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Community Indicators

SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 2007

Emotional Mapping Your Neighborhood

You may have seen this article in USA Today -- Artist uses polygraph, GPS to create 'emotional maps' of cities. The article tells of the work of Christian Nold, who sends volunteers into the community with handheld devices that measure both geography and emotional intensity. Then he records that information and plots in on a map. See what it looks like at his [San Francisco Emotion Map](#) page.

From the USA TODAY article:

He's the first to acknowledge the intimate portraits that result from his endeavors won't help a confused tourist get from Fisherman's Wharf to Golden Gate Park.

Instead, by taking polygraph technology out of the criminal realm, his goal is to offer a commentary on the subjective nature of reality. Maps, he notes, have always been influenced by whomever makes them, citing as an example the globes that used to show Europe as being considerably larger than Africa.

"There are different ways of mapping the city that aren't strictly about the practicalities or financial sensibilities that we usually guide our urban planning with," said Nold, 31.

I'm not sure if there's a practical aspect to this artistic effort -- yet. But the possibilities are exciting. Go to [Christian Nold's website](#) and look at the work he's doing -- he has created maps in [Greenwich](#) and [Fulham](#) -- especially look at the [Mapping Fulham](#) site (the work continues through June) -- see the map of the U.S. created as the "US geographical [b]oundries of states are reshaped by the amount of news coverage that this state receives." The link to the [Charles Booth Poverty Map of Fulham 1898](#) raises an interesting possibility of using time-series maps to understand community conditions.

Nold adds the following: "I am very keen to collaborate with individuals, groups and institutions that are interested in social, political and environmental innovation and sustainability." If that sounds interesting, get in touch with him. This appears to be a fascinating opportunity to reshape how we communicate data to the community.

POSTED BY BEN WARNER AT 2:19 PM

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- Quality of life in county improves - Eden Prairie News - Apr 26, 2007
- Wealth of data about our community is at our fingertips - The Spokesman Review - Apr 23, 2007
- Week in review - The Spokesman Review - Apr 22, 2007
- Numbers can add up to action - The Spokesman Review - Apr 19, 2007
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