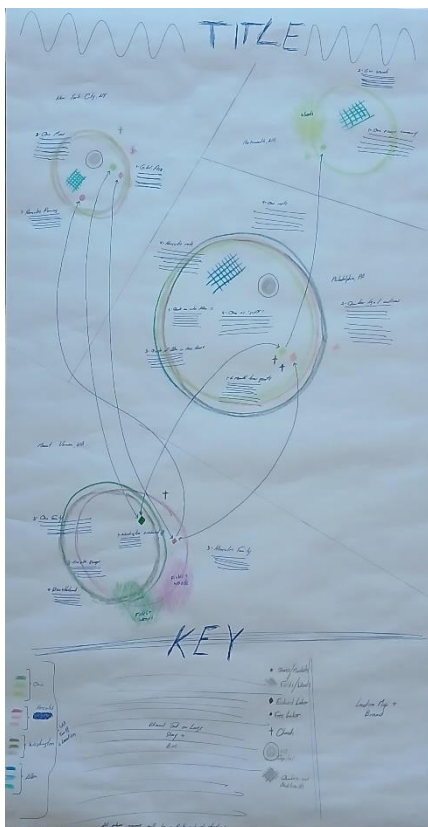
At its highest level, this map replicates *I Was There* to show Judge’s quest for freedom within four different topologies and relationships. Judge, who born around 1773 at Mount Vernon, was a woman of mixed race who reclaimed her freedom by escaping the Washingtons’ enslavement. In 1789, Washington relocated from New York, the nation’s first national capitol, and Mount Vernon with nine enslaved people to occupy the new presidential residence in Philadelphia. Among them was Judge who was tasked with serving Martha Washington.

In 1796, preparations for the Washingtons’ return to Virginia revealed that Ona was to be gifted to Martha Washington’s granddaughter Eliza, who was engaged to Thomas Law. He was known to have a dubious reputation. Fearing perpetual enslavement and dangers to her well-being, Ona made the brave choice to escape on May 21, 1796. With assistance from Rev. Richard Allen and Philadelphia’s abolitionist community, she fled the President’s House eventually settling in New Hampshire. After a period of time, Judge married Jack Staines, a free

black sailor, and bore three children. Though she lived in relative obscurity, her 1845 interviews serve as a testament to the grim realities of enslavement and the resilience of those who sought freedom.

This project is an effort to show, and not tell, Judge's changing positions; movements; relationships to figures including Washington, Staines, Allen; and her ultimate quest to regain her freedom. By showing her movements within the map, this work is designed to engage viewers and challenge them to contemplate the circular symbology, colors, and movements with the ultimate goal of educating them about Judge while deconstructing traditional structures of power and position.

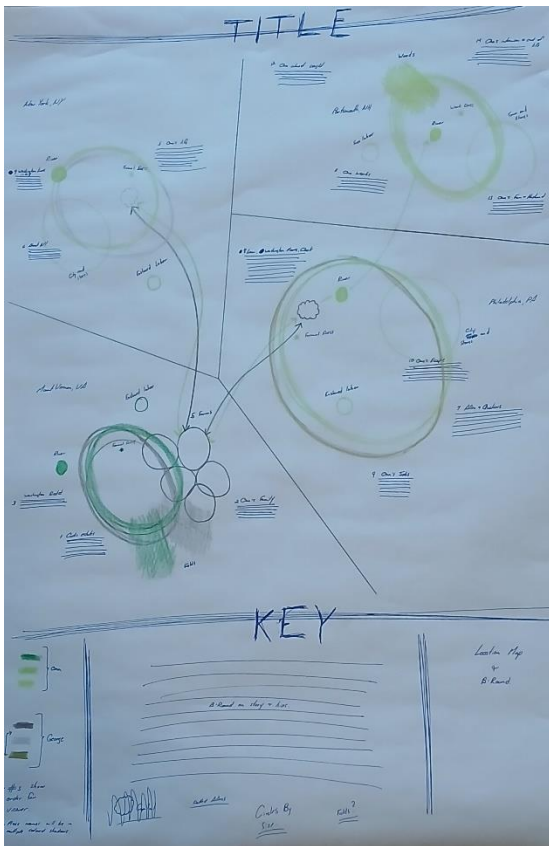
Evaluation of the Mapping Technique



This, to date, was the most challenging mapping project. I estimate it took 25 to 30 hours to complete. The most difficult obstacle, besides learning Adobe Illustrator, was assembling the multiple components that would come together to create the final map. There were four cities, two primary figures, and additional polygons that represented farms, rivers, capitols, and multiple forms of labor. Another challenge was establishing a clear sizing hierarchy for the above circular symbology. And finally, adding the movement arrows for Judge and Washington took a fair amount of thought to make sure they were clear for the viewer, did not detract from the

style and minimal presentation of the map, and effectively emulated Westerveld and Knowles' *I Was There*.

Power and Position



As noted in my previous cartographic project reflections, deconstructing structures of power and position remain a foundational motivation. The fact that Ona Judge, an enslaved woman who gained her freedom from Washington, is the main figure in this map and not Washington, marks an intentional inversion of traditional American, white, male structures of power and narratives. Additionally, this map is designed to show how Ona exercised her agency over the president of the United States. This decision is a deliberate attempt to elevate Judge above Washington to not just show how she gained her freedom, but how

relationships allowed her to accomplish her goal within the different geographies of Mount Vernon, New York, Philadelphia, and Portsmouth.